

Day 3 - Morning Study

Read: John 3:1-15

Jesus tells Nicodemus, “unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.” But Nicodemus did not understand what Jesus was saying, and Jesus went on to explain that we are to be “born of water and the Spirit.”

During the First Great Awakening, one man worked tirelessly to reach Americans with the gospel of Jesus Christ. That man was George Whitefield, an evangelist from England. He traveled over 20,000 miles across the American Colonies, delivering thousands of sermons to crowds that ranged between 20,000 and 30,000 people from 1738 to 1770. About 80% of the American colonial population (roughly 1.5–2 million people at the time) heard him at least once, an extraordinary feat for an era without modern media. Who says you need a YouTube Channel?

His sermons were passionate, dramatic, and aimed at moving people to personal conversion and the experience of being “born again.” He focused on the need for people to repent and turn their hearts to God. One of his famous sermons was titled *Repentance and Conversion*.

In this sermon, George Whitefield believed that truly changing your life for God is about more than just acting better or following religious rules. He argued that “real conversion” is a deep change on the inside. It happens when the Holy Spirit moves a person to stop relying on themselves and start completely trusting in Jesus Christ instead. He warns us that no amount of outward morality can replace the necessity of being born again.

Today, we will look at the principles he outlines in this famous sermon.

The goal today is to help us understand what it means to truly follow Christ. The whole idea of being “born again” or being a “new creation in Christ.” Just because someone says they're a Christian does not mean that they truly are a Christian. And just saying a prayer doesn't save us either. Being a follower of Jesus Christ goes much deeper. We are to be “transformed by the renewing of our mind.” Romans 12:2 And a change in our hearts. Help your campers understand this importance.

Group Study

Can a person be a “good person” but not a Christian?

Use this to get you started in the discussion. Is our definition of good different from God’s definition of good?

Read: Matthew 7:21–23

Is everyone who says they are a Christian really a Christian?

No.

Read: Matthew 25:21

Which of the last two statements would you rather hear?

I definitely want to hear “well done.”

Read: 2 Timothy 3:1-5

In verse 5, “having the appearance of godliness”, do you appear to be good?

Are we being good to impress people or are we doing good because we want to be more like Christ? Is doing something good to glorify yourself just as bad as doing something bad to impress someone?

What are examples today of “outside change but no inside change”?

Try to get the campers to reflect on things they may be doing to impress other people, but it is all fake. How about people’s social media presence? Is it real or fake?

True conversion is a change in the heart.

Read: 2 Corinthians 5:16-17

What happens if we are truly following Christ?

We are a new creation.

What does it mean to be a new creation?

This is a great time for you to share how God has changed your heart and mind. Keep it short!!!

Read: John 3:1-3

What does Jesus mean by “born again”

We are no longer slaves to our old selves that were under Adam’s curse. We are free in Christ. We are a new creation.

Read: Ephesians 2:8–9

Are we saved by grace or by works?

We are only saved by his grace. We cannot earn our way into heaven.

Read: Philippians 3:7–9

Where does true righteousness come from?

It comes through Jesus Christ. Everything else is meaningless. Our first priority is following Jesus Christ. This is the true pursuit of happiness.

Following Christ is not about making bad people good; it is about making dead people alive.

We need to understand that apart from Christ, we are dead. He brings us to true/real life. He makes us alive.

Read: 1 Corinthians 15:20-22

What happens to those in Christ?

We are made alive through him.

What must you do to be alive in Christ?

This is to connect yesterday's teaching with today's. We must repent and believe. See next questions.

Read: Acts 3:17-22

What does Peter say we are to do in verse 19?

We are to repent.

What does it mean to repent?

Repentance is about feeling bad or regret for the things we have done. Regret for our sins. But it doesn't stop there. It is about turning those sins over to Christ and choosing to follow his path and not our own.

Read: 2 Corinthians 6:1-2

When is the day of salvation?

Now. Every day is the day of salvation. It is about what you are going to do with it. Are you going to accept God's grace or keep living your own way?

Read: Hebrews 9:27-28

What does Christ do?

He bears our sins and will come again to save those who follow him.

Read: Ephesians 2:1-3

When we were dead in our sins, who did we follow?

The prince of the power of the air.

Who is that?

The devil or satan.

Read: Ephesians 2:4-7

What does God make us through his love and mercy?

He makes us alive with Christ.

What will God do for us through Christ Jesus?

He will raise us up with Christ. We will be with him in heaven.

Read: Ephesians 2:8-10

Again, I ask: are we saved by grace or by works?

We are saved by grace.

Being good is a religion. God wants a relationship. That is the core of Christianity.

How is your relationship with Jesus Christ?

Each of us must answer this question, and all of us can do a better job.

From Jonathon Edwards, we learned that we live at the mercy of God because we are sinners and have rebelled against Him. From George Whitefield, we learn that God made a way for us to be reconciled to Him through Jesus Christ. It is more than just being good; it is a change of heart. We are no longer to be self-righteous. We need to be Christ-righteous. If we are to be a “city on a hill” and proclaim the good news to the rest of the world, we must first start with our own hearts.

God does not ask us to become a better version of ourselves. He is offering to make you into a totally new person.