

# Weekly Study Guide

The week of January 27, 2013

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## Daily Readings

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Monday	John 1:29-34	Tuesday	John 3:1-8	Wednesday	John 3:9-21
Thursday	John 3:22-36	Friday	Number 21:4-9	Saturday	2 Kings 18:1-6

*My notes on this week's readings...*

## Next Week in Worship

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**Next week's message:** *Healing at the Pool*

**Next week's readings:** John 5:1-15; Acts 3:1-10

All of us have some pain and brokenness in life. Sometimes we can get strangely attached to things that hurt us. In next week's Bible reading, Jesus asks a man "Do you want to be well?" before he brings healing into his life. Join us as our Shine series continues to teach us about the life and character of Jesus.



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# Group Discussion

Connect

Have you ever gone through a significant restart in life? What was that like?

Learn

The story of Jesus and Nicodemus can be a little complicated. **Read John 3:1-21** out loud in your group to help you get oriented to the story.

In a very famous passage, Jesus tells Nicodemus that he must be “born again,” a phrase which could also very easily be translated as “born from above.”

- When you first read this, what kinds of things does it make you think?
- As you read Nicodemus’ response in 3:4 and Jesus’ explanation in 3:5-8, do you think Jesus means something more like “again” or “from above”?
- Jesus said that we must be born “of water and the Spirit.” That sounds mysterious, but John the Baptist had already said something about water and Spirit in John 1:29-34. How might that earlier passage shape the way we understand this one?
- In describing a new start, does the phrase “born again/from above” communicate anything different to you from other phrases that Christians sometimes use, such as “a second chance” or “a clean slate”? What do you think is different?
- Jesus and Nicodemus were both teachers or leaders among the Jewish people, who thought of their status before God as coming from how they were already born into God’s family. Jesus’ insistence on a new birth is challenging. It suggests that something is missing or wrong with what they’ve already got. How do you feel about this challenging implication as it applies to your own life?

This story begins and ends with the imagery of light and dark, which are very important in the story of Jesus’ life as John tells it to us.

- Make a quick list of all the places in this story where you see light and darkness in this passage.
- Jesus seems to want to move Nicodemus out of “night” (v. 2) into light (v. 21), but that is a journey we sometimes resist. Why do people “love the darkness instead of the light?”
- What kinds of things are difficult for people to bring into the light?
- Have you ever had an experience of coming into the light? What was that like?

Apply

The new birth is both a one time event and also an ongoing process. Is there some way that this passage is inviting you to submit to God’s renewal in your life?

Pray

Do you see darkness that needs to be overcome? Read John 1:5, and pray today for God’s light to shine in our lives and in our world.