



# John on Jesus

## *You Must Be Born Again*

### Small Group Work Sheet

June 24, 2012

### Part 1 - Ice Breaker

How did Norvin's "Christ story" encourage you?



### Part 2 - Sermon Review

1. What was Nicodemus' problem? What made his problem ironic? Do you think we have the same problem?
2. What is the kingdom of heaven? How did Nicodemus think he was getting there?
3. What does it mean to say, "If you are born twice, you die once but if you are born once, you die twice?"
4. How is the born again experience like the wind?
5. According to Ephesians 2, why can't we bring about our own spiritual birth?
6. What does Numbers 21 and Israel's healing by faith in the bronze snake teach us about healing from the venom of sin?
7. Why are all religions inadequate apart from Christ? (combine John 3:3 + John 3:14-15)
8. Born again doesn't just mean healing from the sins we have committed but healing from the sins committed against us. How were you sinned against: In your marriage? In your business? In your family?

### Part 3 - Digging Deeper - Identity Distortions<sup>1</sup>

#### Distortion 1: I am What I Do

You are probably familiar with the practice, of describing yourself by what you do: "My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I'm a \_\_\_\_\_" The recovery movement tends to join a person's identity to his enslaving habits: "Hi, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I'm a \_\_\_\_\_" (e.g., Bill, alcoholic). This can be a subtle trap. We are not what we do, we are who we are in Jesus. Jesus is our identity, not our failures.

<sup>1</sup> Portions taken from Clem, B., & Driscoll, M. (2011). Disciple: Getting your identity from Jesus. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, chapter 4.

Just as allowing ourselves to be defined by our failures is the trap. Allowing ourselves to be defined by our successes is also a trap. We are the track star, the state finalist or the successful business executive. This is a trap. These do not define our identity, Jesus does. A hundred years from now, the only thing that defines our identity is the undeserved love of Jesus.

### **Distortion 2: I am What Has Been Done To Me**

It is easy to believe your identity is your tragedies. You are the failure. You are the rape victim. You are the high school dropout. Your tragedies do not define you, Jesus does. Until I experience the pain of being sinned against, I will lack an understanding of the undeserved forgiveness Jesus extends to me. I am not suggesting injustice, hatred and prejudice are just part of the world we need to deal with. I am suggesting that some one other than Jesus led us to expect a pain-free ride on planet earth. If you find yourself being shaped by the pains and labels of your past, the good news is the new identity Jesus gives allows you to define yourself by the hope and healing he promises rather than the hurt others have inflicted.

### **Distortion 3: I Am My Relationships, Roles And Responsibilities**

What do you think when you hear about a 45 year old single mother of three? What comes to mind when you think of a successful farmer? No matter what circumstances, roles or responsibilities are added or subtracted to our lives, they do not add to or subtract from our identity in Jesus.

What were the identity distortions from which Nicodemus suffered?