



SPORTS IN FOCUS

You Must Be Born Again!

John 3:1-36

READY

- If you could go back in history and have a private conversation with Jesus, what is the one question you would ask? Why?
- When was the first time you heard someone use the term “born again”? What did they mean by the term?

SET

Context of John 3:1-36

The familiar story of Jesus’ encounter with Nicodemus reinforces John’s themes that Jesus is the Messiah and Son of God and that He came to offer salvation to people. By confronting Nicodemus with his need for regeneration, Jesus was revealing his identity as God’s messenger.

Keys to Text

Born Again: Phrase literally means “born from above.” It refers to the problem each person has, the need for spiritual transformation or regeneration produced by the Holy Spirit. This new birth is an act of God where He imparts eternal life to the believer (2 Cor. 5:17 and Titus 3:5). *Eternal Life:* There are ten references in John’s Gospel to “eternal life.” The same Greek word is translated eight times as “everlasting life.” It refers not only to eternal quantity but also divine quality of life. It means literally, “life of the age to come.”

GO

Read John 3:1-36

1. What facts from Nicodemus’ encounter with Jesus lead you to believe that he was open to the truth about Jesus?
2. Jesus told Nicodemus, “You must be born again.” What does this mean? Explain it in your own words.
3. Read Ezekiel 36:25-28. How does this message compare with what Jesus told Nicodemus?
4. Describe the events that led to your being “born again.” What people or circumstances did God use?
5. What practical insights into evangelism can you glean from Jesus’ encounter with Nicodemus?
6. According to John 3, what are the consequences of sincere belief in Jesus (see vv.12, 13, 16, 18 and 36)?
7. What was John the Baptist’s attitude as Jesus become more popular? How did John’s followers react to these developments?
8. What qualities from the life of John the Baptist would you like to emulate? Why?
9. Is John 3:16 the most famous summary of the Gospel? Why or why not? How does verse 15 connect to it?

SPORTS IN FOCUS LOVE

A spiritually dead person is alienated from God and therefore alienated from life. He has no capacity to respond. The Scottish commentator John Eadie said, “It is a case of death walking.” In other words, men apart from God are spiritual zombies, the walking dead who do not know they are dead. It’s only salvation that gives spiritual life. If you’re not sure whether you have experienced the new birth, turn to God in prayer and confess your need for forgiveness, your inability to change yourself, as well as your faith in the fact that Christ alone can forgive sin and impart eternal life. That’s the GOOD NEWS!

John 3:16 is the message God wants all followers of Jesus to articulate and model. Because of God’s love for the world, He took action. It boils down to “love in action.” What actions can you take to show God’s love to your teammates or coaches?