



The Dynamic Gospel Study Guide – Book of John

Chapter 3

1 Here's a story about a notable Jewish leader named Nicodemus. He was a Fundamentalist and his name means to 'conquer' or 'rule' the people, and in religious matters, the Fundamentalists held considerable power.

2 Nicodemus decided to visit Jesus personally, though he did it in secret during the night. "Teacher," he said. "It's apparent that God is truly on Your side, for how else could You perform such astonishing signs and miracles?"

3 Heartily, Jesus answered "Absolutely! You speak the truth, friend! Furthermore, it's important to realize that God's Kingdom is being revealed, and no one can really comprehend what that means without a total rebirth."

4 Nicodemus did not get the spiritual implication of Jesus' answer, for he was used to reading things very literally. "How can a man be physically reborn? The old become babies? That makes no sense."

5 Jesus spelled it out for him. "Let Me make this clear: If you want to make it into God's Kingdom, more than one birth is required. Sure, we come into this world physically, washed from our mothers' wombs. But a man must be washed **out** of the world by God's Spirit as well.

6 "That which is born into the world is alive but worldly; that which is born into the Spirit is spiritually alive.

7 "So don't get your mind in a cramp when I say, "you must go through two births."

8 "The Voice of real spiritual Life is blowing like a great wind all around us. It's babble to most. I see you shaking your head. Do you not understand this yet? Let Me ask you this: Where does the wind come from? Where is it heading? Those born to the Spirit will figure it out."

9 Nicodemus said, "You're losing me."

10 Jesus now shook **His** head. "You mean to tell Me you are a professor of spiritual things and you haven't got a clue? All Israel is looking to you!

11 "Amazing... Here's all I have to say on the matter: Every word you hear Me speak is simply an account of the things we have heard and experienced for ourselves, firsthand. No 'he said/she said' here. We've seen God's Truth with our own eyes. We're just reporting it to you as it is. And still you call us crazy.

12 "If I start off with simple lessons - common-sense truths that anybody can understand - and you won't accept even **that**, how in the world are you going to get a handle on deeper spiritual truths?"

13 "What? Are you going to side-step God's revelation and rip Truth right out of Heaven by yourselves? You'll never get at the Truth unless you hear it from the Son Who comes down from Heaven with it.

14 "And the Son won't stay 'down' for long. Just like the serpent Moses held up in the wild places, so the Son of Man is bound to be 'lifted up.' "Trust my words: look to the serpent and you will not die," Moses told the people.

15 "So it will be the same with Me. Only My kind of life is eternal.

16 "It's written big now: **GOD LOVES YOU!** All of you! He's giving you the only Son He has so that anyone that looks to Him for salvation will get it. No more dying inside or out. Instead, they get real life - for now and forever.

17 "God hasn't dispatched His Son to crack down on the unruly masses. He sent Him so that the saving could begin. Day by day; person by person - He's here to save the world.

18 "Follow the Son and there's no fear of judgment and punishment. If you turn away cringing and refusing to believe then you've already judged yourselves. You bring down God's wrath on your own heads when you turn your back on God's Son - the only One you'll ever get.

19 "And here's what the verdict of the condemned reads: "The Light came into the world, and the people decided darkness was preferable since it gave cover to their evil ways."

20 "Their minds thoroughly corrupted, hating the Light came naturally and they made no effort to approach. They knew full-well that their sins would be exposed if they did so.

21 "On the other hand, anyone who chooses to walk in the Light has absolutely no fear of it. This kind of person is doing God's work in whatever he does, just like the One who knows and lives the Truth completely."

22 After this important chapter in the life of Jesus, He and His students worked their way through the region of Judea, stopping every day to share the Truth with the people. They baptized all who responded to the teaching and miracles.

23 The prophet John was also in the area, baptizing listeners of his message who wanted to start their lives over. He did this in Aenon, where there was a large pool suited to the purpose.

24 This was not long before John was arrested and thrown into prison.

25 His teaching got him in trouble with the religious authorities again, and a dispute arose among them about who was baptizing whom and why, and what should be done about it.

26 So the religious bosses made the trek one more time out to where John was doing his work. They said "OK, 'Teacher.' We hear someone you baptized earlier across the Jordan is now doing the same thing, and everyone's flocking to Him. Don't you have a problem with Him usurping your 'ministry?'"

27 John was unmoved by their barbs. "I can't stand up and say anything with authority unless Heaven itself puts its stamp of approval on it.

28 "So let's recap: Didn't I already tell you that I'm no 'Messiah?' I was simply commissioned to be the advance-man. The One has now arrived. I'm just the warm-up.

29 "The groom gets the bride. If anything, you might call me the 'best man.' Now the Groom is speaking up for His bride and it makes me proud. There's a wedding about to take place and that fills me with joy. I couldn't ask for more.

30 "It was bound to happen - His ministry's on the rise; I'm on my way out.

31 "And He's not just 'coming up.' He's already over all. If He were just another earthly teacher, His message wouldn't be more than earthly wisdom. But there's Heaven in His words. He makes it real.

32 "He speaks firsthand of the things of Heaven. He doesn't need anyone else to vouch for His authority.

33 "Anyone who accepts His message knows full-well that it's the Truth and gets God's seal of approval.

34 "God sent Him and He speaks God's words. And God isn't being stingy about it. His Spirit pours out of Him constantly.

35 "You can see how much God loves this Son of His. There's nothing He's holding back. The Son's hand is full of good things to share.

36 "The one who takes it all in - the one who acts on his belief - doesn't have to wait for eternal life. It has already begun! Yet the one who stubbornly resists what the Son has to say won't be seeing any of the good stuff. He won't comprehend or experience a drop of it. This kind of willful ignorance distorts the mind and disgusts God."

Explain the Context:

From your reading provide a short answer to the following:

What is the theme of this chapter?	What is the BIG Idea?
What is something that surprised you?	What is this chapter <i>not</i> saying?

Take a moment to consider these questions:

- 1) Who was Nicodemus and why is his position important to the story?
- 2) In what ways does the honest questions of Nicodemus encourage us to do the same?
- 3) Jesus says that God “loved” the world so much that He gave...What does that kind of love mean to you?
- 4) What does it mean to you to know that Jesus didn’t come to condemn us?
- 5) How does John the Baptists certainty in who he is help you know who you are in Christ?

Apply the Scripture

Write the verse that stood out to you while reading [in this translation or your favorite].

How does this verse challenge you? Does it reveal an attribute of God's character?

For further study:

- 1Peter 1:3
- 1 John 2:29
- 1 Corinthians 2:13-16
- James 1:17
- 1 John 5:20