

Nicodemus - Part Three
June 26th, 2005

1). Joh 3:1 ¶ *There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. 2 This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him." 3 Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." 4 Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" 5 Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. 6 "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7 "Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' 8 "The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit." 9 Nicodemus answered and said to Him, "How can these things be?" 10 Jesus answered and said to him, "Are you the teacher of Israel, and do not know these things?*

2). Recap from last week – We noted last week that subsequent to the salvation of our spirit there is a continuing work of the Holy Spirit, ‘from above, based on the resurrection of Christ –

1Pe 1:3 ¶ *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*

1Pe 1:9 *receiving the end of your faith--the salvation of your souls. 10 ¶ Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, 11 searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. 12 To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven--things which angels desire to look into. 13 ¶ Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that*

is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; 14 as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; 15 but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, 16 because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy."

a). The salvation of the soul requires v13-14

3). Back to our scripture in John. We will see then that the continuing work of the Spirit in our lives will give us sight of, understanding of, the kingdom, *'unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God'.*

And that this is part of the process that enables us to be born (out of) water and the Spirit both of which are essential and concurrent with one another if we are going to enter the Kingdom

5 Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. 6 "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

a). And this process is something that Nicodemus should have understood, if he were to draw from the scriptures relating to the history and the calling of the nation of Israel.

b). Joh 5:46 *"For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me.*

c). If he had accessed the scriptures in the way that Jesus spoke about them - Lu 24:44 *Then He said to them, "These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me."*

d). Not only could Nicodemus have seen that Moses was a type of Christ, but he could have seen in the scriptures that Moses wrote about the Passover, which was followed by the Red Sea crossing, followed by the leading of the pillar of cloud and fire – all prerequisites for entering into the land and receiving their inheritance.

e). Jesus reference to being ‘born of (out of) water is clearly looking to the Red Sea crossing and what it represents.

4). Let's follow the events – on the night of the Exodus the firstborn died in Egypt - Ex 12:29 ¶ *And it came to pass at midnight that the LORD struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of livestock.*

a). Now in God's economy the firstborn of Israel died that night too, only He had accepted a substitutionary death in their place.

b). Following a death their needs to be a burial. And this is exactly the picture the Red Sea crossing gives to us. Not only is the sea in a general sense representative of the Gentile nations (the beast coming from the sea) but it is also representative of the place of the dead (in the new earth there is no more sea).

c). And only after death and burial can there be resurrection – an action wholly of the Spirit a work from above.

5). The foundation for this is laid in Genesis Chapter 1 – the Third Day – Speak about this in relation to Christ and the millennium

Ge 1:9 ¶ *Then God said, "Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear"; and it was so. 10 And God called the dry land Earth, and the gathering together of the waters He called Seas. And God saw that it was good. 11 Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb that yields seed, and the fruit tree that yields fruit according to its kind, whose seed is in itself, on the earth"; and it was so. 12 And the earth brought forth grass, the herb that yields seed according to its kind, and the tree that yields fruit, whose seed is in itself according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. 13 So the evening and the morning were the third day.*

a). We find the earth beneath the sea in the place of death. It is then raised by the power of the Spirit to newness of life.

b). Only in this risen state, by the power of the Spirit, is it able to produce fruit and provide the environment in which a new order of sons would rule.

c). We see the same thing with the flood in Noah's day.

d). We see those who came from the place of death walking in newness of life on the land that also came from the midst of the waters.

6). Nicodemus should have seen the Red Sea crossing in Jesus statement

Ex 14:22 *So the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea on the dry ground, and the waters were a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.*

1Co 10:2 *all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea,*

a). Israel had passed into the place of death and were raised to newness of life on the eastern shore for the purpose of entering the land and receiving their inheritance within the Theocratic kingdom. We must never forget that this is the end result, this is the purpose, this is the focus.

7). Now let's remember John the Baptist's message anticipating Jesus' ministry at His first coming - Mt 3:1 ¶ *In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, 2 and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!"*

a). Those who repented, with a view to the kingdom of heaven were then baptized. - Mt 3:11 *"I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance,*

b). Their sin characterized by unfaithfulness, disobedience and rebellion are all associated with the firstborn, the man of the flesh and in consequence the god of this world. - Eph 2:2 *in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, 3 among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.*

c). Having turned from their sin the old man was symbolically put in the place of death – plunged beneath the water – so that they could understand the picture of walking in newness of life for the purpose of entering into the kingdom of heaven to receive the promises given to Abraham in accordance with the conditional covenant God made with Israel at Sinai - Ex 19:5 *'Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine.*

d). We can see here a parallel situation with that of the first generation leaning Egypt.

e). It is interesting to note that Jesus baptism is immediately linked with the revelation of the Kingdom - Mt 3:16 *When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. 17 And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."*

8). As we think about ourselves in this there is something to note in what John the Baptist says to the Pharisees - Mt 3:8 *"Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance,*

a). Repentance necessitates keeping the man of flesh in the place of death so that which is born of the Spirit can bear fruit. Only through the work of the Spirit from above, after death, can fruit be produced.

b). Joh 12:24 *"Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain.(fruit)*

c). That which is raised by the Spirit alone is able to produce fruit – just as we saw on the Third Day in Genesis.

d). And let's remember that it is the production of fruit that surrounds inheritance in the kingdom.

e). Mt 21:43 *"Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it.*

9). This new 'nation', the church is brought into being because of the events of Calvary – the death of the firstborn, dying in our place. In God's economy though, just as with Israel, God sees our death and it is incumbent upon us to keep everything associated with the firstborn man of the flesh in the place of death – pictured for us in the ordinance of baptism.

Ro 8:13 *For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. 14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. Teach this.*

a). For us then we can see that in order to produce fruit thereby gaining access to the Kingdom, there must first be death and burial as only that connected to the 3rd Day, to resurrection can produce fruit

b). Ro 6:3 *Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? 4 Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, 6 knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. 7 For he who has died has been freed from sin. 8 Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, 9 knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. 10 For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. 11 Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. 12 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. 13 And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.*

c). We can see then that death and shed blood = the salvation of the spirit

d). Burial and resurrection = the salvation of the soul

e). The first is a sovereign act of God apart from us

f). The second is also a sovereign act of God this time however conditioned upon our faith.

g). 1Pe 1:9 *receiving the end of your faith--the salvation of your souls.*

h). Ga 5:16 *I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.*

i). Joh 6:63 *"It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing.*

j). 2Pe 1:1 ¶ *Simon Peter, a bondservant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who have obtained like precious faith with us by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ: 2 Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, 3 as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, 4 by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. 5 ¶ But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, 6 to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, 7 to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. 8 For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins. 10 Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; 11 for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. 12 ¶ For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth. 13 Yes, I think it is right, as long as I am in this tent, to stir you up by reminding you,*

10). Let us remember that just as Israel came from the place of the dead for a specific purpose, so do we. We should choose to put to death the deeds of the flesh so that we can walk according to the Spirit in order to produce fruit – looking to our inheritance kept for us in heaven

a). Col 3:1 ¶ *If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. 2 Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. 3 For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory. 5 ¶ Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth:*

11). Realizing that which is pictured by baptism, being born out of water,
Col 2:12 *buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.*

Has to do with the salvation of our soul –

1Pe 3:21 ¶ *There is also an antitype which now saves us--baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,*

a). Baptism = work = soul salvation

12). If we grasp this our heart cry will be like Paul's - Php 3:10 *that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, 11 if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.*

13). The picture of Baptism

14). Altar call