



The Gospel of John: *Know Jesus and Live*

Part 6

Introduction

The theme of our study through John is based on John 20:30-31

John 20:30-31 – Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; 31 but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

John states that he is giving us signs that Jesus did in order that we might believe that Jesus is who he says he is so that we might have life in Jesus. As we will see in our study today, John shows that more than just signs are needed to have true faith in Christ. The signs are necessary because they reveal who Jesus is, but the signs themselves do not create true faith. Signs strengthen true, saving faith. The signs are one of John's witnesses of Jesus (John 5:36; 10:25, 32, 37-38; 15:24). If the number of signs was important, there were plenty of others that could have been included. At the end of John we read

John 21:25 – Now there are also many other things that Jesus did. Were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.

Jesus Knows Us

- **John 2:23-25 – Now when he was in Jerusalem at the Passover Feast, many believed in his name when they saw the signs that he was doing. 24 But Jesus on his part did not entrust himself to them, because he knew all people 25 and needed no one to bear witness about man, for he himself knew what was in man.**

All belief is not real belief. The Greek word for "believed" in verse 23 is the same Greek word that is translated "entrust" in verse 24. In other words, many believed in Jesus but he did not believe in them.

John shows Jesus' omniscience. Jesus does not need character witnesses on our behalf to determine who we really are.

Jeremiah 17:10 – "I the Lord search the heart and test the mind, to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his deeds."

1 Samuel 16:7 – But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the Lord sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart."

Next John gives two examples of Jesus knowing what is in man. These two are opposite extremes.

Chapter 3 – Nicodemus	Chapter 4 – Woman at the well
Jew (Pharisee)	Samaritan
Man	Woman
Moral	Immoral
Rich	Poor

As we will see, no matter your status or education, you must be born again.



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Nicodemus

- **John 3:1 – Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews.**

Note the connection with verse 25 of chapter 2.

*John 2:25-3:1 – and needed no one to bear witness about **man**, for he himself knew what was in **man**. Now there was a **man** of the Pharisees...*

The Pharisee party arose as a reaction to Greek influence on the Jews. Many felt that observance of the law had become too lax. True religion became strict observance of the law.

Nicodemus was a member of the Sanhedrin, the ruling council. The Sanhedrin was also formed during the period of Greek influence (100 to 200 years before Christ). It was composed of the high priests (current and previous), elders (family heads), and scribes.

- **John 3:2 – This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him.”**

Why does John record that Nicodemus came to Jesus at night?

1. Nicodemus was afraid to come during the day.
2. Nicodemus knew he could be alone with Jesus at night.
3. This is part of John’s contrast between “light” and “darkness” and between “day” and “night.”
John 1:4-5 – In him was life, and the life was the light of men. 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

John 3:19-21 – And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. 20 For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed. 21 But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God.

John 9:4-5 – We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. 5 As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.

John 11:9-10 – Jesus answered, “Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. 10 But if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him.”

John 13:30 – So, after receiving the morsel of bread, he immediately went out. And it was night.

Nicodemus has seen the signs and recognizes that Jesus is special. He calls Jesus “Rabbi,” which means teacher. However, Nicodemus’ description of Jesus is no different than describing a prophet such as Elijah or Elisha. Nicodemus’ response is different from Philip’s response to Jesus in chapter 1.

John 1:47-49 – Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him and said of him, “Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit!” 48 Nathanael said to him, “How do you know me?” Jesus answered him,



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"Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you." 49 Nathanael answered him, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!"

You Must Be Born Again

- **John 3:3-8** – Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." 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?" 5 Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, 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 its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit."

Jesus goes a completely different direction from Nicodemus. Nicodemus mentions the signs that Jesus has been performing. Jesus did not tell Nicodemus that he was an astute observer or that Nicodemus was correct that he was from God. Jesus tells Nicodemus that he must be born again. John is expanding on what he said in the beginning of chapter 1.

John 1:12-13 – But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, 13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

Ever since Jimmy Carter was president the culture speaks of "born again Christians." Chuck Colson, one of the Watergate conspirators, wrote his now famous book, *Born Again*. Unfortunately, there is much misunderstanding in the culture and the church concerning being "born again."

There are some questions we must answer about rebirth (being born again).

1. What is rebirth?
2. Who accomplishes rebirth?
3. When does rebirth happen?
4. What is the result of rebirth?
5. How is rebirth accomplished?

Here is a table that will help us answer these questions.

Verse	Born Reference	Result
3	Born again	see the kingdom of God
5	Born of water and the Spirit	enter the kingdom of God
6	Born of the flesh	flesh
6	Born of the Spirit	spirit
7	Born again	
8	Born of the Spirit	



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What Is Rebirth?

Born again = born a second time or born from above. Nicodemus seems to think of it as “born again,” but the reference to the Spirit throughout this passage clearly also includes the idea of “born from above.” The theological term is regeneration.

Note the parallels between verses 3 and 5. Both reference the kingdom of God. Seeing the kingdom of God and entering the kingdom of God refer to the same thing. So the “born again” in verse 3 parallels “born of water and the Spirit” in verse 5. Thus, “born of water and the Spirit” tells us what “born again” means. Everyone agrees that the “Spirit” part is a work of the Holy Spirit. The issue is what does “born of water” mean?

1. Since verse 6 speaks of two births, one natural and one spiritual, “born of water” means physical birth with the water referring to the amniotic fluid surrounding the baby in the womb. When physical birth happens the mother’s “water breaks.” This is what I was always taught but this view, although true in that one must be physically born to experience new birth, is not supported by Scripture. Jesus is not emphasizing the need for physical birth in order to be born again.
2. Water refers to Christian baptism. This is a popular view but this would have no meaning to Nicodemus. Also, the rest of Scripture is clear that baptism, although associated with entering the kingdom of God, it is not necessary for entering the kingdom of God. Jesus said in verse 7, “You must be born again,” which, as we saw, “born again” equates to “born of water and the Spirit.” According to verse 5 both are required.
3. Water refers to John the Baptist’s baptism. Nicodemus’ response shows that he did not take it this way. As with Christian baptism John’s baptism cannot be a requirement for new birth.
4. Given that verse 5 is a parallel of verse 3, verse 5 must be referring to one birth not two. Also, Jesus expected Nicodemus as a “teacher of Israel” to understand this.

John 3:9-10 – Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?” 10 Jesus answered him, “Are you the teacher of Israel and yet you do not understand these things?”

Thus, Jesus is saying we should look to the Old Testament for understanding. He is telling us to interpret Scripture with Scripture. What does the Old Testament say about water and the Spirit?

Ezekiel 36:25-27 – I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. 26 And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. 27 And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.

Joel 2:28-29 – “And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. 29 Even on the male and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit.

Titus 3:4-6 – But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, 5 he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own



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mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, 6 whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior.

So being born from above means to be washed clean and brought alive by the Spirit.

Who Accomplishes Rebirth?

Verse 6 contrasts flesh and spirit. In this case flesh represents the human body rather than sinful human nature. However, this flesh is fallen. Galatians 4:29 shows the difference between born of the flesh and born of the Spirit.

*Galatians 4:29 – But just as at that time he who was **born according to the flesh** persecuted him who was **born according to the Spirit**, so also it is now.*

Flesh cannot produce anything spiritual.

*John 1:12-13 – But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, 13 who were born, **not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man**, but of God.*

*John 6:63 – It is the Spirit who gives life; **the flesh is no help at all**. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.*

*Romans 8:7-8 – For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, **it cannot**. 8 Those who are in the flesh **cannot** please God.*

*1 Corinthians 2:14 – The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is **not able** to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.*

Both verse 6 and verse 8 speak of being “born of the Spirit.” Jesus became flesh so that we could be “born of the Spirit.”

John 1:14 – And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Romans 8:3 – For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh.

Only God through the Son by the Holy Spirit can bring life to those who are spiritually dead.

*John 1:12-13 – But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, 13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, **but of God**.*

*John 6:63 – **It is the Spirit who gives life**; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.*

*Romans 8:9-10 – You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. 10 But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, **the Spirit is life** because of righteousness.*

*Ephesians 2:4-5 – But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our trespasses, **made us alive** together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—*



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*1 Peter 1:3 – Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, **he has caused us to be born again** to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead*

When Does Rebirth Happen?

There are two options for when someone is born again.

1. When they decide to be born again. (Faith precedes regeneration.)
2. When God decides to give them life. (Regeneration precedes faith.)

Given what we've just discussed concerning the power of the flesh you would think that option 2 would be the only option. What decisions does a dead person make? When did Lazarus decide to walk out from his tomb?

Many take the "must" of "You must be born again" in verse 7 to mean that we have a moral duty to make a decision for Christ. Thus, they try to persuade people to "make a decision" to be born again. What they mean is they want people to repent and come to faith in Christ. We are not commanded to be born again, we are commanded to repent (Acts 17:30). The "must" here means that it is a prerequisite to everything else. We cannot repent without being reborn.

However, let's restrict our thinking to the scenario here. How did we participate in our physical birth? Did our mothers ask us if we would like to be born and have life? Did our mothers ask for our help during the birthing process?

Just as we had nothing to do with when we were born physically, so also we have nothing to do with when we are born spiritually. Jesus compared spiritual birth with the blowing of the wind. (The same Greek word, *pneuma*, is used for wind and spirit.) We can see the effect of the wind but we have no control over the wind. Just as God controls the wind, he controls when we are born again.

*Galatians 1:15-16 – But when he who had set me apart before I was born, and who called me by his grace, 16 was **pleased to reveal his Son to me**, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately consult with anyone;*

Knowing this should eliminate any motivation to try to manipulate people into the kingdom. God doesn't want us to manipulate people, just tell them the truth. Also, this means that just because someone does not respond when you tell them about Christ that they never will.

1 Corinthians 3:4-9 – What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, as the Lord assigned to each. 6 I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. 7 So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. 8 He who plants and he who waters are one, and each will receive his wages according to his labor. 9 For we are God's fellow workers. You are God's field, God's building.

What Is The Result Of Rebirth?

Many think that faith and repentance are necessary for new birth. However, the Scripture is clear that faith and repentance are the result of new birth. So at the moment of regeneration we are given the



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faith we need to turn to Christ in repentance. Just as after birth, a child learns to love and obey his or her parents, after our new birth we immediately turn to Jesus for salvation (justification) and we begin the process of growing in Christ (sanctification). Also, he finishes the process (glorification).

*Ephesians 2:8-10 – For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; **it is the gift of God**, 9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast. 10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.*

*2 Timothy 2:24-26 – And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, 25 correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps **grant them repentance** leading to a knowledge of the truth, 26 and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will.*

*John 6:64-65 – “But there are some of you who do not believe.” (For Jesus knew from the beginning who those were who did not believe, and who it was who would betray him.) 65 And he said, “This is why I told you that **no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father.**”*

*1 John 2:29 – If you know that he is righteous, you may be sure that everyone who practices righteousness **has been born** of him.*

*1 John 3:9 – No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him, and he cannot keep on sinning because he **has been born** of God.*

*1 John 5:1 – Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ **has been born** of God, and everyone who loves the Father loves whoever **has been born** of him.*

*1 John 5:18 – We know that everyone who **has been born** of God does not keep on sinning, but he who was born of God protects him, and the evil one does not touch him.*

*Philippians 1:6 – And I am sure of this, that **he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion** at the day of Jesus Christ.*

Our passage here says that the one who is born again sees and enters the kingdom of God. (The kingdom of God is only mentioned in John's gospel here and at Jesus' trial in chapter 18.) The significance that this should have had to Nicodemus is this is the kingdom prophesied in the Old Testament.

Isaiah 9:6-7 – For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

Zechariah 9:9-10 – Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. 10 I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the war horse from Jerusalem; and the battle bow shall be cut off, and he shall speak peace to the nations; his rule shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth.

The Gospels equate entering the kingdom of God to entering life.



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*Mark 9:43-47 – And if your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to **enter life** crippled than with two hands to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire. 45 And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to **enter life** lame than with two feet to be thrown into hell. 47 And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out. It is better for you to **enter the kingdom of God** with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into hell*

I Must Be Lifted Up

- **John 3:9-15 – Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?” 10 Jesus answered him, “Are you the teacher of Israel and yet you do not understand these things? 11 Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know, and bear witness to what we have seen, but you do not receive our testimony. 12 If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things? 13 No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. 14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, 15 that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.**

Nicodemus can't understand the new birth at all. He has been taught and has been teaching others that entrance to the kingdom of God is through obedience. What Jesus is saying that entrance into the kingdom is completely out of his control. This truth is resisted and rejected by every person that has lived or will live. Only by God's effectual grace do we understand that only he has the power to regenerate. Note that Jesus said that as Israel's teacher Nicodemus should have understood this. Look again at Ezekiel 36.

*Ezekiel 36:22-30 – “Therefore say to the house of Israel, Thus says the Lord God: It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act, but for the sake of my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations to which you came. 23 And **I will** vindicate the holiness of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, and which you have profaned among them. And the nations will know that I am the Lord, declares the Lord God, when through you I vindicate my holiness before their eyes. 24 **I will** take you from the nations and gather you from all the countries and bring you into your own land. 25 **I will** sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols **I will** cleanse you. 26 And **I will** give you a new heart, and a new spirit **I will** put within you. And **I will** remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. 27 And **I will** put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules. 28 You shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers, and you shall be my people, and **I will** be your God. 29 And **I will** deliver you from all your uncleannesses. And **I will** summon the grain and make it abundant and lay no famine upon you. 30 **I will** make the fruit of the tree and the increase of the field abundant, that you may never again suffer the disgrace of famine among the nations.*

Note how many times God say “I will.” Also, Nicodemus failed to understand the significance of the sacrifices. The whole point of the sacrifices was that the people could not obey. That is why sacrifice was needed.



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In verse 12 Jesus says you (plural) do not accept our testimony. The reason is they did not like what Jesus was saying and doing because it pointed out their inability to do what was necessary for salvation. People always reject testimony that speaks of their sinfulness and their need of a savior.

“Earthly things” refers to the new birth since it happens in this life. In other words Jesus is saying that if you can’t accept his teaching on the new birth, you can’t accept his teaching on the result of the new birth. Why discuss the kingdom of God if you don’t believe what Jesus says about the need to be born again. This shows why we should not be surprised when unbelievers want to discuss any theological issue except their sinfulness and their need of Jesus.

Verse 13 is simply saying that if you want to understand heavenly things, you need to listen to the one that is from heaven. The Jews of Jesus’ day had stories of those who had gone into heaven and gotten special knowledge from God and returned to reveal these things. Jesus refutes that.

Proverbs 30:4 – Who has ascended to heaven and come down? Who has gathered the wind in his fists? Who has wrapped up the waters in a garment? Who has established all the ends of the earth? What is his name, and what is his son's name? Surely you know!

Numbers 21 relates the incident of the bronze snake on the pole.

Numbers 21:4-9 – From Mount Hor they set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom. And the people became impatient on the way. 5 And the people spoke against God and against Moses, “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we loathe this worthless food.” 6 Then the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many people of Israel died. 7 And the people came to Moses and said, “We have sinned, for we have spoken against the Lord and against you. Pray to the Lord, that he take away the serpents from us.” So Moses prayed for the people. 8 And the Lord said to Moses, “Make a fiery serpent and set it on a pole, and everyone who is bitten, when he sees it, shall live.” 9 So Moses made a bronze serpent and set it on a pole. And if a serpent bit anyone, he would look at the bronze serpent and live.

Similarities between Numbers 21 and John 3

- Death is the punishment for sin
- God graciously provides a remedy
- Something (or someone) must be lifted up
- Those who look with a believing heart have life

Differences between Numbers 21 and John 3

- Physical death in Numbers 21 and spiritual death in John 3
- The bronze snake had no power to give life whereas Jesus has power to give life.

King Hezekiah had the bronze snake destroyed.

2 Kings 18:4 – He removed the high places and broke the pillars and cut down the Asherah. And he broke in pieces the bronze serpent that Moses had made, for until those days the people of Israel had made offerings to it (it was called Nehushtan).

So **must** the Son of Man be lifted up – a divine necessity



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Mark 8:31 – And he began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed, and after three days rise again.

Luke 24:6-7 – He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, 7 that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and on the third day rise.

So must the Son of Man be **lifted up** – primarily refers to being lifted up on the cross and secondarily to exaltation

John 8:28 – So Jesus said to them, “When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he, and that I do nothing on my own authority, but speak just as the Father taught me.”

John 12:32-34 – And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” 33 He said this to show by what kind of death he was going to die. 34 So the crowd answered him, “We have heard from the Law that the Christ remains forever. How can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?”

Isaiah 52:13 – Behold, my servant shall act wisely; he shall be high and lifted up, and shall be exalted.

Jesus is lifted up so salvation is available to those who believe. Salvation is in Christ and is experienced through faith. When God makes us alive we respond in faith. Regeneration precedes faith, but faith in Christ is absolutely necessary for salvation. Just as fire and heat go together, fire precedes heat in that you must have fire for heat. Heat cannot begin until the fire is lit. As John Piper says, “God’s begetting causes our believing.” God does not believe for us, but he gives us the ability to believe.

How Is Rebirth Accomplished?

God, through the Son and by his Spirit, makes alive all those appointed for eternal life (Acts 13:48), and he does this at just the right time for each one he has chosen. After Ezekiel 36, where we saw the reference to renewal by the Spirit and washing with water, Ezekiel preaches to the valley of dry bones (chapter 37). He preaches to dead people and the bones come together and flesh is placed on the bones and they begin to live.

Ezekiel 37:4-6 – Then he said to me, “Prophesy over these bones, and say to them, O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. 5 Thus says the Lord God to these bones: Behold, I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. 6 And I will lay sinews upon you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live, and you shall know that I am the Lord.”

Jesus told Nicodemus that he must be lifted up and all who believe in him would have eternal life. We lift up Jesus to the world when we preach the Word. In his time and in his way, the Holy Spirit uses the Word to regenerate those who are spiritually dead.

1 Peter 1:22-25 – Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart, 23 since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God; 24 for



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"All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, 25 but the word of the Lord remains forever." And this word is the good news that was preached to you.

James 1:18 – Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

Romans 10:17 – So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.

Ephesians 1:13 – In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit

1 Corinthians 1:21-24 – For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe. 22 For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, 23 but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, 24 but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

Romans 1:16 – For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

Our job is to be faithful stewards of the Word of God.

1 Corinthians 4:1-2 – This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. 2 Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful.

Conclusion

So to tie back to where we started, signs are not a substitute for the preaching of the Word. We believe the gifts of the Spirit continue today but we lift up Jesus by proclaiming what God has revealed to us in the Scriptures. The signs point to Jesus. As we continue through John we'll see that signs testify to who Jesus is and signs draw large crowds, but the signs do not guarantee that the crowds believe Jesus' testimony.

John 5:36-47 – "But the testimony that I have is greater than that of John. For the works that the Father has given me to accomplish, the very works that I am doing, bear witness about me that the Father has sent me. 37 And the Father who sent me has himself borne witness about me. His voice you have never heard, his form you have never seen, 38 and you do not have his word abiding in you, for you do not believe the one whom he has sent. 39 You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me, 40 yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life. 41 I do not receive glory from people. 42 But I know that you do not have the love of God within you. 43 I have come in my Father's name, and you do not receive me. If another comes in his own name, you will receive him. 44 How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another and do not seek the glory that comes from the only God? 45 Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father. There is one who accuses you: Moses, on whom you have set your hope. 46 For if you believed Moses, you would believe me; for he wrote of me. 47 But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe my words?"