

MESSAGE OUTLINE—WEEK OF MAY 30, 2021 THIS IS THE LIFE: LIFE IN JESUS

John 1-17 (ASV)

Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: ² the same came unto him by night, and said to him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that thou doest, except God be with him. ³ Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except one be born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God. ⁴ Nicodemus saith unto 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? ⁵ Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. ⁶ That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷ Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born anew. ⁸ The wind bloweth where it will, and thou hearest the voice thereof, but knowest not whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit. ⁹ Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be? ¹⁰ Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou the teacher of Israel, and understandest not these things? ¹¹ Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that which we know, and bear witness of that which we have seen; and ye receive not our witness. ¹² If I told you earthly things and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you heavenly things? ¹³ And no one hath ascended into heaven, but he that descended out of heaven, even the Son of man, who is in heaven. ¹⁴ And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; ¹⁵ that whosoever believeth may in him have eternal life.

¹⁶ For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God sent not the Son into the world to judge the world; but that the world should be saved through him.

Intro: Jesus has demonstrated his love and power transforming the water into high quality wine and cleaning the Temple. All religious leaders are aware of these powerful works, specially the Pharisees. **Gorion**, was his father. **ben**=son of

1. **"Now there was"** signals something unique, special. Came to Jesus wanting to speak to him, "across the aisle" is an understatement! Breaking all the protocols, traditions even at the risk of his own life. His thinking is logical, his observations are accurate, his conclusions are correct. "God is with you." (v. 1-2)

2. **"Jesus answered"** to what? What was the question? Or what statement was Jesus answering? Coming from a Pharisee, most probably was something like, "We Jews will see the kingdom of heaven because Abraham is our father right?" (v. 3)
3. **"Verily, verily"** is the way to signal something very important. Jesus uses it three time in these verses. (v. 3, 5,11). "He who is not born again cannot see the kingdom of heaven". It means, **regenerated by God, partaker of the divine, a new creature by the Spirit.** For Nicodemus it is absurd! Impossible! Impracticable! He is in shock! He is not discerning spiritually anything; his logic is human. (v. 4)
4. Jesus responds at a deeper level. There is a big difference between the flesh and the Spirit. **ONLY the Spirit Convicts us of sin, Repent, moves us to Believe, Sanctifies us and Regenerates us.** (v. 5-7)
5. Nicodemus remains in shock, open mouth, attempts but his minds does not help him much. He does not know anything about the work and ministry of the Spirit. Jesus expands his teaching using the wind. **The work of the Spirit goes beyond you logical thinking, is imperceptible, undiscernible, but real. You need to trust.** (v. 8-9)
6. **Jesus presents the evidence** that all religious leaders have seen and heard Jesus's witness but they rejected HIM. "Come on Nicodemus, this is theology 101". What would you do if I talk to you about heavenly things, because that is where I am coming from. **Jesus presents himself, as fully divine, The Savior, as the serpent in the desert.** (v. 10-14)
7. **It is because God loves "Agapeo", (not dependent on the loved subject)** the whole world so much that we can be born of the Spirit, have eternal life and not perish. (v. 15-16)

LINK TO VIDEO THE CHOSEN: JESUS AND NICODEMUS

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q1AyMDZNY9k>

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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CONNECT

- If you could speak to your “pre-Covid” self in 2019, what would you want to say that would have been helpful to you? What do you sense God would say to you now at this moment in your life as you look toward the future?

SCRIPTURE REFLECTION

1. **Read John 3:1-17 aloud.** What did you find life-giving from this week’s passage or message?
 2. **Video:** Watch a dramatic interpretation of this week’s passage from *The Chosen: Jesus and Nicodemus*. You can use this youtube clip either by screen sharing on zoom or watching in person. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q1AyMDZNY9k>)
- What did you find life-giving about this production?
 - Share when or how you were first introduced to the idea of being “born again.”
 - Have you ever felt like Nicodemus, confused between being religious and finding life in Christ?
 - If you were able to meet secretly and in-person with Jesus, what question would you ask that would help you connect more deeply with God’s love for you?

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE - Celebrating

Choose a few of the following questions to reflect on your small group experience this year:

- What have you appreciated most about our small group?
- Where have you sensed God’s care for you, watching over you to protect, guide, or provide for you this year?
- What insight or practice has deepened your relationship with Jesus this year?
- Is there an image or verse that has been especially meaningful for you this year?
- How is your life different as a result of being in Scripture together this year? What changes have you seen in yourself (a new attitude, behavior, or desire) that reflects your spiritual growth?

NEXT STEPS CONVERSATION

- Will we stay together as a small group next fall? Is there anything we could do to prepare for next year?
- Ask God to help you think of new people you could invite to join your small group. Extend the invitation now and include them in whatever gathering or communication you have over the summer.
- Consider staying connected in an informal way over the summer (find an activity, have a picnic, read a book together, find a service project, other ideas)?
- Is there anyone in our group that would like to help lead or create a new group? Start praying now for new groups and leadership to develop.

PRAYER and BENECTION

- **Share your requests:** Are there personal challenges the group can pray this summer?
- **Pray for one another:** Thank God for what you have learned and ask God for wisdom to apply it this week.
- **Benediction (personalizing Psalm 29:1-2, 11):**
We give praise to the Lord. With all the angels, we ascribe to the Lord glory and strength. We honor the Lord with the glory due his name; we worship the Lord in the splendor of his holiness...we trust in the Lord who gives strength to his people; for it is the Lord our God who blesses his people with peace. Amen

SUMMER SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

Continue to spend 15 minutes a day with God, gradually increasing the time. Use the weekly passage and the following prompts to guide you.

- **Read and reflect on scripture:** I trust this passage to be God’s living word to me. What does God want me to see in this passage?
- **Prayer for guidance and confession:** I seek to align my heart with God’s heart. What does God want me to let go of to move forward?
- **Silence and solitude with God:** I desire to hear your voice, God, as I listen in stillness and quiet. What do I sense God is saying to me in this moment?