



Lesson 13 - Nicodemus

Based on John 3:1-17

1) Who heard the words of Jesus and was deeply impressed?

John 3:1 There was a man of the Pharisees, named _____, a ruler of the Jews:

Nicodemus held a high position of trust in the Jewish nation. He was highly educated, and possessed talents of no ordinary character, and he was an honored member of the national council. With others, he had been stirred by the teaching of Jesus. Though rich, learned, and honored, he had been strangely attracted by the humble Nazarene. The lessons that had fallen from the Saviour's lips had greatly impressed him, and he desired to learn more of these wonderful truths.

2) What did he do?

John 3:2 The same came to Jesus by _____, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a _____ come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.

He greatly desired an interview with Jesus, but shrank from seeking Him openly. It would be too humiliating for a ruler of the Jews to acknowledge himself in sympathy with a teacher as yet so little known. And should his visit come to the knowledge of the Sanhedrin, it would draw upon him their scorn and denunciation.

Since hearing Jesus, Nicodemus had anxiously studied the prophecies relating to the Messiah; and the more he searched, the stronger was his conviction that this was the One who was to come. With many others in Israel he had been greatly distressed by the profanation of the temple.

3) What cryptic words did Jesus reply with?

John 3:3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be _____ again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

Jesus bent His eyes upon the speaker, as if reading his very soul. In His infinite wisdom He saw before Him a seeker after truth. He knew the object of this visit, and with a desire to deepen the conviction already resting upon His listener's mind, He came directly to the point.

4) What did Nicodemus reply?

John 3:4 Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is _____? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?

Nicodemus understood the idea of the second birth, but by virtue of his birth as an Israelite he regarded himself as sure of a place in the kingdom of God. He felt that he needed no change. Hence his surprise at the Saviour's words. He was irritated by their close application to himself. The pride of the Pharisee was struggling against the honest desire of the seeker after truth.

5) Jesus replied:

John 3:5-6 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of _____ and of the _____, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is _____; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.



6) What did Job say about the human condition?

Job 14:4 Who can bring a clean thing out of an _____? not one.

7) What did Paul tell the church in Rome?

Romans:8:7-9 Because the carnal mind is _____ against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot _____ God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the _____, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

8) What did Jesus say comes out of the unchanged heart?

Matthew 15:19 For out of the heart _____ evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:

The Christian's life is not a modification or improvement of the old, but a transformation of nature. There is a death to self and sin, and a new life altogether. This change can be brought about only by the effectual working of the Holy Spirit.

9) Nicodemus gave Jesus a perplexed look, how did Jesus reply?

John 3:7-8 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be _____ again. The _____ bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

The wind is heard among the branches of the trees, rustling the leaves and flowers; yet it is invisible, and no man knows whence it comes or whither it goes. So with the work of the Holy Spirit upon the heart. It can no more be explained than can the movements of the wind.

10) What did Nicodemus say next?

John 3:9 Nicodemus answered and said unto him, _____ can these things be?

He was not so much impressed by the necessity of the new birth as by the manner of its accomplishment.

11) With love and patience what did Jesus ask him?

John 3:10 Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a _____ of Israel, and knowest not these things?

Jesus explained that His mission on earth was to establish a spiritual instead of a temporal kingdom, His hearer was troubled. Seeing this, Jesus added, ***"If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?"*** If Nicodemus could not receive Christ's teaching, illustrating the work of grace upon the heart, how could he comprehend the nature of His glorious heavenly kingdom? Not discerning the nature of Christ's work on earth, he could not understand His work in heaven.

12) What did Isaiah tell us about our condition?

Isaiah 64:6 But we are all as an _____ thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

13) What did David pray?

Psalms 51:10 Create in me a clean _____, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.



14) What did God promise God's people through Ezekiel?

Ezekiel 36:26-27 A new _____ also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my _____ within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.

In the estimation of men, Nicodemus' life had been just and honorable; but in the presence of Christ he felt that his heart was unclean, and his life unholy.

15) What familiar reference did Jesus use to help Nicodemus?

John 3:14 And as Moses lifted up the _____ in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:

Here was ground with which Nicodemus was familiar. The symbol of the uplifted serpent made plain to him the Saviour's mission.

16) How did Paul compare this?

Romans 8:3 For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the _____ of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

Not through controversy and discussion is the soul enlightened. We must look and live. Nicodemus received the lesson and carried it with him. He searched the Scriptures in a new way, not for the discussion of a theory, but in order to receive life for the soul. He began to see the kingdom of heaven as he submitted himself to the leading of the Holy Spirit.

17) What did Peter and John tell us in Acts?

Acts 4:12 Neither is there salvation in any _____: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

18) Where does repentance come from?

Acts 5:31 Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a _____, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.

19) What did John the Baptist declare to the watching crowd?

John 1:29 The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the _____ of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

“As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness,” so the Son of man has been lifted up, and everyone who has been deceived and bitten by the serpent may look and live.

20) When conversion begins, what will we say?

Psalms 40:8 I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is _____ my heart.

In the interview with Nicodemus, Jesus unfolded the plan of salvation, and His mission to the world. In none of His subsequent discourses did He explain so fully, step by step, the work necessary to be done in the hearts of all who would inherit the kingdom of heaven.



The words spoken at night to one listener in the lonely mountain were not lost. For a time, Nicodemus did not publicly acknowledge Christ, but he watched His life, and pondered His teachings. In the Sanhedrin council he repeatedly thwarted the schemes of the priests to destroy Him. When at last Jesus was lifted up on the cross, Nicodemus remembered the teaching upon Olivet: ***“As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.”***

After the Lord's ascension, when the disciples were scattered by persecution, Nicodemus came boldly to the front. He employed his wealth in sustaining the infant church that the Jews had expected to be blotted out at the death of Christ. In the time of peril he who had been so cautious and questioning was firm as a rock, encouraging the faith of the disciples, and furnishing means to carry forward the work of the gospel.



Can you see how a little time with Jesus can change a life?

Are you interested in receiving Heaven's richest reward?

When is the time to come boldly to His throne?