



ALL SAINTS

PRESBYTERIAN

SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE

FOR ALL SAINTS SMALL GROUPS

“The Old and the New ” | Rev. Josh Keller | March 8, 2020

John 3: 1-7; 13-15

- 1** Now there was a Pharisee, a man named Nicodemus who was a member of the Jewish ruling council.
- 2** 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.”
- 3** Jesus replied, “Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again.”
- 4** “How can someone be born when they are old?” Nicodemus asked. “Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother’s womb to be born!”
- 5** Jesus answered, “Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit.
- 6** Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit.
- 7** You should not be surprised at my saying, ‘You must be born again.’
- 13** No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven—the Son of Man.
- 14** Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up,
- 15** that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him.”

Background:

Josh began his sermon with a reference to a popular movie out right now called The Irishman. The movie isn’t really about a mobster, rather, it is really about getting old and things coming to an end. Josh then jumps into the sermon which is entitled The Old and The New.

In the Gospel reading, we learn a little more about Nicodemus. A ruler of the Jews. To get to this point, you had to be older because it took time to advance to become such a leader. Nicodemus represents the Old World (OW) and old covenant. He says “we know” which represents the OW way of thinking and acting. Jesus says you and all you represent = OW. To move on, you must be born again. The OW way of thinking was more works based, so Nicodemus asks how he can be born again, how can he do it. Jesus is telling Nicodemus that the time of the OW and pharisees is passing away. Josh specifically mentions the patterns of the OW which include the law of independence from God. He uses the Tower of Babel as an example. The people wanted to erect this tower on their own, without God. This is how the Pharisees were living: trying to earn salvation without God. We truly want the things of God but not God.

Jesus is saying this is all going away. God tells Abram to get up and go, at 75!! To leave the OW and head to a NW. No one wants to leave what we have behind but Abram heard the promise of God and believed. He heard, believed and went. The idea of human independence comes from the serpent from the days in the Garden. The NW is through re-birth. Not by flesh but by the Spirit and water which is faith and baptism.

Josh revisits The Irishman in the final scenes. One person keeps coming back the old mobster and that is a young priest. He keeps coming back and asking if the mobster wants to repent of anything. This, in some ways, is Jesus, continually coming to us throughout all times in our lives.

Discussion:

1. Are you currently in the OW? What in your life belongs to the OW? Diagnostic questions – are you hiding sins or failures because you have it under
2. What do you pray to God for? Health, success, companionship? And what if you got none of that BUT just God? Would you feel ripped off?
3. Do you believe that God will take care of you in your calling? That you would go (new job, new city, new whatever that thing might be) if asked?