

(John) the Visitation of Nicodemus Regeneration

by Willie Mullan

The sermon emphasizes the importance of the new birth and the necessity of the gospel in bringing people to life and giving them new birth.

Duration: 1:06:10

Scripture: Matthew 4:6, Matthew 28:19, Mark 1:9, John 3:16, Acts 2:38, 1 Corinthians 4:15, James 1:18

Topics: "Regeneration"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of turning away from darkness and evil and stepping into the light of God's love. He explains that God's love was necessary to give humanity Jesus Christ, who went to the cross and paid the price for the sins of the world. It is crucial for individuals to trust in Jesus and believe in him for eternal life. The preacher also warns that those who do not believe in Jesus will not see life but will face the wrath of God. The sermon is based on the teachings of John the Baptist and the Gospel of John.

Transcript

And tonight's John's Gospel, and we're at the third chapter this evening. The Gospel by John, and we're at the third chapter. You will remember the last evening that we had the Bible class here, in the last Bible class of 1960, that we followed our Lord Jesus from Cana in Galilee right over to Capernaum.

Capernaum is just on the north of the Sea of Galilee there. And then we followed the footsteps of the Master from Capernaum right down here. And, of course, no Orthodox Jew would pass through familiar, so they usually crossed the Jordan about there, and came down the outside of the Jordan, down this valley of Perea.

And then they crossed the Jordan down here just before they came to the Dead Sea, and we traced the footsteps from Capernaum right over to Jerusalem. And it was there that we finished the meeting last year in the Bible class with our Lord doing great things in Jerusalem. Now, let's have a look at that again just for a moment.

Do you see the last three verses of John, chapter 2, verse 23? Now, when Jesus was in Jerusalem at the Passover in the feast day, many believed in his name. And the first glance at that phrase would make you

really think that they were true believers, but they were only empty professors, because here is what is stated, many believed in his name when? When they heard the gospel? Oh, no. When they saw the miracles which he did.

And God never leads anyone to saving faith in Christ through miracles. Indeed, if you look for miracles, you'll be blessed in the day to come, for the devil will do miracles in this world yet. You'll be really blessed.

The foundation for your faith is the word of the gospel, the word of truth, as you'll find out this evening. But many believed in his name when they saw the miracles which he did, but, but, but, but Jesus did not. You see the word commit? Well, if you're a Greek scholar, you'll find this out, that the word believed in verse 23 and the word commit in verse 24 are exactly the same Greek words.

And if you ever want another exposition for the word believe, it's the word commit. I'm persuaded that he is able to keep all that I've committed unto him. When you trust in Christ, you commit yourself for all eternity, and to his blessed hands, that's believing.

That's believing. But here's how it can read and how it does read in some of the old manuscripts. Now, when Jesus was in Jerusalem at the Passover in the feast day, many believed in his name when they saw the miracles which he did, but Jesus did not believe in them.

The same word. Because. Because he knew.

Because he knew all men. And needed not that any should testify of man, for he knew what was in man. And he knew these fellows were just coming and standing around him because of the miracle.

But when he fed the five thousand with the loaves and fishes, you know, he could get a crowd easily the next day. There are always those kind of empty professors who follow Jesus for the loaves and fishes. That's what they can get out of.

There are a lot of those kind of followers, but they're not saved, you know. If you only follow Jesus for what you can get out of it, then you're still on your way to hell. And so the Lord did not commit himself or did not believe in them, for he knew.

He knew. Now, I read that for this purpose, because between chapter two and chapter three, there is a little word left out, and it's a great pity. In five or six commentaries that I've looked up during the week, the word is in.

But it's left out in our Bibles. Now, here is the leading, verse twenty-four. But Jesus did not believe in them because he knew all men.

And needed not that any should testify of man, for he knew what was in man. But, but, there was a man of the Pharisees. You see, the but.

Well, that should be in your Bible. You see, the idea is this, that this man who came in the night, he was different from this other crowd. They were only empty professors, but this man was honestly, sincerely speaking the truth.

And that little but just puts Nicodemus in contrast to all the others at the end of chapter two. And so we are faced to face with a great personality as we come into the chapter. In fact, the whole chapter of this evening swings around four personalities.

Of course, our Lord Jesus Christ is the central figure. Then Nicodemus. Then John the Apostle, who writes some wonderful verses for us in this chapter.

And then John the Baptist, who appears at the end of the chapter. And so we break the chapter into four this evening. First of all, we're looking up the visitation of Nicodemus.

And then we shall listen to the revelation of our Lord Jesus to Nicodemus about the new birth. And then we shall go into a very deep and wonderful part of the chapter, the exposition of John about getting life. And then we come to the end of the chapter with the consolation of John the Baptist.

And so there are the headings for you. Now let's really get into the chapter. The chapter should commence with the word BOSH.

BOSH. And that makes the contrast between Nicodemus and the others who surrounded Christ in the end of chapter two. And that BOSH brings out the sincerity of the man.

He was honestly speaking life and speaking the truth. He was very sincere. And when we read the first phrase, But there was a man of the Pharisees, that word brings up the society he moved in.

He was one of those stern, yet very morally straight, I think, starchy religious Jews of Christ's own day and generation. And although he was straight and stern and starchy, yet he wasn't saved. And that's a thing for all of us to take note of, that you could be steeped in religion, in empty, dead, formal, Christ-less religion, and not saved.

And I would make bold to say that there are thousands of people in our land steeped in empty Churchianity. And Churchianity is not Christianity. Men who are steeped in religion and of no Savior and no Christ.

You can see his sincerity from the word BOSH. You can see the society he moved in from the word Pharisees. And when you find this out, There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler.

You can see his authority. You see, he belonged, I believe, to the Sanhedrin, that great Jewish council that ruled the whole nation. And mind you, out of all the Jews in the nation, all the priests, all the Levites, all the lawyers, all the old wives, the Jews, only 71 were chosen for the Sanhedrin.

And so he was one of the rulers of the Jews. That was the most authoritative and most venerable court in all the world. Those 71 Jews could sit there and try any man in the land, in spite of Rome ruling the land, and put him to death, as they did with our Lord Jesus, and compelled Pilate, the crucifier.

And so he was one of the Sanhedrin. You can see his sincerity from the word BOSH. You can see his society from the word Pharisees.

You can see his authority from the word RULER. Then the second verse says, The team came to Jesus by night. And I think I'm compelled to say that you can see his timidity by the word NIGHT.

Mani was afraid, because I think that you can see that being a ruler of the Jews, being one of that venerable council, being one of the leaders of the nation, well, he was afraid to come out openly. In fact, he was just a little bit of a coward at this stage, but later on he came out in the open, so that you can see his sincerity, you can see the society he moved in, you can see the authority he had, you can see the timidity within him. The team came to Jesus by night and said unto him, Rabbi, and I think you can see the

honesty.

You know, it was a tremendous thing for Nicodemus to address one who didn't belong to that venerable council, and one who didn't even belong to the tribe of Levi, and one who did not serve at the temple, for to address him as Rabbi, it was a tremendous thing. I think he was honest. He had listened to him, and he had watched the miracles, and he was compelled to give this testimony, Rabbi, and then he put in a little word, we know.

You see, I believe there were other members in the Jewish council who had come to the conclusion that our Lord Jesus was not just some ordinary upstart. Thou art a teacher come from God. No man can do the miracles that thou doest except God be with him.

And I think you can see his sincerity, the society he moved in, the authority he had, the committy in his heart, and the honesty that came now upon his lips. 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. And if we might take another word just for this moment from verse ten, Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel? So that you can see his responsibility.

Now there is a plain picture of the man. You can see his sincerity, you can see his authority, you can see his society, you can see his committy, you can see his honesty, and as a ruler in Israel, you can see his responsibility. And so this is a tremendous personality that stepped in before our Lord Jesus in the midnight hour, the visitation of Nicodemus.

Now there's a tremendous lesson for every believer here to learn if you'll just take the time to learn it. You know, this man who is unsaved, a religious, unsaved soul, is coming very politely to our Lord Jesus and saying, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God. That was a big saying.

But our Lord Jesus, you know, just cut them short. In fact, I believe with Island's Night and Schiffer and one or two more that here's how the conversation went, you know. Nicodemus came into the Lord's presence somewhere in the midnight hour and said, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God, and that no man can do these miracles that thou doest except God be with him.

And then he was going to rattle on. And the Lord just stepped in and cut that whole sentence short. I don't think he had finished at all.

The Lord just said, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Now, there's a great lesson here. You know, we shouldn't listen to flowery language from someone who is dead in trespasses and sins.

Don't let them rattle on, because the deep, dire, desperate need in that man's heart is this. It's not a teacher you want, boy. It's life.

You know, you can't teach dead things, can you? He didn't write to talk about teaching. He was dead in trespasses and in sins. He knew nothing about teaching.

You know, an unsaved man who is dead in trespasses and in sins, he can't have discerned spiritual things. Don't let them talk about them. They have no right to do that.

Not the teacher you want, sir, is life. You know, that's what carnalism is. They would dare to give up lessons from the life of Christ.

That's what it's all based on, lessons from the life of Christ. Man and woman, it's not lessons from the life of Christ you want. It's life from the death of Christ.

Now, that's different. If you begin there, you begin at the cross. And when you get life, you can talk about teaching.

But until you have got life, just leave the teaching out. See, you're just butted in. And he's revealing something to this big man before him.

He's putting first things first. He's just butting in and cutting the conversation short. And he's saying, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

The kingdom of God is a phrase that just means the spiritual things of God. And unless a man has got new life, born again, life eternal, unless he's got a new nature and he has become a new creature, he cannot discern spiritual things. So let him keep out of them.

And you want to save friends, not lessons from the life of Christ that you need. It's life from the death of Christ that you need, and that's where you begin. It's a new life that you need most.

That's your deepest need. And so, the Lord is revealing to Nicodemus the necessity of the new birth. And, of course, the answer that comes from Nicodemus just brings up the point that the Lord was emphasizing, because you can see the man didn't see anything.

Nicodemus says 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? Can't you see that he had no spiritual discernment at all? And you can't discern spiritual things when you haven't got a life to begin with. You see, friend, he was blind. He was dead in sin.

He couldn't discern spiritual things, because there he was outside the kingdom of God altogether, in the kingdom of darkness, held captive, blinded by the God of this world, and he can't see anything. Friend, it wouldn't matter even if you could enter into your mother's womb and be born again. You'd be born the second time the way you were the first time.

That wouldn't help you at all. It was nonsense, he was talking. But he was blind.

He didn't see. And then the Lord began to show him not only the necessity of the new birth, but he began to show him the possibility of the new birth. Verse 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.

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. Now, there are quite a number of things in that little saying there that we would need to take our time with.

Jesus answered, Verily, verily I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water. What did Jesus mean when he said that? Of baptism, anything in the white world to do with bringing you a new birth, most emphatically and dogmatically and without any hesitation at all, I say absolutely no. Water, baptism, that would be sprinkling or immersion, has got nothing in the white world to do with new birth.

Anybody who reaches that end of that is getting back onto pagan, poopish land. Let me prove what I said when I'm so dogmatic about it. You see, if baptism or sprinkling or immersion has got something to do with getting you new birth, then not a solitary saint in the Old Testament was born again at once.

You tell me where Abraham was baptized, I'll tell you, you'll have gone and found that. You tell me where Isaac and Jacob was, could you tell me one solitary case in the Old Testament of sprinkling or baptism? And I'll tell you, you can't find one. And I'll tell you more.

When you come into the New Testament and Peter is standing in the house of Cornelius and he's preaching the glorious message of the gospel, the Holy Ghost fell on them that believed. And at that split second, these young believers began to speak with new tongues so that the very Jews around Peter were moved. Were they saved? Of course they were saved.

Well, they weren't baptized yet, because immediately Peter said, who can forbid water that he should not be baptized? So they weren't baptized, but they were saved. How did the thief from the cross get salvation? Was he baptized? Well, you'll have bothered finding it. Not at all.

Baptismal regeneration comes from pagan, Babylonish, idolatrous popery. Don't ever let it enter your mind for a moment, and the Lord wasn't even talking like that. You see, if you make sprinkling or baptism of any mode to be a part of salvation, then you're going to rule out every salvation amulet and life, you are born again.

They don't believe anything about sprinkling or anything else. And you're going to make every quicker that ever lives an unsaved man, for they don't have anything to do with the devil. And so you're going to put dear saints in the fix.

For I don't think that you would be so foolish as to say that there were not good godly Quakers in days gone by. I hope you wouldn't. Because I could just trot out a few now of men that moved the country.

And I don't think that any of you would rule out every godly, evangelical, burning salvation armist who was out and out for God. Oh, I know that you can get clause anywhere. I'm talking about the real thing just now.

So that history in the old economy and history in the new economy and history down through all the years has proved that baptism by water has nothing to do with salvation. Not a thing. And we never talked out here, you know.

And we never will. Well, then, when the Lord said, verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water, that's exactly what did He mean. Well, now, I'll test the clause.

We'll turn from John 3 to John 4. And that's not very far, is it? And the Lord is talking to the woman at the well. And here's what He said to her. Verse 13.

Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again. But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst. But the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

Tell me, was He talking about literal water there? Yes, in the first case, He said, whosoever shall drink of this water, the water in the well, shall thirst again. But whosoever shall drink of the water that I shall give

him, was that a literal water? Of course, you can see at a glance it wasn't. Why, you couldn't give somebody a drink of water and it would be in them for everlasting life, could you? No.

The water that the Lord is talking about in John 3 and in John 4 and in John 7 and in many other places through the New Testament is the old-fashioned message of the gospel. You say, are you sure, man? I'm sure. Come to 1 Corinthians 4. 1 Corinthians 4. And here's Paul writing to the Corinthians, and remember that it says, Paul, verse 15, For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, he's saying to them, yet have ye not many fathers.

For in Christ Jesus I have begotten you. How? Through the gospel. Through the gospel.

How did they get you, like? By Paul preaching the glorious gospel. Well, I could ask every believer that I've led to the Lord to stand on their feet here, and I would surprise this meeting, but I have no notion of doing things like that. But when they would be on their feet, I could say this, In Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.

The gospel is what God uses to bring you life. Have a look at James, the first chapter. James, chapter 1, 18.

Of his own will begot he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of the creature. You see, here it says again, God has begotten us with the word of truth. Have a look at Peter.

You've heard Paul, you've heard James, listen to Peter in the first chapter of that first letter. First Peter, chapter 1, verse 23. Being born again.

There are the actual words now. Being born again, not of corruptibility, but of incorruptible by the word of God, which lives and abides forever. You see, I believe that in all these phrases, the word of truth, the word of God, that what Paul and Peter and James are getting at is this, that it's the old-fashioned message of the gospel.

And you'll find that out as we get back to John, chapter 3. Now, I want you to notice this, that not only did our Lord Jesus say, except a man be born of water, but he also said, of the Spirit. This is my contention all along, and this is something I'd love to inoculate all the young believers with. That, look, if you're going out as a preacher, make sure that you're preaching the gospel, and not some concoction that you think's the gospel.

Make sure that it's the word of truth. Make sure that it's actually the message of God. Now, I believe that there are quite a number of you capable of doing that, but there's something else you need.

You need the old-fashioned message back home with the power of the Holy Ghost. And unless you're just there, you'll never see them really born again. What we need is the country filled with men who can preach the old-fashioned message of the gospel back home with the power of the Holy Ghost, and that brings in every believer that's in this meeting.

Why don't you pray for good gospel preachers? And the prayer meeting should be full of Sunday night overflowing with men and women wanting to pray the thought that the Holy Ghost might fall upon the message. For only when the message, backed by the power of the Holy Ghost, is preached will men and women be born again. And so our Lord Jesus was revealing the possibility.

I want you to notice what he said in verse 7. Chapter 3, verse 7. Verily marvel not that I said unto thee ye must be born again. Now, I'm just taking this phrase because I've heard you speak upside down. You see, I've heard preachers teach this ye must be born again as if God said to some soul you have to have this experience of your own self.

Oh no, it's not something like that. You know, if you look to somebody and tell them they've got to do the thing, you're making this as if it was sounded out in the actor's voice. But it's not, you know.

In the Greek New Testament, it's in the parcel voice. It's not something that you've got to do for yourself. It's something that you must be willing to let go through.

And if you hear the gospel and the Holy Ghost comes upon you, you must be perfectly willing to let God bring you new birth. But you'll see it all in a moment. You see, that's not written in the actor's voice at all.

It's written in the parcel. And so is showing Nicodemus the necessity and the possibility. And then he comes to the mystery.

Verse 8 The wind blows where it lifts us. Thou hearest the sound thereof canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth. So is every one that is born of the Spirit.

You see how often one has stood behind the book and preached the message. And you know, you felt you were covering ground that was covered so often that you were almost ashamed. And yet you should never be.

And you know, just at that moment the Holy Ghost was taking that simple word and bringing it home to some heart with mighty melting power. And they were passing out of darkness into light and out of birth into life. And they were being born again of the Holy Ghost.

And you know, you just couldn't follow it at all. Yes, there's a mystery. But it's possible.

And it's absolutely necessary. You see, that's where you really begin. Now here comes Nicodemus again.

Verse 9 Nicodemus answered and said unto him How can these things be? You know, he was really puzzled. Jesus answered and said unto him Art thou a master of Israel? And knowest not these things? Verily, verily, I say unto thee We speak that we do know and testify that we have seen and ye receive not our witness. If I have told you earthly things and ye believe not how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things? Now this is a strange bit of the gospel.

I believe and a few others believe that our Lord Jesus stopped talking at the end of verse 12. I don't think anybody could be dogmatic about this, mind you. But I believe it and I believe it for a certain reason.

I believe that we have the visitation of Nicodemus and then we have the revelation of Jesus to Nicodemus and now John takes up the writing and John takes it up under the power of the Holy Ghost to give an exposition of how you really get life. And I believe if you watch this you will find this is very important. You see, I don't really honestly think that Jesus could have said this verse.

Verse 13 Supposing we take that Jesus is talking to Nicodemus and no man hath ascended up to heaven but he that came down from heaven even the son of man which is in heaven. Now I know that some of them tried to get out of this by saying that he was God and could be in heaven and the earth at the same time. Oh, I know that.

But I think it's much more sensible if you see John taking up the writing here and he's writing his gospel after Christ has died after the wonderful resurrection after the wonderful ascension and so he can take this word up. Watch it. No man hath ascended up to heaven.

You know, some of the critics would stop you there and say, ha ha, there's one of the mistakes in the Bible. They say, didn't Elijah go up? Didn't Enoch go up? Oh, no, that's just where they're wrong, you see. You see, friend, you want to watch every word of this old book.

Here's the actual wording here. No man hath ascended up to heaven. You know, actually, Enoch was taken up.

Oh, he was. I, and Elijah, was taken by a whirlwind. But our Lord Jesus went up, ascended.

No man ever did that before. You see, the book's always right. Don't get worried about them.

The answers are right before you if you take the time. Now, John, I think, is writing here. And John is saying, no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man, which is in heaven, he came down to be the Son of Man, he died, he rose again, he went back again, and he's in heaven.

And then he goes on. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so much the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. Now, John's taken up the exposition of how you really get this right.

And John's saying this. You know, the cross was an absolute necessity for you to get life. Now, you couldn't get it without the cross.

The Son of Man must be lifted up. You see, he must be the sacrifice to meet every requirement of a holy God. He must lay a foundation whereby he can be raised again from the dead to be a living Savior, and whosoever believeth in him will get life.

And that's the gospel, and would to God it was borne into your heart with power. And that's the only way you'll get it. You'll get it through the gospel coming to you with power when you trust the Savior.

You see, the cross was a necessity for you to get life. But watch this. He goes on still.

That's why we're very particular about this word for, in verse 16, for God, who loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life. You see, the love of God was a necessity for you to get life. Ah, let's get the hold of this.

You see, it took God's love to give Christ up to the cross, that the work might be done, that he might rise to be the Savior, and if you trust him, you'll get life. John's expounding the thing now. No wonder so many people have been saved in these verses, because of the exposition of the gospel.

And watch again. You see, verse 18. Verse 17's just in with verse 16, because it's just showing what the love of God did in sending his Son to be the Savior of the world.

And then verse 18. 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.

Are you getting the hold of this? You know, the Lord is talking, and the necrodemesias said, stop talking, man. What you need is new life. And it's possible for you to get new life by the message and by the Spirit.

It's like the wind working. You'll not be able to follow it, but it really happens. And the cross is a necessity for you to get life.

And the love of God is a necessity for you to get life. And your belief in Christ is a necessity. And you're not jettied without it either.

He that believeth has life. He that believeth not is condemned already. All right, so that's the exposition.

That's the exposition. The cross was a necessity. The love of God was a necessity.

Your trust in the Savior is a necessity for you to get life. And then John went on. Watch again.

Verse 19. And this is the condemnation, that light is coming to the world, and men love darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil, and everyone that doeth evil thinketh the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deed should be reprov'd. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light.

You see, there must be a willingness to step into the light. And do you see what's happening? When you step into the light, you turn your back on darkness and deeds and evil doings. And look, friends, God's love was a necessity to give you Christ.

And it was a necessity that that Christ that was given would go to the cross and pay that tremendous price to satisfy the claims of God against the penitent world. And it was absolutely necessary that he would rise again from the dead and go back again to heaven. And he's in heaven, a real glorified Savior, and it's necessary that you trust him.

And to trust him, and to trust him, it's necessary to turn your back on darkness and evil doings and step into the light, and you see. You get that? Now that's how you're born again. A pagan, popish sprinkle in the water would never do that.

Now you're wiping your feet on the cross and on the blood and on the resurrection and on the love of God and on the attention. Friends, here's how you get saved. God loves you.

Christ saved. He died. He paid it all.

He rose again. He's glorified. You come into the light tonight.

Turn your back on the thing you love. Turn your back on your deeds. Turn your back on your darkness.

Come and trust him and you'll get light. What's keeping you back? Maybe you love something more than Jesus. Well, you'll die and perish with it, even if it's your own belief.

Man, it's a pity of you if you can't trust God. And so, here we have the exposition from John. That's where I'm perfectly sure that John began at verse 13.

And now we come to the last part. Verse 22. After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judea.

And there he toddled with them and baptized. You see, all that we've been looking up in the night season happened in Jerusalem. But we leave in Jerusalem and coming into the wilderness of Judea and probably on the course over to the Jordan here.

And here he tarried. And there he baptized. And then here's what it says in verse 23.

And John also was baptizing an enon near to Salome. Now, here's a wee phrase that the Baptist didn't put in this book. Because there was much water there.

You like to meet me at the end of the meeting and tell me why John needed much water of sprinkling. It was the mold. Because I would defy you to give an answer to it.

I would just defy you. Surely you're not afraid of your own book. That's God's word, you know.

Don't wipe your feet on it. Doesn't belong to the Baptist church. Thank God it doesn't.

That's a wee bit of the book. And it's as precious as John 3 and 16. It's in the same chapter.

John was baptizing because there was much water there. Anybody with any ordinary intelligence would know that immersion must be the mold of baptism when you need much water. You see, I should have said long ago, but I'll say it now, that when you talk about baptism bringing life, baptism never does that.

In fact, when we talk about baptism we say we are believed by baptism into death. I'm not right at all. It's got nothing to do with the new birth.

It's got to do with the burial of the old man. And if you're going to do it properly, you'll need to have much water. Because you've got to put a man and put him under.

And it's a perfect figure of the believer going into death with Christ, and going under, and rising in the newness of life. It's a beautiful figure. Never make fun of it.

And don't let pagan rule take it off you either. It's in the book. And John had much water.

Now we come to a lovely portion, and this is the consolation of John the Baptist. You'll always differentiate, of course, between John the Apostle, who is writing the book, and John the Baptist, who is here in this chapter. And just here we'll hear his last words.

For John was not yet cast into prison, verse 24. Then there arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purifying. And they came unto John and said unto him, Rabbi, you see, they recognized John also as a teacher, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou darest witness, behold, that same Bob Titus, and all men come to him.

You know, John was always being tested in this way. You see, John was six months older, as far as the flesh is concerned, six months older than our Lord Jesus. And, of course, when he started his ministry, you know, all Jerusalem and all Judea went out to John.

Great crowds came to him. And then when the Lord Jesus came along and John testified, that's the Christ, behold the Lamb, you know, the crowds began to leave John. And, you know, the Jews always posted John like this, that, you know, the one you gave witness to, he's baptizing and all men come to him.

Tried to make John jealous. There's a great, wonderful lesson here for every believer. Now, watch this.

John answered and said, A man can receive nothing except it be given him from heaven. You see, John knew that heaven was honoring our Lord Jesus Christ. And, you know, sometimes I watch the young believers coming up.

And there are one or two or three or four of them around me now. And I can see them growing up. And I can see as clear as anything that heaven is honoring them.

And I would be the last to be jealous. Many hundreds of times I bow in my knees for them and say, Lord, bless them more than you'll bless me. I would always like to be big enough for that.

And I would be the most delighted and the most happy. My pride would be full if God took one of these young fellows and made him a man to shape the world, which to God he did. Be prepared to surrender my guns if that were necessary.

I'd like to be big enough for that. I've seen far too much of this in the Lord's service. You know, as I came up and God honored me, they kicked me from post to pillar.

But you can't kick a man about that God's honoring him. He'll get up like a corpse every time. You can't shake him, you know.

My dear friend, never get up against anybody that God's honoring. You're a fool. He'll just be a pity object.

My God's honor resting on your head will take you through all the storms that ever was. Would never be guilty of kicking those that God honors. You ought to stand back and cheer, man.

And John the Baptist was big enough for to do this. You just watch him. Read what he said.

Verse 28. Ye yourselves bear me witness that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom, but the friend of the bridegroom which standeth and hears him rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice.

This my joy therefore is fulfilled. And that was a big man, wasn't it? My, he says, you know, my heart's just overflowed because the crowds are good to him. And then he came out with this, this wonderful everlasting statement.

He must end Greece, but I must be Greece. Oh, how big he was. You know, I learned a lesson once in life.

I worked with, perhaps, the greatest surgeon in the British Isles. And we used to go out shooting together. I think this is the sort of thing he kept me for.

I never did any work. I just ran around in the car and we went from place to place and sailed the yacht and all the rest of it and we went shooting together. And there was a certain spot in the Lower Ards where we used to go shooting.

And I think that I could say that I knew every inch of it. One day we were out with waders on, going to get to another little island. Thought there was some duck there.

And he wanted to take one way to the island and I felt he was going the wrong way. And I said, sir, you shouldn't go that way. I don't think we would make it that way.

We'll go round the other way. And he said, well, he let me have my own way this time and let's try this way. And so we went his way and sure enough we got through.

And when he put his foot on the island he looked back at me and you know he was a real master of everything. I would say the greatest man that ever walked in shoe leather. And he looked round at me and he said, well, eh, you know a dwarf can always be a giant guide.

And he was making himself the dwarf, mind you, and talking about me as the giant. But it was a lesson I learned. A lesson never to be forgotten.

And always remember this. A dwarf can always be a giant guide. And that's the spirit that John the Baptist had.

Man, I'm just the forerunner. I'm only the dwarf. But the giant comes behind me.

And now that the folk are seeing the size and the greatness and the power and the glory of my loss, he says, my joy is fulfilled. He said, God, we were all blessed with a spirit like that. And then John went on to say just one or two things that I must underline.

Verse thirty-one. He that cometh from above is above all. John had no hesitation in that.

He that is of the earth is earthy, and speakers of the earth. He that cometh from heaven is above all. And what he hath seen and heard that he testifyeth, and no man receiveth his testimony.

He that hath received the testimony hath set to his seal that God is true. For he whom God has sent speaketh the words of God. For God giveth not the spirit by measure unto him.

The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand. And here are John the Baptist's last recorded words. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life.

You see, he's back into the very spirit of the passage why the Lord was showing Nicodemus how to get life. John was expounding it. And now John the Baptist, he just puts on the last little bit of a stone just to balance it out.

He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life. Now I want you to watch the second phrase. He that believeth not the Son shall not see life.

Don't let anybody tell you you'll get another chance. My dear friend, if you die in unbelief, you'll never see life. Don't let anybody bluff you.

Don't let them tell you you'll get a chance somewhere in eternity. The word of God will stand yonder. You'll not see life.

Watch the last phrase. Because the last phrase is a wonderful one. But the wrath of God abideth, and that's in a special tense, keeps on continually through eternity, abiding on Him.

You see, John the Baptist did three things. He showed you the light of the gospel, he that believeth on the Son of Life. He showed you the error of this universalism.

My, don't get it into your head that everybody eventually will be saved, for he that dies in unbelief shall not see life. And he shows you the damnable heresy of annihilationism. You see, Russell, I teach that if you

die without the Savior, then you'll be annihilated.

And it'll not matter, it'll just be as if you never were. There'll be no torment. Well, this just knocks the bottom out of the root.

For the wrath of God abideth continually, eternally, on the one that does not believe. Dear friend, don't you let anybody bluff you. If you give your last sight the night after this meeting's over, and you go into eternity an unbeliever, the wrath of God will abide upon you forever, and it would be nonsense saying the wrath of God abideth on you if you weren't there.

But you'll be conscious of it. And you'll deserve every second of it, for God loved you, and Christ died for you, and the gospel was preached to you, and the Holy Ghost came upon you, and all that was left for you to do to get life was just to trust the Savior. And if you die and be damned after that, you deserve it.

Let us bow together. Let us just be still for a moment or two. O God, our Father, we bow to pray for those who are still unbelievers.

Lord, speak to them tonight. Just cut all their talks short and just tell them that it's right beneath. Let them see that life is possible, a new life, a new birth, a new nature.

And it comes through this old-fashioned message preached to them in the power of the Holy Ghost, a message that declares, Lord, you loved every woman and man in this meeting, aren't you? Lord, you loved them so much that you sent your sons. And he loved them so much that he went all the way to Calvary. And that John who loved St. Croix, he was lifted up that he might pay this tremendous price to satisfy thy holy claim and defeat every enemy and rise from the dead and go back to heaven a living savior.

And we thank thee that by faith we see him on the throne tonight crowned with glory and honor. And Lord, any man and woman in this meeting can come and lift their hearts and say, Lord Jesus, I will trust thee, trust thee with my soul. They'll say, lost and helpless.

Thou canst make me whole. And when there all they venture on Christ's atoning blood, the Holy Ghost will enter and they'll be born of God. O God, save some souls and give them life eternal in this meeting this evening only for the glory of thy Son.

Amen.

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