



Pastor Del Phillips

Teachers Manual

# The Word Made Flesh

*the word of God brought to life*

Pastor Del Phillips

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# The Word Made Flesh

*the word of God brought to life*

The word made “*flesh*” is an expression that brings the word of God to life. Every word God speaks is filled with life and life is filled with every word God speaks. The Gospel of John is uniquely written to affirm the deity of Christ in proximity to his humanity. A contrast to the synoptic writings of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, John’s gospel explores the identity and authority of Jesus before coming to earth.

In John’s Gospel Jesus is immortal, invincible, and inventor of the universe. He existed before time, in time and moves through time. Consistently, in this gospel, Jesus is depicted as all God as He is also portrayed as all man. The other gospels make note of His hunger for bread, only in John’s gospel is Jesus referenced as the bread of life.

The Son of God is not hiding in this gospel. As Messiah, Jesus is prominent and clearly presented as son of God, word of God, life of God, fulness of God and one with God. The highlights in this gospel offer dissertations directly from the mouth of Jesus attesting to His identity as the son of God. The synoptic gospels are presented with a large focus on the rebuffs against Jesus by the Pharisees and Scribes. In John’s gospel, the scoffers are met with counter messaging and consequences for doubters and unbelievers to consider.

The theme of Christ’s empirical nature is continued in the later writings of John’s epistles to the early Church. Each epistle is dedicated to affirming the deity and eternal nature of Jesus on earth and in heaven. In the first chapter of John’s epistle, the Apostle illustrates his personal encounter with Jesus as “*handling the word of life*”. (1John 1:1) This description brings to life the impression Jesus had on John’s life. The encounter between Jesus and John was tangible, a real person that he could touch and an experience that profoundly touched him.

John’s gospel and Genesis have a synchronous relationship to the Bible; they both offer a view of God’s word at work in the beginning. Genesis records God speaking “let there be...” and there was light. (Genesis 1;3) Leading with the introduction of “In the beginning was the word...”, affirms the presence of the spoken word responsible for creation. The gospel of John magnifies the principle of the living word having precedence over the written word. The word written is a testimony to the word spoken. The audible, spoken word of God proceeded the written. In the days before a written record of God’s word the only words man had from God were spoken.

There are comparative facts worthy of mention that contrast John’s Gospel to the other three gospels. Facts include the use of certain words found in all the gospels but over-used by John, including: *father*, as representing God, found 121 times in John and 76 times in all the others combined; *believe* found 99 times in John and 35 times in all the others combined; *light* found 23 times in John and 14 times in all the others combined; *life* found 36 times in John and 17 times in all the others combined; *witness* found in John 14 times and 4 times in all the others combined ; **truth** found 25 times in John and only 7 times in all the others combined.

# Through the eyes of one witness

*the word of God brought to life*

## Lesson One

**Class Exercise** – Imagine yourself as the only witness to an important event in life. Your eyes would be focused to capture every key moment and your hearing would be elevated to make certain you don't miss the smallest detail. There would likely be moments during the experience you could be overwhelmed as you realize how profound and life-changing this experience will be for you and all those you are compelled to tell. How will you explain something so wonderful and yet provocative? What can you say to convince those that will not believe you?

The single greatest event on earth places a disciple front and center to capture the evidence of God inside a man and John has the eyes to see it. He is the only disciple with a vision keen enough not to miss the magnificence that stood before him. He listened intently to every word knowing immediately that the words he was hearing were alive. He is labeled the beloved, not because he was loved the most but because he loved the most. Through the eyes of this single witness the world can now see God. How much of God does the world see through your eyes?

### Background:

There is spiritual symmetry between Genesis chapter one and John chapter one.

In Genesis 1:1 "*in the beginning*" pinpoints the beginning of things created. In John 1:1 the same expression points to the source of creation. John embraces the question, "*Is Jesus God*" answering "yes" with profound revelation of His deity and position before creation. As the other gospels focus on aspects of His natural characteristics, John highlights the supernatural. John is absorbed and pre-occupied with every aspect of His eternal nature especially –the "*Logos*", the spoken oracle and unspoken thought or intent of God.

**John 1:1-** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

**John 1:2-** The same was in the beginning with God.

Lesson Notes:

(1:1-2) – “In the beginning” was the *word* identifying the only life that existed before creation. Genesis opens in the same manner, “In the beginning God” the only form of life that existed before creation. These accounts are identical, stating the same truth, affirming the only form of life before creation was God and His word.

John continues, as he over-emphasizes the account, “the *word* was with God and the *word* was God”. There are two important terms used here, the first “*with*” means to “stand before” and the other term “*was*” is a reference to the existence of something in the same time or place.

John establishes in this revelation that the *word* is *standing before God* and the *word* is in the same time and place *as God*.

God’s word is not independent or separate from His will. The Greek word, “*logos*” as it is used here represents the spoken or written words of God also known as the “*oracle*”, the unspoken intent of God; reflecting His thoughts and desire behind His spoken words. The words that are heard or written are informed by God’s intent and thought. God has clearly set His thoughts above creation and outside the reach of His creation, as revealed through the prophet Isaiah, God’s ways and thoughts are higher than our comprehension. (Is. 55:8-9)

**John 1:3-** All things were made by him; and without him was not any-thing made that was made.

Lesson Notes:

(1:3) – All things that were created were fashioned by God’s wisdom; nothing was created without the tool of wisdom. Wisdom reveals the intended use and purpose of all things created. Getting an understanding of wisdom as instructed by the author of Proverbs will allow us to discover the true intrinsic purpose of everything that God created. Without God’s wisdom we misuse the work of God’s creation and therefore forfeit the benefits of the good things God created.

**John 1:4-** In him was life; and the life was the light of men.  
**John 1:5-** And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

Lesson Notes:

(1:4-5) – **John reveals three elements that are eternal: the word (logos), life, and light.** They are associated and actively co-exist together. In Him, the Logos is *life*. Life is activated by the creator. Without the creator (logos) there is no life. The life that comes from the logos (creator) is also *light* to His creation. The breath of *life* that is in every man illuminates or gives light to the truth about the Creator (logos).

All men do not respond to the light, but no breathing man can justifiably deny the exposure to the light. There is no measure of darkness that can comprehend or swallow up the presence of light. The man or woman that lives in the darkest place of creation will see the brightest light. (Isaiah 9:1-2)

**John 1:6-** There was a man sent from God, whose name *was* John.  
**John 1:7-** John The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all *men* through him might believe.  
**John 1:8-** He was not that Light, but *was sent* to bear witness of that Light.  
**John 1:9-** *That* was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

Lesson Notes:

(1:6-9) – God will send a man into every generation as a witness to His creation. In the days of the Jesus, John was the man sent by God to witness to his generation. John was a witness of the Light that would come to lead people out of darkness. John could not lead people out of darkness, because he was not the light. John could only lead people *to the light*. This is an important note as believers consider the current responsibility to be a witness to their generation today. Believers are not called to lead people out of darkness but instead have the duty to lead people to the light.

**John 1:10-** He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

**John 1:11-** He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

**John 1:12-** But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name:

**John 1:13-** Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

Lesson Notes:

(1:10-13) – Witnesses are needed because “the Light” is in the world, but people are unaware of the identity of the “*Light*”. Some will be introduced to “*the Light*” but instead of receiving light they will reject it. Those that chose to receive Jesus as the light will be given the *power to become* “sons of God”. The term “sons” as it is used here can mistakenly interpreted be like or the same as the only begotten son, Jesus. The accurate translation refers to “children” or “offspring”, meaning those who accept the truth of Jesus as Messiah, son of God, will be known as His progeny (descendants). Birth into God’s family is not by flesh and blood but because God will’s it; established by His truth. Our relationship and alliance to God is not earned it is given to us. The expression also shows relationship and alliance that will be given to those that accept and believe in Jesus and distinguishing them from those that reject Him.

**John 1:14-** And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

Lesson Notes:

(1:14) – The logos (wisdom) becomes flesh. Becoming flesh allows creation to behold God’s perfect glory in the person of His son. God replicates Himself in the flesh allowing created man to identify with his creator; making God into a man because man can never become a God. The intent is to give man a better look at God. God wants to allow man to see His creator. Man can see God when he sees the fullness of God in the only begotten son of God.

**John 1:15-** John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me.

Lesson Notes:

(1:15) – John the Apostle introduces John the Baptizer as the witness to identify the one “*preferred before*”, meaning the one caused to be in front or ahead of all creation, the son of God. The only one before all men and creation, the Word that was with God, would be introduced to humanity by John the Baptizer. In context, the Baptizer is related to the earth family of the son of God, through his mother Elisabeth, the cousin of Mary, the earth mother of Jesus. The Baptizer had his first introduction to the Messiah via the womb, when the two mothers came in contact before giving birth to their children. The phenomenon of the baby jumping in the womb of Elisabeth (Luke 1:41), is a foreshadow of the single person on earth with the ability to know the Messiah sight unseen.

**John 1:16-** And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.

**John 1:17-** For the law was given by Moses, *but* grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

**John 1:18** No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared *him*.

Lesson Notes:

(1:16-18) – The Apostle continues to accent the presence of God in the physical embodiment of Jesus, revealing the fulness of His eternal identity, for He is complete, fully God and fully man. Because He is fully God we have received full access to take hold of grace; the son of God and gift to man. In the fulness of Jesus grace is multiplied or doubled. Grace for grace. We have **grace**, *God’s gift of Messiah* for **grace**, the divine favor of God.

Through the law Moses gave God’s people ordinances to teach them His ways but the law did not provide grace only righteousness and judgment. Grace and truth no longer hidden come by Jesus Christ. John the Baptizer reveals the identity of Messiah that no one else in humanity could see. John alone knew the Messiah at birth and could reveal Him to others. This revelation principle is also applied to the son of God declaring the identity of the creator to His creation. No man has seen, or fully experienced God at any time, except the “Word” the logos (wisdom) that was present with Him in the beginning of creation. Jesus alone is qualified to represent the identity of God, the Creator, to His creation.



**John 1:19-** And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou?

**John 1:20-** And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ.

**John 1:21-** And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No.

**John 1:22-** Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself?

**John 1:23-** He said, I *am* the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias.

**John 1:24-** And they which were sent were of the Pharisees.

**John 1:25-** And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet?

#### Lesson Notes:

(1:19-25) – John the Apostle, briefly shifts the focus to verify the identity of John the witness. The ministry of John the Baptist has come to the attention of Jewish temple leaders. From Jerusalem, they send an entourage of priest to verify the identity of the Baptizer. The contingency of priest asks John to clear up any misgivings about his identity. In response, John makes it clear that he is not Christ, the Messiah, wanting to insure them that he is not the subject of his message. They further their questions asking if he is Elijah. When he responds with no, they want assurance asking if he is not Elijah why is he baptizing.

Why would the temple leaders have such great concern about the possibility of John being the re-incarnated prophet Elijah? Their concern is in fear of the prophecy found in Malachi 4:5, that forecast the return of Elijah as a precursor of the day of Lord, known as the day of judgment upon man and creation. This was a prophecy that was well known by all Jewish leaders, especially the priest.

The messages of John the Baptizer recaptured the words of another prophet Isaiah and were also of great concern because like Isaiah, John called for making a straight path in preparation for the coming of Lord. The call to repentance was a prophetic sign to prepare for the judgment God would bring upon the earth to restore righteousness. (Is. 40:1-4) Baptism was a signal of repentance, and the call to repent generally came from Old Testament prophets just ahead of a great judgment God was preparing against the unjust and wicked. The temple priest wanted to confirm if God was preparing to visit His people with judgment for fear that they would be found among the wicked to be judged.

**John 1:26**- John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not;

**John 1:27**- He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose.

**John 1:28**- These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing.

Lesson Notes:

(1:26-28) – In his final reply, the Baptizer informs them that something much greater than judgment is nigh, he warns the one that is coming that is preferred, the term meaning that He *came before* John. The one that came before wears sandals that John feels he is unworthy of untying, denigrating himself below a servant generally given such a task.

The one preferred, that came before, is among you (now). This can be understood to mean that the Messiah is generally among the living population of the day, which would be true. It is also true that the Messiah who will be known as a Rabbi, is already among the Pharisees that are a part of the temple in Jerusalem. The Messiah is among them but unknown to them, in the same way that many are a part of religious systems organized around the concept of God but unaware of the truth about God.

These events took place near the southern end of the Jordan River. The wilderness region where John the Baptizer preached the message to prepare the way for Jesus.

**John 1:29**- The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

**John 1:30**- This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me.

**John 1:31**- And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water.

**John 1:32**- And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him.

**John 1:33**- And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.

**John 1:34**- And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.

Lesson Notes:

(1: 29-34) – The following day, Jesus is seen by John the Baptizer. As He approaches, John formally announces Him as “the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world”. The statement is a significant prophetic declaration. God alone has the authority to “take away sin” and the religious ordinance in place since the days of Moses and Aaron require the priest to present a sin offering on behalf of the entire house of Israel. The celebration called, Rosh-Hashanah (head of the year) is the day of Atonement when Israel makes offerings, prays, and host solemn feast to appeal for God’s forgiveness in exchange for favor as a sign of a clean slate for the incoming year. (Lev. 23:23-27)

This statement to forgive sin is not in synch with the religious calendar, falling well past Rosh-Hashanah and just ahead of Passover. The Baptizer was responding to the voice of God’s spirit and could not be restricted by natural time and religious calendars. The text makes it apparent although they were cousins by natural birth John had never physically seen him. As stated, “I knew him not” only certain that the Messiah would be made manifest to Israel.

John did not recognize Jesus by His clothing or physical appearance, it was the spirit of God descending upon him in the shape of a dove. (Lk. 3:22) This was the sign John was given to identify the Messiah, the Holy Ghost, resting and remaining upon Him. It would be unusual for the spirit of God to remain upon a man of flesh. The history of God’s presence among His people demonstrated visitations and seasonal allocations of men or women empowered by His Spirit. The identifying signature of the Messiah was the spiritual anointing of God remaining constant upon Him.

This signature, seen by the eyes of the Baptizer, became the qualifying record to identify the Messiah. All men would know or be introduced to the Messiah through the eyes of John the witness. Believers presently have the same mandate that all people that we encounter would know Christ through our witness.

# First Miracle

*New wine a symbol of new life*

## Lesson Two

John cp 2:1-11

### Background:

**The Miracle** – The fact that the first miracle takes place at wedding should not be overlooked. The wedding ceremony is an important life event and this one is filled with significant symbolism. A wedding is a planned union to join two separate persons and families together. The background of a wedding to frame the first miracle is symbolic of the planned arrangement God has made to re-unite lost humanity back into the family its creator.

**John 2:1**- And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there:

**John 2:2**- And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage.

### Lesson Notes:

(2:1-2) – The wedding is in Cana, near Nazareth, both cities are a part of the province of Galilee. The wedding must have been one of great importance because Jesus and the men He called to follow Him were all separately invited. We should assume that they were familiar with the families bringing this union together.

**John 2:3-** And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him,  
They have no wine.

**John 2:4-** Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine  
hour is not yet come.

**John 2:5-** His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto  
you, do *it*.

**John 2:6-** And there were set there six waterpots of stone, after the manner  
of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece.

**John 2:7-** Jesus saith unto them, Fill the waterpots with water. And they  
filled them up to the brim.

#### Lesson Notes:

(2:3-7) – Wine is a standing symbol of life and used often for consecration and blessing. Wine is also served for the wedding feast to celebrate the fruitfulness of the union and its expected longevity. The more wine available to serve, adds a greater emphasis placed upon the celebration long life. For every wedding the availability of wine will come to an end. The end of the wine would also indicate nearing the end of the wedding feast. Based upon the reaction of the celebrants, the wine must have been exhausted sooner than was desired or expected by those hosting the wedding feast.

Mary attempts to engage Jesus to assist in the dilemma of the exhausted wine reserves. Her knowledge of the insufficiency of wine indicates her personal involvement with the wedding feast. She does not appear hesitant to suggest that her son's abilities be used to satisfy a secondary, un-scheduled mission. Mary informs Jesus, "they have no wine", she infers that if He does not respond to the insufficiency, the wedding feast will prematurely end. The response by Replying, "*what have I to do with you*", Jesus makes it clear that He has no sense of responsibility to the event.

In time all wine on earth will run out and all celebrations of life will come to an end. The insufficiency of wine or early termination of a wedding feast is unrelated to His purpose. Strongly Jesus says to His mother, "*my hour has not yet come*" and when it does, He alone will respond to it, because it is His, and He alone must own it.

His mother does not respond, she must know there is no argument against the truth He has spoken. However, it does not prevent her from directing her commands to the nearby servants, instructing them to do whatever her son may ask of them.

Jesus reacts, knowing everything He will do for them now will not last. He instructs the servants to bring Him water pots used for ceremonial washing of the hands or utensils especially during a meal. The six stone pots with the capacity of 2-3 firkins, present day would hold up to 216 pints or 27 gallons of fluid. They are told to fill each pot with water, which would indicate they were empty and set aside because like the wine their contents had also been exhausted.

**John 2:8-** And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare *it*.

**John 2:9-** When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom,

**John 2:10-** And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: *but* thou hast kept the good wine until now.

**John 2:11-** This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.

#### Lesson Notes:

(2:8-11) – The second instruction to the servants was to draw out the contents of the water pots. The new wine must be drawn out of the large water pots and then poured into smaller individual empty vessels for serving. The new wine is a symbol of *new life*. As Messiah, Jesus will pour out His life into the smaller, empty, life-less vessels of humanity.

The new wine is served first to the governor of the feast. Serving the governor first was to *prove* the newly transformed wine. If it was received and accepted by the governor, it would be deemed appropriate for all others. The governor judges the latter wine as preferable to the former wine he was served. **Comparing the two wines is a foreshadow of the contrast that would be made between Jesus and the leadership of Judaism in that day. The Pharisees represent the first wine that is intended to intoxicate those that would follow them into blind ritual without relationship with the creator. Jesus will present the new wine that is not intended to intoxicate but to invigorate, give life, to those that will believe He is the son of God.**

This transformation of water to wine, puts life into life-less vessels. This was the beginning of miracles to manifest the glory of the son of God. This miracle empowered the newly selected disciples to believe that He was the Messiah.

# Born of the Spirit

*New spiritual life*

## Lesson Three

John 3:1-16

### Background:

**God's love saves** – The first three Gospels portray Jesus Christ with characteristics to inform a specific audience, with Matthew writing to a politically influenced Jewish audience, Mark to Jewish audience steeped in tradition, and Luke creates a portrayal of Jesus Christ receptive to non-Jewish, Gentile audience. John's audience is universal and unlimited revealing the eternal truth of the deity of Jesus Christ to all people. Representing the Messiah as eternal, in nature (substance), character (attributes) provides assurance that His work is also everlasting and eternal including the work of salvation.

God's love, the subject of this lesson, could be labeled as the most significant feature of His divine attributes. God's love, like all His attributes, is eternal. His love never changes, and it will never end. The conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus introduces important truths that reveal how man can have life that will never end.

**John 3:1-** There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:

**John 3:2-** 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.

**John 3:3-** 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.

**John 3:4-** 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?

**John 3:5-** 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

### Lesson Notes:

(John 3:1-5) – Nicodemus was a Pharisee, making him a part of a Jewish religious sect that believed strongly in both written Torah and the oral commentary (Mishnah) that supported it. The oral commentary provided centuries of respected Rabbinical voices, sharing their Torah interpretations that were passed down from one generation to another.

Jesus was also a part of the Pharisee sect and it would not be unusual for Nicodemus to speak to him or to seek His counsel.

Nicodemus acknowledges the Rabbinic credentials of Jesus as a respected teacher. He also affirms the miracles performed by Jesus noting that they are evidence that God is with Him. This affirmation continues to sustain the declaration of John the Baptizer who made note of the sustaining presence of God's spirit resting upon the Messiah. (John 1:33)

Jesus begins the conversation with an answer to a question that Nicodemus never asked. Launching into the topic of eternal life, the Messiah declares that a man must be born again if he wants to see the kingdom of God. This dissertation creates two questions that Nicodemus must now ask, "How can a man be born again, when he is old". This question is logical. The declaration to be "born again", is not a term that would have been heard previously within Judaism, although the concept from which it is taken would be very familiar.

The words "born again" are constructed from two Greek words, "Gennao" (procreate, produce) "Anonthen" (from the first, top, or beginning) when translated mean "to return i.e. to the first". This is the premise of repentance, a message that Jews have heard for nearly four thousand years. The message of Jesus is the same as the message of the prophets that came before Him.

God is calling mankind to return to his original place and status; to his beginning and the first breath that gave him life.

In the second inquiry Nicodemus confusingly asked, "how can he enter the second time into his mother's womb"? The Pharisee is trying to understand the physical function of this new term "born again". He struggles as he tries to apply the known limits of human birth to what Jesus is saying about spiritual birth. Nicodemus is focused on re-creating his human form as the Rabbi is trying to show him God's desire to give birth to a new nature inside of his human form.

Understanding the explanation to the question Nicodemus posed about re-entering the womb begins with knowing Jesus was not offering an explanation that applied to the laws of physics. He was defining a spiritual truth without any association to physical body. He tells Nicodemus a man must be "born" of water, which is a reference to the ritual of water cleansing (Baptism) that represents repentance. He said also that man must be born of the spirit which is a reference to the breath (pnuema) of life that God gives awaken man's spirit, the God nature inside of man. (II Cor. 5:17, Eph. 2:15,4:24)

**Note:** Water rituals were used as a great symbol to represent repentance and restoration. The ceremonial waters purged and consecrated a person or utensils for temple service and use. Once washed, the person or item is considered set a part for special use. Following the washing ritual of a priest or king they would be anointed with oil as a sign they were ready to serve and take their place in the temple. In the same manner, the repentant are anointed and infilled by God's spirit to take their place in relationship with Him and walk in newness of life



To have access or entry into eternity requires the birth of a new nature. Flesh and blood will not succeed into the eternal realm only the regenerated soul. (Ezk. 18:4, Matt. 10:28, James 5:20) The writings of the Apostle Paul affirm that the flesh cannot inherit or take part of the offerings within the eternal realm. (ICorinthians 15:50)

**John 3:6-** That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

**John 3:7-** Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

**John 3:8-** 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.

#### Lesson Notes:

(John 3:6-8) – The Rabbi separates the two realms for Nicodemus, sorting the flesh from the spirit. Everything born of flesh acts and responds to the demands of the flesh. If something is born of the spirit the same will act and respond to the demands of the spirit. The un-repentant continues to practice and live under the influence of the flesh because that is the character of its nature. The repentant will practice and live as they are influenced by the spirit because of the new nature born inside of them. New birth provides a new set of values that cannot be altered or changed. The nature of God will crave after spiritual things. The new birth experience gives access to “new” *Life* and the ability to create a “new” disposition that will over-ride the tendency to live life to satisfy our flesh.

No one can choose their first birth or the gene pool that will influence their physical features and mental behavior. The new birth is a second life with the privilege to choose the ingredients that will affect and influence who you are and what you will do. The flesh can hinder but not prevent the new nature from growing and developing. Being born again empowers the access to new life to destroy the influence of life patterns that always led to death and destruction.

The physical nature has pre-set dimensions that limit ability and growth beyond a certain height and generally with little control to increase or reduce weight. Spiritual growth has no such limits and there are no pre-set boundaries to what God’s plan for each life can accomplish. The power of the flesh to limit man’s spiritual destiny is eliminated. The new man is empowered to grow at an accelerated rate, going beyond the limitations of our flesh.

Jesus tells Nicodemus not to marvel over this spiritual truth, trying to force it to fit practical knowledge. Instead he should embrace the truth with unseen evidence in the same manner he accepts other truth in nature that he cannot physically see or comprehend. He is reminded that the wind is a force of nature man believes but he cannot see it.

The sound of the wind is heard but its origin is unknown. The results of the wind's impact are certain and viewable, but its path is unpredictable.

So is everyone born of the spirit, awakened to life by the wind of God's breath without the ability to explain where the new life direction came from or where it is taking them but simply trust the direction enough to follow. The new life that comes through the new birth does not come with limitations. We are not limited to the destinations of the flesh. Without restriction the wind of God breathes new life into man and no one can tell where it came from or where it is going. The wind cannot be prevented from pushing man forward into to reach God's planned destination.

**John 3:9-** Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be?

**John 3:10-** Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?

**John 3:11-** Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness.

#### Lesson Notes:

(John 3:9-11) – Nicodemus still questions How can these things be true. He has not heard the concept of repentance explained in this way with direct personal reward or penalty. Israel has largely been accustomed to national repentance and judgement with a single figure becoming the petitioner for the nation. The model Jesus presents makes repentance personal with each man taking ownership for the disobedience and commitment to spiritual renewal. God loves the world but requires every man to know him personally and not just celebrating Him publicly.

A challenge is put before Nicodemus, forcing him to evaluate his status as a Master Pharisee and yet failing to understand spiritual truth. A "master" Pharisee would be a qualified teacher and Nicodemus should know the truth about the Messiah and eternal life. The Rabbi, as a "master" teacher, has presented truth to Nicodemus that He knows his fellow brethren among the Pharisees and largely most of Israel will rejected. His personal decision to believe this truth would make him a standout among the other Pharisees.

In his pursuit to know the truth he must now choose to trust the messenger he approached to tell him the truth. Nicodemus must evaluate his confidence in religious ritual against the messenger from the God of his religion. Man cannot see into heaven without God granting them access to receive revelation and Jesus is the only witness that can testify about truth man does not know and has never seen. The truth the son of God has presented about personal salvation and accountability must be accepted on the credibility of its messenger.

**John 3:12-** If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you *of* heavenly things?

**John 3:13-** And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, *even* the Son of man which is in heaven.

Lesson Notes:

(John 3:12-13) Jesus admonishes Nicodemus having heard how natural elements function on earth that he cannot believe because it will be impossible for him to hear and believe the revelations and spiritual truth that come from heaven. Man does not have access to heaven to bring down revelations and truth. Only the son, He alone has come from heaven to earth to represent the God of heaven and speak His truth.

**John 3:14-** And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:

**John 3:15-** That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

**John 3:16-** For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Lesson Notes:

(John 3:14-16) – The identity and mission of God’s son will soon be affirmed. The world will see Him exalted as savior on a cross like the Hebrews witnessed the serpent raised up on the staff of Moses. Jesus makes a reference to an iconic story known among Jews about the deliverance of their ancestors in their journey to the Promised Land. God sent a pestilence of biting serpents to judge the people for the complaints of not having water and bread. After they repent for their ingratitude of God’s provision, God instructs Moses to mount an image of a fiery serpent upon a staff and command the people to fasten their eyes upon it for their deliverance.

God used an image of the very consequence He sent to punish them to become the icon of their salvation. The son of God would become sin, the very consequence of man’s misdeeds, and men will be required to fasten their eyes upon “the *man that was made* sin” in hope for salvation and deliverance. (Num. 21:9)

The people bitten by the serpents set their sightlines on the raised image of the serpent and they were healed. Whosoever sets their sightline upon Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, will not perish but have eternal life. God so loved this world that He gave His only begotten son to set upon a raised staff to die for the sin of all men so that none will perish that choose to believe in Him. All that believe in Him will have everlasting life.

