

## Week 3 - Born of The Spirit

### Nic at Night!

An important theme in John's Gospel is the contrast of spiritual light and darkness, and he uses a series of events in the spiritual journey of the Pharisee Nicodemus to illustrate moving from dark to light!

#### 1 - Praying Constantly

This week Pastor Tim shared Paul's admonitions to the church in Thessaloniki from **1 Thessalonians 5:12-22**. These verses are a great description of a healthy LIFE Group, so have someone read the passage and briefly discuss the takeaways you find!

#### 2 - Watch Pastor Scott's Video for Journey to The Cross - Week 3

*\* This week begins the daily readings and weekly prayer focus in the **Journey to the Cross** devotional booklet! \**

**3 - Scripture reading** - We meet Nicodemus (at night!), hear Jesus describe a new birth, and the testimony of John the Baptizer. Nicodemus is a Pharisee who had devoted his life to study and careful practice of God's instructions in the **Torah** (Hebrew Scriptures). He was a "ruler of the Jews", a member of the Sanhedrin that decided matters of religious law. He was curious about Jesus' teachings, miracles, and whether Jesus may be a prophet or even the promised Messiah...

#### Read John 3:1-10 - Nicodemus comes to Jesus

- Nicodemus understood "the Kingdom of God" as the coming earthly rule of the Messiah to judge the Gentile nations and establish Israel, but Jesus describes a spiritual kingdom of people who are spiritually reborn.
- Nicodemus is surprised, but the Hebrew Bible looked forward to a new Torah/ Covenant in the Spirit: **Read Genesis 2:7, Jeremiah 31:31-33, Ezekiel 36:25-27**

#### Read John 3:16-21 - Jesus describes a new kind of "Kingdom of God"

- Nicodemus thought that only Israel would be saved, but Jesus says God has now extended salvation to whom? Why has God done this? How do we now respond to enter this Kingdom?
- Jews expected the Messiah to condemn the Gentiles, but what does Jesus say He has been sent to do? Who then is judged?
- In the video, Pastor Scott asks if you have believed in Jesus, received His salvation, and walk in His Light. If not, you can do it right now!

#### Read John 3:30 & 34-36 - John the Baptist's testimony

- John confirms the words Jesus spoke to Nicodemus. What is the interaction of Father, Son, Spirit and us in this passage?

#### Pray together!

- Follow the Week 1 prompt in the United in Prayer section in the booklet!



A DISCIPLE'S WALK THROUGH  
THE GOSPEL OF JOHN



### Nicodemus the Pharisee

Jewish historian Josephus estimates there were about 6,000 Pharisees in Israel in Jesus' lifetime. Several are mentioned in the New Testament who became followers of Jesus, including Nicodemus, Joseph of Arimathea, an unnamed group that believed, and Paul (also his teacher Gamaliel). Paul still considered himself a Pharisee even after believing in Jesus (Phil 3:5-6). Pharisees believed the whole Old Testament was from God, but their zeal could stray into legalistic strict obedience to the Bible's commands without focus on having a heart in tune with God's grace and mercy, leading to attitudes of spiritual pride and judgment. Pharisees disagreed with Sadducees on many topics, as they accepted the Prophets as inspired, and also believed a resurrection would occur when the Messiah appeared.

