

- ii. Jesus didn't come to condemn the world, any more than Moses raised the bronze serpent to condemn the people of Israel to death.

- iii. To look in faith upon Jesus raised up on the cross is to see the King of the Kingdom in His glory... in a very real sense, that is His throne! When we see that, we enter the Kingdom and begin living there... with a life that will not end!

C. Why Nicodemus Refuses to Come into the Light

### LIVE THE STORY

- How do the encounters in John 3 and 4 help show us what it means that Jesus *knows what is in a person*?
- Can you identify something in each of the stories about John the Baptist, the Samaritan woman, and the royal official the contrasts with Nicodemus? (Think of themes and ideas.)
- What do you think it meant to Nicodemus and the other Jewish rulers he represented, *“to see the Kingdom of God”*?
- Discuss the following quote in light of John 3:19-21. *“The truth is, we're mildly attracted to [Jesus'] virtues, but we're strongly attracted to our vices. We wouldn't like to lose them because they please us, and the prospect of a significant life with Jesus doesn't so much.”*<sup>1</sup> How does this relate to your experience?
- What does the picture of Nicodemus coming at night paint? How is darkness described later in this same scene? Does darkness show up elsewhere in John's gospel? If so, how might that inform this scene?
- How does the account of the serpent being lifted up in the wilderness help us understand how Jesus came that we might live?
- What kind of life is Jesus talking about when he speaks of life unending? How is it related to entering the Kingdom?

1 Cornelius Plantinga Jr., *Christianity Today*, September 2006.

## The Word Became Flesh (8)

### *Jesus and Nicodemus*

Jerry Cisar — February 5, 2017

Text: John 2:23—3:21

### Introduction

#### I. Jesus Sees (2:23-25)

- A. Jesus knows you!
- B. Jesus isn't interested in man's testimony about man.
- C. Jesus sees every human heart clearly.
  - i. 1 Samuel 16:7
  - ii. 1 Kings 8:39

#### II. Nicodemus Can't See (3:1-3)

- A. The Offer (3:1-2)
  - i. Nicodemus came to Jesus at night.
  - ii. Nicodemus is a big cheese in Jerusalem.
    - a) Nicodemus and his pals are the opposite of John the Baptist.

- b) Nicodemus fails to understand that Jesus doesn't need their authority, nor will He submit to it.

#### B. The Rejection (3:3)

- i. Nicodemus didn't ask Jesus a question, nor had he said enough to warrant a response.

- ii. Seeing the Kingdom of God is what Pharisees stand for!

- iii. What is "The Kingdom of God?"

- a) The kingdom of God and eternal life

- b) The Kingdom of God was the long awaited for coming kingdom of the Messiah.

- Isaiah 9:6-7

- Jeremiah 23:5

- John 6:15

#### C. Man's Need

### III. Nicodemus Can't Understand (3:4-9)

- A. Jesus expands on what He means (5-8).

- i. Not only will you not see it, **you therefore will not enter it!**  
You will **not** get to **participate in it!**

- ii. *...born out of water and spirit.*

- iii. *Those born of the Spirit are born of the spirit at the pleasure of will of the Spirit.*

#### B. How can this be?

### IV. Nicodemus Doesn't Believe (3:10-12)

- A. "We" and "You" (3:2, 11)

- i. 1 John 1:2-3 - Jesus and the disciples.

- ii. Jesus, the Father, and the Spirit

- B. Their rejection of Jesus is a faith problem!

### V. Everyone Must Believe (3:13-21)

- A. The Serpent on the Pole (13-15)

- i. *Look and live!* (Numbers 21:1-9)

- ii. *Look and live becomes believes and have life unending.*

- B. Heavenly truth explained (16-18)

- i. What is this life unending?

- a) The **life** that would exist under the Messiah's reign.

- Descriptions of that day are rich in words describing peace, joy, fullness, well-being, safety, comfort, and justice.

- b) The quality is deep, and the duration is forever.