

Teaching Around A Central Theme Practical Exercise

John 3:3-21

Steps:

Identify the genre of the passage. (Didactic, Poetry, Narrative)

The passage is **narrative**, concerning Nicodemus' encounter with the Lord Jesus Christ and the passage is **didactic** as the Lord teaching Nicodemus concerning Salvation. Using a mixture of both methods would be appropriate to determine the central theme.

For a didactic passage:

1.a. After reading the passage several times, write down the general topic being addressed.

The general topic being addressed is **Salvation**.

1.b. Break the passage into natural divisions and summarize each division in your own words.

John 3:3-8 The requirement of being born-again to see and enter into the Kingdom of God is a spiritual work that cannot be observed with the natural eyes. It is accomplished by God and is necessary.

John 3:9-13 Unbelief is present due a willful rejection and blindness. The Lord Jesus Christ also states His credentials for speaking concerning God's work.

John 3:14-21 The example from the Old Testament is given concerning Moses and the Brazen Serpent. Jesus explains His life and purpose to be lifted up (on the cross) providing Salvation to those that would believe in Him. Those who rejected the Light that the Lord provided were already under condemnation.

1.c. Look for repeated words or phrases.

'born' (8)-

v3 "Except a man be **born again**..."

v4 "...How can a man be **born when he is old**?"

v4 "...enter the **second time** into his mother's womb, **and be born**?"

v5 "Except a man be **born of water and of the Spirit**..."

v6 "...**born of the flesh** is flesh... **born of the Spirit** is spirit."

v7 "...Ye **must be born again**."

v8 "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: **so is every one that is born of the Spirit**."

'believe' (7) –

v12 "I have told you earthly things, and **ye believe not...**"

v12 "**how shall ye believe**, if I tell you of heavenly things?"

v14-15 "even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That **whosoever believeth in him should not perish**, but have eternal life."

v16 "that **whosoever believeth in him should not perish**, but have everlasting life."

v18 "**He that believeth on him is not condemned:**"

v18 "**he that believeth not is condemned already**"

v18 "because **he hath not believed** in the name of the only begotten Son of God."

Other words to consider: light (5), condemn [condemnation] (4)

1.d. *What is the common denominator in the text? (a truth, command, or principle woven throughout)*

There is a need for every man to be 'born-again' which is a spiritual birth accomplished by the Spirit. Believe in the Son of God: His death, burial and resurrection is necessary to have eternal life. Those who do not believe are already condemned and reject the light because they love darkness.

1.e. *State the central theme in one sentence.*

Man, who is naturally condemned, enters into everlasting life (eternal life), being born-again by the Spirit upon belief in Jesus Christ.

1.f. *Rewrite the sentence, making it as concise and clear as possible.*

Being born-again (Salvation) is by belief in Jesus Christ and accomplished by the Holy Spirit.