

Am I really a Christian?



You Are Not A Christian Unless You Have Been Born Again

John 2.23-3.15

Main Idea

Our hearts are dead and can only be awakened by God in order to see the Kingdom.

Overview

I. 2.23-25: Jesus doesn't entrust himself to the people "believing" in Him

- Jesus knows what is in the heart of man and the implication is that it is not good
- It likely is that people are believing in Jesus for His miracles and not for Himself

II. 3.1-15: You must be Born Again

- Nicodemus has trouble understanding Jesus' call to be born again (v 3-4)
- Jesus repeats the necessity of being born again but adds "water & spirit"
 - This is an allusion to the New Covenant passage of Ezekiel 36.25-27
 - Water indicates cleansing and this makes it possible for re-birth in the giving of the spirit and give a new heart
 - This seems to be the case as Jesus says that Nicodemus should know this as a teacher of Israel (v 9-10)
- If we need to be born again that would indicate that we are dead (not just in need of some help):
 - If we are dead, only God can be the one can bring new life (we have to trust Him for it)

Questions

Discussion Starter: *Name some "additives" and you have possibly understood them as analogous to Jesus and His Gospel.*

1. Read John 2.23-25. Discuss why it appears Jesus is not entrusting himself to those around Him. What does verse 25 tell us about the condition of mankind? How does this inform what comes next in Chapter 3?
2. Read 3:1-15. What seems to be behind Jesus telling Nicodemus (and us) to be born again?
3. If our hearts are dead and only God can bring the re-birth what does that say about our salvation?
4. Discuss what it means to have a "grace based" salvation. How does inform your understanding of the cross and your relationship towards God?
5. If God showed you grace in salvation, how can you show grace to others in order to bring life?
6. Why do many confessing Christians dislike this idea of only God bringing new birth? Why do we want to have control of things so much? What do we think we lose if we have complete freedom?

7. Jesus is very honest about our hearts, so much so that it got Him killed. Why is it loving for Jesus to be honest with us about our hearts and our world?
8. How do you speak/live in a way that provides additives instead of encouraging grace based growth by God around you?
9. How do we do evangelism that calls for people to be born again instead of an evangelism that calls for additives?

Accountability Question: Encourage one another in evangelism. Check in and see who people are prayerfully reaching out to in order to bring about growth. Spend some time identifying evidence of Gods grace where He brought growth to your dead heart.