

## John 3:13-21, "Jesus Meets with Nicodemus, Part 2"

- ✓ "Born Again" recap: "No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven—the Son of Man. Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life." **John 3:13-15.**
  - ✓ Jesus is the Way, the One who has access. Jesus is the only one who gives access to heaven. Jesus alone carved this path to heaven. In doing so, He makes a way for us to travel to and enter into heaven. He is the trailblazer to heaven, showing us that the journey can be completed. In defining the born again process, Jesus points to Moses, a favorite, familiar and revered father of the Jewish faith. Nicodemus, as a pharisee, would love the "eternal life" talk. (Take that, you Sad-U-Sees!). Surely the "learned man" Nicodemus is familiar with this Old Testament story from **Numbers 21:4-9.**
  - ✓ Old Testament Foreshadowing: "They traveled from Mount Hor along the route to the Red Sea, to go around Edom. But the people grew impatient on the way; they spoke against God and against Moses, and said, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the desert? There is no bread! There is no water! And we detest this miserable food!" Then the LORD sent venomous snakes among them; they bit the people and many Israelites died. The people came to Moses and said, "We sinned when we spoke against the LORD and against you. Pray that the LORD will take the snakes away from us." So Moses prayed for the people. The LORD said to Moses, "Make a snake and put it up on a pole; anyone who is bitten can look at it and live." So Moses made a bronze snake and put it up on a pole. Then when anyone was bitten by a snake and looked at the bronze snake, he lived." **Numbers 21:4-9.**
  - ✓ The Jewish tradition is the human condition.
    - The Jews were the people of God. They were very impatient people.
    - They often complained to God and Moses. God's judgment came as a result. The result of all their behavior was repentance.
    - Moses prayed to intercede for the people of God. God provides the remedy, a remedy that requires repentance and faith, which includes travel and effort.
    - The Serpent on a stick was an odd thing! According to some, bronze may symbolize judgment. The "look of faith" gives "Life" to the Israelites.
    - Jesus is most assuredly talking about himself when He quotes the passage about the "look of faith" that healed the Jews in the past and offers life to us today.
  - ✓ In this same "lifting up" manner, Jesus goes to the cross. It was not a brass cross or crucifix; it was the cross the Romans built to torture people to death. The cross is both absolute humiliation and exaltation. This seeming failure is actually Jesus crowning achievement! Was His suffering on the cross worth it? It was for me. It saved my soul. Jesus is the cure for sin and separation from God. Jesus removes the consequences of our sin if we only believe in Him. Our eyes should be fixed on Jesus, in faith, as the author and finisher of our faith!
  - ✓ "Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." **Hebrews 12:2.**
  - ✓ Jesus said He must be lifted up. The unavoidable nature of the cross was designed from the beginning. All parts of Jesus' purpose were completed when he rose from the grave.
  - ✓ Praying in the garden before his capture and execution, Matthew says of Jesus:
  - ✓ "He fell with his face to the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as You will." **Matthew 26:39.** He could not honor God and miss the cross. Jesus had to be lifted up!
  - ✓ There are two other "lifted up" passages in the book of John worth noting:
    - ✓ "Jesus said, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am the one I claim to be." **John 8:28.** Jesus is pointing to the cross. When you see this "must be accomplished" task completed, you will understand. He is every bit who He says He is! Do you believe Him?
    - ✓ "When I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men to myself." **John 12:32.** This is to bring people into his goodness and under his authority. He is bringing people into heavenly glory. The ascension made way for the Holy Spirit.
  - ✓ So, lifting up Jesus becomes a high priority for us too!
- 
-

## John 3:13-21, "Jesus Meets with Nicodemus, Part 2"

- ✓ To recap what it means to be born again, last week it was:
  - Born of water and Kingdom focus, the Spirit of God moves like the wind.
  - When we respond and don't turn away, the Spirit of God will point us to Jesus.
- ✓ This week it is:
  - The One from heaven who walked the path before us so we could follow.
  - The Son of Man was lifted up, died on the cross, was buried, and was resurrected.
  - Look and believe in this, being born of the Spirit leads to life eternal.
- ✓ "That everyone who believes in Him may have eternal life. **John 3:15**. The phrase "eternal life" is the same term used in the following verses.
- ✓ It is in the context of this Born Again discussion and definition that Jesus says: "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. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him. Whoever believes in Him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son." **John 3:16-18**. One of the most quoted verses ever given was given under the cloak of darkness, probably not in a widely public discourse. Most likely a one on one or small group discussion. This verse is often revered as "The crown jewel" of the gospel in its simplest form.
- ✓ God's universal love is not just for Israel. God's starting place, His motive, is love for the world. For everyone everywhere! It was hard for a devoted Jew to hear. I can hear Nicodemus saying, "Wait, wait, wait!" Salvation comes from the Jews, God's chosen people! God's love is the big umbrella. This love is of a sacrificial nature, given at a great cost. Not out of God's excess and abundance, but He gave His one and only Son. Love's eternal purpose is eternal life.
- ✓ Salvation comes as a free gift when we believe what God has said. Four times in three verses (verses 16 through 18). Jesus uses variations of the word believe, perhaps the most important key word in John's Gospel. The Son of God classified the entire human race into two groups: those who believe and are not condemned, and those who do not believe and are condemned already.
- ✓ This is the gospel in a nutshell. Jesus tells the story of faith in being born again. In verse 16, Jesus tells what happened: "God gave His only Son." In verse 17, we see the purpose of why He gave his son. In verse 18, we learned about the wonderful result.
- ✓ Condemnation and judgment would be appropriate and fair for those who break God's law. But grace prevailed! However, it is a limited salvation: it has a single stipulation, a single requirement. This salvation is only limited by the hearers' rejection of it. If you believe Him, you receive Him! Verse 18 says you can believe Jesus or not; this will result in you being in or out. You can't have both eternal death and eternal life. You get one or the other.
- ✓ Verse 18a presents a possession that can only be claimed by an act of faith. Live in salvation now or live in judgment now and for all eternity. Which way is your scale tipping?
- ✓ Verses 19 through 21 discuss light versus darkness. Jesus fought an epic battle for your soul!
- ✓ "This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God." **John 3:19-21**.
- ✓ Are you hanging on to evil thoughts, desires, and actions? Those things that are against the words and purposes of God. We love our ways, and we know that we can't take them with us into God's marvelous light.
- ✓ Not all, but most everyone struggles with the decision of faith in Jesus. Even as believers, we read the Bible through the lens of "I'm not giving up \_\_\_\_." So instead of quitting our sin, sometimes we will quit the Bible or the church. It is not enough for us to get a "feel good" experience!
- ✓ Sometimes we think, "I'm not going to do \_\_\_\_." In doing so, we twist the scriptures to meet our own desires. Being born again is a recognition that our need for the Savior outweighs everything else in our lives. The decision to believe should not be hard. If you have yet to believe it, it is probably a hard decision. For many of us who believe, it was hard until it wasn't!
- ✓ With all that is in me, I encourage you to look at Jesus with eyes of faith and leap towards Him today!