

"Jesus and Nicodemus"

John 3:1-21

Part 5

Introduction: We have been looking at a study in John 3 and in the verses, we have looked at Jesus is teaching Nicodemus about how to be born again. Nicodemus had been drawn to Jesus by the Spirit. He was a highly religious Pharisee who was deep into legalism. As a ruler of the Jews, he should have known about the new birth for it is found in the Old Testament. But the legalism had blinded him. He had come to believe that he could please God by his works as he kept the commandments of the Scribes. Jesus made it clear to Nicodemus and to all readers that He had the authority to declare the way of salvation. The Scribes did not have the authority to determine the way, but Jesus did.

Notice John 3:13

The message that Jesus preached had come from God the Father. He was the One who was offended by sin and therefore He is the only One who has the authority to determine how man is going to be forgiven and brought back into fellowship with Him. The WAY is the new birth. Sin has brought death into the human race and therefore we are all born spiritually dead. We are born as enemies of God, and we know nothing but to live for the lusts of the flesh. The new birth is essential for we need spiritual life; we need the life of the Spirit within us. The question then arises, "How can we be born again?" That is the question that Nicodemus asked. Jesus then began to explain. He pointed first to an Old Testament picture.

➤ **Old Testament Illustration**

Notice John 3:14a

In the first part of this verse Moses references an event in Numbers 21.

Numbers 21:4-9

⁴ And they journeyed from mount Hor by the way of the Red sea, to compass the land of Edom: and the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way.

⁵ And the people spake against God, and against Moses, Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? for there is no bread, neither is there any water; and our soul loatheth this light bread.

⁶ And the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died.

⁷ Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD, and against thee; pray unto the LORD, that he take away the serpents from us. And Moses prayed for the people.

⁸ And the LORD said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live.

⁹ And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived.

In this event that was the result of sin it was God Who determined the way of healing. It was not by works but it was by faith in the way that God had provided. The people had to look to the serpent on the pole. They had to believe that the serpent on the pole was the means to be healed.

Now before we move on let us understand that because God determined that looking to the serpent on the pole was the way of healing people who were snake bitten, then we can understand that the serpent HAD to be raised up on the pole.

➤ **The Application**

Notice John 3:14b

Just as the serpent HAD to be raised up on the pole, in the same way the Son of man MUST be lifted up. Why does Jesus say the Son of man MUST be lifted up. Because just as the serpent on the pole was the only way of to be healed of the snake bites, in the same way it has been determined by the Father that to be spiritually healed the Son of man HAD to be lifted up on the cross. Let us notice something that Abraham said in Genesis 22.

Genesis 22:6-8

⁶ And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together.

⁷ And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?

⁸ And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together.

When Abraham was going up Mount Moriah, he told Isaac that God would provide HIMSELF a sacrifice. This ties into the fact that it is God Who determines the means of healing because He is the One Who MUST be satisfied.

1 John 2:1-2

My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:

² And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

Jesus was the Sacrifice that satisfied the righteous demands of God. Therefore, He is the ONLY way to the Father/He is the ONLY way to spiritual healing and life.

John 14:6

⁶ Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

➤ The Details

Notice John 3:16

Here in this verse Jesus begins to give details of the Son of man being lifted up. In this verse we see several points of greatness.

1. The Greatest Love.

"For God so loved the world..."

The little Word "SO" takes the love of God to a depth that is difficult for us to understand. It makes no difference how deep into sin a person might be, they are still loved by God. In His love it is His desire to see all men saved so that He can have fellowship with us.

1 Timothy 2:1-4

I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men;

² *For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.*

³ *For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour;*

⁴ **Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.**

Not one person has sinned beyond the love of God.

2. The Greatest Gift.

"that He gave His only begotten Son..."

The greatest gift that was ever given was given some 2000 years ago when God sent His only begotten Son into the world to be the Saviour of the world.

Luke 2:7-11

⁷ *And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.*

⁸ *And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.*

⁹ *And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.*

¹⁰ *And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.*

¹¹ *For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.*

Jesus is called the only "BEGOTTEN" Son and that means He is "ONE OF A KIND, UNIQUE" which means He was sinless and perfect and therefore He qualified to be the Sacrifice that would satisfy God's demands as the payment for our sin.

Isaiah 53:7-11

⁷ *He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.*

⁸ *He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken.*

⁹ *And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth.*

¹⁰ *Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.*

¹¹ *He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.*

3. The Greatest Simplicity.

"that whosoever believeth in Him..."

Salvation is not by work but by grace through faith. The righteousness of Jesus is imputed to us when we place our faith in His death, burial, and resurrection, believing that He died in our place upon the cross, was buried and rose from the dead on the third day.

Romans 3:20-24

²⁰ *Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.*

²¹ *But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;*

²² *Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:*

²³ *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;*

²⁴ *Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:*

Ephesians 2:8-9

⁸ *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:*

⁹ Not of works, lest any man should boast.

4. The Greatest Security.

"that whosoever believeth in him should not perish..."

Once we are saved, we can never perish. We are forever secure in Jesus Christ.

John 10:27-29

²⁷ My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

²⁸ And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

²⁹ My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

5. The Greatest Possession.

"but have everlasting life."

This is the greatest possession that a man or a woman can have. To have eternal life is to have everything. The stuff of the world will all go away but eternal life is what it says, ETERNAL.

Conclusion:

God has made a way for every person to be born again. It happens by the power of the Spirit when we place our faith in Jesus Christ.

Are you sure you have been born again?