

# 'The Son of God and the Lord of Glory Series'

## Sermons in the Gospel of John

### Message 26 - 'The Wind of Change' John 3:7 ~ 12



We continue in these verses to look at the final part of the conversation between the Lord Jesus Christ and Nicodemus. For Nicodemus, all his efforts, whilst commendable in human eyes, had not, would not, and could not make him acceptable to God. Yes, he had religion, but he did not have salvation, he did not have forgiveness, he did not have eternal life. In the conversation, the Lord spoke of the Holy Spirit, His person and work. The Lord Jesus likened the Spirit of God to a mighty rushing wind, a wind that changes, and a wind that is sovereign in its movements. When this change takes place it is an eternal change. We can see the following:

**The Breath of God (v7-8)** - What does the Bible refer to when speaking of the spirit? At its most basic level, the reference is to the Third Person of the Trinity, to God, and on the distinctly human level, it speaks of the part of man that has a consciousness of God. As we look at the word in more depth, more is revealed. The word we use as spirit, comes from the Latin, 'spiritus', which has as its meaning, 'breath'. As the Lord Jesus Christ teaches Nicodemus about the Holy Spirit, the Lord speaks of the wind, or referring to the breath of God. We see in this so much, not least the sovereignty of God in that God allows His breath to go where He wishes, and as it does, it brings the effects of His choosing. In the Greek, the word used for spirit is '*pneuma*'. This again refers to breath. In fact, if you were to look at the Hebrew word for spirit, it is 'ruach'. In itself it has to be said exhaling. In speaking of the Spirit's work in creating new life in those who are spiritually dead, we see that a person is only born again when God breathes that life into them. Not only that, but it is an exclusive work of God, it happens at His good pleasure. What is it that reaches, stirs, convicts, regenerates and changes men and women? It is the breath of the living God, the Holy Spirit, who powerfully moving through the Scriptures, is as a mighty wind, and comes in power and brings new life into the hearts of the spiritually dead! The Spirit moves wherever He pleases, and as such God alone has all the glory of salvation. It is of His grace, of His love, of His goodness, He takes the initiative, and draws people to Himself, He takes them from death and gives them life, He takes them from enmity, and places them in an unbreakable friendship, He takes the wanderer and gives purpose, He takes the lonely and holds them close in His hand, He takes sinners and saves them, making them clean, washed in the blood of the Lamb.

**The Lasting Change (v8-12)** - Nicodemus asks the question, 'how can this be?' From our Lord's reply, the Lord Jesus Christ who knows the heart of man, it seems that Nicodemus is refusing to accept those things that which he could know, and Christ rebukes him. The change from singular to plural, distinction between heavenly and earthly, cause some dilemmas in these verses. However, it seems from the text that Jesus is not just speaking about the new birth, rather He is speaking of the results of the new birth. In other words, Nicodemus isn't chastised for not fully grasping the workings of regeneration, the new birth itself (who can fully understand?), but the fact that he will not heed the reality of it as it is displayed in transformed lives around him. So we can see that these words are a direct continuation of v8 (read), so that the earthly things are the manifest results of the new birth that can be seen by all. The 'heavenly things' are those things that can be known only through revelation; for example, the nature of the new birth itself, and one of the most glorious mysteries of the Christian faith which Christ will speak of in the verses immediately following these ones, the atonement. The 'we' therefore becomes the testimony of the truth, and example of the power of God to change lives.



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