

Lesson 3 [Chapter 3]"Nicodemus"

Remember:

Last lesson, John Chapter 2 features two major events: Jesus's first miracle at the Wedding in Cana, where He turns water into high-quality wine, revealing His glory; and His cleansing of the Jerusalem Temple, where He drives out money changers and sellers, prophesying His own body's resurrection in three days, which the Jews misunderstood.

Lesson Goal:

Knowing that the true spiritual life and entering God's Kingdom, requires being born "from above" (spiritually) through baptism and the work of the Holy Spirit, not physical birth.

Lesson Opener:

In today's movie clip, there's a young boy by the name of Forrest Gump, who has a bad back. He's been given these leg braces that are meant to help him learn how to walk correctly. Let's see if those braces teach Forrest how to walk in a better way.

Click to view [this video clip](#) (from the movie *Forest Gump*)

Sometimes the first way we learn how to do something isn't the best way to do the thing. The problem with learning something the "wrong way" is that it makes it harder for us to learn how to do it the better way.

Nicodemus thinks life with God involves braces on legs ("religious rules") but Jesus is saying, "But then you can't run. The rules will stop you from letting the Holy Spirit move you where you need to move." In essence, Jesus is like Jenny and is saying, "Run, Nicodemus! Run with God's Holy Spirit!" The same thing might be true for us, too. We may not want to relearn things we think we already knew but this clip reminds us of how rewarding that is.

Lesson Body:

NICODEMUS AND THE NEW BIRTH 3:1-21

Short video telling the story:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iNkdZeJEtX0&t=74s>



Nicodemus was a very important man.

He was a leader of Israel.

He was also a pharisee. He studied



One night, Nicodemus came to speak to Jesus in secret. He didn't want anyone else to see him.

Nicodemus knew that Jesus was special because he had heard Jesus teach and do miracles.

Nicodemus had lots of questions to ask Jesus.



Jesus told Nicodemus that to go to heaven you must be born again.

This didn't make any sense to Nicodemus. He knew it was impossible to be born two times.



Jesus spoke some amazing words to Nicodemus.

Jesus said, "For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life."

Nicodemus understood. The only way to have eternal life is to believe and trust in Jesus.

What do we learn about this man, Nicodemus? (he was a Pharisee, a ruler of the Jews)

After crucifixion, he took permission from Pilate to bury the Body of the Lord in his new private tomb.

When did Nicodemus come to see Jesus? (at night)

What did Nicodemus say to Jesus? (we know You come from God, because no one can do the signs You do.)

How does Nicodemus know Jesus is from God? (the signs Jesus has been doing)

What does Nicodemus call Jesus? (Rabbi, teacher)

Nicodemus has not asked Jesus any questions, but Jesus responds to him with a very odd statement. [What is it?](#)

Verse 3 Jesus answered and said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

This doesn't even seem to be related to what Nicodemus said to Jesus, does it? We went from the signs pointing to Jesus' origin with God to the necessity to be born again to see the kingdom of God.

[How does Nicodemus respond to this statement from Jesus?](#)

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?”

5 Jesus answered, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

[Why can't babies go back into their Mamas' tummies?](#) (they are too big!) Nicodemus knows what we know about babies getting bigger. They cannot return to their mamas' tummies when they are older.

[What kind of birth could Jesus be talking about here?](#)

Jesus is talking about being born again from the spirit through Baptism. The new birth is from heaven, achieved through baptism by water and the Spirit.

[What makes this birth different from the first birth?](#) (flesh vs. spirit)

[What do mama elephants give birth to?](#) (elephants) [What do mama whales give birth to?](#) (whales)

Jesus is telling Nicodemus one of the laws of nature – animals are born after their own kind. And human beings are born after their own kind.

So, Jesus is saying that this second birth will also follow the laws of Nature. A person born of the Spirit will have a spiritual birth.

Jesus then turns Nicodemus' attention to another nature lesson in verse 8.

8 The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit.”

(Wind!) [What do we learn about wind from what Jesus says in verse 8?](#)

{the wind blows, can be heard, invisible, cannot be tracked}

[What is He comparing the wind to?](#)

Jesus is comparing the wind to the Spirit.

How is the wind like the Spirit? this is a hard one!

The people who are born again of the Spirit are not changed on the outside. The change is internal, invisible. But it is evident, just like the wind, we do not see it but watch its effect.

After Jesus' two nature lessons, does Nicodemus finally understand what Jesus meant when He said, "you must be born again?" Let's read the next verse – verse 9.

Nicodemus answered and said to Him, "How can these things be?" John 3:9

He still has some questions. If things that are born after their own kind and the second birth – the one of the Spirit is invisible, how can a man be born again? And how do we know we are born again?

Let's read verse 10 together to see what Jesus said,

Jesus answered and said to him, "Are you the teacher of Israel, and do not know these things?"

What does Jesus call Nicodemus? (teacher). The Lord reprimanded him for not understanding, being a teacher to the Jews.

Let's go on to see what else Jesus says. Read verse 11:

11 Most assuredly, I say to you, We speak what We know and testify what We have seen, and you do not receive Our witness.

The Lord uses the plural probably to indicate that He is speaking in the name of the Holy Trinity.

Nicodemus is trying to understand his need for a new birth through the One who "came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven...." He alone ascends into heaven and carries all those who believe in Him to enjoy adoption through Him and be the children of God.



Jesus shows the reason why He descended from heaven, that He might be lifted up, i.e. crucified, for the salvation of man. As the serpent was raised up, so shall Christ be raised on the cross for us.

Here we come to the most famous verse in the Bible.

Verse 16: For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

It is as though the Lord is saying: 'Do not be amazed that I should be lifted up on the Cross so that you might be saved for this is God's decision. He has loved you so much that He has sacrificed His Son for His slaves. Clearly none of you would do that for a friend or for any righteous person.

If you really love others, you need to be willing to give up the best that you have for them. True love is not stingy. It doesn't keep back anything selfishly. It doesn't regret it once it has given something to others.

JOHN 3:18-21

When we believe in Jesus, we are saved by the salvation He did on the cross for us. We are no longer condemned; the death sentence our sin requires is forgiven because of the blood of Jesus Christ. People who reject Jesus and His work on the cross are condemned because they are already dead in sin, and they refuse to receive the life that Jesus has provided.

God sent us His light; He sent us a way to receive a new spiritual life. The light is Jesus. We receive life through Jesus' death. It is a gift from God, because He loves us so much. We simply reach out and receive the gift.

It is as though the Lord is saying: 'I have come to help the people out of the darkness. Therefore, they are condemned since they did not abandon the darkness and come to the Light. They have no excuses.

John the Baptist Exalts Christ 3:22-36

The Lord Jesus Christ began to baptize through His disciples before John the Baptist is put in prison to draw the disciples of the Baptist towards Himself, so they aren't scattered after his martyrdom.

When John the Baptist was asked about Jesus and was told that His disciples were baptizing too, he said: "30 He must increase, but I must decrease".

In other words, He will grant me good things and I will receive; He will be glorified and I will confess.

Do you see how he has nothing else to say of himself other than that he is of lesser stature and came from the earth and was born of it? As for the Lord Jesus Christ, He had come to them from heaven. With all these words, the Baptist is able to satisfy their jealousy.

Lesson Delivery Idea:

Measuring God's Love (John 3:16)

Theme:

God's love is immeasurable.

Objects to bring:

A measuring cup; a tape measure; a watch



Sometimes we measure ingredients. If I were making some cookies, which of these would I use to make sure that I put in exactly the right amount of flour, sugar, and milk? (Allow kids to pick between the measuring cup, a tape measure, and a watch.)

That's right, we would use a measuring cup for cookies, but I wonder if we might use a measuring cup to measure God's love? The Bible says, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want....my cup runs over" (Psalm 23:1,5). Well, if our cup runs over with God's love, I guess we couldn't use a measuring cup to measure it.

If we were building something, which of these would I use to measure the length, width, and height of different things? (Allow kids to pick between the measuring cup, a tape measure, and a watch.)

That's right, a tape measure, but I wonder if we might use a tape measure to measure God's love? The Bible tells us that God's love is higher than the heavens (Psalm 108:4). If God's love is higher than the heavens, I don't think we could use a tape measure to measure it, could we?

Which of these would I use to measure time? (Allow kids to pick between the measuring cup, a tape measure, and a watch.)

We use a watch to measure time. I wonder if we could use a watch to measure how long God's love will last. The Bible tells us that God's love is from everlasting to everlasting (Psalm 103:17). Wow! If God's love is from everlasting to everlasting, I guess we couldn't measure it with a watch.

Read (John 3:16). How do you measure a love like that? We can't measure it. We don't need to, but we do need to experience it.

My prayer for you today is, "That you may understand how wide, how long, how high, and how deep His love really is. May you experience it, though it is so great you will never fully understand it" (Ephesians 3:18-19).

Dear God, we thank You for Your love—a love so great that You gave Your one and only Son so that we could have eternal life, amen.

Memory Verse: 3:16: For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.



Lesson 4 [Chapter 4] "The Samaritan Woman"

Remember:

Last lesson, we talked about Nicodemus who met Jesus at night, and Jesus explained to him the spiritual birth. Also, the famous declaration that God sent His Son out of love for the world, so believers wouldn't perish but have eternal life (John 3:16).

Lesson Goal:

When we have Jesus in our hearts, our spirits are made alive, and we are no longer thirsty on the inside.

Lesson opener:

Ask your children if they have ever been thirsty? When you are cold, would you prefer to drink hot chocolate or iced lemonade? When you are very hot, would you rather drink water or milk? Pour a glass of fresh water and refer to it as you read the story with your child.