

Today I want to take you to a shoot through a story found in John 3. It is in interaction between Jesus a religious man named Nicodemus.

Nicodemus was not just any man; he was a respected Pharisee and teacher of teachers. We begin this story in John 3:

John 3:1-21 There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. (2) 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."

(3) Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (4)

Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" (5) Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. (6) That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born

of the Spirit is spirit. (7) Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' (8) The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit." (9) Nicodemus answered and said to Him, "How can these things be?" (10) Jesus answered and said to him, "Are you the teacher of Israel, and do not know these things?

(11) Most assuredly, I say to you, We speak what We know and testify what We have seen, and you do not receive Our witness. (12) If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things? (13) No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven. (14) And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, (15) that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. (16) For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him

should not perish but have everlasting life. (17) For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. (18) "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. (19) And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. (20) For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. (21) But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God."

The story begins by Nicodemus a ruler and leaders in the Jewish Community and a Pharisee approaches Jesus at night.

A) Jesus was not a popular person among the leaders of the Jews. He spoke against their practices because they did not follow Moses and the prophets but relied on their

Talmud and Rabbinical teachings. They made the Torah and the law secondary to the commands of God.

B) Today we have these forms of teachers who do not rely on God's words but their own opinions and commentaries. They raise teachers for themselves who only tell them what they want to hear rather than what God teaches.

Nicodemus makes a statement that tells us that he knew who Jesus was and how he felt about Him.

A) You are from God. You are a teacher sent from God. Your miracles are from God. God is with you. Despite all these recognitions, Nicodemus still lacked salvation.

B) There are Nicodemus's in our world today. They believe in Jesus, that He is a teacher sent by God, that God is with Him, that He is even the Christ and that He did all the miracles because of God. Even

believing he died on the cross for their sins but still have not attained to salvation.

Despite Nicodemus' confessions, he was not saved. Jesus said, you must be born again to see the Kingdom of Heaven.

- A) So many people have an intellectual understanding of Christ but lack spiritual awaking. They have not been regenerated by the Holy Spirit. They acknowledge Him with their heads but not with their hearts.
- B) Jesus said, you cannot see the Kingdom unless you are born from above. Something must move you and change you internally, that something and someone is the Holy Spirit.
- C) Nicodemus' acknowledgement of Jesus was not sufficient for salvation, and neither is anyone else's. There must be an internal change of life, attitude, and spirit.

Nicodemus had a hard time understanding what Jesus was saying. He took everything literally. How can a person enter a womb a second time?

A) A person who is not regenerated by the Holy Spirit will find it difficult to understand the words of Christ and the life of Christ.

Jesus responds one must be born of water and of spirit.

A) As a Christian for 30+ years and a Pastor for 20+ years I have seen in Christendom what I was told a long time ago. People who have believed in Jesus Christ and have not grown in their faith and involvement of the Body. Why is that? What makes someone a believer and not growing in Christ?

1. The Flesh.

1 Corinthians 3:1-3 And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ. (2) I fed you with milk and not with solid food; for until now you were not able to receive it, and even now you are still not able; (3) for you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men?

Hebrews 5:11-12 of whom we have much to say, and hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. (12) For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food.

Romans 8:7-9 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. (8) So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God. (9) But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.

In conclusion,

We have a religious leader who says Jesus is from God, that God is with Him, that He is a teacher sent by God, and yet is not saved.

We have Christ telling him that His acknowledgement is not sufficient for his salvation but must be Born Again.

Jesus then says something that I believe is key...

John 3:(19) And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. (20) For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. (21) But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God."

What we see here is the fault is not on God to have someone mysteriously Born Again but rather on the individual themselves. God shines his light in the world to all men. People see the light. They may even hear and feel the light but instead of coming to the light they love themselves more.

Being Born Again is about a person who acts on the light. You know Jesus is from God, He is a teacher sent by God, you know God is with

Him, you may even believe He died on the cross for your sins, that He rose from the dead, and that He is returning to judge the living and the dead but are you Born Again.

Jesus said, people have seen the light but do not come to it because their deeds are evil. In other words, they want to continue in their sin, their ways, their flesh, their ideologies.

James says,

James 2:19-20 You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble! (20) But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?

Have you repented your sins? Have you made the vow to turn crucify your flesh and die to your sins? Have you asked the Holy Spirit into your life?

Romans 10:9-11 that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and **believe in your heart** that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. (10) For **with the heart one believes unto righteousness**, and with the mouth

confession is made unto salvation. (11) For the Scripture says, "WHOEVER BELIEVES ON HIM WILL NOT BE PUT TO SHAME."