

## Nicodemus - the impact of multiple touch points

John 3:1-21, 7:40-53, 19:38-42

- Pharisee and teacher of the law
- Very patriotic, traditional, religious, and ritualistic. A member of the Sanhedrin (a tribunal of the Jews having religious, civil and criminal jurisdiction)
- A teacher most likely in the school of Gamaliel.
- Unique because he was open to the possibility that Jesus was a teacher from God -> he wanted to hear from Jesus.

His discernment is leading him on a journey.

Observation

N: You are a teacher come from God.

J: You are unable to make that determination unless you are born again.

Please Explain

N: Born again?

J: Yes, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. Are you operating in the realm of earthly things (flesh is flesh)? Or are your eyes being opened to heavenly things (Spirit is spirit)?

How? I want to understand.

N: How can these things be?

J: Allow your knowledge of the OT to illuminate your heart and be open to the truth that stands in front of you.

**Ezekiel 36:25-27** I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. **26** And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. **27** And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.

**Ezekiel 37:14** And I will put my Spirit within you, and you shall live,  
(Dry bones)

**vs. 14**, As Moses lifted up the serpent (Numbers 21:8-9)

In the same way, the Son of Man must be lifted up.

When the Greek verb "lifted up" is used it is always alluding to the image of being physically lifted up on the cross.

**vs. 15**, whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

**vs. 16**, God's love demonstrated through his Son -> whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

Eternal life received by spiritual re-birth.

An act of God (grace) through belief (faith) made possible because of Jesus (the only Son).

"If Nicodemus, with his knowledge, gifts, understanding, position and integrity cannot enter the promised kingdom by virtue of his standing and works, what hope is there for anyone who seeks salvation along such lines? Even for a Nicodemus, there must be a radical transformation, the generation of new life, comparable with physical birth." ~ D. A. Carson

**Question:** Have you experienced a spiritual re-birth? Do you believe (active faith) in the Son of God? How has this belief transformed you? What are the signs in you of new life?

The Son of Man must be lifted up.

Exaltation and glorification.

The cross and the resurrection are one redemptive event.

Life in Christ looks to future resurrection.  
Rejection of Christ leads to divine rejection.

Jesus is the center of salvation and judgement.  
As followers of Jesus we must proclaim this truth fully (adequately) so that those who hear it have the opportunity to respond.

The Mission of the church -> proclaiming the truth of this one redemptive event so that others understand that Salvation and Judgement are completely centered in Jesus.

**Question:** How frequently are you stuck with Jesus being the center of salvation and of judgement? If low, why? What is hindering you from embracing the full implications of the salvation and judgement that comes through Jesus? If high, how does this frequency affect the lives of those with whom you interact with? Is your life marked by proclaiming the truth of this one redemptive event?

Jesus has been sent from heaven achieving a redemption that makes re-birth possible.

- Eternal life becomes a present reality to those who believe in him.
- The Kingdom is not simply future, it has been inaugurated by Jesus.
- The Kingdom of heaven is here. His resurrection has taken place. The forgiveness of sin is available.
- There is a tension in the already / not yet.

The message of the gospel is not vague! (31-36)

John 3:36 Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.

If the message of the gospel is not vague then...

**Question:** What adjustments need to be made so that gospel growth in my life is not vague?

**vs. 19-21,**

Light exposes. In order to avoid exposure ones organizes their life to stay in the dark.  
Conviction is suppressed and shame is expected.

Those who welcome the light see freedom in its exposure.

This freedom is not found in self-righteousness, it is found through the works of God.

Regeneration from the Spirit takes place before the end.

We are transformed here and now through the power of the Holy Spirit.

**Question:** Are you experiencing the joy, challenge, and growth of sanctification?

The rest of the story.

**7:40-53, 19:38-42**

Are you allowing yourself to be persuaded?

**7:50-51,** Nicodemus speaks up on behalf of Jesus.

If you are unwilling to listen directly from the one who is challenging your interpretation of the law, then you yourselves are not listening to the law. You are law-breakers.

Risking exposure Nicodemus willingly associates.

**19:39,** Nicodemus also,

Provided the spices needed for Jesus' burial.

Was present in the preparation and wrapping of the body.

**Question:** Are you willing to risk the exposure of associating with Jesus? Does your faith need to be "found out"?