在约翰福音3章中记载着圣经中最为重要的一段话，那就是发生在基督和尼哥底母之间的一场对话。在这段经文里，尼哥底母在夜里来见耶稣，想要求问宗教信仰的真谛。

那么，尼哥底母是谁？他是怎样的一个人？他是当时那个年代的精英。他是最为敬虔的宗教人士，一个法利赛人，有最纯正的犹太血统，而且属于犹太人中固守神的律法的宗派。在遵守神的律法方面，他们殷切周到，丝毫不敢马虎。并且，这里称尼哥底母是“犹太人的官”，这说明他身居高位。实际上，他不但对神的律法了如指掌，而且在生活中身体力行，堪称高尚道德的楷模，所以被选立为犹太公会的成员之一。犹太公会是犹太人最高级别的议会，由特别甄选出来的71个极其有才干的人组成，在宗教事物方面行使着类似最高法院的职能。犹太公会责成其每个成员严格遵守最高要求的宗教标准，在道德生活上清正廉洁。所以称尼哥底母为当时的精英乃名至实归，毫无夸张。

就是这个人，在夜幕的掩护下来见耶稣，唯恐有人看见他亲近令犹太人鄙视的拿撒勒人耶稣。另外，作为犹太人的律法师，尼哥底母当然不希望别人知道自己竟然来向耶稣求问律法方面的问题。所以，这位德高望重的宗教领袖在夜间来拜访耶稣。

那么，耶稣对尼哥底母有何指教呢？祂想让尼哥底母成为自己的门徒之一吗？祂想用旧约预言来证实自己就是那位神所应许的弥赛亚吗？不，耶稣没有这样做！祂只对尼哥底母说：“我实实在在地告诉你：人若不重生，就不能见神的国。”主耶稣告诉尼哥底母该怎样做才能得享神国的祝福。耶稣的在对他说：“每一个人的首要任务都是重生得救，你也一样。你需要一个新的生命。”

你的灵魂必须归正和更新

耶稣对尼哥底母说“你必须重生”，同时这也是祂对所有人说的话。祂的用意何在？耶稣的意思是：“尼哥底母啊，你有宗教信仰，身居高位也为你赢得了荣誉和权力。然而，还有一样是必不可少的，那就是你必须重生。”主耶稣知道尼哥底母真正需要的是什么。透过他的长袍，耶稣看见了他心里的饥渴，他所拥有的一切都无法满足他的饥渴。耶稣知道，他的权柄、地位和敬虔都无法满足他。法利赛人遵守各种典章和礼仪，严守各种清规戒律，但是尼哥底母却不能借此在神的面前得享安息或平安，耶稣知道这一点。于是，这种不安驱使尼哥底母夜间来见基督。

于是耶稣告诉尼哥底母，他需要重生。祂好像在说：“尼哥底母啊，你所遇到的麻烦是从里面出来的，单靠外面换一副面具、过一过宗教生活是解决不了问题的。你必须被带入与神和好的关系中，你的心必须被更新。神需要再次进入你的心并住在那里。圣灵必须把你变为一个新的人，并在你的里面造就出新的性情。”

亲爱的读者朋友，耶稣能知道尼哥底母的真实需要。同样，祂也知道你所需要的到底是什么。也许你已经拥有财富、地位、宗教信仰、他人的尊重、愉悦、快乐、希望和目标等等。然而，你还需要一样更好的，那就是在你的心里、在你的生活里必须有神。你需要被改造成一个新人。“你必须重生”，你的灵魂必须被重塑，而且要靠圣灵来重塑。你的问题出在心里，这个问题解决不了，其余的事都毫无意义。你必须在里面被更新，否则绝无可能得见神的国。

如果金匠做坏了手中的一个器皿，他该怎么办呢？他只能把做坏的器皿融化，然后重新塑造一个合用的器皿。人的属灵状态也是如此。人因着罪而全然败坏，人的堕落导致其全身脱节，灵魂的每一个部分都支离破碎。藉着重生，靠着圣灵的大能，主为我们松开了每一个关节，并且将其复位。

无论是至善之人，还是罪魁祸首，人人都需要重生

在耶路撒冷，尼哥底母可算是至善之人，因为从没有人听到过非议他的话，然而，他必须重生得救。听到关于新生命的必要性、重新开始以及悔改归正，我们很可能会说：“当然，那些税吏和妓女，那些属世的男人和女人们，他们必要悔改归正。我可是一个正直的人。我去教会做礼拜，遵行神的诫命，我不需要重生。”然而，甚至连尼哥底母这样的人，耶稣都说他必须重生。除非一个人籍着圣灵重生，否则他绝无可能得以进入神的国。从本质上讲，人是有罪的，而且是全然败坏的。如果里面不更新，绝没有人能进入神的国。

或许你会说：“我每个周日都去教会做礼拜。”这样做很好，并且是在遵行神的话语，但这并不是重生。还有人说：“我竭尽全力做正确的事，难道还不能算是一个基督徒吗？这样做了还会没有新生命吗？”是的，还是没有新生命。因为新生命不仅仅是修枝剪叶，也不是受洗或领圣餐，更不是积极投身于教会的服侍。

新生命意味着里面得以更新，也就是接受一颗新的心和一个新的本性。这样的工程绝非是在旧的建筑物上修修补补，而是需要从根基上入手。既然问题出在心里，所以需要从心里入手。

怎能有这事呢？

听到耶稣问这样的问题，你想过尼哥底母是怎么回答的吗？他说：“怎能有这事呢？”那一刻他认识到了自己的无能，知道靠着自己这件事是不可能发生的。关于新生命的必要性，你也听到了耶稣的教导。你会有何感想呢？希望你也能从中认识到自己的无能。我相信你已经了解到了有关新生命的一些事实：去教会做礼拜不等于重生，努力做对的事不等于重生，受洗不等于重生，有宗教信仰并在行为上有所改变也不等于重生。

基督赐给我们的教导是：重生是心灵的改变。现在你必须了解发生这种改变的根源是什么——这种改变意味着上帝在我们已死的心里植入全新的法则。重生乃是心灵和特质的根本改变。

也许，你早就认识到了重生的必要性，甚至为了重生也曾竭力更新自己，改变自己的心思、意愿和特质。如果是这样的话，你可能已经明白了一个事实：新生命的改变绝非出于我们自己的努力，我们既无法更新自己的心，也无法给内心植入新的法则。

亲爱的读者朋友，我盼望你心里也有这样的疑问：“怎能有这事呢？”或许你也曾经有同样的经历：越是努力地想要有所改善，越是清楚地看到自己做不到。这时候你开始意识到问题出在里面，也就是说，你发现自己的心有罪并且败坏。你能理解先知耶利米所说的话吗？他说：“古实人岂能改变皮肤呢？豹岂能改变斑点呢？若能，你们这习惯行恶的便能行善了。”（耶利米书13：23）。所以说，病根儿深藏在身体里面，我们无法让自己的心变正直，更谈不上让自己变得有资格得进神的国度。你体会到这一点了吗？你所犯的罪和你有罪的一颗心让你感到到困扰了吗？如果感到了困扰，你是有福的！你可能会说：“有福吗？但我却感觉自己是一个失丧的人，一个即将灭亡的罪人，毫无指望。我越想努力地完善自己，越是偏离神的国。依我看，谁都有可能得救，只有我例外，因为我实在是罪孽深重的人。”然而，我们还会坚持说：“你是有福的，因为......无病的人用不着医生，有病的人才用得着。”（路加福音5：31）基督来到这个世界，就是为了拯救这样的罪人。就是为了那些无法自救的人，祂将自己的宝血洒在髑髅地。基列的乳香适合医治你的病症，耶稣基督正是根除你疾病的伟大医生。也许你会好奇地问：“我比别人好在哪里呢？我凭什么能来到耶稣面前呢？”我的回答很明确：你的伤口，以及你对祂的需要。

通往神国的唯一入口

“怎能有这事呢？”尼哥底母问。从一开始，耶稣的目的就是要引导他思考这个问题。耶稣想改变尼哥底母——从一个骄傲自义的法利赛人变成一个谦卑悔改的税吏。耶稣想引领这个有学问的人开始发问：“怎能有这事呢？”在耶稣的引领下，他应该已经开始领悟救恩的教义：钉死十字架的基督身成就了救恩，只有靠着恩典和信心才能得享这样的福分。尼哥底母必须学习这个功课。于是，尼哥底母感觉到了灵魂上的绝望，所以他必定会问：“怎能有这事呢？我怎样才能永远得蒙神的悦纳呢？”然后，主耶稣向他指明了救恩之路，祂说：“摩西在旷野怎样举蛇，人子也必被照样被举起来，叫一切信祂的都得永生（或作“叫一切信的人在祂里面得永生”）。”基督为罪人打开了一扇门，好叫他们藉此进入神国的平安、公义和福分。如何通过这扇门呢？作为失丧而灭亡的罪人，我们必须完全委身于被钉十字架的救主。对受难的耶稣的信心是我们得进神国的唯一入口，基督自己就是我们得进神国的那扇门，只有通过这扇门的人才能永远进入神的国。什么样的人才能被带到耶稣的脚前呢？就是那些失丧、悔改、无助的罪人，他们的灵魂在绝望中哭号：“怎能有这事呢？”因着对耶稣的信心，这样的罪人发现耶稣已经为他打开了通往天国的那扇门。所以，作为失丧而灭亡的罪人，被带到基督的面前难道不算蒙福吗！？是谁代替你流血死在髑髅地的十字架上？正是在那里，我们找到了通往天国的道路。只有感受到灵魂需要的人，才能切切地求问：“怎能有这事呢？”如果你真是这样的人——真正地感受到了对新生命和一颗新心的需求，并且深感自己的心灵贫乏——那么，请你侧耳倾听祂的福音，祂就是那位像旷野中的铜蛇一样被举起来的主耶稣基督。并且，请你牢记：得进天国的唯一要求是：你觉得自己需要祂！（来源：中国基督教书刊）

http://www.jiangzhangwang.com/jingxuan/21982.html

**You Must be Born Again**

**By Rev. C. Harinck**

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**THE BANNER OF TRUTH**

Tract Committee 540 Cresent Street N.E. Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503

　　John 3 records the conversation between Christ and Nicodemus. This conversation is one of the most important passages in the entire Bible. We are informed how Nicodemus came to Jesus by night to ask direction in religious matters.

　　Who was Nicodemus? What type of a man was he? He was among the best of his day. He was a sincere religious man. He was a Pharisee. He belonged to that strict Jewish sect that adhered very diligently to the law of God. Furthermore, he is called a "ruler of the Jews." This denotes that Nicodemus held a high ecclesiastical position. He had become so knowledgeable in God's law and lived such a strict moral life that he was appointed a member of the select group of Jews called the Sanhedrin. The Sanhedrin consisted of seventy-one members, all men of the highest calibre. It served as a religious Supreme Court. Its members were obliged to conform to the highest religious codes. They lived a clean moral life. Therefore it is not an exaggeration to assert that Nicodemus was one of the best of his day.

　　This man came to Jesus under the cover of darkness for he feared that people might see him going to the contemptible Jesus of Nazareth. Since Nicodemus himself was assumed to be a master of Jewish law, he was reluctant to be seen going to Jesus for direction in religious matters. That is why Jesus was visited by this highly esteemed religious ruler of the Jews during the night.

　　What information did Jesus give this man? Did He try to make Nicodemus one of His disciples? Did He prove from the Old Testament prophecies that He was the promised Messiah? No! Jesus said to Nicodemus: "Verily, verily I say unto you: Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." The Lord Jesus told Nicodemus what he needed to obtain to enjoy the blessings of the kingdom of God. Jesus said to him: "The first thing you and everyone needs is to be born again. You need a new birth."

Your Soul Must Be Reformed and Remolded.

　　What purpose did Jesus have in saying "you must be born again" to Nicodemus and thereby to all men? Jesus meant to say: "Nicodemus, you have religion, honor and power; but more is necessary. You must be born again." The Lord Jesus recognized the real need of Nicodemus. He saw that Nicodemus had a heart concealed under his long robe that was hungry for more than he presently possessed. Christ sensed that Nicodemus was not satisfied either with his power and position or his piety. Christ knew that Nicodemus could not find rest or peace with God in the rites, strictness and ceremonies of the Pharisees. Consequently, he had been driven to Christ by night.

　　Therefore Jesus informed him of the new birth. It was as if He said, Nicodemus, your trouble is within. Your trouble is not cured by putting on a new front and living religiously. You must be brought into a new relationship with God. Your heart must be renewed. It is necessary that God again makes His dwelling place in your heart. The Holy Spirit must make you a new man and work a new nature in you.

　　Dear reader, Jesus recognized the real need of Nicodemus and He also knows your real need. You may possess wealth and position, religion and esteem, pleasure and joy and hopes and intentions. However, you need something better than these. You need God in your heart and life. You need to be made a new man. "You must be born again." Your soul must be completely remodeled and re-molded by the Holy Spirit. Your trouble is within. As long as the problem is not solved, nothing will avail. You must be made new within or you can never see the kingdom of God.

　　When a goldsmith makes a vessel of gold that is a failure, he has no choice but to melt down the vessel of dishonor and remold it into a vessel of honor. Thus it is with man respecting his spiritual state. Man has become totally corrupt because of sin. He is entirely disjointed by the fall. Every faculty of the soul is as it were dislocated. In regeneration, by the power of the Holy Spirit, the Lord loosens every joint and sets it in its proper position.

Regeneration Is A Necessity For The Best

And The Worst Of Men.

　　Nicodemus was one of the best men in Jerusalem. Nothing was recorded against him. Nevertheless, he must be born again. When we hear about the necessity of a new birth, a new beginning, and conversion, we are prone to say: "Surely these publicans and harlots, these worldly men and women, must be converted. But I am an upright man. I go to church and keep God's commandments. I do not need to be converted." However, Christ told even Nicodemus that he must be born again. No man is fit for the kingdom of God until he has been born of another Spirit. By nature man is sinful and corrupt. Without a renewal within, he can never enter God's kingdom.

　　Perhaps you might say, "I go to church every Sunday." That is good and in accordance with God's Word, but it is not regeneration. Others might say: "I am trying to do what is right. Am I therefore not a Christian? Isn't that a new birth?" No, the new birth is not turning over a new leaf. The new birth is not being baptized and partaking of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. It is not being active in missionary work.

　　The new birth is being renewed inwardly. It is the receiving of a new heart and a new nature. We must not consider patching up the old building, but begin at the foundation. The problem lies in the heart and the cure must begin there.

How Can These Things Be?

　　Do you know the question Nicodemus asked after hearing these things? He said: "How can these things be?" He realized he was confronted by a great impossibility. I hope this is also your reaction to Christ's teaching concerning the necessity of a new birth. You have heard that church attendance is not the new birth. Attempting to do what is right is not the new birth. Baptism is not the new birth. Becoming religious and turning over a new leaf is not the new birth.

　　According to the instruction Christ has given you, the new birth is a change of heart. You now must realize that it is the implanting of a new principle from above in our dead hearts. The new birth is a complete change of heart and character.

　　I hope, believing the necessity of this, that you have tried to renew yourselves, to change your heart, will and character and have now learned one lesson: the new birth is a change which I cannot effect myself. I can neither renew my heart nor instill a new principle.

　　Dear reader, I hope it is a question that comes from your heart: "How can these things be?" Do you experience the following things? The harder you try to rectify matters, the more you experience that you cannot improve yourself. You come to realize that the trouble is within, namely, that your heart is corrupt and sinful. Can you understand what Jeremiah says: "As the Ethiopian cannot change his skin and the leopard cannot change its spots, so you who are accustomed to do evil cannot do good"? Do you sense that the disease lies deep within you and that you can never make your heart right and qualify yourself for entrance into the kingdom of God? Do your sins and sinful heart burden you? Blessed are you! Do you say, "Blessed? I feel I am a lost, undone sinner. I feel myself to be a sinner without hope, for all my efforts to improve myself have brought me even further from God's kingdom. I see that it is possible for everyone to be saved but not such a vile wretch as I." Yet, we insist upon it: "Blessed are you, for...They that are whole need no physician, but they that are sick." Christ came into the world to save such sinners. His blood was shed on Calvary for those who cannot save themselves. You are a fit subject for the balm of Gilead and the great Physician Jesus Christ. If you ask: "What recommends me to Jesus more than others?", my answer must be: Your wounds and need of Him.

The Only Entrance Into God's Kingdom

　　"How can these things be?" asked Nicodemus. From the beginning it had been Jesus' purpose to bring Nicodemus to that question. He wanted to change the proud Pharisee into a humble publican. He wanted to bring the learned man to the confession: "How can these things be?" It was necessary that Nicodemus learn this lesson, for he could now be led to the blessed doctrine of salvation merely by grace and faith in a crucified Savior. In the despair of his soul Nicodemus must say: "How can these things be? How can I ever become right with God?" The Lord Jesus taught the way of salvation by saying: "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have eternal life." Christ opened the door by which sinners can enter God's kingdom of peace, justice and bliss. We are taught that this is the door: an entire self-commitment unto a crucified Savior as a lost and undone sinner. Faith in the crucified Jesus is the only entrance into God's kingdom. Christ Himself is the door of the kingdom of God. If you ever enter that kingdom, you must enter through that door. This means that you must be brought to the feet of Jesus as a lost, penitent, helpless sinner, crying in the distress of your soul: "How can these things be?" By faith in Him such sinners find that Jesus opens the kingdom of heaven. Is not this a blessed spot—to be brought as a lost and undone sinner to Christ Who bled and died in your room and stead on Calvary's cross? There we find the way by which we may enter the kingdom of God. If you are truly one of those who must, in the need of your soul, exclaim, "How can these things be?" and if your confrontation with the necessity of a new birth and a new heart has brought you into this poverty, then listen to the gospel of Him Who was lifted up as the brass serpent in the wilderness and remember the only fitness which is required is a felt need of Him.

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