

The Conversations of Jesus - Nicodemus visits Jesus a message for the **Abundant Life Class** at Gulf Coast Baptist Church by Steve Thomas 3-21-26

🕯️ Jesus & Nicodemus — John 3:1–21 (KJV)

I. 🏛️ Introduction: Who Was Nicodemus? (v. 1)

Nicodemus was not an ordinary man — he was a Pharisee (a religious elite) and a ruler of the Jews (a member of the Sanhedrin, Israel's supreme council). His coming to Jesus was a significant and deliberate act.

II. 🌙 Nicodemus Opens the Conversation (v. 2)

He came by night — likely to avoid public scrutiny from his peers.

He addressed Jesus respectfully as "Rabbi" (Teacher).

He acknowledged Jesus's divine origin, basing his belief on the miracles Jesus performed.

He spoke on behalf of others ("we know"), suggesting some among the Pharisees recognized Jesus's authority.

III. ✝️ Jesus's First Declaration: You Must Be Born Again (vv. 3–8)

A. The Requirement (v. 3)

Jesus redirects the conversation from miracles to spiritual necessity — a complete new birth is required to see the Kingdom of God.

B. Nicodemus's Confusion (v. 4)

Nicodemus interpreted "born again" literally and physically, missing the spiritual meaning entirely.

C. Jesus Clarifies — Born of Water and the Spirit (vv. 5–8)

Jesus draws a clear distinction:

Flesh → produces flesh (natural birth)

Spirit → produces spirit (spiritual rebirth)

The Spirit, like the wind, is real and powerful though unseen — it cannot be controlled or fully comprehended by human reason. Jesus is giving new revelation that was a mystery up to this point. Jesus is making a clear distinction of who should be the teacher and who should be the student.

IV. 😞 Nicodemus's Second Question (v. 9)

"How can these things be?"

Nicodemus is still at a loss. His question shifts from "how physically?" to "how is this even possible?" — revealing genuine but struggling inquiry.

V. 📖 Jesus Rebukes & Reveals Deeper Truth (vv. 10–15)

A. The Rebuke (v. 10)

Jesus gently rebukes Nicodemus — as a teacher of Israel, he does not possess information that Jesus clearly does, and add on to that the fact that Jesus has done the works that give his message credibility. His credentials are above reproach, yet the religious leaders are not receiving the message that Jesus was giving.

B. The Problem of Unbelief (vv. 11–12)

Jesus asserts divine authority and points out the deeper problem: the religious leaders refuse to receive His testimony even in simpler, earthly terms.

C. The Son of Man's Authority (v. 13)

Only Jesus has the credentials to speak of heavenly things — He descended from heaven and is the exclusive revealer of God's truth.

D. The Bronze Serpent — A Foreshadowing (vv. 14–15)

Jesus draws on a story Nicodemus would know well (Numbers 21:8–9): just as Israel looked to the bronze serpent on the pole for physical healing, so all people must look to the crucified Christ for eternal life. This is the first hint of the crucifixion in John's Gospel.

VI. 🌍 The Gospel in Full: The Heart of Christianity (vv. 16–18)

These three verses form the theological climax of the conversation:

v. 16 — God's love and the gift of His Son

v. 17 — God's purpose: salvation, not condemnation

v. 18 — The consequence: belief brings freedom from condemnation; unbelief means already being condemned

VII. 💡 Light vs. Darkness — The Final Verdict (vv. 19–21)

Jesus closes with a moral and spiritual contrast:

	Darkness	Light
Who	Those who do evil	Those who do truth
Response to Christ	Avoid / reject Him	Come to Him freely
Reason	To hide their deeds	To display God's work in them

This conclusion implicitly challenges Nicodemus himself — he came by night, but Jesus calls him (and all people) to walk in the light.