

JOHN III.

BECAUSE of unbelief (v. 12), Nicodemus could not understand how a man could be born when he was old. Naturally man resists the truth until convicted through hearing it, and in believing he receives life, light and understanding. Comp. Ps. cxix. 130. The quibbler remains in unbelief. (Luke xxiii. 39.) He "*must* be born again." Flesh profits nothing in this matter (John vi. 63). The Spirit quickens; but it is a new life and nature (*spirit*). This does not come from man's nature; it is Divine and eternal, and comes from above, therefore a wholly new being (2 Peter i. 4). "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life," but the flesh is ever the same, even after conversion. v, 6.

"Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, made it no clearer, for how could a man be born of water? There is no such virtue in baptism." It may quiet the natural conscience religiously inclined; but nothing can purge the awakened conscience before God except the blood of Christ (Heb. ix. 22).

No; the explanation is that the word "water" is a *symbol of the "Word of God"* James i. 18; 1 Peter i. 23. It is therefore by faith in the word "word of truth" that the new birth is accomplished, and not by trusting baptism with water." Whosoever believeth in the up-lifted Son of Man, the only