

John 3:1-17 ESV

You Got Questions? Jesus Got Answers!

Services: Sunday, 3/12 at 8:00 & 10:45 + Monday 3/13 at 7 PM

Church Year: Second Sunday in Lent – 2017

Wednesdays of Lent: Services at 11 & 7; Meals at 12 & 6

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: God’s Word is Truth – *important Truth, saving Truth!* The Bible says that people “perish because they refused to love the truth” (2 Thess. 2:10 NIV). So let us ➡ dig into God’s Word, ➡ hear an important conversation, and ➡ rejoice in Jesus’ answers!

1. **The Setting**: ¹ Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. ² This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, “Rabbi [teacher], we [I and the other rulers] know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs [these miracles of divine origin] that you do unless God is with him.” // So Nicodemus ✓ was a representative of the other Jewish rulers and ✓ came by night – *under the cover of darkness*, probably to keep his conversation with Jesus secret from the regular people.
2. **You Must Be Born Again**:
 - a. ³ Jesus answered him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again [anew, from above] he cannot [literally, he is not able to] see the kingdom of God.” // Everyone has been born physically,

but, *to see the kingdom of God*, you must be born spiritually – thus, “born...of God” (John 1:12).

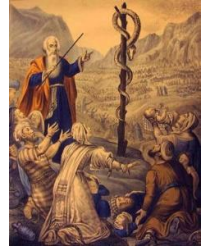
- b. ⁴ **Nicodemus said to him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?” //** Even though Jesus was talking *spiritually*, Nicodemus was still thinking *physically*.
- c. Then Jesus told Nicodemus the answer to his question: ⁵ **Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit [thus, a reference to the water of holy baptism and the Spirit working in conjunction with that water and the Word of God], he cannot enter [into] the kingdom of God.” //** In other words, as only a **woman** can give physical birth, so *only God can give spiritual birth!*
- d. ⁶ **“That which is born of the flesh is flesh [physical], and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit [spiritual]. ⁷ Do not marvel that I said to you [Nicodemus, singular], ‘You [y’all, plural] must be born again [anew, from above].” //** Since sin brings death, *our current physical lives are temporary* – we live and we die, then we will be raised physically. But spiritually, †God makes us alive through baptism and †God keeps us alive through His Word (Acts 20:32); even when we die physically, God takes us to paradise where we continue to live spiritually – *as we await Jesus’ return and the resurrection of our bodies.*
- e. ⁸ **“The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it**

comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.” // With the wind we can see what it does – *as the trees move*; with the Spirit we can see what He does – *as people are made new in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17)!*

3. Bible Knowledge Is Important:

- a. ⁹ Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be [come about]?” ¹⁰ Jesus answered him, “Are you the teacher of Israel and yet you do not understand these things?” // Not a good situation for Nicodemus or any Bible teacher. Ezra 7:10 has four critical steps for a teacher: (1) set his heart [*his focus, his mind*], (2) study God’s Word, (3) practice GW, and (4) teach GW!
- b. ¹¹ “Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know, and bear witness to what we have seen, but you [*y’all, plural*] do not receive our testimony.” // Even though Jesus demonstrated His connection with God and saw with His own eyes, sadly, Nicodemus and the other rulers did not receive, *thus did not believe*, such things.
- c. ¹² “If I have told you earthly things and you [*y’all, plural*] do not believe, how can you [*y’all, plural*] believe if I tell you [*y’all, plural*] heavenly things? ¹³ No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man.” // Since Jesus is the Son of Man, *who came down from heaven*, we should certainly and completely believe Him – *even all of God’s Holy Word!*

4. **Believe In Jesus for Eternal Life:** ¹⁴ **“And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up,** ¹⁵ **that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.”** // A powerful parallel:



In **Numbers 21:4-9** the people spoke against God, so *He sent serpents to bite the people so that many of them died.* Then, when the



people repented, Moses – following the LORD’s command – put a bronze serpent on a pole; whoever looked upon it with faith did not physically die but lived.

That pointed ahead to Jesus being lifted up on the cross! Now, *whoever is sorry and looks upon Jesus with faith has eternal life!*

5. **This Is God’s Primary Will:** ¹⁶ **“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son** [*so God’s love moved Him to give His Son; why?*], **that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.** ¹⁷ **For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.”** // Don’t be deceived, Jesus did not come to search out our sins *so that He could condemn us*; instead, He came to live in our place and suffer for our sins, so that we – *through believing in Him* – will be rescued from our sins and be members of God’s family!

Conclusion: Let us pray: Thank You, dear Father, for spiritual birth, Bible knowledge, and faith in Jesus! Amen!

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Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 7500 State Road, Parma, Ohio 44134, 440-845-2230