

"Jesus and Nicodemus"

John 3:1-21

Part 8

Introduction: We have been looking closely at the conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus in John 3. This is the most detailed passage in the Bible dealing with the New Birth. Nicodemus was a ruler of the Jews and he was a Pharisee. He was caught up in legalism which blinded him to the Truth of the New Birth. We get a picture of this in Mark 7.

Mark 7:3-9

³ *For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders.*

⁴ *And when they come from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing of cups, and pots, brassen vessels, and of tables.*

⁵ *Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands?*

⁶ *He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.*

⁷ *Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.*

⁸ *For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do.*

⁹ *And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.*

This is exactly what had happened to Nicodemus. But the Spirit was pulling him to Jesus and Nicodemus was responding. There was emptiness within him because that is what religion leaves people with. Jesus went on to explain the New Birth to Nicodemus and He explained how a sinner is born again. He used Numbers 21 and the serpent on the pole to clearly explain the need for the cross and for Jesus to be lifted up on the cross. Jesus explains that the New Birth is by faith plus nothing. God had sent Jesus into the world

that man might be saved. He did not send Jesus to condemn the world. Jesus went on to explain that people who do not believe on Him are condemned already. These people who are not saved are walking through life as guilty sinners, but they are unaware of the sentence that hangs over them. They are one heartbeat away from a Christless eternity.

➤ **The Condemnation of the Unsaved**

Notice John 3:18

Jesus then went on to teach why sinners will not come to Jesus Christ.

Notice John 3:19

Jesus is the Light of the world and light does several things to sinners. It irritates them when they are exposed to the Light. This irritation comes from the conviction of the Holy Spirit in their lives. They feel guilty as the Spirit shines the Light into their lives and many want to run from the uncomfortable feeling or they want to extinguish the Light. We looked at this last week in the life of Herod when he heard that the King of the Jews had been born and he had the little children killed. It is seen in the lives of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego when they refused to bow to the golden image. Nebuchadnezzar tried to extinguish their Light with the fiery furnace. We will see it in Daniel 6 when Daniel is thrown into the lion's den for his consistent prayer life

Light exposes the sinner's deeds, and this makes the sinner uncomfortable. Sinners love their sin because sin brings pleasure for a season.

Hebrews 11:24-25

²⁴ *By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;*

²⁵ *Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;*

Men love darkness because they feel it keeps their sin hidden. But what they do not know is that God sees all that goes on in the darkness. There is nothing hidden from God.

Psalms 139:1-4

O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me.

² *Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off.*

³ *Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways.*

⁴ *For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether.*

1 Chronicles 28:9

⁹ *And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever.*

Psalms 147:4-5

⁵ *Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite.*

One of the most popular lies of Satan is to whisper in the ear of the sinner that he or she can get away with their sin with no consequences. The Bible makes it very clear that man cannot get away with his sin.

Numbers 32:23

²³ *But if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the LORD: and be sure your sin will find you out.*

Notice John 3:20

Jesus stated that sinners will not come to the Light because they do not want their sins to be reproved. This explains why people will not read the Bible or why they avoid church. Sin will keep people away from the Word of God. Why?

Hebrews 4:12-13

¹² *For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

¹³ *Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.*

In the book of Acts, we can see what the Word of God does when it is spoken into the life of the sinner. Notice a portion of Steven's sermon.

Acts 7:49-54

⁴⁹ *Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool: what house will ye build me? saith the Lord: or what is the place of my rest?*

⁵⁰ *Hath not my hand made all these things?*

⁵¹ *Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye.*

⁵² *Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers:*

⁵³ *Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it.*

⁵⁴ *When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth.*

Have you ever wondered why you cannot get certain people to come to church? They do not want to be exposed to the Truth of the Word of God because when they come under conviction, they are very uncomfortable. I have heard people try to mask the conviction in many ways. They might complain that the people in the church are hypocrites, or the people are not friendly. They will complain about the pastor saying they do not like his style, or he is too long winded, or he is not friendly. People can come up with many excuses as to why they do not come to church, but when it is boiled down to the real reason, it is because they do not like the Light for it makes them uncomfortable. They do not want to experience the conviction of the Spirit, so they stay away. They will not attend a church where the Bible is taught, and they will not read the Bible. This can even happen to believers who drift off into sin. Let us notice how the Word of God impacts those who are exposed to it.

2 Kings 22:3-4, 8, 10-13

³ *And it came to pass in the eighteenth year of king Josiah, that the king sent Shaphan the son of Azaliah, the son of Meshullam, the scribe, to the house of the LORD, saying,*

⁴ *Go up to Hilkiyah the high priest, that he may sum the silver which is brought into the house of the LORD, which the keepers of the door have gathered of the people:*

⁸ *And Hilkiyah the high priest said unto Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the LORD. And Hilkiyah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it.*

¹⁰ And Shaphan the scribe shewed the king, saying, Hilkiah the priest hath delivered me a book. And Shaphan read it before the king.

¹¹ And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the book of the law, that he rent his clothes.

¹² And the king commanded Hilkiah the priest, and Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and Achbor the son of Michaiah, and Shaphan the scribe, and Asahiah a servant of the king's, saying,

¹³ Go ye, enquire of the LORD for me, and for the people, and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that is found: for great is the wrath of the LORD that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book, to do according unto all that which is written concerning us.

Notice John 3:21

This verse gives us a contrast. The unsaved sinner hates the Light and the exposure of their sin. The believer, however, loves the Light and hates their sin. We who are saved want the Light in our lives and we desire to be free from our sin. Whereas the unbeliever loves their sin and desires to hold tightly to it. This verse also tells us that the believer wants their works to be made known because they understand that the good in their life is the result of God working in them. The believer desires to glorify God with his or her works. Jesus describes this in the Sermon on the Mount.

Matthew 5:14-16

¹⁴ Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

¹⁵ Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

¹⁶ Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

Our works glorify God because it is God who works in us to bring about the good works. We see this in John 15.

John 15:1-5, 8

I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

² Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

³ Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

⁴ Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

⁵ I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

⁸ Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.

Conclusion:

In John 3:20-21 we find a good test for True salvation from the very Words of Jesus Christ. When we are saved, we will love the Light. We will desire to be under the teaching of the Word, and we will hate our sin. We will desire to glorify God with our good works. For the unsaved, they will avoid the Light because they despise the conviction. The question then is, "Which group do you belong to?"