

John 3

1 The name Nicodemus means 'to conqueror the people'. He was a Pharisee. There were two main religious factions. The Saducees seemed to control the Temple and did not believe in the resurrection of the dead. The Pharisees believed in the resurrection of the dead, the coming of the Messiah, the inspiration of the Old Testament, and in miracles. The ruling council to which he belonged made the religious decisions for the Jews. He had one of the highest positions to which a Jew could attain. He may be mentioned here in contrast to those people in the last chapter to which Jesus did not commit Himself. Since Jesus had already shown his radical departure from what the religious leaders allowed, Nicky was taking quite a risk to his reputation. John 7:47-49 appears to tell us that he kept his respect for Jesus a secret for a while.

2 He came by night so as not to be seen by others. What convinced him? It was the signs that Jesus had performed. The Pharisees believed that true prophets could perform miracles to authenticate their ministry. John 7:50-51 shows us he will stand up for Jesus in the days to come. John 19:38-39 In the end he will take his stand with Jesus that would cost his political position. John 15:24 The miracles made them accountable. They knew but refused to accept.

3 Jesus gets right to the point. You have to be born from above (literal meaning) to see the Kingdom of God. Galatians 6:15; 1John 5:1 Notice the Kingdom Jesus is referring to is not a political but a spiritual one.

4 Nicky takes Jesus too literally. Jesus will explain. 1 Corinthians 2:14

5 Two requirements to entering the Kingdom of God, born of water and born of the Spirit. Some understand this to mean literal physical birth (the water sack) and a spiritual birth in the heart. Others think this means baptized and the heart change. Ezekiel 36:25-27; Matthew 3:11; Titus 3:5

6 In typical Hebrew fashion the idea is repeated in different terms. This would lead us toward the first interpretation. First you are born into the physical world through the physical, but then you must be born into the spiritual world by the Spirit. 1 Corinthians 15:47-49

7-8 You, of all people, should know this. Wind and Spirit are from the same word, pneuma. We get our word pneumatic from it. Those who are led by the Spirit are directed by an unseen force in unpredictable ways. Ephesians 4:22-24; Ezekiel 37:9; Acts 2:2 You can't see the wind or the Spirit but you can see the affects of it. The Spirit moves lives like the wind moves leaves.

9 -10 Nicky is confused. He is honest. Jesus again reminds him that he, of all people, should know the basics of faith and a life in the Spirit. Matthew 11:25

11-13 Jesus says He is telling him of things He has witnessed in the earth and is not believed. Jesus can see that men who are not born of the Spirit do not have life. He can see that men born of the Spirit are led by the Spirit. If the Pharisees can't even see that, how will they believe anything of a deeper spiritual nature that Jesus tells them? Jesus is the only One who can tell them what He has witnessed in heaven. 8:38

14 –15 Now Jesus gives Nicky the Old Testament picture of what is going to happen in Jesus' life. Remember, this is the first Passover of Jesus ministry. 6:40; 12:44-46; Numbers 21:7-9

16 The most quoted and loved verse of the Bible! The purpose of the incarnation is clearly declared, 'God so loved the world'. It wasn't just the Jewish people, but all the people of the world. That is why Jesus was sent. Romans 5:8 God demonstrated His love to us in Christ. The world did not seem to understand and kept avoiding the message of the prophets. So God sent His only Son to convey the message and to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. He came to secure life for all who would believe in Him. 2 Corinthians 5:19-21

17 His purpose was not to condemn but to save! 12:47-48; 1 John 2:2

18 It is our obligation to receive. We stand condemned. There is a way out of our sentence. Unless we choose to accept the payment made for us, we will remain in our condemned state. His name is "The Salvation of God." 5:24; Hebrews 2:3

19-21 Light has come. 1:4 Now that the light has exposed the darkness, men must decide. They can choose to remain in the darkness because they prefer the temporal pleasures of the world, or they can choose to forsake those things and come into the light. Once you choose the light, your deeds will be good. You will desire to remain in the light. The deeds are a work of God. (Eph 2:10) Without Him you can do nothing. (John 15:5) You will want His deeds to be visible, because they are good. Light dispels the darkness. 8:12; 15:22-25; Hebrews 3:12-13; 1Thessalonians 5:4-9