

Morning Sermon Outline / October 9, 2022
“The Mysterious Power Behind the New Birth” John 3:1-8

A popular Wendy’s commercial asked “Where’s the Beef?”

I will ask today, “Where’s the Power?”

Where is the power of salvation? Where is or what is the power behind the New Birth?

I. The power is not in man –

¹³ **who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.**
John 1:13 (NKJV)

¹⁶ **So then it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy.**
Romans 9:16 (NKJV)

1. Note, the verses above credit man with a will, an ability to make decisions:

- A. nor of the will of the flesh - John 1:13*
- B. nor of the will of man – John 1:13*
- C. not of him who wills – Romans 9:16*

2. This “will” does not produce the new birth –

- A. What they become, when born again - He gave the right to become children of God – John 1:12*
- B. How they were born - ¹³who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. John 1:13*

3. People often speak of a free will and what they usually mean by this is that the “will” is one part of man that is free from sin, and thus able to make a decision that CAUSES faith and ultimately causes the new birth ...

4. However, Nicodemus asks the QUESTION -

⁴ **Nicodemus said to Him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?” John 3:4 (NKJV)**

If the answer to this question, ‘how can a man be born’ was ‘make a decision for Christ’ or ‘use your will to believe in Jesus Christ’ don’t you think Jesus would have said this to Nicodemus? And through Scripture to us?

5. How does Jesus answer Nicodemus’ “how” question?

⁵ **Jesus answered, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. ⁶ That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷ Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ ⁸ The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit.”**

John 3:5–8 (NKJV)

- A. First with emphasis on the MUST - :3 He already said you cannot see God’s Kingdom without the new birth :5 He says cannot enter God’s kingdom without it!*

:6 He gives the reason for the new birth being necessary and that is flesh and spirit are two totally different things! He also says the New Birth is brought about by the Spirit, meaning the Holy Spirit.

:7 He tells Nicodemus plainly, again - **7 Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'**

:8 He finally explains the HOW of the New Birth –

8 The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit.” John 3:8 (NKJV)

II. *The Power is in God’s Spirit; Who is sovereign in His actions, as uncontrollable for us as the wind -*

8 The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit.” John 3:8 (NKJV)

1. *The Spirit, the Holy Spirit is like the wind. We do not control it, the wind, nor do we control Him - **8 The wind blows where it wishes***
2. *The Holy Spirit (the third person of the Godhead) is sovereign / powerful in His working*
3. *With the wind We hear its sound, feel its influence **8 The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it***
4. *But the wind’s / Spirit’s workings are mysterious **but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes.** Not the same in everyone / not automatic -say the sinner’s prayer and the Holy Spirit is yours, you are saved forever, no matter how you live...*

Note, the Holy Spirit is not compared to a well-trained dog that comes, sits, roll-over on your command.

I say this because many will tell you that as soon as a person prays a short sinner’s prayer, at that very moment the Holy Spirit has to come into you (He has no will of His own), and you have to count yourself born again, as a sort of AUTOMATIC THING!

This is not the case!

Yes, we should pray for the Holy Spirit and trust God will give Him, but see how such prayers are described –

9 “So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. ¹⁰ For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. ¹¹ If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? ¹² Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? ¹³ If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!” Luke 11:9–13 (NKJV)

Asking, seeking, knocking describes fervent prayer. Yes, God is willing to GIVE!

However, if you were praying for a car, you desperately needed transportation for a job, for your life. If you prayed and immediately after one short prayer, I as your pastor told you, you have a car, the keys are in your hand and you look in your hand and NOTHING is there! But I tell you STOP PRAYING, you just need to trust you already have the car, get in it drive it. You would say, “I don’t see it!”

5. *Now, Wind is symbolic of the Holy Spirit because both are invisible and yet you can know the power of both, sometimes very dramatically –*

² And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³ Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and *one* sat upon each of them. ⁴ And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. Acts 2:2-4

In Acts 2, Spirit is powerful, both in appearance and actual results, as three-thousand people were saved – Acts 2:41.

6. *In relation to the New Birth there is a mysterious aspect - but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit.” John 3:8*

A. *Nicodemus, a man learned in the Scripture, which is the Seed of the New Birth – 1 Peter 1:23-25*
You would expect he / Nicodemus would be born again, even Jesus says –

¹⁰ *Jesus answered and said to him, “Are you the teacher of Israel, and do not know these things? John 3:10 (NKJV)*

B. *The Woman at the Well, John 4, seems saved almost immediately, and an entire town with her!*

C. *Some people are saved dramatically, some seem won over gradually, by a gentle wind. There is evidence in this Book of John that Nicodemus was one of those who was saved, gradually...*

The key is God is sovereign, not a slave in regard to who or how He saves!

III. *How should we respond to God’s sovereignty in regard to both our and other’s salvation?*

Aim to please God, as you would aim to please a king who had your life in His hands –

1. *We seek to please God with an emphasis on and devotion to His Word -*

²³ *having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever, ²⁴ because “All flesh is as grass, And all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers, And its flower falls away, ²⁵ But the word of the LORD endures forever.” Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you. 1 Peter 1:23–25 (NKJV)*

2. *We seek to please God with prayer -*

A. *Before Pentecost they were praying -*

¹⁴ *These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers. Acts 1:14 (NKJV)*

⁴⁰ *And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, “Be saved from this perverse generation.”*

⁴¹ *Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. Acts 2:40–41 (NKJV)*

B. *They did these important things, and God increased them, added to them –*

⁴² *And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. ⁴³ Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. ⁴⁴ Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, ⁴⁵ and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need. ⁴⁶ So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, ⁴⁷ praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved. Acts 2:42–3:1 (NKJV)*

3. *Prayer enables us for action –*

²⁸ Have you not known? Have you not heard? The everlasting God, the LORD, The Creator of the ends of the earth, Neither faints nor is weary. His understanding is unsearchable. ²⁹ He gives power to the weak, And to *those who have no might* He increases strength. ³⁰ Even the youths shall faint and be weary, And the young men shall utterly fall, ³¹ But those who wait on the LORD Shall renew *their* strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint. Isaiah 40:28–31 (NKJV)

4. *Prayer connects us with He Who controls the wind and the waves, Who baptizes with the Holy Spirit -*

³⁷ And a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling. ³⁸ But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow. And they awoke Him and said to Him, “Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?” ³⁹ Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, “**Peace, be still!**” And the wind ceased and there was a great calm. ⁴⁰ But He said to them, “**Why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?**” ⁴¹ And they feared exceedingly, and said to one another, “Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!” Mark 4:37–41 (NKJV)

³³ I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’ ³⁴ And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God.” John 1:33–34 (NKJV)

5. *Prayer must be humble / We need to be humble, humble and repentant –*

⁶ But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: “**God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.**” ⁷ Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. ⁸ Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse *your* hands, *you* sinners; and purify *your* hearts, *you* double-minded. ⁹ Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and *your* joy to gloom. ¹⁰ Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up. James 4:6–10 (NKJV)

6. *Pray in faith believing in God –*

⁶ But without faith *it is* impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and *that* He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. Hebrews 11:6 (NKJV)

7. *Whatever else we do, we need to bathe it in prayer, whether:*

- A. *Gospel of John sent to North Port*
- B. *Pastor losing weight*
- C. *Door-to-door evangelism*
- D. *Softball team*
- E. *More variety in music*
- F. *Using our screen / New Hope’s screen*
- G. *Videos*
- H. *Jamaican nights or Jamaican days*
- I. *Movies at Pastor’s house*
- J. *Meals at church, at Pastors and restaurants*
- K. *More advertising*
- L. *Special speakers*
- M. *Pool parties*
- N. *Bible studies in homes*
- O. *Hurricane relief*
- P. *Men’s group with Russian Church*
- Q. *Special services / events around holidays*
- R. *S. T. U. V. W. X. Y. Z whatever we do or do not do, we have to PRAY!*

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