

"On the Way" 365 Bible Reading Plan**JOHN 3****John 3**

John three has one of the most quoted verses in the Bible, John 3:16. But John 3:16 is not spoken in a vacuum, but rather to an individual named Nicodemus in a conversation about eternal life and spending eternity with God in heaven. The age-old question is answered in a way that had never been articulated before, as Jesus did to this religious, rich ruler of the Jews.

Nicodemus was part of the Sanhedrin. The "Sanhedrin," Greek for "Sitting together," was a council of religious elders comprised of either 23 or 71 persons. That is enough information to help you understand the position of Nicodemus, who would have been a man of considerable knowledge of Judaism and TNK and Talmudic teachings during the days of the first century. This man came to the Lord Jesus after the sun had set and would not have been seen by so many people. The Sanhedrin had eyes everywhere; it was the nature of the Pharisees, Sadducees, Scribes, and high priests that made up this decision-making body. Nicodemus listened to Jesus and realized the power and authority of His teachings and wanted to understand better. In this sense, he was a seeker of truth and open to learning. This is a constant and consistent prerequisite for coming to God and finding repentance, forgiveness, and salvation.

John lets us in on the heart of the conversation between the Lord and this teacher of the Jews. When Nicodemus complemented Jesus on His teaching, the

Lord made an incredible statement to Nicodemus that puzzled him. Jesus said, **"Truly, truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.** (v.3). The term **"born again"** is the Greek word **(anōthen)**. This comes from the root word, **"ano"** which means **"up or above."** Nicodemus could not get his mind into the spiritual realm, as he protested that he could not enter again into his mother's womb and come out again. Jesus immediately answered him and instructed Nicodemus that He was talking about a spiritual or heavenly birth, not a physical one. Yes, he must have a physical birth, but he also must have a spiritual birth. He must be born from above. He entered into his physical family through a physical (water birth), and in like, he must have a spiritual birthday! He must be born into the heavenly family through a divine encounter with the Spirit of God.

Jesus chided Nicodemus, as he, being a student of the TNK (Old Testament), should have known this truth, but he did not. Jesus reminded Nicodemus of the way of healing for those who traveled with Moses in the wilderness when they sinned. Moses made a bronze pole, no doubt in the shape of a cross, to hang the serpent on and commanded the people to **"look and live!"** Jesus spoke of His coming substitutionary death on behalf of sinners, sick and diseased by sin.

Prayer and Action Steps

Lord, please let me be a seeker of truth, like Nicodemus. May my heart be open to Your word. Help me to search the scriptures daily, not just so I can know more about You, but rather to know You better and love and serve You more.