

Answering the Unbeliever

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[0:00] John chapter 3, verses 9-12, if you would please stand with me as we honor the reading of God's word together.

! How can these things be? Jesus answered him, Are you the teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things? 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.

If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things? May God add a blessing to the reading of his word. Would you please be seated? When I was in about the third grade, I went to church camp for the very first time.

And it wasn't long after being at the camp that I had learned from some of the older campers about the legend of Ice Pick Jack. The legend went something like this.

There was a young boy, a young camper, who, like myself, had been visiting the camp for the first time. And for whatever reason, the other kids would pick on him.

[1:30] And they just kept picking on him to the point where he was so upset. And so what he thought to do, according to the story, was to take an ice pick from the cafeteria.

And the next time the kids were teasing him, he wanted to scare them, so he pulled it out of his pants and he was chasing them around the camp with it. And the story continues to say that he chased them up a big hill that had a rocky facade and he lost his balance.

And he went tumbling down that rocky facade and tragically landed on the ice pick and lost his life. And they said, so now, what happens at the camp is that every time we gather, right, that ice pick Jack will come in to your camp, your cabin, whenever you're sleeping, and he'll move your stuff around.

And he'll just do annoying little things like that, right? But there was one important piece of information. Don't tell your parents. Because if you tell your parents, an ice pick Jack finds out, he'll know, he'll hear.

He will come and haunt you and your family for the rest of your life. And so this was terrifying as a third grader in church camp.

[2:50] Please don't be afraid of sending your kids to church camp. There are other good things that happen. Unfortunately, kids are sinners just like us, and some of these things are made up and whatever. So I was terrified.

I remember, you know, waking up in the morning. The first thing I do is inspect all my stuff to make sure nothing had been moved and that we were okay. We hadn't been visited in the night by ice pick Jack.

But this really bothered me. And so I knew I couldn't tell my parents, but I had to tell somebody. We got back home, and so I thought it'd be safe to tell my older sister. You know, and so I told her with fear and trembling, you know, please don't tell mom and dad.

And guess what she did? She marched right out of my room into theirs, and I heard her telling the story of ice pick Jack, and I went and hid under my bed for fear that now my dumb sister had brought us all under doom for the rest of our lives.

We were going to be haunted forever by the ghost of ice pick Jack. And so my father came into the room and heard me crying under my bed. And so he started talking to me, and he said, you know, Michael, you don't have anything to be afraid of.

[4:00] This is a story that some kids made up. When I was a boy, when I was your age, I was out at a park playing with some of my friends, and some of the older kids came, and they said that a lion had escaped from the zoo, and some of the other kids were hiding behind a bush, and they were rustling with it.

And we took off running because we were afraid that the lion was going to come out and get us. And so, you know, I kind of heard that story. I was like, well, these seem a little bit different, you know. I think that, you know, I have a little bit more reason to be scared, because a lion can be killed more easily, I think, than maybe a ghost could be.

But my dad, what he did to gain my influence is that he reminded me of who he was to me, that he loved me, that he cared about me, that he'd never lied to me before, that he told me the truth, and that he wanted me to know that this story was false, and that I shouldn't believe it, that I should trust in him.

And so, you know, I can't tell you that right off the bat I was immediately put at ease. I remember that first night was a little bit difficult to get to sleep, but as the days went by and Ice-Pick Jack never showed up, I realized more and more that my father was somebody whom I could trust, that all the things that he said before that matched his character, that they were true.

All this to say that who and what you believe is important. John, the author of this gospel, stresses that very point all throughout this book. In fact, he uses the word believe or belief or believed 98 times in this gospel, which is more than Matthew, Mark, and Luke combined.

[5 : 39] And so it's not surprising that even in his purpose statement, in John 20, verse 31, he emphasizes the importance of belief. These things are written, he says, so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.

And so if you remember, we have been involved in this conversation that Jesus has been having with Nicodemus for some time now. If you remember, Nicodemus was a man who had spent his entire life trying to earn salvation.

And he's learning through this interview with Jesus that all of his efforts, Jesus is telling him, have been worthless. That in order to be saved, he must be born again.

That was news that was really hard for him to swallow. He spent his whole life believing that what he was doing would result in eternal life. And now, Jesus was telling him otherwise.

And he couldn't comprehend what Jesus meant by this new birth. And how this new birth could take place. And so in verses 5 through 8, Jesus answers how the new birth takes place.

[6 : 47] That it's by the working of the Holy Spirit. That the Holy Spirit is the source and means of the new birth. And then in verse 9, as we've read, Nicodemus, his confusion turns now to disbelief.

He's heard Jesus' answer how the new birth takes place. But now, he expresses disbelief in what Jesus has said by saying, how can these things be?

Nicodemus wasn't convinced to this point that Jesus was somebody whom he could trust. And perhaps, that's the same place that you're in this morning.

You're not sure of what to make of all of this. You're perhaps wondering if Jesus is somebody that you can trust.

And wondering if the testimony of us who have trusted him, if that's a testimony that you can believe. If that's a message that you can trust in as well. And so my hope and prayer for you, if that is you this morning, is that you will believe.

[7 : 54] And I want you to know that I'm glad that you're here. I really am glad that you're here. For those of you who have been born again and who have believed and trusted in Christ, you know that every day you encounter people like Nicodemus who don't believe.

And you can't force them, nor should you try to do that. But we want to reach them, so how best can we do that? Well, we follow the example that Jesus shows us here in the verses that we've read.

We know that it is God who causes the new birth. We understand also that it's by his design that he uses us as his messengers to go and to tell.

And to testify. And to share the truth that we have come to know and receive about Jesus Christ. He uses your words to communicate his truth so that people will believe and come to know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

So here's the main idea for this morning's message. Those who have been born again are called by God to speak to what they know, bear witness to what they have seen, and continually express the necessity of the new birth and their conversations with unbelievers.

[9 : 19] From time to time, I have to go out of town and leave Danny with the kids. And in a couple of weeks, I'll be having to do that as I head to Kansas City for my first doctoral seminar.

And before I leave, as in those times, as I will this time, I'll make sure that I have a conversation with Jack. Not Ice-Pick Jack, right? He's gone. The real Jack. My son Jack.

And so what I'll say to him is, you know, something like this. Son, I'm leaving for a certain amount of days. Then I'll come home. And during that time, I expect that you will obey your mom. She'll need help with Hazel. And so I expect you to help her with your sister. I also expect that you'll be good. That whatever mom tells you to do, that you won't talk back or fight with her, that you'll just do it.

And so I believe that those kinds of parting instructions, if you've been in that place before, those are important, aren't they? Even in your workplace, if your boss leaves or your supervisor leaves and he says, hey, while I'm gone, or she says, while I'm gone, these are the things that need to be done.

[10:24] And there's that expectation that they'll be done in their absence, right? Those parting words are important. And so I say those things to Jack to leave no doubt in his mind as to what I expect from him while I'm gone.

And based upon my authority as his father, he should obey my wishes as my son. Similarly, in Matthew 28, Jesus shares some parting words with his disciples.

He tells them that he has a very important task that he expects them to carry out while he's away. Matthew 28, 18 through 20. And Jesus came to them and said, So you see, there's no questioning here what Jesus' expectation for us is as his disciples.

He's called us to represent him in this world. He's called us to go about carrying out the expectations that he has given us to go and make disciples.

And as we do that, we will be met with unbelief, just as Jesus was met often with unbelief. And when we do, we should follow his example in how he answered the unbeliever.

[11:55] So first we see that we speak to the truth that you know and have received, or that you have received and known. How do we answer an unbeliever? Well, speak to the truth that you have received and know.

Again, Jesus begins by saying, Nicodemus questions him, how can these things be? And Jesus answers, are you the teacher of Israel and you don't understand these things? Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know.

You know, Jesus would often introduce that statement, or use that phrase, truly, truly, before he would say something really important.

Now, in your translation, you might have it written there as truly, truly. Some translations say, verily, verily. Some say, very truly. And so whatever your English translation might say, we understand that they're all translations of the original Greek.

And in the Greek, the word that we translate as truly or verily is the word amin, or a word that's taken from the Hebrew language that is amen.

[13:00] We know that word, don't we? Usually, when we use that word in our modern times, we usually use it at the end of a prayer. Or we say it after somebody has spoken something or made a statement that we're in agreement with.

We'll say amen. You'll hear, hopefully, maybe some amens this morning. That's typically how we use it. At the end of a comment expressing that we're in agreement with it.

In fact, that's what the word means in the Hebrew. So be it. And so we're saying, I'm in agreement with what has been said or with this prayer that has been made. But Jesus reversed the order in how he used that word, that phrase.

He would say amen or amin before making a statement or giving a message. When he used it in this way, the word amen took on a slightly different tone with a slightly different implication.

When he let off a statement with amen, not only was he implying that what followed was true, but also that he had firsthand knowledge and authority to speak about what he was about to speak on.

[14:09] He isn't merely saying, believe me, this is true. What he's really saying is, I know this is true. I have firsthand knowledge and I have authority to speak on it.

And firsthand knowledge is something that we value, isn't it? Say you had a dream vacation that you wanted to take.

And things worked out so that you could go. Say it's Hawaii, for example. And so you're excited, right? So what do you do? You start telling people, hey, we're going to Hawaii on such and such a date, right?

And then guess what happens normally when you do that? People who have been there before start telling you about it. They have firsthand knowledge. They say, hey, these are the things. Oh,

you've got to do this.

This is great. Your family will love it. Or they'll say, don't do this. You'll see it advertised. People will try to get you to do it, but it's a waste of your time and money. Or they'll say, these are the great places to stay.

[15 : 11] These are the places that you should avoid. These are the restaurants that you have to eat at. These are the ones that weren't so good. And they'll give you all this information and you take it typically because why?

Because they're speaking with firsthand knowledge. They have authority to speak on it because you haven't been there. And they have. They can tell you and you listen to them. So when Jesus used this expression, truly, truly, again, typically what followed were comments about spiritual things.

Things about heaven. Things about God. And so what he's saying is, I know all about these things. I have firsthand experience of all these things.

And I understand this in a way that you don't. And so I'm speaking to you as one who's been there. As one who has seen. Now an unbeliever might hear that and think, well, I need more evidence than that.

They might think, you can't expect me to accept Jesus' words as truthful just because he claimed to speak with authority about them. But you know, we believe things all the time based solely on somebody else's authority on the matter.

[16 : 21] Now, C.S. Lewis, great Christian thinker, the author of the Narnia series. Many of you know or have heard of him. He made a really interesting point about this very thing.

He said, 99% of the things you believe are believed on authority.

I believe that there is such a place as New York. I could not prove by abstract reasoning that there is such a place. I believe it because reliable people have told me so. The ordinary person believes in the solar system, atoms, and circulation of blood on authority because the scientists say so.

Every historical statement is believing on authority. None of us has seen the Norman conquest or the defeat of the Spanish Armada. But we believe them simply because people who did see them have left writings that tell us about them.

In fact, on authority. A person who balked at authority in other things, as some people do in religion, would have to be content to know nothing at all, all of his life. Jesus claimed to be more than just a source of truth or more than an authority on truth.

[17 : 39] He claimed to be the authority of truth. And ultimately, that truth itself finds its source in him. John 14, 6, he says this very clearly.

I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. And so we understand that Jesus, all throughout his earthly ministry, claimed to be God.

And he validated those claims in many ways. He says, ultimately, in the greatest way, by rising from the dead on the third day after his crucifixion.

As evidence that was witnessed, the Bible says, by hundreds of people who, after Jesus gave those parting words of instruction, ascended into heaven.

Then they went out on his authority. On that first-hand knowledge that they had seen and witnessed for themselves. And they went out bearing that witness.

[18 : 43] Giving that testimony. This was the truth, they said, that we speak to you. And we have believed it. And we're giving you this testimony that you would know this truth as well.

And this is the truth that we continue to speak today. That Jesus is the way. That Jesus is the truth. That Jesus is life. While the Bible says that God is the source of all truth, it says, likewise, that Satan is the source of all untruth.

In fact, Jesus called him the father of lies. From the very beginning, Satan has sought to deceive people into believing that God was not the source.

And is not an authority on truth. Let's go back to Genesis 3. In his conversation with Eve. And now the serpent was more crafty than any of the beasts of the field that the Lord God had made.

And he said to the woman, Did God actually say, You shall not eat of any tree in the garden? Right?

Already questioning. Already trying to plant a seed of doubt. And the woman said to the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it lest you die.

[20:05] But the serpent said to the woman, You will surely not die. For God knows that when you eat of it, your eyes will be open and you will be like him, knowing good and evil.

You can't trust God. You should trust me. Listen, God's trying to keep something from you. He doesn't want you to be like him. He's not somebody you can trust.

That's all what he's trying to do. That's what he continues to do today. His tactics haven't changed. He continually seeks to cause people to disbelieve and doubt God, making them instead feel like they can be their own source and authority of truth.

And so, there's a phrase going around. It's been around for a little while now, and you've probably heard it. And people talk about this very thing. They say, My truth.

This is my truth. Or they'll be encouraged by others to know their truth or live their truth. And this idea suggests that truth is something that comes from within you.

[21:20] You're the source of it. You create it. You're the authority of it. And that what you need to do most is put your faith in yourself. But such statements are really dumb.

Because they don't make sense. Now, someone might hear that and think, Well, that's insensitive. How dare you suggest that someone not speak their truth? But what if that's my truth?

To say such a thing. That's my truth. So why isn't my truth as important as your truth? And we're saying different things. It's illogical. It cannot be.

It doesn't make sense. In a twisted way, though, I kind of wish that this line of thinking was more prevalent when I was in grade school. Struggling through math class.

And I go to my teacher and say, Hey, well, I know that that's your answer. That's your truth. But that's not my truth. Okay? My truth is that this is the answer. And you see my work.

[22:20] And my truth says it's right. But you know it doesn't make sense. And any good teacher would boot me out of their classroom or something else.

Christians are called to speak the truth. The truth that we've received from God that Jesus is the way, that he is the truth, and that he is the life.

At our association meeting a couple weeks ago, Monty Hale, our DOM, made a comment that has stuck with me.

And I've shared it multiple times since that meeting. And he pointed out that, you know, Jesus was kind. But he wasn't always nice.

We talked about that in Sunday school this morning with the teens. What's the difference between being kind and being nice? Kind speaks truth. Kind is when you see somebody struggling or hurting.

[23:21] A Christian brother or sister in Christ that's not living the life that God has called them to do. Being kind is going to that person. And speaking truth to them. Which Jesus did all the time.

With the Pharisees. With the woman at the well. With everybody that he encountered. He was kind by speaking the truth. Now they didn't often like what he had to say. But he was being kind because he was pointing out their great problem of sin.

And their need for him to be their savior. Whereas being nice sugarcoats things. Or overlooks things. Well, I don't want to cause any problems. I don't want to have that awkward conversation. They're not going to want to have that too.

I want to have that relationship. I want to be their friend. So I'm going to be nice. Jesus wasn't like that. And neither should we. Like Jesus, we must meet unbelief as he did.

Kindly. Passionately. Speaking the truth that we've received from him. That others may know that he is the way, the truth, and the life.

[24:20] Additionally to that, we bear witness to what we have seen. So Jesus says we speak truthfully to what we know.

And secondly, as we answer in belief, we bear witness to what we have seen. Now, understand this. That people may deny the truth of the gospel. But no one can deny you of the impact that it's had on your life.

I may have shared this story before, but my best friend in college was not a believer. And many of you have heard my testimony that when I was in college, I was not living my life like a believer. Even though that was the case, I never stopped believing. I was mad at God. I didn't want to do what God wanted me to do with my life. And so I ran away. But I never doubted my faith in him at all.

And so from time to time, I would share my testimony with my friends. And this was my best friend. And I remember one night, he and I, it was late. And we started talking about things.

[25 : 27] I shared my testimony with him. And he listened intently. And at the very end, we made eye contact. It's one of those moments where I could close my eyes and I could see it.

You know, it's like I'm there still. It was a powerful moment. And I just looked him in the eye and I said, I said, Joey, I don't know a whole lot of things in this world, but I do know that God is real. And I do know that Jesus is his son. And I do know that he's died for my sins, that I might have eternal life. And that was the end of the conversation.

We talked for a little bit afterwards, but that was it. He didn't leave that conversation a believer. But I'll tell you that years later, after we graduated, we would get back together with our friends. And he'd pull me aside and be like, you know, Mike, I'll never forget that conversation that we had. It was in our garage in the apartment that we were renting. It's like, I'll never forget that. I'll never forget that comment you said. I don't know what it was, but it's just always stuck with me.

[26 : 29] And I've been praying for him. I mean, I was praying for him ever since and even before that. Then more years later, we're married and we have kids. And I find out that he, two Easter's ago, was baptized, that he was born again, that he was a believer.

He and his wife, they're going to church. And I was so excited, so thankful. And so I sent him a Facebook message. I said, hey, I heard and I want you to know I'm so happy and I'm so thankful. And he emailed me back and he said, you know, it was that conversation. That conversation that we had. I've never forgotten it. It's always been there with me.

The Holy Spirit planted that seed and through a course of years kept watering it. And other people would come into his life and do the same. That little testimony, God used it to bring my good friend to salvation.

And I'm so thankful. Your testimony is a powerful witness in the hands of the Holy Spirit to testify to the truth of Jesus Christ.

[27 : 40] Share it. We see this in Scripture. We'll be here soon. John chapter 4, the woman at the well. Remember her interaction with Jesus changed her life completely.

And she went from that meeting to go back to her town to tell everybody about what she had seen and what she had heard, the truth that she had received. In John chapter 4, verses 39 and 42, it says, Many Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony.

He told me all that I ever did. So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them. And he stayed there two days. And many more believed because of his word.

They said to the woman, it is no longer because of what you said that we believe. For we have heard for ourselves and we know that indeed this is the Savior of the world. You see, the hero of her testimony, like the hero of our testimony, isn't ourselves.

It's Jesus Christ. And that testimony of what he has done in your life, used by the Holy Spirit, can draw unbelievers to faith in Christ.

[28 : 48] Testimonies are powerful. They are undeniable evidence of the Holy Spirit's taking up residence in the life of a believer and making them a new creation.

Bear witness to both what you have experienced him do in your life and also, in answering the unbeliever, bear witness to what you've seen him do in the lives of others around you.

This past week at a youth group, after the devotion, one of our teens came up to me and he had some questions about salvation.

It's a young man that's been baptized within this year in this church. And his life has changed. And he had questions about salvation.

And so we answered, talked through those questions. And he said, Pastor Mike, I just got a job. How can I share Jesus with my coworkers?

[29 : 57] And we talked about that. And then he said, I'm giving all of the money for my first paycheck to the church. And I said, now wait a second.

That's not necessary, right? Even, you know, you give a tenth or a portion and all the time I'm trying to say it, he's shaking his head no. I'm going to give it all. And I asked him this morning if it was okay if I said who that was.

It's Sloan Turner. That's awesome. That was an encouragement to me, Sloan. And as I left that conversation, you know, I thought, wow, God, what you could do in this church and in this world if people have that same attitude.

How can I share Jesus with people? What can I give to God and His church? That is an awesome testimony and I wanted to share that with you today.

And I also want to say that I hope that you are encouraged by what God is doing in our children and youth programs. That what's going on there is important.

[31:15] And I encourage you to be a part of their lives. I encourage you to know them by name. I encourage you to share your testimony with them. And I encourage you to see how important it is that we have children and youth coming to this place and learning about Jesus Christ.

And I thank you for those of you who take the time out of your week to do that. It's so important. But there are times whenever we've been a Christian for a while maybe where we don't see how important sharing our testimony is.

And so I'll never forget soon after Danny and I were married we were visiting some of her family and I was going to seminary just started and she was prompting me to share my testimony with them. But I was in a mood. I was just in one of those days I don't know what my problem was and I was just in one of those moods and I didn't want to share and so I kind of gave a Cliff Notes version not very passionately and when we got back into the car she rebuked me and she was right to do so. She's not here so you know don't tell her later but actually I don't care because she was right to do so. She was right to do so. She said you know that's my family. I'm kind of condensing but she said that's my family and I care about them.

[32:49] This is something that God has done in your life and you had an opportunity to share your testimony with them and you did it. She was right. And like me then I think too many of us are guilty of doing the same and in a way I hope that this message is a rebuke to us as well.

God has done something in your life. You've got to share that. You've got to share that with those around you giving glory to Him.

Like Jesus we must meet unbelief as He did. We do so by speaking to the truth that we have received and have come to know. We do that by bearing witness to what He has done in our lives and then thirdly we keep emphasizing the necessity of the new birth.

In verse 12 Jesus says to Nicodemus if I have told you earthly things that you do not believe how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things? And so at first glance this passage seems pretty difficult to understand.

What are the earthly things? What are the heavenly things that Jesus refers to? The subject of this conversation again remember between Jesus and Nicodemus is the new birth. So I believe that the earthly things must refer to those things that are visibly perceived.

[34:07] The life transformation that we've talked about while the heavenly things refer to those things which are known only through special revelation. That would be your personal experience of being born again.

Of understanding that you've sinned against God. Of knowing that Jesus Christ died for your sins and experiencing then the peace that results from having that knowledge and being back in fellowship with your creator.

And so I think to help us understand I want to try to paraphrase these words to help us get a better grasp of what Jesus is saying. I think he's saying something like this.

So Nicodemus says I have never observed the new birth. I can't believe that such a thing is possible. And then Jesus answers him Do you mean to tell me that you have risen to the point of being one of Israel's most prominent teachers and yet you have never observed the life transforming power of the Holy Spirit on someone?

I'm telling you the truth when I say that all of us are speaking about things that we have personally experienced and are testifying to things that we have often observed taking place in others.

[35:15] You don't believe us. If I have testified to transformation in others that can be observed and you don't believe it how could you believe if I tell you about the things that only can be known by special revelation unless you are born again the kingdom of God will remain hidden to you.

Something amazing happened in a Dallas courtroom a couple weeks ago and you've probably heard of it. Amber Geiger a white police officer was convicted and sentenced to 10 years in prison for murdering Botham John a 26 year old black accountant in Dallas, Texas.

If you know the story Amber was an off duty police officer she returned back to her apartment what she thought was her apartment but failed to realize that she was one floor above where her apartment was and she entered Botham's apartment and she mistook him as an intruder and she

shot and killed him in a horrible tragedy.

At the sentencing Botham's brother Brandt addressed Amber before everyone else gathered in the courtroom.

I want to read to you what he said you may have heard it it's amazing. He says to her if you are truly sorry I can speak for myself I forgive you and I know if you go to God and ask Him He will forgive you and I don't think anyone can say it again I'm speaking for myself but I love you just like anyone else and I'm not going to say I hope you rot and die just like my brother did but I presently want the best for you and I wasn't going to ever say this in front of my family or anyone but I don't even want you to go to jail I want the best for you because I know that's exactly what Botham would want for you and the best would be for you to give your life to Christ I'm not going to say anything else I think giving your life to Christ would be the best thing that Botham would want you to do again I love you as a person and I don't wish anything bad on you and then he turned to the judge and asked her [37 : 30] I don't know if this is possible but can I give her a hug please then he walked out from behind that witness stand if you've seen it and he embraced his brother's killer later that same judge presiding over that case exited the room and she returned with her own bible and she presented it to Amber and again encouraged her to know Jesus Christ as her Lord and Savior to read that word of God and as Amber Geiger left that courtroom to begin serving her sentence she clutched that bible tightly to her chest in that moment the gospel was fully on display this was a moment where two born again Christians gave strong testimony to a broken and twisted world that Jesus Christ is the way the truth and the life and though many tears have been shed by those who have witnessed it there are still many who have reacted to their display in negative ways criticizing

Brant Botham's brother for not using his brother's death to score political points or criticizing the judge for acting unprofessionally by giving Amber her bible because they can't understand the earthly implications of the new birth and if they can't understand that then how can they not understand or they can't understand the heavenly implications of the new birth what should we do then when that's the case with unbelievers when we speak the truth of Christ to them and we share our testimony and they still don't believe well we see from Jesus' example that he sticks with it with Nicodemus he continues to draw his focus to the new birth just like in math you can't grasp complex mathematical formulas until you first learn how to add and subtract and multiply and divide so we stick with the main need the main focus you must be born again John 3 3

Jesus says truly truly I say to you unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God that should be the text that we most often preach from as followers of Christ in fact George Whitefield the great English pastor and theologian of the 18th century was known for preaching on that text over and over again with his topic always being or most often being on the necessity of the new birth and so it's recorded that one person came up and asked him they're tired of hearing the same message about the same thing and so they said Mr. Whitefield why do you always preach about the need for people to be born again and he answered simply because you must be born again that's the focus that's the message this message should be at the core of the truth that we speak and the witness that we bear keeping it ever in focus and hoping and praying that the Holy Spirit will do what he does to draw people to belief and knowledge of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior so now three applications to conclude this message what do we do with this where do we go from here well first of all as we've seen we speak the truth in love you can speak the truth if it's not in love then really it's kind of untruthful we tell people because we care and because we love them and so we do so being kind but that doesn't mean being nice secondly share your testimony everybody who is born again has a testimony and it may not be one of those testimonies where you were you know overdosed in a ditch about to die and you cried out to God and he saved you it doesn't have to be like that this is your testimony of what God has done for you and nobody can deny you of what he's done for you so share that testimony in fact

I would ask you to make it your goal to do that this week or this month with somebody you know share your testimony with them and then thirdly persist in your efforts to communicate the necessity of the new birth at home in your workplace wherever the Lord has you that's your mission field speak the truth share your testimony persist in your efforts to communicate those things that God would use you to draw unbelievers to belief in himself and then I encourage you as well to take the example of our brother Sloan Turner desire to share desire to give could you imagine what God could do in a church like ours if we all had those same desires but Thank you.