SMITH FOR CHRIST · TEACHING THE WORD · WATCHING THE TIMES

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN · LEADER'S SHEET · THURSDAY DEC 3

John 3 · week 3 of 21

You Must Be Born Again · Answers and notes for Thursday

READ MONDAY – WEDNESDAY · MEET THURSDAY EVENING, DECEMBER 3

Answers to every worksheet question, with the exact NASB key-word counts. Personal questions are marked "Personal."

THE WEEK

Monday	Read John 3 straight through, then again with a pen and mark it · Mon, Nov 30
Tuesday	Read the study notes; answer the Observe questions and count the key words · Tue, Dec 1
Wednesday	Interpret, Weigh the Teachers, the Word study and Apply · Wed, Dec 2
Thursday evening	Together: watch the John 3 part of the film, go through the worksheet, pray · Thu, Dec 3

KEY VERSE

> **JOHN 3:16 · NASB**
>
> *"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life."*

A respected teacher comes to Jesus in the dark and is told he has to start over from above. Follow the chapter from that night to the Light, and from the new birth to the Son who makes it possible.

John 3 *You Must Be Born Again*

KEY VERSE 3:16

Theme of the chapter. The kingdom of God is entered only by a new birth from above, worked by the Spirit and received by looking in faith to the Son lifted up. The one who believes has life now; the one who refuses remains under wrath; and the one who has seen Him gladly gets smaller.

KEY WORD COUNTS (NASB)

born	**8**	vv. 3, 4 (×2), 5, 6 (×2), 7, 8
believe / believes / believed	**8**	vv. 12 (×2), 15, 16, 18 (×3), 36
Light	**5**	vv. 19 (×2), 20 (×2), 21
world	**5**	vv. 16, 17 (×3), 19
Spirit	**4**	vv. 5, 6, 8, 34
must	**4**	vv. 7, 14, 30 (×2)

JOHN 3:1–8 Born from Above

1 OBSERVE *Who is Nicodemus, and when does he come (3:1–2)? What does he already believe about Jesus?*

> "A man of the Pharisees," "a ruler of the Jews" (3:1). He comes "by night" and believes Jesus has "come from God" as a teacher because of the signs (3:2).

2 OBSERVE *What does Jesus say a man cannot do unless he is born again (3:3 and 3:5)?*

> He "cannot see the kingdom of God" (3:3) and "cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (3:5).

3 WEIGH THE TEACHERS *What is the "water" in 3:5? Guzik lists five readings and gives Ezekiel 36:25–27 "the most weight (though it is a tough call)." Spurgeon rejects baptismal regeneration. Read Ezekiel 36:25–27. Why should "the teacher of Israel" (3:10) have known this?*

> Ezekiel promised Israel clean water and a new spirit: cleansing and new life from God. None of the four teachers reads it as baptism that saves. A teacher of Israel had read that promise.

4 APPLY *Jesus told a lifelong religious man, "You must be born again" (3:7). What have you leaned on to be right with God that is really your own effort?*

> Personal. Guzik's point is that you cannot birth yourself. Sproul: "There is no such thing as a non-born-again Christian or an unregenerate Christian."

JOHN 3:9–15 The Son of Man Lifted Up

5 OBSERVE *What Old Testament event does Jesus use to explain His death (3:14)? What is promised to whoever believes (3:15)?*

> Moses lifting up the serpent in the wilderness. "So that whoever believes will in Him have eternal life" (3:15).

6 INTERPRET *Read Numbers 21:4–9. What did a dying Israelite have to do to live? What does that teach about how a man is saved?*

> He had to look at the bronze serpent on the pole. He brought no work, payment or cure of his own. Guzik: "a bronze serpent does speak of sin, but of sin judged." Faith is looking to Christ lifted up.

7 INTERPRET *The Son of Man "must" be lifted up (3:14). Find the other "must" statements in 3:7 and 3:30. What do the three have in common?*

> The new birth, the cross and Christ's increase are divine necessities (the Greek *dei*), not options. "Lifted up" in John means the cross first (12:32–33).

JOHN 3:16–21 Love and Light

8 OBSERVE *From 3:16–17, write down what God felt, what God did, why He did it, and for whom.*

> He "so loved the world." He "gave His only begotten Son." He did it so that whoever believes "shall not perish, but have eternal life" (3:16), and "that the world might be saved through Him" (3:17).

9 OBSERVE *According to 3:18, who is judged, and when?*

> The one who believes "is not judged." The one who does not believe "has been judged already" (3:18).

10 INTERPRET *Why do men stay away from the Light (3:19–20)? Is the problem a lack of evidence?*

> "Men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil" (3:19). They fear being exposed (3:20). Guzik: "there is a moral compromise at the root of their rejection." Henry: "Christ is hated because sin is loved."

11 APPLY *Nicodemus came by night. What part of your life have you kept in the dark, and what would coming to the Light look like this week?*

> Personal. "He who practices the truth comes to the Light" (3:21).

JOHN 3:22–30 The Friend of the Bridegroom

12 OBSERVE *What complaint do John's disciples bring him (3:26), and what is his first answer (3:27)?*

> "All are coming to Him" (3:26). John answers, "A man can receive nothing unless it has been given him from heaven" (3:27).

13 INTERPRET *John calls himself "the friend of the bridegroom" (3:29). What is the friend's job at a wedding, and why is John's joy "made full" when people leave him for Jesus?*

> The friend brings the bride to the groom and steps back. The bride belongs to Jesus. Guzik's point: John was happy to lose his congregation to Jesus.

14 APPLY *"He must increase, but I must decrease" (3:30). Where does Jesus need to increase and you decrease right now?*

> Personal. Ask for a specific place: home, work, ministry, reputation.

JOHN 3:31–36 The One from Above

15 OBSERVE *List what 3:31–35 says about the One who comes from above.*

> He "is above all" (3:31). He testifies to what He has seen and heard (3:32). He "speaks the words of God" and has the Spirit "without measure" (3:34). "The Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hand" (3:35).

16 INTERPRET *What two outcomes does 3:36 set side by side, and what tense are the verbs? What does John use as the opposite of believing?*

> The believer "has eternal life" now. On the other "the wrath of God abides" now. Both are present tense. The opposite of believing is "does not obey the Son": unbelief is refusal, not only doubt.

WORD STUDY

17 WORD *anōthen (G509), again; from above. The word in 3:3 and 3:7 means both "again" and "from above" (see 3:31). Which did Nicodemus hear (3:4)? Which did Jesus mean?*

> Nicodemus heard "again," a second physical birth. Jesus meant a birth from above, given by God: "born of the Spirit" (3:8).

18 WORD *monogenēs (G3439), only begotten, one of a kind. The same word is used of Isaac in Hebrews 11:17. Read Genesis 22:2. What did it cost the Father to give "His only begotten Son" (3:16)?*

> The Son is unique, one of a kind, the beloved. Abraham was spared from giving his son. The Father was not.

ACTS 17:11

The Chosen check

> ACTS 17:11 · NASB
> *"...examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so."*

WATCH THIS WEEK

Season 1, Episode 7, "Invitations" (3:1–21)

Answers and notes for the Chosen check. Let the group find the differences in the text before you give them.

C1 OBSERVE

How does the episode explain how John knew what Jesus said to Nicodemus? Does Scripture tell us?

> The show has the disciple John listening and taking notes. Scripture does not say how he knew. Jesus promised the Spirit would bring His words to their remembrance (14:26).

C2 OBSERVE

Compare the episode's dialogue with 3:14–16. What is kept word for word, and what is paraphrased or added?

> Answers will vary. Have the group read 3:14–16 aloud after naming what they remember from the episode.

C3 INTERPRET

What did the episode add that John 3 does not say? Does the addition help you see the text, or does it change what the text means?

> Additions are not automatically wrong; they are not Scripture. The test is whether an addition changes what the text says about Jesus.

C4 APPLY

The Bereans received the word eagerly and examined the Scriptures daily (Acts 17:11). Where are you most tempted to let a picture, a sermon or a feeling stand in for the text?

> Personal. Press for one concrete habit: reading the chapter before watching, and checking every scene against it.

The Chosen is a drama, not Scripture. God's Word is the truth; where the film differs, the Word wins.