

# LESSON 1

## BE BORN AGAIN

### BEFORE YOU TEACH

#### Nicodemus

Nicodemus means “conqueror of the people,” implying someone who is marked for leadership. The fact that he was known as “the teacher of Israel” (Jn 3:10) indicates the extent of his professional stature. As a “ruler of the Jews” (Jn 3:1), Nicodemus was also a member of the Pharisees, a group whose origin lay in the Maccabean Revolt a century and a half before Jesus’ birth. Pharisees zealously preserved Jewish law and tradition against being watered down by Hellenistic influences. Nicodemus’ identity as a Pharisee may have been the reason why he chose to see Jesus at night to avoid being seen by his peers.

### UNDERSTANDING YOUR STUDENTS

Children at this age might have difficulty understanding what it means to “be born again,” and might even ask the same questions as Nicodemus. Take this opportunity to share with your students the power of the Holy Spirit and the effectiveness of water baptism. Share a few testimonies of how the Holy Spirit transformed our church members and the difference they experienced when they were washed of their sins through water baptism. Explain to them how the Holy Spirit gives a person new life. Encourage the students to pray patiently for the Holy Spirit and its guidance.

At this age, when children ask for things from their parents, they want it now and oftentimes are granted their request(s) right there and then. However, praying for the Holy Spirit doesn’t work that way. Tell the students not to be anxious and discouraged if they have not felt the movement of the Holy Spirit. Our heavenly Father has promised us that He will give us the Holy Spirit one day. We just need to keep praying for it earnestly and wait patiently for God. God’s timing is always the best!

### BIBLE TEXT

John 3:1-21

### BIBLE TRUTH

Everyone must be baptized and receive the Holy Spirit to enter the kingdom of God.

### LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. To introduce the working of the Holy Spirit.
2. To emphasize the importance of spiritual rebirth.

### MEMORY VERSE

“Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.”

(John 3:5b)

### PRAYER

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we pray. Dear Lord, today is the beginning of a new quarter. We hope to learn a lot about Your kingdom and Your words. Please help us understand and keep Your teachings in our hearts. We want to obey You and serve one another. Please fill us with Your strength and wisdom. Hallelujah! Amen.

## VOCABULARY

**Gentiles:** people who don't believe in God

**reveal:** to make known

## REVIEW

Last quarter, the students learned about the Ten Commandments, Job, and the fruit of the Holy Spirit. Take some time to review these topics with the students to refresh their memories and to see how much they remember from last quarter.

This quarter, we will be focusing on Jesus and His latter days here on earth. This first lesson focuses on an important teaching that Jesus told to Nicodemus: that one needs to be born of water and the Spirit to enter the kingdom of God.

## BIBLE STORY

Boys and girls, have you ever thought about what God's heavenly kingdom might be like? What it would look like, sound like, smell like, and feel like? If you could buy a ticket to spend one day in heaven, how many of you would do it? [Have students raise their hands.] Wow, it looks like everyone would do it! It's too bad that we can't experience heaven in this way before we are ready to enter. So, now you may be asking yourself, "What should I be doing to make sure that I'm ready to enter God's kingdom?" In today's story, a man named Nicodemus asked Lord Jesus this same question. Let's find out together what Lord Jesus said about entering the kingdom of God.

### Introduction

While Jesus was in the world preaching God's message of salvation, many people followed Him. There were poor people, rich people, Jews, and even Gentiles. However, there was one group of people, known as the Pharisees, who did not like Jesus at all. They did not believe that Jesus was God, even though they believed in God. The Pharisees were teachers of the law, so they knew God's commandments and rules very well. They actually worked so hard to obey these laws that they sometimes forgot why they needed to obey these commandments and what it meant to love others. All they did was make sure that they did not break God's laws. They thought that Jesus had come to take away their power by claiming to be God. They constantly tried to trick Jesus, so that they could catch Him in a mistake and eventually have Him killed.

### Nicodemus

Among the Pharisees was a man called Nicodemus. He was part of the Jewish ruling council, which meant that he was something like a judge—people looked up to him because he made important decisions. Many people

thought that he was very wise. When Nicodemus heard about Jesus and His great miracles, he became curious. Even though the rest of the Pharisees did not like Jesus, Nicodemus believed that Jesus was a teacher sent by God to help the people. He wanted to learn more about God, but he wasn't sure if he should go seek out Jesus since other Pharisees might see him. But the more he thought about it, the more he wanted to go. So one night, he decided to find Jesus and ask Him some questions.

### Be Born Again

When Nicodemus found Jesus, he was overjoyed. There was no large crowd following Jesus, so Nicodemus knew that they would have a lot of time to talk. Nicodemus introduced himself and spoke to Jesus.

"Jesus, I know that You are a teacher sent by God. No one can heal the sick or lame unless God is with him," said Nicodemus.

When Jesus heard these words, He knew that Nicodemus was serious about seeking after God. So, Jesus revealed something very important to Him.

"Nicodemus," said Jesus, "in order to see the kingdom of God, a person must be born again."

Nicodemus was confused when he heard what Jesus had said. What did Jesus mean when He said that everyone must be born again?

Nicodemus asked, "How can a grown-up man become a child again? Can he enter his mother's womb a second time and be born again?"

Jesus knew that He had to explain what being born again meant. He was not talking about a physical birth, but a spiritual one.

Jesus told him, "In order to enter God's heavenly kingdom, a man has to be a new kind of person. It is just like being born again, only your new family is God's family. To become part of this new family, you have to be

born of water and the Spirit."

### Jesus Clears Up Nicodemus' Confusion

Even though many people thought Nicodemus was one of the smartest men in the city, he could not understand what Jesus was saying.

"I don't know what you mean," Nicodemus replied.

Jesus replied, "You are a teacher of Israel and yet you do not understand these things? For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."

Jesus was explaining that He was God and that by believing in Him, Nicodemus could gain eternal life. But in order to become a part of God's family, it was also necessary to be born again by getting baptized and receiving the Holy Spirit. Water baptism washes away people's sins, meaning that God has forgiven them. The Holy Spirit is important because it helps people understand God better.

After talking with Jesus for a long time, Nicodemus finally understood more about God's kingdom. He went back home very excited, because he was able to learn so much about God's salvation.

### Final Thoughts

Boys and girls, Nicodemus was an amazing learner! What can we learn from his learning attitude? [Wait for response.] Yes, he was eager to learn about the truth and about God. When he didn't understand, he kept asking questions. That's something we can all learn from Nicodemus! Don't be afraid to ask your teachers or parents questions when you don't understand something. They will give you wiser advice than your friends will give you. Better yet, you can come to the Lord in prayer. Tell God your doubts and troubles and ask Him to help you. You might be surprised at how God works wonders through the Holy Spirit to lead and guide your life!

## CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

- 1. Who was Nicodemus?** He was a high-ranking Pharisee who was highly respected by others.
- 2. Why did Nicodemus want to see Jesus?** He wanted to learn more about God's word.
- 3. When did Nicodemus go to see Jesus?** He went to see Jesus during the night to avoid being seen by other Pharisees.
- 4. What were some things that Nicodemus already knew about Jesus before he went to see Him?** Nicodemus knew that Jesus had great power and was a teacher sent by God to help people.
- 5. What did Jesus say a person must do to enter the kingdom of God?** A person must be born from Spirit and water, which means to receive the Holy Spirit and water baptism.
- 6. Why is it important to be baptized?** It's important because our sins are forgiven through water baptism.
- 7. Why is it important to have the Holy Spirit?** It is important because the Holy Spirit is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance in heaven (Eph 1:14). The Holy Spirit can help us when we pray. The Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express (Rom 8:26).
- 8. What must you do to receive the Holy Spirit?** We must repent of our sins first since God is a holy God. Then, we need to pray earnestly and not give up in praying. When He decides the time is right, He will grant us the precious Holy Spirit.

## MEMORY VERSE PRACTICE

Please reinforce the memory verse every week.  
You can practice the memory verse with your students anytime during class.

**"Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God." (John 3:5b)**

**SPIRITUAL TEACHING & LIFE APPLICATION**

**Be Born Again**

Just like many people today, Nicodemus was very curious about the kingdom of God. He was keen to know the truth about this “kingdom,” which Jesus was preaching to people from one city to another. In the end, Nicodemus went to see Jesus, and he finally got an answer. Do you remember what Jesus said to him? [Let students answer.] He said, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” Jesus revealed to Nicodemus that if he wanted to enter the kingdom of God, he must be “born again.” What does this mean? Nicodemus himself was puzzled then. How is it possible for Nicodemus, or for us, to be born again?

Nicodemus had exactly this question in his mind, which he openly asked the Lord in John 3:4. Jesus explained that to be “born again” means to receive water baptism and the Holy Spirit. In other words, after we have been baptized and received the Holy Spirit, we are a new person in God’s eyes. We have been “born again”! But this time, we are born as the children of God. Our heavenly Father rejoices as a father who sees his child for the first time! Jesus said very clearly that **“unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.”** When we are born again, we become a part of God’s kingdom, as His special chosen ones. Moreover, since only His children belong to His household, only those who are baptized and have received the Holy Spirit can go to His kingdom in heaven!

In fact, Jesus was referring to a spiritual rebirth—that is, to be “born again” spiritually, not physically! We cannot go back to our mother’s womb and be born again as infants.

**Water Baptism and the Holy Spirit**

Today, no one is naturally born as a child of God because we all have sin. However, through water baptism our sins are washed away. Acts 2:38 tells us that baptism washes away our sins: “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.” In addition, baptism saves us by washing away our sins (1 Pet 3:21). Everyone can choose to become a child of God through baptism—a spiritual rebirth. 2 Corinthians 5:17 says, “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.” Once a person is baptized into Christ, he is a “new creation”! His sins have passed away because God has forgiven his sins, and now he is determined to follow the new ways, according to the truth of God that will lead him to the heavenly kingdom.

teachings of the Bible and do the right thing? After all, we are human, and humans make mistakes. This is why God also gave us the Holy Spirit—a personal counselor that gives us wisdom to know what is right in God’s eyes and what is not (Jn 14:26). He helps us understand the word of God and follow it. He guides us on the right path to the kingdom of God. Without the Holy Spirit, we would be lost sheep without guidance—unsure of the way home back to our Father in heaven. If a person who has been baptized continues to walk in the way of sin, he will never reach the heavenly kingdom. Only those who obey the word of God will see His kingdom as their destination. This is why Jesus said both water baptism and the Holy Spirit are necessary for our salvation.

But being a child of God can be challenging at times. Are there times when you feel it is difficult to obey the

[Show students the provided Spiritual Teaching and Life Application illustrations.]

**Water Baptism and the Holy Spirit**

Of course, the Holy Spirit doesn’t give us verbal directions when guiding us on the path of God. Rather, the Holy Spirit moves us in every important situation so that we do not choose to walk on the wrong path.

[Go through each scenario in the chart below with your students. Allow them to share how each situation may change with the help of the Holy Spirit.]

Situation	How does the Holy Spirit help me?
“If I tell the truth, Mom will be so angry with me. It’s better to lie...”	When I feel that it is “better” or “easier” to disobey God, the Holy Spirit <b>strengthens me</b> to do what is right in God’s eyes.

Situation (cont.)	How does the Holy Spirit help me? (cont.)
"My friends told me to help them lie to the teacher. I don't know if I should help them or not."	When I don't know which way is the right way, the Holy Spirit <b>gives me wisdom</b> to know which way pleases God.
"I see an old lady on her wheelchair having trouble opening the door to a store. Should I help her?"	When I hesitate to do good, the Holy Spirit <b>helps me bear fruit</b> .
"I really don't like my new school. I'm not very happy here. I don't know why God let this happen to me."	When I feel sad, the Holy Spirit <b>comforts me</b> and gives me hope and joy.
"I want to play piano for the church, but I don't think I'm good enough."	When I serve, the Holy Spirit <b>empowers me</b> to work for the Lord.

None of us can rely on our own power to reach God in heaven. However, God gives all of us a chance to enter His kingdom by sending us His Spirit to help us. All we have to

do is to pray for His power to fill us always and follow where the Spirit leads us.

### Understand that our life truly changes after being born again in Christ

#### Materials

- Pictures of items that reflect early childhood (e.g., pacifiers, diapers, strollers, etc.)
- Pictures of items that reflect the students' current life (e.g., computers, homework, books, etc.)
- Three paper bags

#### Instructions

1. Fill one paper bag with all of the pictures.
2. Label one empty paper bag with "Old Me" and the other with "New Me."
3. Show students the paper bag that is filled with all the pictures.
4. Pour all the pictures out on the table. Ask the students to make a decision about each item to see whether it should go into the "Old Me" paper bag or the "New Me" paper bag.
5. When they are done sorting, talk to the students about how we can see changes in our life through the different things we have used or needed in different life stages. What are some changes in our personality, attitude, love for God, love for others, etc., that have taken place?
6. Draw two columns on the board labeled "Old Me" and "New Me." Encourage students to think about their own physical, personal, and spiritual growth from their kindergarten years to now.
7. Write the students' reflections on the board. If they can't think of many examples, you can share your own observations of the students' recent growth. Some examples include:

- Not being able to dress themselves before, but now no help is needed to get dressed
  - Not wanting to brush their teeth before bedtime, but now they try hard to keep their mouth clean
  - Being able to pay attention in class without being disruptive
  - Showing more love to their peers by helping them out
  - Showing more love to God by helping out in church, such as by cleaning up the classroom after class
  - Praying harder for the Holy Spirit by focusing better in prayers
  - Reading the Bible more, whether with parent(s) or by oneself
  - Guiding younger siblings to behave well
8. Celebrate these growths by offering a thanksgiving prayer together. You can start the prayer and have each student give thanks by recalling one example of growth he/she has experienced recently.

## HOMework ANSWER KEY

1. Pharisee
2. God
3. Jesus, night
4. baptized, Holy Spirit
5. B
6. C
7. A
8. C
9. Answers may vary.

## ACTIVITY

**1**

### Acting Out the Memory Verse

**Objective:** To familiarize the students with today's memory verse so they will be able to recite it by heart.

Review today's memory verse with the class:

**“Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.” (John 3:5b)**

1. Divide students into two teams and form two lines facing the back wall, perpendicular to the wall. Have each team pick a person to come to the front of the room. This person has to decide how they can use different gestures to best describe the memory verse.
2. As soon as these two people have their gestures figured out, they will go to the first person in line and tap that person on the shoulder to make them turn around. They will then silently perform their descriptive gestures to the person who has just turned around. They should recite the Bible verse while going through the gestures. Remind the students that there should be neither peeking nor turning around before their shoulder is tapped. They should patiently wait for their turn.
3. As soon as the next person learns the gestures, he or she has to pass on the correct gestures to the next person. After everyone has had a turn, ask the students at the very end of each line to come up and show the gestures they learned while reciting the verse. Have the first person in line re-do their original gestures to compare. Whichever team has passed on the most accurate gestures wins!

**2 The Homeowner's Manual for the Holy Spirit**

**Objective:** To help students see that the Holy Spirit is our guide in life.

**Materials**

- Paper
- Pencils
- Large-sized poster paper or whiteboard/blackboard

**Instructions**

Ask the students if their mom and dad have rules around the house that they have to follow and have them share some of the different rules. Some of them might include: making their beds, taking out the trash, setting the table, practicing an instrument, doing homework, no TV during weekdays, no sweets until meals are finished, etc.

Why do your parents set all these rules and limits for you? [Pause for responses.] Yes, it is because they love you. They want you to grow up healthy and learn good habits. It's better for you when you know what is right from wrong starting at an early age.

So, even though many of us have not received the Holy Spirit yet, does it mean that God's Holy Spirit won't take care of us or help us unless we start speaking in tongues? Of course not, God's Spirit is always looking after us and finding every possible way to guide us onto the right track.

Now think of the Holy Spirit as a person. If He were writing rules for your home, what rules would they be? Some clues can be found in Luke 10:27: Jesus said, "Love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind." How would you take care of your mind? Your body? Your heart?

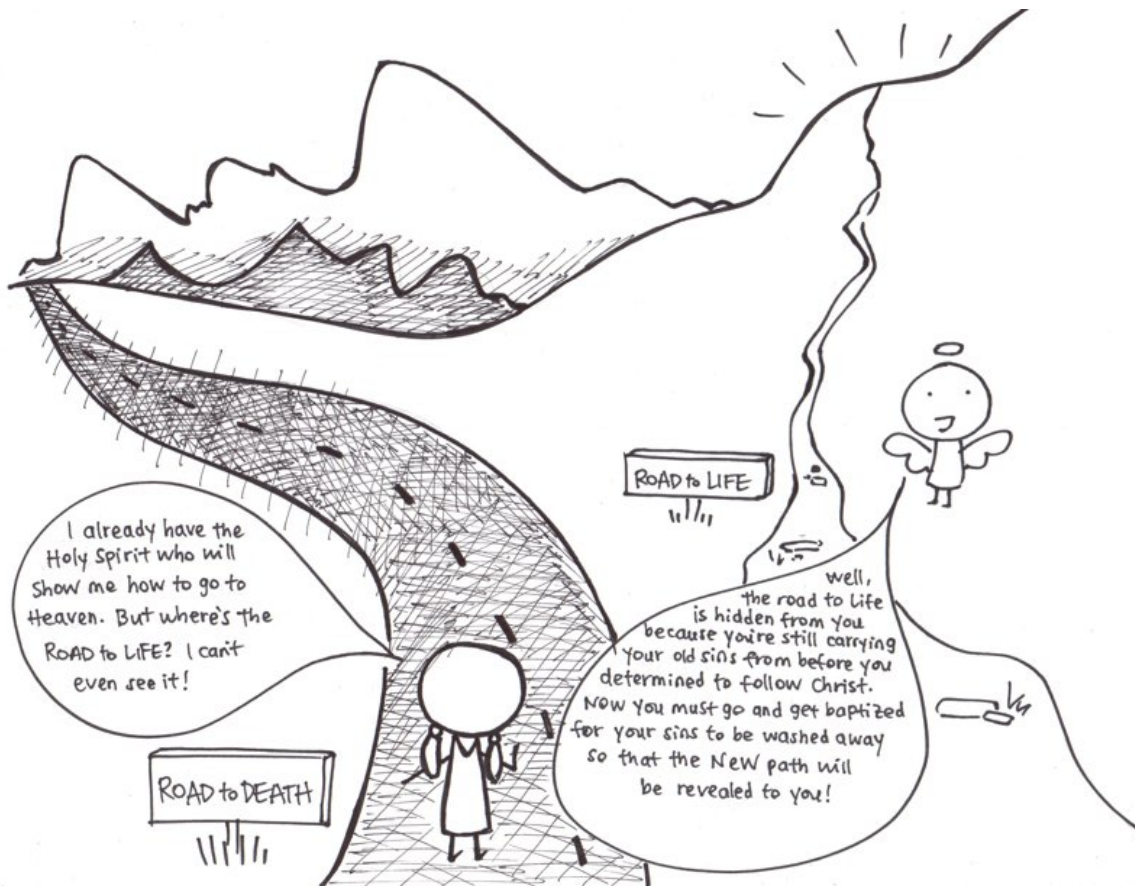
Today, you're going to write a "Homeowner's Manual for the Holy Spirit." A homeowner's manual offers tips and useful advice to take care of your home. For this manual, what represents your home? Are we talking about a physical house? No! Your body is the temple of God, which is the home that the Holy Spirit really wants you to take care of. How would the Holy Spirit want you to take care of your home? What would He want you to do? What would He want you to stay away from? How would you love God with all of your heart, soul, strength, and mind?

Divide the students into groups of two or three. Distribute paper and pencils. They will write a "Homeowner's Manual for the Holy Spirit." Have them fold their paper into fourths so that there are four blocks to write in. At the top of one block, have them write "HEART." In the second block, have them write "SOUL." In the third, "STRENGTH." And in the fourth, "MIND." Have them think of ways they can take care of each of these areas of their life. Give students time to brainstorm. After a few minutes, regroup and discuss their ideas, writing them on the large-sized poster paper or blackboard/whiteboard. Here are some suggestions for reference:

<b>HEART</b>	<b>SOUL</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Always think of God's word and His teachings from the Bible (Ps 1:1-3).</li> <li>2. Protect your heart from sin. "The heart is deceitful above all things" (Jer 17:9).</li> <li>3. Forgive people who have wronged you.</li> <li>4. Be thankful all the time—Do not complain.</li> <li>5. Have a humble and joyful heart.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Pray daily to draw closer to God.</li> <li>2. Pray for the Holy Spirit and pray for the fullness of the Holy Spirit if you have already received the Holy Spirit.</li> </ol>
<b>STRENGTH</b>	<b>MIND</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Serve God with the talents that He has given you.</li> <li>2. Help others in church and outside of church.</li> <li>3. Think about God and think of others who may need your help.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Protect your mind from sin. Be careful of what you see on TV or the Internet.</li> <li>2. Listen to music with good lyrics. Read books that honor God.</li> <li>3. Surround yourself with good friends—people who will encourage you to do the right thing.</li> <li>4. Study God's word.</li> </ol>

Others:

- BODY:** 1. Exercise. 2. Eat a balanced diet. 3. Get enough sleep. 4. Shower every day.





## E1 Year 3 Book 2 Lesson 1—Be Born Again

**Homework Assignment**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Bible Truth:** Everyone must be baptized and receive the Holy Spirit to enter the kingdom of God.**Lesson Objectives:** 1. To introduce the working of the Holy Spirit.  
2. To emphasize the importance of spiritual rebirth.**Bible Reading:** Please put a check mark in the space when you complete the reading each day.**Prayer:** Please put a check mark in the space on the days you prayed to God.

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Bible Reading							
Prayer							

**Memory Verse**

Please write down this week's memory verse.

(John 3:5b)

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**What I Learned from the Bible This Week**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

# Homework Assignment

*Understanding What You Have Learned*

## Fill In the Blank

Holy Spirit	Pharisee	Jesus	God	baptized	night
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- Nicodemus was a \_\_\_\_\_.
- Nicodemus wanted to know more about the kingdom of \_\_\_\_\_.
- Nicodemus went to see \_\_\_\_\_ during \_\_\_\_\_ time.
- Jesus told Nicodemus that in order to be saved, he had to be \_\_\_\_\_ and receive the \_\_\_\_\_.

## Multiple Choice

- \_\_\_\_ : Why did Nicodemus want to see Jesus?
  - He wanted to help the Pharisees to trap Jesus.
  - He wanted to learn more about God.
  - None of the above.
- \_\_\_\_ : How did the Pharisees feel about Jesus?
  - They loved Jesus dearly.
  - They wanted to be Jesus' friend.
  - They hated Jesus and wanted to kill Him.
- \_\_\_\_ : Which statement below is correct?
  - Jesus said that everyone who wants to be saved must be born again.
  - We need to take a shower every day to wash away our sins.
  - We need to grow out our hair to receive the Holy Spirit.
- \_\_\_\_ : What can we learn from Nicodemus?
  - He was not afraid to ask questions about things that he didn't understand.
  - He had a humble heart to learn from Jesus.
  - All of the above.

## Life Application: Your Questions for Jesus

- If you were granted a one-on-one session with Jesus like Nicodemus was, what questions would you ask Him about being born of the water and the Holy Spirit? Write down three questions below.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_