

## John 3:1-15: Jesus meets with Nicodemus

### (vs. 1-2) Who was Nicodemus?:

- His name means, “innocent of blood”.
- Pharisee, ruler of the Jews, teacher of Israel, and a member of the Sanhedrin.
- Was an educated leader, well-known, had a good reputation, looked up to, and wealthy.
- From the world's standards, he had everything.
- Good possibility he was a believer in Jesus **\*\*John 7:50-52 (He defends Jesus against other leaders and Jewish people at the Festival of Booths) & John 19:39-40 (He cared for the body of Jesus with Joseph of Arimathea by bringing 75lbs of myrrh and aloes, which was enough to prepare a king for burial)\*\***

### Why did he seek Jesus, and at night?:

- Saw signs (miracles) that Jesus did and knew He was from God. He knew they were real!
  - As Nicodemus watched Jesus' ministry, he knew Jesus had more to offer than just following the rules out of obligation or moral requirement.
  - Called Him “Rabbi”, a title that means “my master / sir”. A respected teacher.
  - He was seeking God's truth, more than just God's rules he was entrusted to uphold (Of course the Jews added traditions and guidelines God never intended).
  - Many beliefs of why he visited Jesus by night. Was it because of fear of the non-believing Pharisees and his position in the Sanhedrin being jeopardized? Was it normal time for visits? Was it because he wanted time of uninterrupted conversation without the distractions of the crowds Jesus spoke to during the day?
  - “we”: could mean other Pharisees within the Sanhedrin that believed in Jesus, but were afraid to say anything OR it could mean others Nicodemus may have brought with him.
1. **Does the thought of losing your reputation, status, and well-being in this life cause you to hesitate or hide your relationship with Jesus from others?**
  2. **What is the difference between knowledge and wisdom and do you need both in your faith?**

### **JESUS WANTS A RELATIONSHIP WITH US REGARDLESS OF OUR REPUTATION, STATUS, AND WELL-BEING!!**

### (vs' 3-8): Jesus responds to Nicodemus with the ONLY way to see the kingdom of God.

- Jesus gets straight to the point by stating the need to be born again. **\*\*2 Corinthians 5:17\*\***
- Cannot see the kingdom of God without being born again. **\*\*John 3:36\*\***
- Nicodemus did not grasp the nature of REGENERATION **\*\*Ephesians 2:1-5\*\***
- Remember to be born again is to remember what John the Baptist preached in the earlier chapters of repenting of sins and putting faith in Jesus.
- In vs. 5, many views of “water”: 1.) Physical birth, 2.) The Word **\*\*Ephesians 5:26\*\***, 3.) Symbolizes the Spirit, 4.) Repentance ministry of John the Baptist.

- Nicodemus was familiar with baptism and what it symbolized (repentance of sins).
  - Regardless of your view of the “water”, all of the above apply to us becoming a new creation.
  - Nicodemus is more focused on how the actual process of being born again works (which he will never fully understand) instead why new birth is needed and what it is for.
  - Why is it needed: The only way to save sinful humanity.
  - What it is for: Our eternal salvation and relationship with God.
  - In vs. 8: Man can't control the Spirit or being born again by his own power. The Greek word *pneuma* means both wind and spirit. The work of the Holy Spirit is invisible and mysterious like the blowing of the wind. **\*\*1 Corinthians 12:6-7; 11\*\***
- 3. Are you focusing more on the things of God you can't explain just to prove to yourself that He exists, rather than focusing on what His relationship with you is all about?**
- 4. Has your nature changed at all since being born again?**

**(vs' 9-12) Jesus addresses Nicodemus shallow faith.**

- In vs' 9-10: Based on Nicodemus' expectations and conditions of what he was taught and practiced, he still wasn't getting the spiritual transformation that was required for a relationship with God.
- Jesus asks him directly after addressing him as a teacher of Israel, one that ought to understand what He was saying.
- Nicodemus should have remembered what the prophet Ezekiel said in **\*\*Ezekiel 36:26-27\*\* & Joel 2:28-29.**
- Shows that if your heart is not open to Jesus, you will be blinded and misguided!
- Nicodemus represented the nation of Israel's unbelief and lack of spiritual knowledge.
- “you” in vs.11 is plural and used four times in verse 12. Refers to the unbelieving Jews as a whole. Shows everyone is responsible for their own faith!!!
- In vs. 12 “earthly things” is believed to refer to God's earthly kingdom. In the OT, Nicodemus knew that one day the Messiah would come and set up a literal kingdom here on earth.
- Nicodemus failed to understand that in order to enter God's earthly kingdom, he has to be born again. “Heavenly things” are being born again, as well as Jesus' description in vs.' 13-15 (CONTEXT, CONTEXT, CONTEXT).

**5. Is your mind open to God's Word, but not your heart?**

**(vs' 13-15) Jesus tells Nicodemus who He is.**

- Vs. 13 can be explained as: No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven, the Son of Man (NIV).
- “ascended” refers to the Ascension and “descended” refers to the Incarnation. We also have to remember that Jesus was in heaven before the Incarnation. He ascended to heaven by His own power (Fully God and Fully Man).
- Some manuscripts, including the NKJV, add “who is in heaven” after the Son of Man in vs.13.

This just reaffirms His omnipresence **\*\*John 1:47-50\*\***

- Vs. 14 is referring to **\*\*Numbers 21:4-9\*\***, where God disciplines the ungrateful Israelites by sending fiery serpents to bite them. Many of them died as a result. This was after He delivered them from Egypt. They became impatient and spoke against God and Moses.
  - In vs. 15, “believes” means to place confidence in, trust, reliance upon **\*\*John 3:36; 1 John 5:12; 20\*\***
- 6. As a Christian, do you really grasp who Jesus is and the extent He went to save you?**