opening declarations of His ministry, He  
here unites together the two clements of  
a complete Baptism which were sundered  
in the words of the Baptist, ch. i. 33—in  
which united form He afterwards (Matt.  
xxviii. 19, 20; Mark xvi. 16) ordained it  
as a Sacrament of His Church. Here he  
speaks of spiritual Baptism, as in ch. vi. of  
spiritual Communion, and in both places in  
connexion with the outward conditions and  
media of these ‘sacraments. It is observable that here as ordinarily (with a special  
exception, Acts x. 44 ff.), the outward sign  
comes first, and then the spiritual grace,  
vouchsafed in and by means of it where  
duly received.

**enter into** is more  
than “*see*” above, though no stress is to  
he laid on the difference. The former word  
was perhaps used because of Nicodemus’s  
expectation of *teaching* being all that was  
required; but now, the necessity of a real  
vital change having been set forth, the  
expression is changed to a practical one—  
the *entering into* the Kingdom of God.

**6.]** The neuter gender (**that  
which** *is born*....) denotes not only  
the universal application of this truth, but  
(see Luke i. 35) the very first beginnings of  
life in the embryo, before sex can be predicated. So Bengel: “It denotes the  
very first elements of life.”

The Lord here answers Nicodemus’s hypothetical question of ver. 4, by telling him  
that *even could it be so*, it would not  
accomplish the birth of which He speaks.

In this **flesh** is included *every part*of that which is born after the ordinary  
method of generation: even the spirit of  
man, which, receptive as it is of the Spirit  
of God, is yet in the natural birth *dead*,  
sunk in trespasses and sins, and in a state  
of wrath. Such ‘flesh and blood’ cannot  
inherit the Kingdom of God, 1 Cor. xv.  
50. But when the man is born again of  
the Spirit (the water does not appear any  
more, being merely the outward form of  
reception, —theless included in thegreater),  
then just as flesh generates flesh, so spirit  
generates spirit, after its own image, see  
2 Cor. iii. 18 end; and since the Kingdom  
of God is a spiritual kingdom, such only  
who are so born can enter into it.

**7.]** The weightiest word here is **Ye**. The  
Lord did not, could not, say this of *Himself*. Why ?—Because in the full sense  
in which the flesh is incapacitated from  
entering the kingdom of God, He was  
*not born of the flesh*. He inherited the  
weakness of the flesh, but His spirit was  
not, like that of sinful man, alien from  
holiness and God; and therefore on Him  
no second birth passed; when the Holy  
Spirit descended on Him at his baptism,  
the words spoken by the Father were indicative of *past approval*, not of *renewal*.  
His obedience was accepted as perfect, and  
the good pleasure of the Father rested on  
Him. Therefore He includes not Himself  
in this necessity for the new birth.

The **Marvel not** points on to the next verse,  
in which Nicodemus is told that he has  
things as wonderful around him every day  
in the natural world.

**8.]** Our Lord  
might have chosen any of the mysteries of  
nature to illustrate the point :—He takes  
*that one*, which is above others symbolic of  
the action of the *Spirit*, and which (in both  
languages, that in which He spoke, as well  
as that in which His speech is reported) is  
expressed by *the same word* as it;—  
*Pneuma* being both *wind* and *spirit*. So  
that the words as they stand apply themselves at once to the Spirit and His working, without any figure. Bengel, after  
Origen and Augustine, takes the word  
*pneuma* with which this verse opens, and  
which we have rendered **wind**, of the  
*Holy Spirit* exclusively: but this can  
hardly be. The *form* of the sentence, as  
well as its import, is against it. The  
words “*bloweth*,” “*hearest*,” “*knowest*,”  
are all said of well-known facts. And the  
comparison would not hold on that supposition—‘ As *the Spirit* is in His working  
on those born of Him, so is *every one that  
is born of the Spirit*. But on the other  
interpretation, we have **The wind bloweth,  
&c.:—so is**, i.e. *‘so it is with’* (see a  
similar construction Matt. xiii. 45) **every  
one born of the Spirit**.

The word