

1. You may be seated – thank band – **welcome those online**

2. Turn to John 3 – In the coming 40 days we hope to see the Spirit of God awaken our state!

3. Starting this Wednesday, we're asking all believers to pray and fast with us for 40 Days during Lent – leading up to Holy Week at Easter. You can download the digital prayer guide and **AwakenIndiana.com**.

4. But we're going to start first with us as individuals. What does God want do to with you over the next 40 days? I want to ask you this important question: Have you been transformed by God?

5. Read John 3:1-8 – Now there was a Pharisee, a man named Nicodemus who was a member of the Jewish ruling council. ² He came to Jesus at night and said, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the signs you are doing if God were not with him."

³ Jesus replied, "Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again."

⁴ "How can someone be born when they are old?" Nicodemus asked. "Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother's womb to be born!" ⁵ Jesus answered, "Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. ⁶ Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. ⁷ You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.' ⁸ The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit."

6. Pray

1. The Indiana Hoosiers transformed from one of the most losing football programs in history to National Champions in 2 years! That is some radical change! Did you know God believes you can transform just as radically on a spiritual level?

2. God desires for you to become more like Jesus – this requires change and transformation. In the coming 40 days as we partner with churches all over Indiana are you will to awaken change in your own life? Would you change your views of people? Thoughts on life? Worldview? If you genuinely believed God had a better way to live?

3. I want to show you through John 3 how we often resist change and yet Nicodemus, who had everything to lose was willing to change.

3 Reasons We Don't Change:

1. We're afraid

1. Read John 3:1-2 – Now there was a Pharisee, a man named Nicodemus who was a member of the Jewish ruling council. ² He came to Jesus at night and said, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the signs you are doing if God were not with him."

2. No one likes change – if you want to be transformed by God...it requires change!

3. Nicodemus was a rabbinic Pharisee and member of the Jewish ruling council. He had everything to lose by his encounter with Jesus. That's why Nicodemus comes at night because he's afraid people will see him.

4. Many who encounter Christ never take next steps of faith because they're afraid of what people will think. Their family, colleagues, etc...

5. Romans 1:16 - For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile.

2. We feel change is impossible

1. Read John 3:3-4 – ³ Jesus replied, "Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again." ⁴ "How can someone be born when they are old?" Nicodemus asked. "Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother's womb to be born!"

2. I'm the guy who likes to party. I can't be someone new. **I'm the stingy businessperson.** I'm the gossip. **I'm the sports fanatic.** I can't give up a Sunday.

3. Yet the Bible says in **2 Corinthians 5:17** – *¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!*

4. **Paul on the road to Damascus. The Bible is full of stories of change!**

5. **Change is a part of growing in Christ** – As Christians, if our lives look the same as the rest of the world...what's the difference? **If we're just as uncompassionate, selfish, careless parents, drug addicted, alcoholic, sexually active...**what difference does knowing Jesus make?

6. That's why Scripture says when you surrender to Him, you make Him Lord – **Romans 10:9-10** - *⁹ If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved.*

7. **For 40 Days we're asking God to become LORD of our lives! That He might transform us because into who He created us to be. As you grow in intimacy with him you can share stories of life change with church around the state by using the hashtag – #AwakenIndiana – Know you are doing this with believers all over the state!**

3. You can't comprehend or control God

1. **Read John 3:5-8** – *⁵ Jesus answered, "Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. ⁶ Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. ⁷ You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.' ⁸ The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit."*

2. When we make Jesus Lord and are born of His Spirit we relinquish control of our lives and that is difficult. So often we allow things to steer us off course...to lose His wind in our sails. Whether it be intellectual questions we have dealt with, broken relationships, or outright sin – these often prevent us from real transformation because we have relinquished control of our lives.

3. **Proverbs 3:5-6** – *Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; ⁶ in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.* – **Get to know and trust Jesus – experience a relationship with Him.** Ask your questions...all of them. But **don't diminish an almighty Creator and Redeemer of the universe to a textbook...get to know HIM!**

4. **Nicodemus would come to know Jesus and inherently trust Him and sacrifice for Him.**
John 19:38-42 - *³⁸ Later, Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for the body of Jesus. Now Joseph was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly because he feared the Jewish leaders. With Pilate's permission, he came and took the body away. ³⁹ He was accompanied by Nicodemus, the man who earlier had visited Jesus at night. Nicodemus brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds. ⁴⁰ Taking Jesus' body, the two of them wrapped it, with the spices, in strips of linen. This was in accordance with Jewish burial customs. ⁴¹ At the place where Jesus was crucified, there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb, in which no one had ever been laid. ⁴² Because it was the Jewish day of Preparation and since the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.*

Nicodemus would come to know Jesus so closely...to have his life so transformed by Him...he would be there and bring 75 pounds of myrrh and aloes...as you would for the burial of a KING!

Have you been born of God? Is Jesus your Lord and King?

INVITATION

Pray for God to awaken our state! That we may be born of His Spirit and relinquish control of our lives to Him as Lord.