

## AGAPE HOUSE OF WORSHIP - BIBLE STUDY

### Study Series: That You May Believe: A Journey Through The Gospel of John

#### Part 5: You Must Be Born Again

Text: John 3:1-21

Wednesday, March 4, 2026

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#### Part I: Nicodemus' Declaration of what he knows about who Jesus is

*"Now there was a Pharisee, a man named Nicodemus who was a member of the Jewish ruling council. 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.'"* John 3:1-2 NIV

Who was Nicodemus? a. He was a \_\_\_\_\_ b. He was a \_\_\_\_\_ c. He was a \_\_\_\_\_

**Food for thought #1:** What is the significance of these titles that Nicodemus had? Can you identify with Nicodemus in anyway?

**Food for thought #2:** Why do you think Nicodemus came to Jesus in the middle of the night? What would you have done?

Nicodemus' first comments to Jesus was acknowledging who Jesus was as a teacher (he called him Rabbi), as a Miracle Worker and as one sent directly by God. Jesus' immediate response to him was *"'Jesus replied, 'I tell you the truth, unless you are born again, you cannot see the Kingdom of God.'"* John 3:3 NLT

We are first introduced to the concept of being born again by Jesus here in verse 3.

**Food for thought #3:** What does it mean to be born again? What did Jesus mean by saying one cannot "see the Kingdom of God"?

#### Part II: Nicodemus' first set of questions to Jesus

*"'What do you mean?'" exclaimed Nicodemus. "How can an old man go back into his mother's womb and be born again?" Jesus replied, "I assure you, no one can enter the Kingdom of God without being born of water and the Spirit. Humans can reproduce only human life, but the Holy Spirit gives birth to spiritual life. So don't be surprised when I say, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows wherever it wants. Just as you can hear the wind but can't tell where it comes from or where it is going, so you can't explain how people are born of the Spirit."* John 3:4-8 NLT

Nicodemus' questions to Jesus reveal his astonishment at the recommendation that Jesus has that one should be born again- reborn, born from above. And Jesus proceeds to reinforce that idea of being born again and goes on to explain that to enter the Kingdom, more must still be done- become born of water and of the Spirit.

**Food for thought #4:** What did Jesus mean by being born of water? What did Jesus mean by being born of the Spirit? How do you, as a believer, show that you have been born of water and of the Spirit daily?

**Food for thought #5:** What is the difference between "seeing" the Kingdom of God and "entering" the Kingdom of God?

Jesus compares the wind to the Spirit of God here, this is important because as human beings, oftentimes, we don't believe until we see. But Jesus is telling us here that the process of being born of the Spirit is something that cannot be seen, but it can definitely be experienced. Once one is born of the Spirit, a NEW LIFE begins. Jesus was essentially telling Nicodemus that up to this point, he's been living life with titles and positions that may have made him feel that he was in right standing with God, but it was still necessary to start true life again through a completely new means.

#### Part III: Nicodemus' second set of questions to Jesus

*"'How are these things possible?'" Nicodemus asked. Jesus replied, "You are a respected Jewish teacher, and yet you don't understand these things?"* John 3:9-10 NLT

**Food for thought #6: What do Nicodemus' questions reveal about his heart/mindset during this conversation with Jesus?**

Jesus' response to Nicodemus reveals to us a lot about knowing God superficially versus having a deep revelation knowledge about Jesus. He essentially tells us that holding positions and titles does not guarantee that you will have the depth of knowledge and relationship that God desires for His children. Nicodemus was an influential leader in the Jewish community, a member of the Sanhedrin. But his true knowledge about God and His Kingdom was found to be lacking. *How many times have we been in that position? Where even though we've been in the kingdom for years, some decades, maybe our faith level, our knowledge level of Jesus is not matching up- how can we improve on this?*

*"I assure you, we tell you what we know and have seen, and yet you won't believe our testimony. But if you don't believe me when I tell you about earthly things, how can you possibly believe if I tell you about heavenly things? No one has ever gone to heaven and returned. But the Son of Man has come down from heaven. And as Moses lifted up the bronze snake on a pole in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in him will have eternal life."* John 3:11-15 NLT- These are very powerful words coming from Jesus and here we see Christ introduce the concept of "belief". Jesus is telling Nicodemus that the catalyst in this process of salvation is his belief. Jesus reveals here that He has the desire to show Nicodemus more than just the earthly signs and miracles and invite him into things of the heavenly realm- experiencing the Kingdom of God on earth, but that would not be possible if he couldn't believe.

**Food for thought #7: What does "belief" mean to you? How do you show God on a daily basis that you believe in Him?**

Jesus references the story in Numbers 21: *"Then the Lord told him, "Make a replica of a poisonous snake and attach it to a pole. All who are bitten will live if they simply look at it!"*" Numbers 21:8 NLT. This is a type and shadow of Jesus. All the Israelites had to do at that time was to LOOK and they would be saved. Jesus is saying to Nicodemus, to us, that all we need to do is LOOK TO JESUS, to believe and we would be saved. This concept was probably very difficult for Nicodemus to receive and sometimes it is for us as well. No ceremonies, no rituals, simply believing will save us.

**And now we come to probably the most popular verse in the Bible:**

*"For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life."* John 3:16 NLT- We see the ultimate expression of the love of the Father towards us- He GAVE His Son, He took the sin of the world upon Himself, like what the bronze snake represented, and all the Lord requires of us is to BELIEVE so that we experience the salvation of God and eternal life.

Another thing to note from this verse is that God loved the world- not just the Jews, not just the self-righteous, but all the world, all those already condemned to die- God loved us all and so He gave the ultimate gift- Himself- so we might be saved. This also must have been a challenging concept for Nicodemus to grasp considering the belief that only the Jews were to receive this salvation.

**Food for thought #8: How can we preach John 3:16 in the different spheres of life we find ourselves in?**

*"God sent his Son into the world not to judge the world, but to save the world through him. "There is no judgment against anyone who believes in him. But anyone who does not believe in him has already been judged for not believing in God's one and only Son. And the judgment is based on this fact: God's light came into the world, but people loved the darkness more than the light, for their actions were evil. All who do evil hate the light and refuse to go near it for fear their sins will be exposed. But those who do what is right come to the light so others can see that they are doing what God wants."*" John 3:17-21 NLT

So many people in the world feel that they are condemned or judged by God. This keeps a lot of unbelievers from experiencing salvation.

**Food for thought #9: How can we challenge this idea to unbelievers around us?**