

DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS

Our Mission: Reaching Out to Leaders Who Can Change the World.

Oct 2015

John: Jesus is the Christ

Lesson #5: Teaching the Teacher

A part of our society is sympathetic to the need for positive moral values (i.e.- laws that force people to do what is right) but they would never consider that people are often doing what comes naturally (sinning). Why don't more people endorse "regeneration" so that people naturally do what pleases God (and society)? The Holy Spirit becomes their conscience and guide rather than society.

OBSERVATION/INTERPRETATION.

Note: Nicodemus was a Pharisee who was zealous for the law and scrupulous in his observance of it. He was a member of the Sanhedrin, wealthy, respected and in a position of leadership. The common Jewish philosophy was that entry into heaven was based on heritage (being born a Jew) and works. The concept that the Holy Spirit would be available to all men for spiritual regeneration was foreign to their culture and history.

Read John 3:1-21

1. Why did Nicodemus approach Jesus at night? v.1
2. How would you describe his level of interest and respect for Jesus? v.2
3. Jesus shows that he knows the heart of a man. Why is His response v.3 so abrupt?
4. Does Jesus' answer imply that man "cannot" (incapable) or is "prohibited" from entering the kingdom? What difference does it make?
5. Why does a man need to be "born again"?
6. Do you think that Nicodemus really didn't understand the question or was he trying to find a way to express his hopelessness of meeting the requirement of spiritual birth? v.4
7. What is the value and challenge with pointing to a specific "spiritual" birth date?
8. How did Jesus help Nicodemus understand the work of the Holy Spirit? Vv.5-8
9. How was Jesus' response in vs. 10-15 tailored to Nicodemus' background?
10. What is the analogy between scene of the serpent on the pole and Jesus? Num 21:4-9
11. What is the role of faith in the Moses and Jesus analogies?
12. Verses -16-21 seem to be John's commentary on the interview with Nicodemus. Who does he say is restricted in their ability to receive salvation? What is the requirement? What is the consequence of unbelief? Who should be blamed for their lack of spiritual entry?
13. When did you begin to see God as saving you rather than condemning you?

APPLICATION

- Who do you need to pray for... that the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit will take effect in their life?
- Where are you in the birthing process of spiritual life? (i.e. not yet conceived, developing but no one can tell, heavy with child and waiting, kicking and screaming, growing daily)

“Judgment is the logical consequence of unbelief. As the man who turns his back on the sin deepens by his own shadow the darkness in which he walks, so an unbeliever intensifies the darkness of his own soul by his unbelief. His unbelief is an admission of sin, since he will not come to the light to have his deeds made manifest and evaluated.

Charles Erdman, The Gospel of Belief, p. 29