



## Believing Christ - Responding to John's Gospel

### John 3:1-21 "For God So Loved..."

#### Fulfilment and Replacement

- The ladder between heaven and earth (John 1:51)
- The New Wine over ceremonial washing (John 2:1-11)
- The New Temple of His body (John 2:18-22)
- The New birth from above (John 3:1-16)

#### John 3:1-8

- Vs 1 - Nicodemus is seeking after/in a follower of Jesus (see John 7:50-52, 19:39)
- Vs 3 – Born again = Born from above
- The Kingdom of God is God's rule over all (Psalm 103:19). To the Jews, this will be in a future age to come, e.g. Isaiah (9:1-7, 49:1-26); Zechariah (9:9-10) and particularly Daniel (2:44, 7:14, 27).
- But Jesus spoke of it here as a present reality.

#### Ezekiel 36:25-27

<sup>25</sup>I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleanness, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. <sup>26</sup>And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. <sup>27</sup>And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.

- Vs 6: Contrasts what is physical ("born of the flesh") with what is spiritual ("born of the Spirit").
- Vs 8: Like the wind, we can't control or predict it. This supernatural new birth is the work of God's Spirit (see John 1:12-13).
- We need Him to give life to us by His wind or breath (cf Ezekiel 37:8-10)

#### John 3:9-15

- Vs 9 – 10: Jesus was surprised that Nicodemus, who should know the Scriptures, was ignorant of the promises of a new covenant through God's work (Jeremiah 31:31-34, Ezekiel 36:25-27, 24:22-24, etc.)
- Vs 11-12: If they can't understand Jesus talking of earthly matters, what about heavenly ones?
- Note that the "you" in vs 12 and 13 is plural – referring to unbelieving Jews.
- Vs 13: Only Jesus has been in heaven and now has come down.
- Vs 14-15 – "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life."
- From Numbers 21:5-9
- Jesus will also be "lifted up". Greek *hypsōō* lit. to be exalted, lifted high.
- Jesus will be glorified in His crucifixion (John 8:28, 12:23; 32, 34).

"The gospel of salvation and life has its source in the love of God."

F. F. Bruce, *The Gospel & Epistles of John*, Eerdmans: 1983, page 90.

John 3:16:21

- Vs 16: 1) God loves the world (i.e. all people)
- 2) We must not love the world (1 John 2:15-17 cf John 15:18-19)

"There is no contradiction between this prohibition and the fact that God does love (the world). Christians are not to love the world with the selfish love of participation; God loves the world with the selfless, costly love of redemption."

D. A Carson, *The Gospel According to John*. (Grand Rapids:Eerdmans, 1991), pg 205.

- "kosmos" in Greek = all people in the world (used 78 times in John's Gospel).
- Vs 17: Jesus comes not as judge but as saviour!
- Vs 18: Our response to him will lead to our acquittal or condemnation.
- Vs 19-21: Jesus comes as light – but sinners prefer the dark.
- But true believers must come to the light, so all can see God's work in them.

**WHERE ARE YOU STANDING BEFORE GOD TODAY?**