



SERIES: September 2022 – February 2023 Believe

SPEAKER: NAT CRAWFORD

Wednesday, September 21, 2022

Scripture: John 3:4-8

TITLE: Born Again?

Terminator 2 is one of the most iconic films from the 1990s, if not of all time. And there's this scene where Sarah Conner is running from the Terminator. In the first film, the Terminator came to kill her, but in the sequel, he came to save her and her son, John. Well, the Terminator reaches out his hand and says, "Come with me if you want to live." She can't believe it. She is in shock, but she has a choice to make. Trust and live or reject and die.

Jesus offered a Pharisee a similar proposition. It's our proposition today. What did Jesus say? Turn with me to John 3:4-8 to find out.

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?" Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' 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."

Nicodemus sought out Jesus at night. They are having a private conversation about salvation. Jesus tells Nicodemus in verse 3, "You must be born again to inherit the Kingdom of God." And now Nicodemus is shocked. He's wrestling with this idea. "How can someone be born again. This is physically impossible!"

So Jesus says, "Look, unless someone is born of water and Spirit, he cannot get into heaven." There's debate as to what water means. The Spirit is the Holy Spirit. That's agreed upon. So what is the water? Some people think it simply refers to physical birth. Others think it refers to baptism whether believer's baptism or John's baptism. Contextually and culturally, I don't think physical birth or believers baptism makes any sense. Possibly there is a connection to the work of John as we just read about his ministry in chapter 2. But it likely is symbolic of cleansing and restoration as in Ezekiel 36.

Then Jesus says, "Do not marvel." Pick up your jaw and get over it. Settle the matter. Yes, it is a miracle; you must be born again. Your works won't save you. Your legalism won't earn your way to God. It is the work of the Spirit who will change your heart. So change your thinking. Repent of your sins and your religion and be born again. Let the Spirit transform your heart.

This is the battle for every person today. Jesus says, "Come with me if you want eternal life." We have a choice to make. Do we go all in on religion and our ability to save ourselves or throw our souls at the mercy of Jesus? You can't do both. We all have a choice.

So here's my challenge for you today: declare your choice. In the quiet of your heart and in the comments below, declare your choice. Do you think your good works or religion can save you? If so, why or how? Or do you think that Jesus is the only way? If so, why? Settle it. Choose it today and declare it.

When we make our choice to trust Jesus, we will win the day.