

**Jesus is Visited by Nicodemus****TEXT: John 3:1-21****STORY ELEMENTS:**

**Setting:** circa 26 AD in Jerusalem

**Main Characters:** God, Jesus, and Nicodemus

**Plot:** Nicodemus privately visits Jesus.

**Key word(s):** “ \_\_\_\_\_ ”

**Climax** John 3:10 *Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?*

**The Need for the New Birth**

1. (v. 1) . Jesus' first Passover during his public ministry left quite an impression on the people of \_\_\_\_\_. Between the cleansing of the temple and the performance of miracles, many were noticing the Savior's unique status.

*John 2:23 Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did.*

2. One of those people was Nicodemus, a member of the \_\_\_\_\_ – the ruling body of the Jews. Nicodemus came to Jesus at night, and many understand that to mean he was afraid that his interest in Christ would've been discovered and his professional reputation jeopardized. What had Jesus done that had put him at odds with Jerusalem's leadership? He threw out the money-changers.
3. (v. 3) Nicodemus was one of those superficial believers mentioned in 2:23, but he wanted to know more about Jesus and about the Kingdom. Jesus cuts to the quick with this pious, yet unsaved man, declaring, “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be \_\_\_\_\_, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” Notice:
  - (a) Nicodemus was \_\_\_\_\_, yet need to be born again.
  - (b) Nicodemus recognized (to a certain degree) Christ's \_\_\_\_\_, yet he needed to be born again.
  - (c) Nicodemus was a well-versed Bible \_\_\_\_\_, yet he needed to be born-again.

**The Means of the New Birth**

4. (vv. 4-6) Of course, Nicodemus was confused: how could a man be born a second time? Jesus explained:
  - (a) The new birth is a spiritual birth not a \_\_\_\_\_ birth.
  - (b) The new birth is a birth of water and the Spirit:
    - i. Water, here, does not refer to \_\_\_\_\_. The answer is found in the Old Testament (Eze. 36:24-28), because Jesus rebuked Nicodemus for not knowing these things. Rather, water refers to the cleansing of the Spirit as it regenerates a sinful heart. This sin-cleansing action of the new birth is an oft-repeated theme of the New Testament. Notice:

*Eph 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; Eph 5:26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it **with the washing of water by the word**, Eph 5:27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.*

*Tit 3:5 Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Tit 3:6 Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour;*

- ii. "Spirit" is the same original-language word as "\_\_\_\_\_." When speaking of the new birth, it refers to the revitalizing power of the Holy Spirit that breathes new life into a dead spirit.

***Just as a child is born with an effusion of water and the necessary gasping of that first breath, so also the Spirit of God rebirths us into believers by cleansing us of sin-guilt and imparting to us a new nature and a living spirit.***

- 5. This new birth is a work of the Holy Spirit, but there is a human element involved: we are called upon to \_\_\_\_\_. The new birth leads to a life different from physical life – it grants everlasting life. Believing in Jesus Christ is the outward manifestation of the inward work of the Holy Spirit. New life is given and that person becomes a citizen of the Kingdom of God.

*John 3: 16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

## Applications and Observations

- 6. Nicodemus came to Jesus \_\_\_\_\_. Many times it is better to evangelize someone in private, otherwise they may reject the gospel when surrounded by other people.

## Notes

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### HOW TO USE THIS HAND-OUT AS A TAKE-HOME BIBLE STUDY:

- 1. Read the Bible passage indicated in the **STORY ELEMENTS** box.
- 2. Try to fill in the blanks based upon your understanding of the passage.
- 3. Check your answers with the **Answer Key and correct any errors**
  - o Understand that some blanks may have more than one correct answer (e.g., synonyms for words in the Answer Key)
  - o Understand that some answers are a matter of opinion

- 5. Write down your own thoughts and personal applications in the **Notes** section.
- 6. Enjoy God's Word!

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**ANSWER KEY:**

Key word(s): "born again"

- 1. Jerusalem
- 2. Sanhedrin
- 3. born again a) religious; b) deity; c) teacher
- 4. a) physical; b) I) baptism; ii) breath
- 5. believe in Jesus Christ
- 6. privately