

1. Describe the last time you had a conversation with a non-Christian who appeared to be trying to fit God into his/her terms? In what ways were you able to empathize with the person? In what other ways did you discern significant problems?
2. Read John 3:1–2. What can we discern about Nicodemus from these two verses? Describe some of the characteristics of 1st Century Pharisees. Why did Nicodemus come to Jesus by night?
3. Read John 3:3. How does Jesus respond to Nicodemus? At first, Jesus' claim appears out of the blue, but why might the concept of rebirth have been more familiar to Nicodemus than we might realize at first glance?
4. Read John 3:4. Why does Nicodemus say what he says? Why was it such a leap for him to apply rebirth to himself? What about the nature of rebirth made it so difficult for Nicodemus to accept?
5. Read John 3:5–6. To what Old Testament passage does Jesus refer here? Why should Nicodemus have been aware of the concept? What does the fact that he had overlooked this passage and others like it from the OT reveal about the spiritual state of Israel in the 1st Century? What correlations can we find in our culture today?
6. Read John 3:7–8. What case does Jesus make for accepting the work of the Spirit in rebirth? Why is it so hard for so many people today to accept that God exists and to align themselves with his terms as stated in Scripture?
7. Have you been reborn? What does God require of you or others in order to have the assurance of your rebirth? What's stopping you from accepting his terms today and/or sharing those terms with someone you love?