

## Religious Credentials

### John 3: 1-13

- Greet your group! Allow time for everyone to share the best part of their week.
- Take prayer requests and ask someone to open in prayer.

Main Idea: The only credential that guarantees entrance to heaven is the new birth.

Share: What gains a person entrance into heaven? Every man, woman, and child will stand before the God of heaven to be judged. Some will be sent to hell: a place of eternal torment. Some will be given entrance to heaven: a place of eternal joy. What credentials is God looking for? In chapter 3 Jesus gives a clear- and for many people, surprising- answer.

-Carter, Matt, Josh Wredberg, David Platt, Daniel L. Akin, and Tony Merida. *Exalting Jesus in John*. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishing Group, 2017.

#### Discuss:

What are credentials?

Who were the Pharisees and what did they do?

- Read **John 3:1-13** together as a group. (you may assign this to one person or several people)
- Allow each student to read the passage alone completing a H.E.A.R. Journal. (**Highlight** what stands out to you, **Explain** what the passage is saying, **Apply** this passage to your life, **Respond**)
- Allow time for sharing from H.E.A.R. Journals

#### Small Group Discussion Questions:

What do we know about Nicodemus from this passage?

How is Nicodemus's interaction with Jesus different from the way the other pharisees interacted with Jesus?

What are we to believe about Jesus from this passage?

How is the message from this passage good news for you today?

What does it mean to be born again?

How does the need to be born again show the mistake of the Pharisees' extreme focus on obedience?

What evidence will exist in the life of a person who has been born again?

Why are Jesus's words to Nicodemus a message of hope to sinners?

\*Don't feel like you have to get through all of these questions. Allow time for reflections and meditation upon God's word! Silence is okay! Allow the Holy Spirit to work and focus on where you see Him moving in your group!