Planning to Be Saved, Part 2

Reborn · John 3:1–4

Read it. Talk about it. Live it.

OVERVIEW

This session explores what it truly means to be born again — not merely as a theological concept, but as a radical, active reorientation of life. Using the encounter between Jesus and Nicodemus as a foundation, we will examine what genuine spiritual rebirth requires, what it costs, and what it produces in the life of a believer and in the broader church community.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Spiritual rebirth is not passive. It requires prayer, consecration, and sound doctrine — even when those things are uncomfortable.
2. Revival is not built on preference, prejudice, or passivism. It is built on posture and the presence of God.
3. Unrepentant sin is the greatest threat to the Body of Christ. Forgiveness of sin is its greatest cure.
4. The new birth is both personal and communal. Transformation affects not just individuals but families and faith communities.
5. God was intentional when He chose you. Respond with intentional, vulnerable worship.
6. The next generation has real questions. They must be trained, taught, and tolerated — and you cannot teach someone you have not first loved.

OPENING REFLECTION

Take a few minutes before discussion begins to sit quietly and consider this question individually:

When did you first begin to understand that following Christ required you to become someone different — not just believe something different?

Allow a few members to share briefly before moving into discussion.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

SECTION 1: THE ENCOUNTER — NICODEMUS AND THE QUESTION OF REBIRTH

Reference: John 3:1–9

1. Nicodemus came to Jesus at night. What does his timing and approach suggest about where he was spiritually and emotionally? Have you ever approached God cautiously or privately before you were ready to go public with your faith?
2. Nicodemus was not trying to be disrespectful when he asked how a man could re-enter his mother's womb — he was genuinely confused. What are some honest questions you had about faith that you were afraid to ask out loud? How did your community respond when you asked them?
3. Jesus told Nicodemus that being born of water and the Spirit is necessary to enter the kingdom of God. What does it mean to you that this birth is described as coming "from above" — not of human origin but of the Holy Spirit?

SECTION 2: THE COST OF TRANSFORMATION

Reference: Colossians 3:5–10, Ephesians 4:22–24, 2 Corinthians 5:17

1. The sermon described the new birth as requiring active participation — mortifying earthly desires, putting off the old man, and putting on the new. In your own life, what has been the hardest thing to "put off"? What made it difficult?
2. The sermon warned that "staying the same is not optional." What areas of your life have you been tempted to leave unchanged after coming to faith? What has held you back from full surrender in those areas?
3. The sermon said that being born again is not just a heaven-or-hell issue — it is a community issue. How has your transformation affected the people around you, whether positively or with resistance?

SECTION 3: REVIVAL, REPENTANCE, AND THE CHURCH

Reference: Joel 2:23–25

1. The sermon described echo chambers as "decorated coffins." What does that phrase mean to you? In what ways can churches or small groups become echo chambers, and what does it take to break out of that pattern?
2. The sermon listed unrepentant sin — not any one specific sin, but sin left unaddressed — as the greatest threat to the Body of Christ. Why do you think unrepentance is more dangerous than the sin itself? How does Godly sorrow differ from shame?
3. Joel 2:25 describes God restoring the years the locust has eaten. What does restoration look like in a practical sense for someone who has spent years living in unrepentance or spiritual complacency? What does it require from them and from their community?

SECTION 4: THE NEXT GENERATION AND THE COMING REVIVAL

1. The sermon described Generation Alpha as a generation with real questions that must be trained, taught, and tolerated before they will commit. How does your group or church currently make space for honest questions from younger people? Where do you fall short?
2. The sermon made a pointed observation about how some churches restrict certain instruments or worship styles while expecting the Spirit to move freely. How do our preferences and traditions sometimes become barriers to the Spirit's work? How do we discern the difference between healthy conviction and unhelpful rigidity?
3. The sermon said, "Don't teach someone you can't love first." Who in your life needs you to love them before you try to instruct them? What would it look like to lead with love in that relationship?

SECTION 5: INTENTIONALITY AND WORSHIP

1. The closing thought of the sermon was: "He was intentional when He chose you. Be intentional in vulnerable worship." What does vulnerable worship look like for you personally? What makes it difficult?
2. The sermon referenced Elijah seeing a cloud the size of a man's hand as a sign of coming rain. Are there small signs of spiritual movement in your life or community that you may be overlooking because you are waiting for something larger? What would it mean to honor those small signs with faith?

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

Choose one or more of the following to commit to before your group meets again:

- **Examine your posture.** Spend time this week asking God to reveal any area where you have been sitting on your heels spiritually — reminiscing about the past instead of pressing into what He is doing now. Journal what He shows you.
- **Practice Godly sorrow.** Identify one area of unrepentance you have been avoiding. Bring it before God this week — not in shame, but in honest, Godly sorrow that leads to repentance.
- **Love before you teach.** Identify one person in your life — particularly someone younger or someone with questions about faith — and commit to one intentional act of love toward them this week before any spiritual instruction or correction.
- **Pursue vulnerable worship.** In your next personal worship time, remove one thing that makes you feel safe or in control and allow yourself to be genuinely open before God.
- **Study the Old Testament foundation.** Read Ezekiel 36:25–27 and Jeremiah 31:33 on your own this week. Reflect on how these promises connect to what Jesus told Nicodemus and to your own experience of spiritual renewal.

CLOSING PRAYER GUIDE

Close your time together by praying through these three areas:

1. **Repentance** — Ask God to surface anything in the group, individually or collectively, that has been left unaddressed. Pray for Godly sorrow that leads to genuine change.
2. **Revival** — Pray for a revival of rebirth in your church and community. Ask God to prepare the ground — in posture, in presence, and in sound doctrine — for what He wants to do.
3. **The Next Generation** — Pray by name for young people in your lives who are waiting, questioning, and watching. Ask God to make your group a place where they are loved first.

FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

Consider sitting with these questions on your own throughout the week:

- Am I truly different because of my faith, or have I simply added religious language to the same life I was already living?
- What would it mean for me to submit to the conversion process rather than manage it?
- Where is God calling me to be intentional — in worship, in relationships, in community — and what is stopping me?

"He was intentional when He chose you. Be intentional in vulnerable worship."

GATHER WITH US

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