

## Living The Good Life, Part 2

- **John 10:10 (KJV)** The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.
- **John 10:10 (NLT)** The thief's purpose is to steal and kill and destroy. My purpose is to give life in all its fullness.
- Since he has the perspective of more than a half-century of "Spirit-filled living," John – more than any of the earlier gospel writers – talks about the Holy Ghost. He portrays the teachings, ministry, actions and reactions of Jesus in a way that shows us how to "live the good life" by walking in the Spirit. We need to pay special attention to the "snapshots" of the Spirit-filled man that we see in John's gospel ... and live the good life!
- **VIDEO CLIP HERE (?)**
- One of the most significant conversations in the entire ministry of Jesus is found in John 3, when a member of the Sanhedrin – the ruling Jewish council – comes to Jesus after dark to talk to Him. Nicodemus is obviously impressed enough by the miracles of Jesus to consider Him "a teacher come from God" (3:2). But he is also afraid; that is why he comes by night.
- History tells us that Nicodemus was counted one of the three richest men in Jerusalem, and that he may have been the brother of Josephus, a famous Jewish historian. Precisely because he is such an influential man in Jerusalem, Nicodemus is fearful for his position and reputation.
- John makes a point of mentioning three separate times in his gospel that Nicodemus "came to Jesus by night" (3:2, 7:50, 19:39) and lets us know that he and another Sanhedrin member, Joseph of Arimathea, eventually did become disciples of Jesus "but secretly for fear of the Jews" (19:38-39).
- The problem is that Nicodemus is confused; he is torn between religion and a relationship with God, and as yet does not understand that you cannot have both! He can see that there is something undeniably REAL about the way Jesus lives, but he can't figure out what it is. Jesus doesn't even pause to acknowledge his compliment; He goes straight to the heart of the matter with His answer.

- **John 3:3-7 (KJV)** Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

- Although he is a "master of Israel" Nicodemus does not understand this simple "salvation equation" ...

**BORN ONCE = DIE TWICE**

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- **Follow the conversation:** Jesus says that we must be BORN AGAIN. Nicodemus asks HOW we do that. Jesus defines the NEW BIRTH as "born of WATER and born of SPIRIT." He then says that humans can reproduce human life ("flesh is flesh"), but that only God can create spiritual life ("Spirit is spirit"). YOU MUST BE BORN AGAIN!
- What does it mean to be "born of water"? WATER BAPTISM is the only significant use of water in the New Testament church!
- **Acts 10:47 (KJV)** Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?
- **1 John 5:8 (KJV)** And there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.
- John doesn't write his gospel chronologically; he places events and teachings in a certain order FOR EFFECT. Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus is sandwiched between references to John the Baptist's ministry of baptism (1:25-34, 3:23), and is also immediately followed by a reference to Jesus' disciples baptizing people in His authority (3:22, 4:1-2). Why? Because "born of water" means "baptism"!
- Is water baptism a necessity? YES! Without it, you can't be born again! Why? Because your sins haven't been washed away!
- **Acts 22:16 (KJV)** And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.
- Is water baptism a necessity? YES! Without it, you can't be born again! Why? Because baptism is what puts you in Christ!
- **Galatians 3:27 (KJV)** For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

- What does it mean to be “born of the Spirit”? SPIRIT BAPTISM is the infilling of the Holy Ghost that gives us power to live our new life!
- **Joel 2:28 (KJV)** And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:
- **Isaiah 28:11 (KJV)** For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people.
- The Bible calls the Holy Ghost the Spirit of Christ, our seal until the day of redemption, the earnest of our inheritance, our rest, the comforter, the spirit of adoption, the living water, and power from on high. It is also called a birth and a baptism. The Bible teaches that the Holy Ghost gives us righteousness, peace and joy, helps us pray, gives us power to witness, teaches and guides us, gives us assurance that we are saved, and gives us power over the enemy. We need the Holy Ghost!
- Is Spirit baptism a necessity? YES! Without it, you can't be born again! Why? Because the Holy Ghost gives power over the flesh!
- **Romans 8:11 (KJV)** But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.
- Is Spirit baptism a necessity? YES! Without it, you can't be born again! Why? Because the Holy Ghost puts Christ in us!
- **Romans 8:9 (KJV)** But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.
- Here's another important “salvation equation” ...  
**WATER BAPTISM = ME IN CHRIST**  
**SPIRIT BAPTISM = CHRIST IN ME**
- **Titus 3:5 (KJV)** Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;
- The new birth is a single process; there is no such thing as being half born. One is either born again or not! Whatever repentance, water baptism and Spirit baptism accomplish individually, we must always remember that the total work of salvation is completed at the union of the three.
- We should never attach so much importance to one element that we deem the others to be unnecessary. The Bible pattern is to experience all three:
  - Even though the Samaritans had been baptized in Jesus' name, they still needed to receive the Spirit (Acts 8:15-17).
  - Even though Cornelius had already received the Spirit, Peter commanded him to be baptized in Jesus' name (Acts 10:44-48).
- If people will exercise faith they will receive the Holy Ghost as soon as they repent and are baptized. This is exactly what happened to the disciples of John at Ephesus (Acts 19:1-6). God has designed it so that the entire new birth process can occur at one time.
- You would think that anyone would want a fresh start, a new lease on life, a chance to begin again. But sadly, most people refuse it because, like Nicodemus, they don't understand it.
- **John 1:4-5 (KJV)** In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.
- The most well-known verse in the Bible is in John chapter 3, in the middle of Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus ...
- **John 3:16 (KJV)** For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.
- But look what follows that verse ...
- **John 3:17-19 (KJV)** For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.
- What is CONDEMNATION? The Bible words mean “to know something against, to pronounce judgment against, to pass sentence upon.” Condemnation is a judicial word, indicating that we have committed crimes against God and His word, and that we stand under sentence of death as a result. There is no hope!
- BUT THAT IS NOT THE WORST!

- Not only do sinners have judgment waiting for them in eternity, Jesus said they were “CONDEMNED ALREADY!” They are already under the heavy sentence of eternal death and separation from God.
- How do you view sinners? With smugness? With disdain? With disgust? With a holier-than-thou attitude? HOW ABOUT VIEWING THEM WITH SYMPATHY!?! They are CONDEMNED ALREADY!
- **Here is John’s second snapshot of a Spirit-filled man: He has compassion toward the lost.**
- All human behavior is based on a belief. People are sinners because they have bought into a belief. BEHIND EVERY SIN IS A LIE THAT I AM BELIEVING! And until I repent of that thinking, I live under condemnation. I’m not waiting to get to eternity to find out that I’m lost – I’m ALREADY LOST. I’m CONDEMNED ALREADY!
- **Titus 3:3 (KJV)** For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.
- **Titus 3:3 (MSG)** It wasn't so long ago that we ourselves were stupid and stubborn, dupes of sin, ordered every which way by our glands, going around with a chip on our shoulder, hated and hating back.
- **Titus 3:11 (NLT)** For people like that have turned away from the truth. They are sinning, and they condemn themselves.
- How do you recognize someone who is condemned already? They spend their life running from the light! They love darkness, because it hides reality from them – they can’t see how sinful they are because they won’t take an honest look at themselves!
- How easy it is to get hurt when we RUN in the dark! How horribly people are injured and scarred when they continually run from God’s light! Don’t hate sinners – feel sorry for them! They don’t know any better; they’re only hurting themselves. They’re condemned already!
- **Isaiah 57:20-21 (KJV)** But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.
- HOW DO I FIX THIS PROBLEM? I must REPENT, which is basically changing the way I think about my life by accepting the way GOD thinks about it! Repentance is an inward change in ATTITUDE that leads to an outward change in ACTION.
- Here’s the good news! If it is possible to live CONDEMNED ALREADY, then it is possible to live SAVED ALREADY! When I obey the gospel, when I am BORN AGAIN, God wipes out the judgment against me for my sins and gives me salvation. I’m not waiting to get to eternity to find out that I’m saved. I’m ALREADY SAVED!
- **John 5:24 (KJV)** Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.
- **Romans 8:1 (KJV)** There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.
- **John 8:10-11 (KJV)** When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.
- How do you recognize someone who is saved already? They spend their life running to the light! They love light, because it lets them see reality. It’s not a pretty sight at first, but then God does a great work when they accept His way of thinking and living the good life!
- **John 8:32 (KJV)** And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.