

Sermon Series: True Spirituality

Sermon Title: "Born from Above"

Sermon Text: John 2:23-3:15

Pre-Sermon: This is to help you prepare for hearing from God's Word.

- Read the passage we are going to be studying together. What stands out to you? Does anything seem surprising? Does anything seem confusing? Does anything seem particularly meaningful to you?

Sermon Discussion Questions: This will help you think through the passage and what you heard in the message.

- Why is the word spirituality not always the most helpful word?
- What are some different ideas you have heard about what it means to be spiritual?
- When we talk about being spiritual, what are we basically talking about?
- How does John 3 relate to this series on true spirituality?
- In what way is John 2:23-25 surprising given the purpose of the gospel of John? What do you think is going on here?
- How does John 3:1ff connect to John 2:23-25? Why do we say that?
- What is something distinctive we see right away in this passage regarding the way Jesus thinks about spirituality?
- What was the other way you could translate the phrase born again?
- What are some wrong ideas you think people have about being born again nowadays?
- Nicodemus got a lot wrong in the way he responded to Jesus regarding being born again, but what was one very general thing that he got right?
- What were the four characteristics of the change that takes place in the new birth that Charles Spurgeon mentioned?
- How did Jesus explain being born again in verses 5-8. Read these verses out loud and then see if you can explain some of the important points.
- What Old Testament passage is John 3:5 connected to?
- How would you explain to someone who is not a Christian the significance of what Jesus is teaching here about the new birth?
- How are these truths encouraging to us as believers?

Sermon Outline: A sermon is much more than an outline, but perhaps this outline will help you follow the sermon.

This is one of the most important passages in the Bible on the new birth.

1. It shows us the need to be born again - why be born again?
2. Then it reveals the nature of the new birth - what does it mean to be born again?
3. And finally the basis of the new birth - how can you be born again?

The Big Idea: This is a VERY short explanation of what this message is about and what I'm praying God will achieve through this message.

There's no truly being spiritual without being born again, and there's no being born again that won't result in truly spiritual activity.

Sermon Flow: This is a short summary to help you understand what this sermon is doing and where it is going.

- Reading the text
- Introducing the subject
 - Explanation of the subject
 - Explanation how John 3 connects to the subject
- Specific description of what the passage is about and an overview of the structure of the message
 - This is one of the most important passages in the Bible on the new birth. First it shows us the need to be born again. So why be born again. And then the nature of the new birth. What does it mean to be born again? And then finally the basis of the new birth. Or just, how can you be born again. So, why, what, how.
- The body of the sermon
 - Why you need to be born again
 - John 3:3
 - Identify the main point of this verse
 - Explain why that main point is important: there's no being spiritual without being born again.
 - Demonstrate that from the text by going back to 2:23 and showing how this passage works.
 - 2:23-25 present a problem
 - 3:1-2 provide an illustration that emphasizes the significance of the problem
 - Which sets up for 3:3, and the importance of Jesus' solution to that problem
 - Apply the point Jesus is making to us
 - What it means to be born again
 - Explain the term Jesus uses
 - Look at the question Nicodemus asks and what he actually got right

- Walk through Spurgeon’s overview of the kind of change that takes place in the new birth
 - A thorough change
 - A wonderful change
 - A mysterious change
 - An obvious change
 - Examine the way Jesus explains being born from above to Nicodemus in verses 5-7.
 - Deal with verse 5 and show the connection to Ezekiel 36:25-27.
 - Explain the significance of verses 6-7.
 - How to be born again
 - Emphasize the Spirit’s sovereignty and the fact it’s not your efforts by looking at verse 8.
 - Show the importance of humbly relying on Jesus by thinking through verses 9-15.
- Conclusion
 - Call on non-Christians to cry out to God for the new birth and on Christians to take seriously and enjoy the significance of the miracle God has accomplished in them and seek to live in light of it.

Application Questions: We can’t just read these passages, study them. It’s vital we respond.

- Are you born again?
- If so, what does that mean?
- What difference should being born again make in your life?
- Sometimes we feel like God hasn’t done much in our life. How should the truths of this sermon help you process that?

Sermon Notes: This is a place you can record your own notes and thoughts as you listen to the message today so that you can think about them later.