

John #2: Nicodemus
John 3:1-18

Objectives: We want to begin to understand our own journey of relating to Christ. We want to understand that all people (even the good and religious) need salvation. This salvation only comes through Jesus who offers it freely in love.

Getting to Know You (5 minutes)

In Cru, we seek to know and follow Jesus in community. Since we all come from different places, we will spend some time each week getting to know one another better. *Something that helps students share something about who they are. Soularium cards. Objects that could describe them. I am from cards?*

Launch (3 minutes)

This semester we are going to discuss different passages in the gospel of John. John was one of the people who knew and followed Jesus. Over the next 3 weeks we are going to look at 3 different interactions Jesus has with people who have highly diverse backgrounds and needs.

Explore

Read John 3:1-8

- **What do we observe about Nicodemus? What are adjectives you would use to describe Nicodemus?** (*Religious leader, powerful, wealthy, educated, respected in society, humble, open minded, representing other Jewish leaders*)
- **In contrast to Nic, how would society describe Jesus?** (*poor, uneducated, no power, curiosity*)
- **So, we have the basic scene set for our story tonight. A powerful, holy, wealthy religious leader comes to Jesus hoping to learn more about him. As you read 3-8, what is surprising about how Jesus responds?** (*You might expect Jesus to be flattered, or excited about having a man of wealth and power behind him. It is surprising that Jesus starts talking about being born again since Nic did not ask about that. Jesus starts his statement with truly, truly which means he is the one in authority who is going to teach Nic something very important.*)
- **Several times in this passage Jesus say's you must be born again or born**

from above. What do you think it means to be born again? (*to receive a new spiritual life from the Holy Spirit*)

- Jewish leaders believed that the way to enter the Kingdom of God, or eternal life, was to be born into the right religious family and do the right religious things.
- **In your own words, what was Jesus trying to communicate to Nic?** (*No matter your religious credentials all people must be born again to receive eternal life. Good people need to be born again. Bad people need to be born again. Religious people need to be born again as much as non-religious people. We are all on the same level, no one can save themselves, no one can earn eternal life on their own.*)
- **What do you think make this teaching hard for Nic to receive?** (*Jesus told him he was not good enough to see the Kingdom of God on his own, he needed a spiritual rebirth*)
- **In what ways is this teaching good news to you?** (*it is good news because no one is too bad to be made new. It is good news because God does not tell us to be more religious, he makes us new, etc...*)
- There are many other interesting things we could discuss in this dialogue with Nicodemus. However, we want to make sure we get practical by looking at the summary of his teachings to Nicodemus.
- **Read 3:16-18**
- God sent his Son to earth to live a sinless life, die on the cross in our place and resurrect from the dead. **According to these verses, what would happen if God did not send his son to rescue people?** (*they would be condemned and would perish*)
- **According to these verses why did God send his son?** (*Because of his love of the world he provided a way that they could be rescued and receive new life. Out of love Jesus was condemned so that we could receive the new life*)

- Jesus was sent to be condemned so that we would not be condemned and have the opportunity to receive life. **According to the passage, what does one need to do in order to receive the new life Jesus offers?** *(to believe)*
- **What do you think it means to believe?** *(To believe in Jesus is to agree with him that you can't save yourself and to trust him to give you a spiritual rebirth.)*

Apply (in small groups)

- John 3:16 is one of the most famous verses in the Bible. Yet, many of us struggle to truly believe that God loves us personally. **What makes it hard for people to believe that God loves them? What makes it hard for you to believe God loves you?**
- To believe in Jesus is to agree with him that you can't save yourself and to trust him to give you a spiritual rebirth.
- **What is one thing keeping you from receiving/believing in Christ?**
- **Or if you are a follower of Christ, what is one reason why you trust in Jesus to make you new?**
- **Who is one person in your life who would be encouraged to know that God loves them and wants to offer them a new life?**
- **Pray that each one of us would be able to grasp the depth of Christ's love for us.**

Announce

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