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## Jesus--John 3; Luke 3:19-20

### Conversation with Nicodemus; John Imprisoned

**I. Additional Scriptures...**

1. John 7:50-52; 19:39.
2. The kingdom was soon to come (Mk 9:1; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4).
3. James 1:18.
4. Numbers 21:8-9.
5. Matthew 14:1-12.
6. John 1:6.
7. 1 John 2:3-4.

**II. Chronology.**

BIBLE PERIOD: **The Period of the Christ.**

**III. Summary.**

Nicodemus comes to Jesus by night and we are not told why he came at night. He expressed his confidence that Jesus was a teacher come from God because of the miracles Jesus had performed. Jesus told him that he must be born again. Nicodemus misunderstood Jesus to be speaking about a physical birth but Jesus was speaking of a spiritual birth--of water and of the Spirit. Nicodemus still did not understand and Jesus was amazed that a teacher of Israel would be so lacking in understanding. Jesus used the analogy of the brazen serpent in the wilderness (Num 21:8-9) to speak of His redemptive work on the earth. Jesus spoke of God's great love for mankind so wonderfully demonstrated by the sending of His son into the world. Jesus compares His work on earth to bringing light against the forces of evil and darkness.

We are told that John baptized at a certain location because of the fact that there was MUCH WATER there. John's disciples asked about Jesus and His work. John spoke of himself being the friend of the bridegroom and rejoicing greatly in that position. John was perfectly happy to have the supporting role and he spoke of Jesus INCREASING and himself decreasing. It is stated by John that God "giveth not the Spirit by measure" to Him. John taught that those who did not believe on the Son would not see life, but rather the wrath of God would abide upon them.

In the Luke passage we have Herod shutting up John in prison because John rebuked him for his adulterous relationship with his brother Philip's wife.

**IV. Outline.**

1. Jesus has a conversation with Nicodemus about the new birth (Jn 3:1-7).
2. Jesus continues his conversation, speaking of the Spirit's work of inspiring (Jn 3:8-15).
3. God's great love (Jn 3:16-17).
4. Condemnation of the unbeliever (Jn 3:18-22).
5. The location of John's baptizing (Jn 3:23-24).
6. John deals with his disciples' questions about Jesus (Jn 3:25-33).
7. John was sent by God (Jn 3:34).
8. John presents Jesus as Lord of lords (Jn 3:35).
9. Only the obedient have life eternal (Jn 3:36).
10. Wicked Herod imprisoned John because he rebuked his sin (Lk 3:19-20).

## V. Questions.

**True or False**

01. \_\_\_\_\_ The Bible tells us the reason Nicodemus came to Jesus at night.
02. \_\_\_\_\_ John reprov'd Herod.
03. \_\_\_\_\_ John chose Aenon as a place for baptizing because he liked the scenery.
04. \_\_\_\_\_ When Moses lifted up the brazen serpent in the wilderness it immediately healed all who had been bitten by the poisonous snakes.
05. \_\_\_\_\_ The truth of John 3:35 is also found in Matthew 28:20.

**Who Am I? Who Said It? Who Did It?**

06. \_\_\_\_\_ Was rebuked for all the evils he had done.
07. \_\_\_\_\_ "How can these things be?"
08. \_\_\_\_\_ The friend of the bridegroom.
09. \_\_\_\_\_ The wrath of God abides on this one.
10. \_\_\_\_\_ & \_\_\_\_\_ are said to have come into Judaea in this text.

**Fill in the Blanks**

11. James 1:\_\_\_ "Of his own will \_\_\_\_\_ he us with the \_\_\_\_\_ of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures."
12. Numbers \_\_\_:9 "And Moses made a \_\_\_\_\_ of brass, and put it upon a \_\_\_\_\_, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived."
13. John said, "He must \_\_\_\_\_, but I must \_\_\_\_\_."
14. "Except a man be \_\_\_\_\_, he cannot see the kingdom of God."
15. The one who hates the light is the one that does \_\_\_\_\_.

*Each Question is worth 7 Points*

**My Score is:** \_\_\_\_\_

Answers will be given on next week's handout

**ANSWERS to Lesson 01-28...** [01--False, Jn 1:50; 02--False, Mt 4:2; 03--True, Jn 1:44; 04--True, Mt 4:11; 05--False, Jn 1:30, 1; 06--Jesus, Jn 1:39 and Philip, Jn 1:46; 07--Jesus, Mt 4:4, 7, 10 and Satan, Mt 4:6; 08--Nathanael, Jn 1:47; 09--John, Jn 1:34; 10--Andrew, Jn 1:38-40; 11--Lamb, sin, world; 12--4, temptation, season; 13--Exodus, lamb, blemish; 14--his, own, brother, Jn 1:41; 15--Kings, strength, forty, forty.]

## VI. Lessons &amp; Applications.

1. **for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him** (Jn 3:2). Here is but one more among many affirmations regarding the purpose of the miraculous signs performed by Jesus and those who had spiritual gifts (cf., John 20:30-31). Nicodemus had seen miracles and the logical conclusion to which he moved was that the one doing the signs has to have been sent from God.
2. **...how can a man be born when he is old?** (Jn 3:4). Nicodemus was thinking of a literal physical birth, whereas Jesus had in mind a spiritual birth that comes about through water and the Spirit (v. 5). The water is the element into which a person is baptized and the begetting comes through the Spirit-inspired words. Brother Harold Littrell explains... "A natural, physical birth is composed of two parts: a begetting (conception), and a bringing forth (birth). There is no birth without a conception (begetting) taking place first. Both parts are essential to a birth. In the new birth, the begetting is accomplished by the word of God (Jn 1:18)." [*A Commentary on the Gospel by John*, p. 24].

4. *The wind bloweth where it listeth, and...* (Jn 3:8). This statement has been confusing to me for many years. I am indebted to brother Harold Littrell for helping me to understand it. In his translation of this text brother Littrell has it: "The Spirit inspires where it will, and you hear its voice but you do not know from where it came or where it goes. In this manner is everyone begotten who is begotten of the Spirit." Here are his comments, which to me, make imminent good sense...
- The word "inspires" of verse 8 is from *pneo*, "breath," "blow." *Pneo* is the part of *theopneustos*, "inspired of God," that is translated "inspired."**
- In 2 Timothy 3:16 the word is used like this: "All Scripture given by the "inspiration of God" (*theopneustos*), is also profitable for doctrine..." *Theopneustos* means, literally, "God breathed."**
- The part of this word that is translated, "inspired" (*pneo*) is used of the Holy Spirit in John 3:8. Here it is the Holy Spirit who "inspires" (*pneo*). The Spirit inspires (*pneo*) where it wills.**
- The Spirit's voice was heard through the inspired men--through their voices then, in the early days of the church, but through the written word now.**
5. *...Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?* (Jn 3:10). The word MASTER here is from the Greek **didaskalos**, which means teacher. Any teacher of God's word, as Nicodemus was, should have been able to understand that an inner change is necessary for there to be new life. It was the thinking of the Jews that interfered with any emphasis upon the inner man because they sought a Messiah who would establish a physical kingdom.
6. *As Moses lifted up the serpent...* (Jn 3:14). Jesus refers to this historical event and thus gives His stamp of approval on its authenticity. There was something He was drawing attention to in this incident from the past. The children of Israel who were healed from the bites of the poisonous snakes were ONLY the ones who had an ACTIVE faith which took God at His word. It was ONLY the ones who looked upon the brazen serpent, in obedience to God's will, that were saved from death.
7. *...because there was much water...* (Jn 3:23). Why the stress here upon MUCH water. Of course, it is because the baptism of the New Testament was an IMMERSION in water and required more than a cupful. Cf., Rom 6:1-3; Col 2:12.
8. *He must increase, but I must decrease* (Jn 3:30). John had no problem understanding what his role was in relation to that of Jesus.
9. *...for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him* (Jn 3:34). Please notice that the words UNTO HIM are italicized in the KJV. This means simply that these words are not in the original and they are supplied by the translators. Better that they were not supplied here. Actually, this text is not speaking of Jesus, but rather of Jesus. John is the HE WHOM GOD HATH SENT (Jn 1:6). He was the voice crying in the wilderness (Mt 3:1-3; Jn 1:23). No place in Scripture does it speak of God giving the Spirit BY MEASURE. This is an idea that man has developed. This text is the primary source of confusion in the minds of many. This verse is not speaking about giving to Jesus the Spirit without measure. It is a verse talking about John, and a broad general statement is made that God does not give the Spirit by measure.

## VII. Seek-A-Word Puzzle.

J	F	T	S	E	K	T	Y	N	J
O	H	T	B	F	Q	Z	C	E	F
Y	B	N	K	J	T	I	C	E	S
E	V	B	M	J	H	G	F	V	E
W	E	C	B	T	U	E	T	M	I
B	R	W	I	C	F	G	Y	M	L
U	Y	T	G	N	H	Y	I	B	O
R	V	A	N	N	G	I	N	R	J
E	C	V	N	H	T	R	H	I	J
H	T	B	F	E	C	B	N	D	J
I	P	Y	G	F	P	V	H	E	D
N	R	D	R	E	C	V	G	G	J
O	L	J	E	N	G	R	B	R	B
W	O	U	Y	R	W	Q	A	O	K
R	G	O	D	A	E	B	F	O	Z
A	U	J	Y	M	R	V	D	M	W
T	A	E	F	U	G	Y	N	I	H
H	J	I	O	C	Y	N	G	R	F
R	A	B	C	H	F	B	T	H	G
V	F	T	B	W	T	R	H	U	M

[The words below are from John 3:22-36. See if you can find all of them above.]

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|----------------|---------------|
| 01. Judaea     | 02. Aenon     |
| 03. Salim      | 04. much      |
| 05. water      | 06. purifying |
| 07. Rabbi      | 08. bride     |
| 09. bridegroom | 10. friend    |
| 11. joy        | 12. increase  |
| 13. decrease   | 14. above     |
| 15. earthy     | 16. sent      |
| 17. speaketh   | 18. wrath     |