

Nic at Night

John 3:1-17 (TLB)

Introduction: Nicodemus hears the words “You must be born again,” but he’s confused. So he asks, “How can a person go back into his mother’s womb and come out again?” It’s surprising to us that Nicodemus is so confused. He’s a religious leader and should understand spiritual lessons but somehow he feels he’s missed some crucial truth. And, there’s a reason he’s going to Jesus. He has an inkling that Jesus might be able to provide that missing important detail. Nicodemus has somehow been headed in the wrong direction and now he must change his course. This he knows but Nicodemus seems hesitant. He seems uncertain about making such a drastic change. Why? What makes this man slow to take Jesus at his word? There are three reasons:

I. First, Nicodemus was a r_____ man.

II. Second, Nicodemus was a p_____ man.

III. Third, Nicodemus was an e_____ man.

Conclusion: Like Nicodemus, we too, must be born again.

3¹⁻²After dark one night a Jewish religious leader named Nicodemus, a member of the sect of the Pharisees, came for an interview with Jesus. “Sir,” he said, “we all know that God has sent you to teach us. Your miracles are proof enough of this.”³Jesus replied, “With all the earnestness I possess I tell you this: Unless you are born again, you can never get into the Kingdom of God.”⁴“Born again!” exclaimed Nicodemus. “What do you mean? How can an old man go back into his mother’s womb and be born again?”⁵Jesus replied, “What I am telling you so earnestly is this: Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God. ⁶Men can only reproduce human life, but the Holy Spirit gives new life from heaven; ⁷so don’t be surprised at my statement that you must be born again! ⁸Just as you can hear the wind but can’t tell where it comes from or where it will go next, so it is with the Spirit. We do not know on whom he will next bestow this life from heaven.”⁹“What do you mean?” Nicodemus asked. ¹⁰⁻¹¹Jesus replied, “You, a respected Jewish teacher, and yet you don’t understand these things? I am telling you what I know and have seen—and yet you won’t believe me. ¹²But if you don’t even believe me when I tell you about such things as these that happen here among men, how can you possibly believe if I tell you what is going on in heaven? ¹³For only I, the Messiah, have come to earth and will return to heaven again. ¹⁴And as Moses in the wilderness lifted up the bronze image of a serpent on a pole, even so I must be lifted up upon a pole, ¹⁵so that anyone who believes in me will have eternal life. ¹⁶For God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son so that anyone who believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷God did not send his Son into the world to condemn it, but to save it.