

BORN A SECOND TIME

John 3:1-13

Hello friend and welcome to *Hope for Today*. My name is J. Mark Horst; I'm your friend and Bible teacher. The program you're listening to is produced by Heralds of Hope, an international Gospel radio and literature ministry.

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In just a few moments, Dr. Yoder will come with today's teaching from the Gospel of John. His teaching this time is titled, "Born the Second Time." That is an interesting title. And it may immediately raise a question in your mind; "is being born the second time even possible?" To learn the answer to that question you'll need to stay tuned.

Right now, let's pray. Holy God our Heavenly Father, we come to you by faith in the name of Jesus. We ask you to open our hearts to the truth of your Word as Dr. Yoder teaches us from it. We pray this in Jesus' name, Amen.

It's rather alarming to know that world population is increasing at a rapid rate. Thousands are born every hour, thousands of others die every hour, yet the experts tell us the rate of increase in the world population is 2.2%, with the population of the world today standing at more than four billion people.

All these many millions of people have experienced birth and death-thousands every hour. But many only experience one birth, the physical birth. Do you know that you can be BORN A SECOND TIME? That's right. The Scripture I'm using for this meditation tells us this very clearly. A Jewish leader came to Jesus one night and they had a conversation. There was a thought in this Jewish leader's mind that he wanted to get cleared up. He wanted to get more information. So he came to Jesus for a talk. The account is in John 3:1-13.

1 *There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:*

- 2 *The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.*
- 3 *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.*
- 4 *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?*
- 5 *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.*
- 6 *That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.*
- 7 *Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.*
- 8 *The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.*
- 9 *Nicodemus answered and said unto him, how can these things be?*
- 10 *Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?*
- 11 *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, we speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness.*
- 12 *If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?*
- 13 *And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.*

Did you hear Jesus tell this man, Nicodemus, “you must be born again”? In this talk with Nicodemus, I point out the necessary STAGES so you too can experience being born a second time. It’s possible. Would you like to know how? Then read on.

The first stage in the conversation is clearly set by **The Assertion.**

Here is a learned man, a ruler among the Jews who came to Jesus. When he came to Jesus, he made a very positive assertion. He said, “We know that thou art the teacher come from God.” That was a very worthy acknowledgment Nicodemus made. Jesus was a teacher come from God. There can be no question about that. When you read the Gospel records about Him, He was a teacher come from God. Then Nicodemus went a little farther. He said, “No man can do these miracles that thou doest except God be with him.” So Nicodemus acknowledged not only that Jesus was a teacher come from God but also that He was a worker of miracles.

That, my friend, is very, very important. That is stage number one. Jesus is not an ordinary person. No, Jesus is an extraordinary person. He’s a teacher come from God and a worker of miracles. That isn’t all that Jesus is but that much Nicodemus already knew. My friend, it is a tremendous assertion.

The second stage is **The Direction.**

Jesus gave a direction to Nicodemus. He started out with a very solid statement. He said, “Truly, truly, I say unto you, unless a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” I want you to notice that Jesus isn’t particularly addressing Nicodemus although He is talking to him. By the very fact that He said, “Except a man be born again,” means any man and that includes you and me. It means every man, every person. No matter in what station of life you may find yourself, it means you.

Here was a learned Jew, a ruler of the Jews, who was told by Jesus, “You must be born again.” Now if it was necessary for him, I confess that it is necessary for me. And I must tell you, it is necessary for you. That is a very solemn statement. It was to Nicodemus a very puzzling statement because he immediately raised the question, “How is it possible?” Is it possible for old men to be born a second time? How is the process accomplished? In what way is it done? Do old

men enter the second time into their mothers' wombs and be born? That is a rather puzzling statement Jesus made. At least it was puzzling to Nicodemus. Maybe it is puzzling to you.

Let's notice the revealing answer that Jesus gave. He said to Nicodemus, "Except (or unless) a man is born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God." The reason being that whatever is born of the flesh is flesh and whatever is born of the Spirit is spirit. That very clearly states that there must be a spiritual birth. Now we have all been born of the flesh for we have our physical bodies. The evidence is clear that the flesh produces the flesh. The evidence is also clear that the Spirit produces the spirit. A very deep and profound truth is here expressed by Jesus. It is this: you and I are creatures of flesh and spirit, not just flesh but flesh and spirit.

We have plenty of proof by our human bodies that we are of the flesh. We also have plenty of proof that we are of the spirit in those around us. If you are born again or born the second time, you know what I am talking about. That which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Jesus said, "Marvel not that I said unto you, you must be born again." You can be born a second time.

The final stage in this conversation on how to be born the second time comes in **The Conclusion.**

Jesus used a very interesting illustration. He said the wind blows wherever it wills. You can hear it, but you can't see it. You don't even know what creates the wind. Oh, I suppose our weathermen have some theory about the wind, but they don't know for sure what causes the wind or where it comes from or where it goes. All we can do is feel it passing by or see what happens as it passes by, by the way in which it affects the dust, or the trees. But we do not know very much about the wind, not much.

Jesus said, "So is everyone who is born of the Spirit." There is some mystery about this, perhaps some unsolved mystery. We only know that the Spirit is at work. For Nicodemus, his mind stood in his way because he raised the question, "How can these things be?" Oh, there are many people like our friend Nicodemus who allow their minds to rob them of the deeper experiences of life. Yes, to them the most important answer is that it must convince the mind.

But we also have a will with which to believe! Jesus went on to talk to Nicodemus about the earthly things and the heavenly things. He said, "We know what we're talking about, but you don't receive our witness." Jesus gave Nicodemus enough for his mind but the reason Nicodemus did not receive the witness of Jesus is that he had yet to exercise his will for faith.

Earthly things tell us of heavenly things. Yes, they do. Jesus made that comment and made it very clear. Earthly things and heavenly things have a relationship. The earthly tell us of the heavenly. Therefore, because we are flesh and we are born of the flesh which is earthly, we can also be born the second time of the spirit and be in relation to the heavenly.

To be born a second time, you must agree that Jesus is more than any other man; One come from God. You must choose to believe and receive His direction to be born of the Spirit. You must give your will to Him. You can't afford to argue with Him, He knows what is in your heart. Why don't you believe on Him now?

Holy Father, we thank Thee that the way has been made clear. Jesus made it clear to Nicodemus. I want to pray for my friends now who have seen this in a new way, that they, too, can be born a second time: born of the Spirit. Teach them this, I ask in Jesus' Name, Amen.

Yes, my friend, as Dr. Yoder said, Jesus wants you to be born the second time. To receive salvation through Jesus, the Messiah, is the most important decision you will ever make. It not only will transform your life now and for eternity. Please don't misunderstand me. I'm not saying that becoming a Christ-follower will make your life easy. In fact, it very well could make your circumstances more difficult. Jesus said to His followers, "if they hate me, they will hate you." But in your heart and mind you will have peace because you will have the presence of Jesus living right within you. And no one can take that away from you!

Now, were you blessed by this teaching? If so, you can request an audio CD or a printed copy of this complete teaching, "Born a Second Time."

The quickest way for you to contact me is to send an e-mail to mail@heraldsofhope.org. That e-mail address is mail@heraldsofhope.org. Or you may write to *Hope for Today*, Box 3, Breezewood, Pennsylvania 15533. Remember, you can request a printed manuscript or an audio CD of this teaching, "Born a Second Time." I'd be happy to send one to you.

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Now, I urge you to tune in next week as Dr. Yoder continues teaching from John's Gospel with a message titled "God Did All He Can." And until then, keep looking for that blessed HOPE.