



- 1 **Think for a moment about the image Jesus chose to teach Nicodemus about being right with God—the new birth.** (John 1:3, 5) The new birth isn't something we can do to ourselves. If Jesus had said, "Unless you are washed, you cannot see the kingdom of God" then we might think, "Well, I think I can wash myself." We may be able to wash ourselves; but we could never birth ourselves.


 What are some of the things that people assume make them right with God?

 In what ways have you allowed the physical (whether that be spiritual knowledge, intellectual knowledge, success in life, etc) to hinder your spiritual understanding of your need for Jesus?

 If you have been born again, take time to rejoice and reflect on God's past, present and future work of regeneration in your life.

- 2 **In the Old Testament, the children of Israel were hard hearted and rebellious against God many times, but in Ezekiel 36:25–28 God graciously offered them new hearts.** What stands out to you most about this prophecy that was fulfilled in Jesus?


 How does the message from this Old Testament passage compare with what Jesus said to Nicodemus about the need for regeneration (that is, internal, spiritual transformation)?

 Read 5 or 6 of the following passages with your group and discuss what they teach about the miracle of the new birth (regeneration) and what it means for you. How are you personally encouraged right now by these truths? John 1:12-13, 2 Cor. 5:17; Titus 3:5; 1 Pet. 1:3; 1 John 2:29; 3:9; 4:7; 5:1-4, 18, Galatians 6:15, Ephesians 4:22-24.


3 **The theological concept of new birth is a reminder that sinners don't just need to try harder or have a few things adjusted, they need to be completely remade—reborn.** Sin has deeply affected and twisted everything—including how we view ourselves. How have you seen sin distort and twist people's identities, including your own? Discuss the impact of sin in our world, creation, and your personal life.


 Read 1 Timothy 1:12-17. Discuss Paul's identity both before and after he placed his faith, or trust, in Christ (v. 13).

 What role did Jesus play in Paul's life change?


 What threatens or discourages your faith in God's ability and desire to bring about change in your life?


4 **Read Numbers 21:4-9.** What would Nicodemus, a well-educated religious leader, have known about the snake Moses lifted up in the wilderness? Why do you think Jesus chose to bring this story up in his conversation with Nicodemus?

 God didn't remove the venomous snakes in Numbers 21, but gave the people a remedy for the problem. How does this relate to both initial faith and also daily faith in the message of the gospel? (See also Isaiah 45:22)

 Think practically about Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus. What can you learn from Jesus about sharing the gospel?

5 **In 1 Peter 1:3-9, the Apostle Peter tells us that we are born again to a living hope.** Biblical hope is not just a feeling that you will see the light again. It is a settled, determined expectation that something good will come based on the promises of God. What is the connection between being born again and having hope?

 Where in your life recently have you been struggling to find hope?

 What impact does remembering your identity in the new birth on your current circumstances?

## PRAYER REQUESTS

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---