



FEBRUARY 26, 2107 | JOHN 3:1-21 | #4: JESUS AND NICODEMUS

NICODEMUS THE BELIEVER | VV. 1-2

- Nicodemus was a believer in the signs (2:23) and thus the identity of Jesus (3:1-2)
 - What kind of belief is enough belief?
 - “You are a teacher come from God” and “God is with him” will not save you.
 - Intellectual belief leads one to a faith requirement, thus cannot be separated from saving faith.

NICODEMUS THE SKEPTIC | VV. 3-8

- The clear requirement for the Kingdom of God: “born from above” (v. 3)
 - While “born again” is the common translation, the word literally means “from above.”
 - Nicodemus’ response: It is too late for me...and anyone alive. (v. 4)
- Jesus’ reply: There must be another birth. (vv. 5-8)
 - The birth of water
 - This could be a reference to physical birth – but we would just make that up (as in *the New Living Translation*).
 - Some have made this into a new age concept of “connecting with the original creation” (as in *The Message* translation).
 - This could be a reference to Baptism – but we wouldn’t get that from John
 - This is most likely a reference to the regeneration Word – John 4:14, 7:38-39, Eph 5:26, Titus 3:5, rom 10:17
 - The birth of the Spirit
 - There is an “other-world” nature of one who is born from above, so that we “do not know where it comes from and where it is going. See Philippians 4:7, 1 John 3:1

NICODEMUS CHASTISED | VV. 9-12

- The blunt question: “How can you be a teacher and not know this? (v. 10)
 - This was not a new teaching! Ezekiel 36:24-27 gave a clear requirement to “seeing the Kingdom of God.”
 - With the signs and wonders that had convinced Nicodemus that Jesus was from God, and with the zeal for God’s name displayed by Jesus, Nicodemus should have bowed in humble acceptance of the Messiah, as taught in Ezekiel 36:24-27.
- Point of application: Be careful not to be so hungry for the “spiritual things” that you ignore the foundation of the “earthly things.”
 - Nicodemus was missing the greatest truth because he was ignoring the simple truth.
 - Many people today want a spiritual enlightenment without a Biblical knowledge.

THE BELIEF THAT SAVES | VV. 13-21

- The core belief: that Jesus is “the Son of Man.” (v. 13)
 - The Son of Man is the Messiah – Daniel 7:13-14
 - That the Son of Man is able to offer eternal life (v. 15).
- The eternal life offer—
 - It is *typified* (illustrated) in the serpent of the wilderness (v. 14).
 - Its source is the love of God for the world (v. 16).
 - Its opposite is eternal *destruction* (v. 16).
 - John 10:10 – *destroy* is the same word as *perish*.
 - The *judgment* of eternal destruction has already been given. The *offer* of eternal life was new in Christ.