

God's Great Love – John 3



MEMORY VERSE: For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through Him. John 3:16,17

DAY 1 JOHN 3:1-8 — You Must Be Born Again

1. Who was Nicodemus, and why might he have come to Jesus at Night?
v.1
2. What did Nicodemus say he recognized about Jesus? v.2
3. What did Jesus reply? How did Nicodemus interpret His words? vv.3,4
4. Jesus said we must be born of water and of the Spirit in order to enter the kingdom of God. What do you think each means in this context?
Water vv.5-7

Spirit v.8

5. Why do you think Jesus talked about “wind” in relation to being born again of the Spirit?

Acts 2:2

LEARN THE TRUTH

Many truths in the Bible are a mystery, but one thing is crystal clear~ God's love is greater than any love we can possibly imagine. If you ever feel condemnation remember how very much God loves you. His love is incomparable to any other love. He is for you and wants you to be His beloved child.

DAY 2 JOHN 3:9-15— Belief in the Son of Man

6. Nicodemus was mystified at Jesus' explanation of being born again. What did Jesus point out to him about his failure to understand? vv.9-12

1 Thessalonians 2:8

7. Why do you think Nicodemus found it so hard to believe Jesus' words? Why do people today struggle with unbelief?
8. What did Jesus claim about Himself and indicate about what lay ahead for Him? vv.13,14
9. Jesus refers to an event in the Old Testament which foreshadowed His atoning sacrifice. What happened in Numbers 21:4-9?

10. What does each represent in the Numbers passage?

The Israelites- Romans 3:23

The serpent's poison- Romans 3:23

The consequence of being bitten- Romans 6:23

The benefit of looking to the uplifted serpent- Romans 6:23

DAY 3 JOHN 3:16-21 — The Light Has Come Into the World

11. What did God do, and what was His purpose in this act? v.16
12. What does everyone deserve, but was specifically not God's purpose in sending His Son? v.17

13. What words describe those who are condemned and those who are not condemned? vv.18-21

Condemned

Not Condemned

14. Who is responsible for receiving spiritual judgment and condemnation? vv.18-20

15. Why do believers not need to fear the light of Christ? 1 John 1:5-10

DAY 4 JOHN 3:22-30 — Christ Must Increase

16. What was happening both in the Judean countryside and at Aenon near Salim? vv.22-24

17. What were John's disciples upset about? Why do you think it bothered them so much? vv.25-26

18. Why might a discussion about purification have led John's disciples to go and follow Jesus?

19. How did John respond to his disciples about their distress? vv.27,28

20. In John's analogy, Jesus is the bridegroom and the church is the bride. Who then is John, and how did he fulfill his role with excellence? vv.29-30

21. Why do you think we have a natural desire to increase rather than decrease?

22. How does understanding and embracing the following verses cause us to desire our own decrease and God's increase?

1 Corinthians 3:4-9

1 Peter 4:9-11

23. What facts about Jesus are proclaimed in this passage of Scripture?

v. 31

v. 32

v. 34

v. 35

24. What choice determines a person's standing with God, and what are the ramifications of their choice? vv.33, 36

25. What have been some of the most clear benefits or changes in your life since believing in Christ?

LOVE THE TRUTH

Christ must increase and we must decrease. There is great freedom in letting go of the need for self-promotion and instead living for the glory of God. It is a true pleasure to serve alongside other believers in furthering God's kingdom. Life is empty when we promote self and full when we promote Christ.

John 3

God's Great Love

Nicodemus was a Jewish leader, a pharisee and expert teacher of the law, yet he could not fathom what Jesus meant by being born again. Why would a Jew, one of the chosen people and a highly educated religious leader, need to be born again? And how could that be possible anyway? There were some godly pharisees in Christ's day, but many were legalistic hypocrites who heaped man-made laws on others while failing to keep the law themselves. These men were always in conflict with Jesus and envied His popularity. Nicodemus must have been mystified at how a Nazarene with no formal education and a carpenter from a low class family had the nerve to tell him there was something wrong with him. And yet he was curious. Perhaps he went to Jesus after dark because he was afraid of being seen. Or perhaps he was a sincere seeker and wanted to avoid the crowds and really talk with Jesus. At the end of this exchange with Jesus, there is no indication that he understood or had been born again, yet at the end of the gospel of John (19:38-42), he accompanied Joseph of Arimathea to get Christ's body for burial. He had gone from being hungry for truth yet spiritually blind, to seeing truth and having a saving faith in Jesus Christ.

There are different ways of interpreting what it means to be born of "water" and of "Spirit." Water could refer to the waters breaking in a human fleshly birth. Or it could refer to baptism, which symbolizes dying with Christ and being raised up with Him to a brand new life. Water certainly refers to the word of God and it's part in being born again. "Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth that we should be a kind of first-fruits of His creatures." (James 1:18) "...you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God." (1 Peter 1:23) Being born of the Spirit is a mystery which we cannot yet fully understand. Like the wind, we cannot control the Spirit nor even see it, but we hear it and know when it is blowing because we see what it does.

What an example John the Baptist is to us. He knew his place in God's plan. He understood his calling and wanted nothing more than to prepare the way for Jesus Christ. His honest desire was that Christ increase and he decrease. It's so easy to follow earthly spiritual leaders in lieu of God Himself. When this happens, it is an indication that one believes the dynamic leader is the reason for the impact on lives rather than the Holy Spirit. It causes division and competition, and when that leader sins, it damages people's faith. We must not fall into this. One leader plants seeds and another waters the seeds, but God alone causes growth. It is a miracle only of God.

WALK IN TRUTH



Do you find that you have a tendency to put spiritual leaders on a pedestal? Our leaders should be appreciated, but not glorified. Pray for your leaders, but give the glory to God. Do you know your place of service in furthering God's kingdom? If not, ask Him to show you how He can work through you to bring others to salvation or growth in Christ. If you know your gifts and calling, check your heart. Do you take credit or desire glory for success? Do you appreciate and celebrate when God uses other believers to impact His kingdom? It is not a competition, but rather cooperation between people who love God and His word, and desire to further His kingdom together. If we take credit when the Holy Spirit moves in a person's life, then we must also take the blame when a person rejects Jesus. Both are wrong and too much for us to bear. We plant or we water. God causes the growth. May the people who know us be left with an impression, not of how great we are, but of how great God is!

Notes