

Summary sheet 7 - John 2 vs 23-3vs36 (Part B -3vs16-36)

GOAL of the 1-2-1 study

Realise that only God makes entry to the kingdom possible

Context – how does this passage fit in?

In John 2.1-25 we saw that Jesus is the Messiah come to bring in the 'Messianic age', aka the kingdom of God, the eternal new creation prophesied in places like Isaiah 25:6-8. But we were taken aback by the clash at the temple showing that Jesus is the divine judge who won't tolerate sin. This raised two questions – **HOW** does someone enter the Messianic kingdom? & **WHO** enters? This passage mainly answers the **HOW?** And chapter 4 mainly answers the **WHO?** We're starting to see some of the ideas from the Executive Summary (eg 1.5-13 - what Jesus has come to do and why we need to believe in him to have life) unpacked.

Impact on us

Helping us be clear that no human can enter God's kingdom on their own merits or credentials but that the necessary new start of 'new birth' only comes through God's work, in his time, received by faith in Jesus.

How John writes to make his point

Jesus teaches in this passage that entry to God's kingdom is only possible through God's work of spiritual rebirth. This is enabled by the Spirit as people believe in Jesus. This teaching is really important! We're shown this a number of ways – eg Jesus saying 3 times "Truly, truly"; repetition of key ideas like 'born', 'Spirit', 'witness'; John the Baptist's authentication of Jesus by saying something very similar to Jesus in v22-36; and the shock of Israel's 'teacher' Nicodemus being on the outside of the Kingdom (in comparison to the disreputable Samaritan woman (ch4)).

Structure

2vs23-3vs3: No one can enter without rebirth

3vs4-8: Rebirth is only possible through God's work by his Spirit

3vs9-21: Rebirth (new life) can only happen through belief in Jesus

>because vs 16-18 Jesus, God's Son, has been sent so people can have life not condemnation

>and vs19-21 many people reject Jesus because they prefer the darkness

3vs22-36: John the Baptist says the same thing as Jesus, providing authentication

John's references to the OT and why they matter – vs 3.16-36

- "**The bridegroom**" - John the Baptist refers to Jesus as the bridegroom in v29. In doing so he is referring to Jesus as the fulfillment of OT passages - such as Isaiah 54vs4-8 and Hosea 2vs19 - where God's future kingdom is described as a wedding banquet with God as the bridegroom betrothing himself to his bride (his people).

Some questions – vs 3.16-36

Opener: John's Gospel has a lot to say about 'belief' or in other words, 'faith'. But it can seem vague and confusing, how would you explain what it means to have faith in Jesus?

Considering the text1: From verses 16 – 18, why does Jesus say we should believe in him?

Considering the text2: From verses 19 – 21, why do some people reject Jesus?

Considering the text3: What are the similarities between what John the Baptist says in verses 27 – 36 and what Jesus has said in 3vs1-21? What does this emphasise? What reasons does John give his own disciples about why they should believe in Jesus?

One to keep chewing on: How high are the stakes in the choice to believe in Jesus or not?