



THE SECOND WEEK

Read and reflect on John 3:1-17. Write down anything thoughts or questions you might have.

[illegible]

TUESDAY, MARCH 2

Psalm Reading:

Psalm 40

School/Apartment to Pray For:

Joppatowne Elementary School / Apt 312

Devotional Reading:

Nicodemus

This week's passage is primarily a conversation between Jesus and a Pharisee named Nicodemus. This conversation contains some very deep truths about salvation and Jesus' eventual death on a cross. We'll get to these things later this week, but today let's talk about Nicodemus.

Nicodemus appears three times in the book of John. We're told that he was "a Pharisee...a member of the Jewish ruling council." Based on Jesus' usual dealings with the Pharisees, this should make Nicodemus an enemy, but instead he comes to Jesus with respect. However, he does come at night, presumably so that he wouldn't be seen talking to Jesus!

Nicodemus appears two more times: in John 7 (read **7:45-52**) Nicodemus defends Jesus to his fellow Pharisees, and in John 19 (**19:38-42**) he accompanies Joseph of Arimathea to bury Jesus. It would seem that he responded favorably to Jesus!

John 3:1-2 (The Message) There was a man of the Pharisee sect, Nicodemus, a prominent leader among the Jews. Late one night he visited Jesus and said, "Rabbi, we all know you're a teacher straight from God. No one could do all the God-pointing, God-revealing acts you do if God weren't in on it."

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3

Psalm Reading:

Psalm 41

School/Apartment to Pray For:

Joppatowne High School / Apt 313

Devotional Reading:

Born Again?

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

The concept of being "born again" is fundamental to Christianity and while it trips up Nicodemus it's actually a pretty easy concept to grasp. Jesus explains it in verse 6: "Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit." Basically, there are two births, our physical birth (from our mom) when we enter the world and then our spiritual birth (from the Spirit) when we enter into a relationship with God through Jesus.

As with much of Jesus' teaching, He was misunderstood in the moment. Nicodemus is not quite understanding that Jesus was talking about a spiritual birth. There's something in the Greek here that makes Jesus' teaching even more clever than it appears on the surface. The Greek word translated as "again" can also be translated as "from above." So what Jesus said can be translated as "born again" or, "born from above." It appears that this was lost on Nicodemus, though!

John 3:3 (The Message) Jesus said, "You're absolutely right. Take it from me: Unless a person is born from above, it's not possible to see what I'm pointing to—to God's kingdom."

THURSDAY, MARCH 4

Psalm Reading:

Psalm 42

School/Apartment to Pray For:

Magnolia Elementary School / Apt 314

Devotional Reading:

Lifted Up?

John 3:14-15 *Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him.*

The background to these verses is found in **Numbers 21:4-9** (go ahead and take a minute to read it, the rest of this will make more sense!). The gist of it is this: people were being healed by looking at the very thing that was killing them!

Jesus applied this to Himself (He often referred to Himself as the Son of Man), saying that instead of a snake, He would be lifted up and that everyone who looked to him would be healed. The key term here is “lifted up,” which is a reference to Jesus’ eventual death on a cross. But just like “born again,” “lifted up” has a second meaning: “exalted.” So, when Jesus is “lifted up” on a cross healing (eternal life) comes to everyone who looks to Him (believes). In the same way, when Jesus is “exalted” healing comes to everyone who looks to Him.

John 3:14-15 (The Message) In the same way that Moses lifted the serpent in the desert so people could have something to see and then believe, it is necessary for the Son of Man to be lifted up— and everyone who looks up to him, trusting and expectant, will gain a real life, eternal life.

FRIDAY, MARCH 5

Psalm Reading:

Psalm 43

School/Apartment to Pray For:

Magnolia Middle School / Apt 315

Devotional Reading:

God’s Love-Part 1

John 3:16 *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.*

There’s a good reason why this is the most popular verse in the entire Bible; it shows us in a single sentence the depth of God’s love for us and the length He went to show that love.

We were created to be in a right relationship with God. It’s the meaning of each of our lives. However, our sin (disobeying God) keeps this from happening. If left to our own devices, this would be the end of the story and we would never be able to experience life as it was meant to be. BUT...God loves us too much to let that happen, and so He made a way for us to be right with Him. That way involved His Son, Jesus, coming to earth, living a sinless life, and then offering that life on a cross as the sacrifice that would pay for our sins! He was then buried, before God raised Him from the dead. If we believe in Jesus, we are made right with God!

John 3:16 (The Message) This is how much God loved the world: He gave his Son, his one and only Son. And this is why: so that no one need be destroyed; by believing in him, anyone can have a whole and lasting life.

SATURDAY, MARCH 6

Psalm Reading:

Psalm 44

School/Apartment to Pray For:

Meadowvale Elementary School / Apt 317

Devotional Reading:

God's Love-Part 2

John 3:17 *For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.*

For the longest time, I never gave any thought to whether or not there were verses surrounding John 3:16; that verse is so powerful by itself. But we do ourselves a great disservice when we read verses outside of their surrounding context. Verses 14-15 establish the idea of eternal life coming through our looking to Jesus' death on a cross. Verse 16 shows us that Jesus' death was God's plan to give us eternal life and was a product of God's love for us. Now we've arrived at verse 17 and further explanation of why God sent Jesus to die.

Many people are running from God's call on their life, causing them to mistake His call for condemnation. But this verse makes it clear that Jesus didn't die to bring condemnation but salvation. In fact, in **Romans 8:1** Paul tells us: *"Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."*

John 3:17 (The Message) God didn't go to all the trouble of sending his Son merely to point an accusing finger, telling the world how bad it was. He came to help, to put the world right again.

GRACE AND TRUTH COMMUNITY CHURCH

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Weekly Schedule:

Tuesday

9:00 AM: Grocery Shopping

**Dianna Tilton collects lists/
payment from 8-9AM**

12:30 PM: Worship Service

Via Zoom

**Gatherings also take place in
various apartments**

Thursday

10:00 AM: Coffee with the Pastor
**Host Apartment varies each
week**