

Title: Recycled – John 3 1-25

Read:

¹⁻² There was a man of the Pharisee sect, Nicodemus, a prominent leader among the Jews. Late one night he visited Jesus and said, "Rabbi, we all know you're a teacher straight from God. No one could do all the God-pointing, God-revealing acts you do if God weren't in on it." ³ Jesus said, "You're absolutely right. Take it from me: Unless a person is born from above, it's not possible to see what I'm pointing to—to God's kingdom." ⁴ "How can anyone," said Nicodemus, "be born who has already been born and grown up? You can't re-enter your mother's womb and be born again. What are you saying with this 'born-from-above' talk?" ⁵⁻⁶ Jesus said, "You're not listening. Let me say it again. Unless a person submits to this original creation—the 'wind-hovering-over-the-water' creation, the invisible moving the visible, a baptism into a new life—it's not possible to enter God's kingdom. When you look at a baby, it's just that: a body you can look at and touch. But the person who takes shape within is formed by something you can't see and touch—the Spirit—and becomes a living spirit." ⁷⁻⁸ "So don't be so surprised when I tell you that you have to be 'born from above'—out of this world, so to speak. You know well enough how the wind blows this way and that. You hear it rustling through the trees, but you have no idea where it comes from or where it's headed next. That's the way it is with everyone 'born from above' by the wind of God, the Spirit of God." ⁹ Nicodemus asked, "What do you mean by this? How does this happen?"

Think:

The concept of being born again is gross. Can you imagine how messy that would be? But Jesus was trying to explain to us what it means to be a Christian. We were born the first time and we messed it up, so something had to be done. I don't know about you, but I reckon up until the moment I was born, I was probably not selfish, I probably did not sin. Now admittedly after that, I went out of my way to mess things up. It all seemed to start, the minute other people got involved. I hated people taking my toys at kindergarten; I mean, what right did they have? Then things progressed when I started school and I got into a few punch ups in the play ground. It didn't improve much at home as I became a teenager either; sometimes I was just grumpy with my parents, because they were my parents. College was much the same, as I did loads of stuff that was not what God would have me do. OK, so even with just these highlights, we can see that I messed up my first birth pretty quickly. So it was pretty obvious that I needed Jesus and the chance to be born again. Now, you might think you are different, but just in case you can see similarities between my life and yours, what are we to do about it? Well Jesus is pretty straight talking when he tells us the meaning of being born again in this passage. We must ask God to send his Holy Spirit into our lives so that we can have the rubbish we have done in the past wiped clean. We still have the same body, we still remember some of the rubbish that has gone on before, but we are forgiven by God because of what Jesus did. The same thoughts will often come into our minds, but we choose to act differently most of the time. More recycled than born again, but never the less cleaned by Jesus.

Pray:

Father thank you for recycling me and making me more the person that you intended me to be. Amen.

Action:

Is there something in your life that needs throwing into the recycling trash? Make the choice to ditch it today and commit to someone you trust that you are turning your back on that rubbish. Bye.