



3/30/26

If you're looking for some great music to help you focus your worship on Jesus this Easter week, a new album came out recently. It's Tommy Proffit's album, The Resurrection of a King. I highly recommend it.

*Blessings,
Jonna*

John 3:1-21

It's the week of Easter... the reason Jesus came... to give eternal life to all who believe and confess Him as Lord. Interestingly, the people who were supposed to be looking for His coming... the Pharisees, the religious leaders, were the most hostile to Him. I'm sure they freely talked with each other about Him as a nuisance. So when a Pharisee named Nicodemus wanted to talk with Jesus, he went at night. He was too afraid of the possible backlash. I know from John 19:39-42 that Nicodemus' faith in Jesus eventually overcame his fear, because he publicly helped prepare Jesus' body for burial after He was crucified.

But here, in John 3, Nicodemus came at night. He seemed to respect Jesus because he called Him, "Rabbi." I think he was fishing for answers. "We get that You're a teacher from God because You do these incredible signs. No one could do that if they weren't from God." Just a statement. No question.

Jesus didn't respond to Nicodemus as I would expect. He didn't say, "Yep, that's Me." He said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." Now, this was a religious leader who knew the Old Testament scriptures like the back of his hand. Why would Jesus say something so confusing? And why did He say "truly" twice? Nicodemus would have known that saying it twice meant that it was absolute. But what did it mean? Born again? That doesn't make sense! That's exactly what Nicodemus thought.

The problem was, Nicodemus was thinking too small. He was thinking physically, not spiritually. But the spiritual is far bigger and more lasting than the physical. Jesus explained, "Truly, truly

I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God." I think Jesus was helping Nicodemus see beyond his natural assumption. The Jews thought that because they were the chosen people of God, they were automatically going to spend eternity in heaven. But their attachment as the chosen people was only in the physical on earth. In order to spend eternity with God, they needed more than the flesh attachment, they needed the Holy Spirit to seal them and give them life. In John 7:37-38, Jesus called all who are thirsty to come to Him and out of our hearts would flow rivers of living water... the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the proof of new life in Christ. He is the living water and He is like the wind. I can't see Him, but I can see the evidence of His presence in my life as I feel the presence of the wind.

Nicodemus, still stuck in the seen of the physical world rather than the unseen of the spiritual, could not understand. He said, "How can these things be?"

Jesus said to him, "Are you the teacher of Israel and yet you don't understand these things? We're speaking of what we experientially know and we bear to what we've seen, but you don't believe our testimony." Who is WE? I don't think Jesus was talking about the disciples and Him. I think He was speaking about the Trinity... Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. After all, He said throughout His time on earth that He came to do the Father's will and to make His name known.

Jesus told Nicodemus that if He was speaking about earthly things and Nicodemus couldn't understand, there was no way he would understand heavenly things. But Nicodemus would have to take His word for it, because only Jesus had been by the Father's side in heaven. He, the Son of Man, came down from heaven to this earth for our salvation.

Then Jesus said something that Nicodemus wouldn't understand until he saw Jesus on the cross. He said, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him may have eternal life." Nicodemus understood the statement about the serpent, but he didn't understand how that pointed to Jesus.

In Numbers 21, God sent fiery serpents to the Israelites in the wilderness. The people were rebelling against God and this was a consequence of their actions. But they repented and begged Moses to pray for the Lord to take the serpents from them. So God told Moses to make a bronze fiery serpent and set it on a pole. If they got bit, they would just need to look at the bronze serpent and they would not die. In the same way, Jesus was lifted up on a cross and we simply need to fix our eyes on Him and confess Him as Lord, and we receive eternal life as a gift from Him. To look at Jesus I have to believe that He is my redemption. To believe in Him is to have eternal life... to be born again.

Why would God provide this answer for us when we're so rebellious??? "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." God's purpose was to give us life. We deserve condemnation, but that was not His purpose. His purpose was salvation.

Vs. 18 says, "Whoever believes in Him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God." This is really important for me to see. Whoever rejects God is already condemned. There are no "good people" who deserve eternal life. None of us can be good enough to earn our salvation. God sent His Son to save everyone who turns to the Lord in repentance because He loves us and we had no hope without Him.

The way to salvation is only through Jesus. The judgment that comes down is that "the light has come into the world, and the people loved the darkness." Why? The darkness hides the evil of our hearts. But it doesn't change the fact that our hearts are evil apart from Jesus. Jesus is the light. If someone doesn't want to give up the darkness, they won't come to Jesus... and that makes them condemned already. Jesus came here to save broken people who had no hope. Let me not miss that.

How does someone know that they're in the light and not in the darkness? They will do what is true before Jesus. "Whoever does what is true comes to the light... Jesus... so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God." The only works that have any value are the ones that the Lord does through me.

This would have all sounded so foreign to Nicodemus. Born again? Salvation through faith and not works? Works carried out in God and His strength? Pharisees are strong in themselves, aren't they? I don't get it. But somewhere along the way, Jesus' words and His teaching came together in Nicodemus' mind. He believed and received eternal life. At some point he understood what it meant to be born again.

How do I respond to this? Worship. Jesus did not come to condemn me but to save me and to give me new life. God is at work in my life to do works for His honor and glory. I see this in Ephesians 2:10. I can do the works He has for me, not in fear of condemnation, but in gratitude of His faithfulness. Praise Your name!