

Directional Church The Need for Salvation

John 3:1-16

2/29/16

The Bible says in Joh 3:1-2 *There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him."*

There is no doubt that Nicodemus had heard of the fame of Jesus and confesses *we know that thou art a teacher come from God*. How did Nicodemus know this? – Because he said *for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him*.

Notice that Nicodemus comes to Jesus by night. Did he do this because he was a just a busy man or because maybe he was ashamed or afraid to be seen talking with Jesus in broad daylight for fear of his fellow religious leaders? I think that it was fear of what others would think of him.

I tell the students all of that time, “If you fear God, you will not fear men; but if you fear men, you will not fear God.”

Proverbs 29:25 *The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe.*

Straight to the Point

v.3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

Do you notice that Jesus did not thank Nicodemus for the kind words or flattery?

Instead, he answers the question that he knew Nicodemus came to ask, *I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*

No Time Wasted

This was very characteristic of Jesus throughout His ministry.

He did not waste His time or words.

Illustration: The same thing is going to happen in the next chapter with the woman at the well.

Cf. 4:7-19

You see God knows man and he knows that man has a sin problem and he has the answer to fix it.

“The Little Boy and the Duck”

There was a little boy visiting his grandparents on their farm. And he was given a slingshot to play with out in the woods. He practiced in the woods but he could never hit the target. And getting a little discouraged, he headed back to dinner.

As he was walking back he saw Grandma's pet duck. Just out of impulse, he let fly, hit the duck square in the head, and killed it. He was shocked and grieved. In a panic, he hid the dead duck in the wood pile, only to see his sister watching. Sally had seen it all, but she said nothing.

After lunch that day grandma said, "Sally, let's wash the dishes." But Sally said, "Grandma, Johnny told me he wanted to help in the kitchen today, didn't you Johnny?" And then she whispered to him, "Remember, the duck?" So Johnny did the dishes. Later Grandpa asked if the children wanted to go fishing, and Grandma said, "I'm sorry but I need Sally to help make supper." But Sally smiled and said, "Well, that's all right because Johnny told me he wanted to help." And she whispered again, "Remember, the duck?" So Sally went fishing and Johnny stayed.

After several days of Johnny doing both his chores and Sally's, he finally couldn't stand it any longer. He came to Grandma and confessed that he killed the duck. She knelt down, gave him a hug, and said, "Sweetheart, I know. You see, I was standing at the window and I saw the whole thing. But because I love you, I forgave you. But I was just wondering how long would you let Sally make a slave of you.

You see, God knows what is in the heart of man and that we are slaves to sin, because He's been standing at the window.

He knows everything about you!

Born Again

And Jesus knew that Nicodemus was indeed a slave to sin and that's why He told him, *I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.*

This is the first time in the Bible "born again" is mentioned.

What does it mean to be "*born again*"?

In its simplest terms, it means to be born a second time.

The Bible teaches that all men are born physically, but they also need to be born a second time or "*again*" spiritually.

This is what Jesus was telling Nicodemus.

Confusion Sets In

v.4 Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?

Obviously, Nicodemus didn't have a clue as what Jesus meant with the word ***"born again."***

Why? - 1 Corinthians 2:14 *But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. Nicodemus wasn't thinking in the spiritual, but in the physical.*

v.5 *Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.*

Notice He says, ***I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.***

Jesus is talking about two different births here.

One is a natural birth while the other is a spiritual birth.

There is an old saying, "Born once, die twice; Born twice, die once."

In other words, you must have two birthdays.

v.6 *That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.*

Man can only give physical life, while God can give both physical and spiritual life.

v.7 *Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.*

Nicodemus obviously showed some signs of amazement at what Jesus was saying to him.

v.8 *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.*

In other words, the wind is sovereign and men cannot control it.

We can hear the wind, but we can see it.

Jesus is telling Nicodemus, "Stop trying to see with your physical eyes" what you know is there.

A Teacher of Israel

v.9-10 *Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be? Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?*

Now it's Jesus' turn to respond in amazement, Jesus is accusing him of being a teacher without any knowledge of his subject.

Hosea 4:6 *"My people are destroyed from lack of knowledge"*

Look to Jesus

vv.11-14 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness. If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things? And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:

Now Jesus bottom lines it for Nicodemus by reminding him of a story in the Old Testament.

The story is of Moses and the serpents in Numbers 21:1-9

Jesus is saying, Nicodemus, “Just as Moses lifted up the serpent on the pole in the wilderness so that all could look on it and be saved...so am I going to be lifted up on a cross so that all who look to me can be saved.”

This morning, there are snakes (sin) in our lives and unless we look to Jesus and the cross, we will perish.

Isa 59:2 But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.

Jer 5:25 Your iniquities have turned away these things, and your sins have withholden good things from you.

Everlasting Life

vv.15-16 That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. (16) For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Your physical birth put you into the family of man, but it's your spiritual birth that will put you into the family of God!

Remember the story of the “The Little Boy and the Duck” and his Grandmother standing at the window?

I don't know what's in your past.

I don't know what one sin the enemy keeps throwing up in your face.

But whatever it is, I want you to know something.

Jesus Christ was standing at the window and He saw the whole thing.

But because He loves you, He is ready to forgive you.

Perhaps He's wondering how long you'll let the enemy make a slave out of you.