

KNOWING THE TRUTH**The New Birth John 3:1—4:3**

*“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son,
that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” John 3:16*

1. Read John 3:1–15. What do we know about Nicodemus? Can you think of any reason why he would visit Jesus after dark?
2. What do the religious leaders (Nicodemus included) know about Jesus? (vs. 2) What don't they know? (See vs. 12. [Hint: what are the “heavenly things” Jesus refers to?])
3. What is the first subject that Jesus brings up in his conversation with Nicodemus?
4. Why is the birth image a good one for illustrating what Jesus is talking about? How is a physical birth like a spiritual birth? How are they different?
5. What other image does Jesus use to describe being “born of the Spirit”? (vs. 8) Have you ever seen or felt the Spirit's power?
6. Jesus talks about seeing the kingdom of God. What is the difference between someone who sees the kingdom of God and someone who does not? (vss. 3, 5)
7. If Nicodemus is not born again, do you think he can understand what Jesus is talking about? (vs. 10) How can we know whether or not we have been born again?

8. Read Numbers 21:4–9, the Old Testament incident that Jesus mentions in verses 14–15. How is Jesus like the bronze snake in the story?

9. Read John 3:16–21. What do you think Jesus means by the words “saved” and “perish” (vs. 16)? What synonyms for perish appear elsewhere in this chapter? (See vss. 18 and 36.) How can we know for certain that we will be saved?

10. In verses 18–21, what reasons does Jesus give for coming to him, for not coming to him, and to which group do you think Nicodemus belongs? To which group do you belong?

11. Read John 3:22—4:3. What do John the Baptist’s disciples say to him that might tempt John to think and feel in wrong ways? How does John reject these temptations? Have you ever been in the same type of situation? How did you respond? (Share with your group if you feel comfortable.)

12. How much of the Holy Spirit has God given us? (vs. 34) Practically speaking, what difference does this make in your daily life?