

*Bible chat week starting 5 3 23*

John 3: 1-17

Now there was a Pharisee, a man named Nicodemus who was a member of the Jewish ruling council. 2 He came to Jesus at night and said, 'Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the signs you are doing if God were not with him.'

3 Jesus replied, 'Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again.'

4 'How can someone be born when they are old?' Nicodemus asked. 'Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother's womb to be born!'

5 Jesus answered, 'Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. 6 Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. 7 You should not be surprised at my saying, "You must be born again." 8 The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.'

9 'How can this be?' Nicodemus asked.

10 'You are Israel's teacher,' said Jesus, 'and do you not understand these things? 11 Very truly I tell you, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen, but still you people do not accept our testimony. 12 I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things? 13 No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven – the Son of Man. 14 Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, 15 that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him.'

16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

1. Why might Nicodemus visit Jesus at night?
2. How sincere is Nicodemus in his question in verse 2? (See also John 7:50 - 51 & John 19:39ff.)
3. What might Jesus mean by his words in verse 3? Comment on Nicodemus' reply in verse 4.
4. Try to unpack Jesus' next words in verses 5 - 8. Consider how spiritual rebirth is linked to water and the Spirit. Could you summarise Jesus' message here in simple language?
5. Why does Nicodemus find it so hard to understand Jesus' teaching (verses 10 - 12)?
6. Recall the background to verses 14 and 15 - Numbers 21: 4 - 9. What does it mean for the Son of Man to be 'lifted up'?
7. What does it mean to believe in Jesus (verse 16)? How can we share the message of this famous verse in a fresh way?
8. Our Sunday service spoke of doing the little things well. What little things can you be doing to support the church in its exploration of God's will?