

24-0218p Transcript

24-0218p - Nicodemus, Part 2, Jim Lokenbauer

Bible Reader: John Nousek

This transcript transcribed by TurboScribe.ai

See a detailed summary: [Detailed Summary HTML](#) - [Detailed Summary PDF](#)

(Detailed Summary by Grok, xAI)

Nicodemus, Part 2

Transcript (0:03 - 30:58)

Scripture Reading

Bible Reader: John Nousek

John 3:11-21,

(0:03) Good evening. So this evening's reading comes again from the Gospel of John, the (0:13) third chapter, beginning with verse 11. And I'll read through verse and including (0:21) verse 21.

Most assuredly I say to you, we speak what we know and testify what we (0:32) have seen, and you do not receive a witness. If I've told you earthly things (0:39) and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things? No (0:47) one has ascended to heaven but he who has come down from heaven, that is, the (0:52) Son of Man who is in heaven. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, (0:59) even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him should (1:08) not perish but have eternal life.

For God so loved the world that he gave his (1:17) only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have (1:24) everlasting life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the (1:30) world, but that the world through him might be saved. He who believes in him (1:38) is not condemned, but he who does not believe is already condemned, because he (1:48) has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

And this is the (1:55) condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness (2:01) rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone practicing evil (2:08) hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be (2:14) exposed. But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be (2:24) clearly seen, that they have been done in God. (2:28)

Transcript

Preacher: Jim Lokenbauer

(2:33) Well, good evening. I hope everyone has had a lovely day today. Mine was relaxing.

(2:41) Well, as you can tell, we're going to pick up where we left off this morning, and (2:47) we're in the third chapter of the Gospel of John. So, this morning we read in (2:54) John's reading, we heard Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus, a Pharisee (3:02) who was seeking to know Christ, seeking to know his teaching. And Nicodemus was (3:10) astonished by what he heard from our Lord, and couldn't make the spiritual (3:17) connection to what Jesus was saying.

To help us understand why Nicodemus was (3:24) confused, we examined Paul's point from Acts 13 27, that the leaders themselves, (3:31) the teachers of the law, during Moses' time right up to the present time, didn't (3:39) truly know what the law was about, even though they were teaching it. This was (3:45) because it was a law of works, and about keeping every point of the law, so that (3:51) they wouldn't be guilty of breaking any of the law. Jesus recognized this in them, (3:58) and said of the Pharisees in Matthew 15 14, leave them alone.

They are blind guides (4:06) of the blind. If the blind guide is blind, both will fall into a pit. That is why (4:15) when people heard Jesus teach, they made this conclusion found in Mark 1 22.

They (4:23) were astonished at what his teaching said, for he taught them as having authority, (4:30) and not like the scribes. So there was an obvious contrast between Jesus' teaching (4:40) and that of the teachers of the law, like Nicodemus. Being the word, Jesus knew what (4:49) he was talking about.

Jesus is the spirit of the law. So when they taught the law, a (4:56) lot of time was spent trying to understand the spirit, or the essence of the law, as (5:04) to what the point of it was. But their teaching was more out of ignorance, and about keeping (5:10) the law, and how to appear holy and pious in front of others.

If the teachers of the (5:18) law spent more time trying to understand the law, to try and get the essence of what it (5:25) was saying, they would have recognized the author of the law, Jesus. To Nicodemus' credit, (5:33) he did seek out the Lord. He should have remembered these Old Testament prophecies, which I said (5:39) we'd go over tonight, and we shall.

These Old Testament prophecies were about the very (5:49) time that they were living in, and would be fulfilled. Ezekiel 11, 19-20. This should (6:00) have come to Nicodemus' mind when Jesus was talking about the spirit coming.

It says, (6:10) I will give them an undivided heart, and put a new spirit in them. I will remove from them (6:18) their heart of stone, and give them a heart of flesh. Then they will follow my decrees, (6:25) and be careful to keep my laws.

They will be my people, and I will be their God. And (6:33) a little later in Ezekiel's book, 36, 26, and 27, he says, I will give you a new heart, (6:42) and put a new spirit in you. I will remove from you your heart of stone, and give you (6:48) a heart of flesh.

And I will put my spirit in you, and move you to follow my decrees, (6:55) and be careful to keep my laws. And lastly, from the Old Testament, Jeremiah 31, 31-34. (7:07) Behold, the days come, says Yahweh, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, (7:14) and with the house of Judah.

Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in (7:20) the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, which covenant (7:26) of mine they broke, although I was a husband to them, says Yahweh. But this is the covenant that (7:33) I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says Yahweh. I will put my law in their (7:40) inward parts, and I will write it in their heart.

I will be their God, and they shall be my people. (7:48) They will no longer each teach his neighbor, and every man teach his brother, saying, Know Yahweh, (7:55) for they will all know me from their least to their greatest, says Yahweh, for I will forgive (8:01) their iniquity, and I will remember their sins no more. So Jesus' death on the cross realized (8:12) these prophecies.

The previous law became known then, at that point, as the Old Testament, (8:19) because Jesus' death made it obsolete, and he, being the testator, having died, brought in (8:26) his testament, what we call our New Testament, his last will and testament. (8:33) The prophecies we just read talked about the results of the word of God, that the word of (8:39) God would have on people's hearts. God would draw those hearts to him by his word, along with the (8:48) working of Holy Spirit, who gives understanding to the hearer, and convicts all those hearts (8:55) into believing what they're hearing, leading them to obey Christ's message.

(9:01) They have been so changed by what they heard, they keep or hold the word in their hearts, (9:09) knowing and using it as their standard to guide and to measure all their motives and actions, (9:17) and to bear fruit and bring glory to our Father in heaven. There were so many Old Testament (9:23) scriptures pointing to this event and time, Nicodemus should have seen it, but he didn't. (9:32) Verse 11, Most certainly I tell you, we speak that which we know, and testify of that which we have (9:41) seen, and you don't receive our witness.

The we, Jesus was referring to, was everyone at the time (9:50) spreading the gospel, and even at times performing miracles, like when he sent out the 70 in pairs, (10:00) and they went proclaiming the gospel and having a measure of the Holy Spirit, they healed people. (10:14) So with this authority, many lives were turning to Jesus, which made the authorities (10:24) of the scribes, the Pharisees, the priests, made them all jealous of what was going on, (10:32) and many of them had it in their mind to put Christ to death. (10:38) But I don't believe Nicodemus was one of these.

(10:46) Verse 12, If I told you earthly things and you don't believe, how will you believe if I tell you (10:53) heavenly things? Well, the earthly things Jesus is referring to is his style of teachings he used (11:02) on Nicodemus, and actually for all of his listeners. Jesus used metaphor in parables. (11:11) Simply put, it's a simple parallel story using common earthly experiences to illustrate a deeper (11:19) spiritual teaching.

God had several reasons for using this style of teaching. Mainly, (11:27) he wanted us to learn how to think spiritually, to reason, to search for the deeper meaning (11:35) of what was being said. Because after exerting great effort to discover (11:40) an answer to a question, problem, or mystery, you value what you've just learned.

You value (11:49) the process used to come up with the answer. You tend to treasure what you've learned. (11:55) And plus, God couldn't reveal everything to the people, because even in Nicodemus' sect, (12:04) the Pharisees, they had intentions of killing the Lord, so Jesus had to be careful what he (12:11) told people.

And so by teaching them in parables, kind of cloaked what he was saying. (12:21) And God, being a good father, gives his children tools to help them learn, (12:29) to figure out mysteries. Listen to these verses.

They illustrate this perfectly from Proverbs 1, (12:36) 1 through 7. The Proverbs of Solomon, and as I was doing research, I don't know why it struck me as (12:46) funny, but the Hebrew name for Solomon is Shlomo. I just found that funny. I don't know why.

(12:57) So if he was having a bad day, he'd be Shlomo and Slo-mo. Anyhow, sorry, Lord. (13:07) The Proverbs of Solomon, the son of David, king of Israel, to know wisdom and instruction, (13:13) to discern the words of understanding, to receive instruction in wise dealing, (13:21) in righteousness, justice, and equity, to give prudence to the simple, knowledge and discretion (13:28) to the young man, that the wise man may hear and increase in learning, that the man of understanding (13:37) may attain to sound counsel, to understand the Proverbs and parables and the words and riddles (13:45) of the wise.

The fear of Yahweh is the beginning of knowledge, but foolish despise the wisdom (13:53) and instruction. So Proverbs, parables, words, and riddles are God's tools to stimulate the student (14:04) into using their brain to problem solve, to figure out these deeper spiritual messages. (14:13) A man who should have known these things, Nicodemus, should have been able to figure it out.

(14:20) But the people during old law times were all about the keeping of the law rather than, (14:28) you know, what does God really want us to know here, kind of thought. So God could simply have (14:35) given us the answers to everything, but would we actually learn or know anything if He did? (14:44) There's value in trying to understand something, to work at it. If you're a student of the Bible, (14:53) a good place to start your religious education is found in studying the Proverbs.

(15:00) So being Israel's teacher, what was Nicodemus' excuse for not understanding Jesus? (15:07) That may explain our Lord's somewhat harsh sounding tone with him. Verse 13, (15:15) no one has ascended into heaven but he who descended out of heaven, the son of man who is (15:22) in heaven. What? He's been there, but he's here and there? No, our Lord isn't having a Kamala Harris (15:34) word salad moment here.

What he's saying is that heaven is his home, that's where he's from, (15:43) so he's uniquely qualified to talk about heavenly and spiritual things while he's here. (15:51) It also means he is God. He is omnipresent.

It is one of those unique qualities of his nature, (16:00) being God. And though he's there with Nicodemus, he is also everywhere at the same time. (16:09) Can we even begin to wrap our heads around that? The Apostle John describes his nature (16:19) and relationship with the Father earlier in his Gospel.

John 1.18 says, no man has ever seen (16:27) God the Father at any time, only the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father. (16:37) He has declared him to us. Jesus, the only begotten Son of God, (16:44) is the second figure of the Godhead and was with God before the creation.

(16:51) After the creation and the plan of salvation was set in motion, when the time was just right, (16:58) Jesus the Christ came, being born of a woman, making him God's only begotten Son, (17:08) became God's perfect sacrificial lamb to redeem mankind from sin. And while on earth, (17:16) through his life and teaching, he revealed and explained and demonstrated who his Father is.

(17:24) Remember his words to one of his disciples? (17:30) Why do you ask to see the Father? Don't you know that I and the Father are one? (17:36) When you see me, you see the Father? That's why the words from Isaiah 9.6, (17:44) describing the Christ child that would come, would be Father, Son, and Spirit in that description (17:53) of his name.

Verses 14 and 15, as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, (18:03) even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him should not perish, (18:10) but have eternal life. Here Jesus goes out on a limb as to what he reveals to Nicodemus, (18:20) the Pharisee. It was the Pharisees and the other Jewish leaders that knew about Jesus.

However, (18:28) Jesus, knowing all men's hearts, sees the sincerity in Nicodemus' heart, that he truly is (18:37) hungry to know about the kingdom of God, and that he's close to becoming a true believer. (18:47) So Jesus shares the plan of salvation with him, though he's only told his own disciples (18:54) what's going to happen to him about his death. He tells the listeners to believe (19:03) that he's the Son of God and that they should repent of their sins if they want eternal life, (19:08) but he hasn't yet revealed how that was going to be done.

He shares the plan with Nicodemus, (19:17) by first directing his mind to recall the time in Israel's history in the desert. (19:24) He's talking about from Numbers 21. As punishment for their murmuring and complaining against God (19:33) and Moses, God sent poisonous vipers to bite them, and many people died.

And when they acknowledged (19:43) their sin to Moses and asked Moses to pray to God for their forgiveness, God directed Moses (19:51) to make an image, to make a bronze snake, put it on a pole, and lift it up high so that when any of (19:59) the complainers were bitten, all they had to do was look upon the serpent on the pole and they (20:07) would be healed. Do you know what Jesus is teaching Nicodemus here? He's revealing typology (20:17) to Nicodemus. The Old Testament type is where the bitten sinner turns to look upon the serpent (20:25) that was lifted on the pole and they'd receive life.

Jesus, being the anti-type, the actual (20:32) figure that the type was pointing to, the sinner receives healing when they look to Jesus for the (20:41) forgiveness of sins, because he was lifted up on the cross, having died for them as an atoning (20:48) sacrifice. And they will receive eternal life. Hebrews 12 says, looking to Jesus, the author and (20:59) perfecter of faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising its shame, (21:07) and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

So we have to look to Christ the same way (21:16) the Israelites had to look to that bronze serpent for healing, forgiveness, and life. (21:24) And that's what he's relaying to Nicodemus. But Nicodemus, those things should have been (21:30) clicking in his head.

Oh, I get it. Verse 16, for God so loved the world that he gave his only (21:38) begotten son that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. And here is (21:47) perhaps the most famous and often quoted verse in the entire Bible.

John 3.16. You see it at every (21:56) sporting event. You see it on people's shirts. You see it in people's yards, on signs.

John 3.16, (22:05) for God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whoever believes in him shall (22:13) not perish but have eternal life. And here it is right in this conversation with Nicodemus. (22:23) Those wonderful words were shared with him first.

The entire plan of salvation is wrapped up in that (22:32) one verse. So if there's one verse you need to know, it's that verse. That's why you see it (22:41) everywhere.

It explains it. God's love for a lost world was the reason he offered his son as an (22:49) atoning sacrifice to redeem mankind from sin back to himself. He doesn't want anyone to perish.

(22:57) That's why he has not returned to judge the world yet. Because of his great love for man, he is (23:04) patiently waiting for everyone to repent from sin and believe in Jesus as the son of God, (23:12) his anointed one. God wants us to spend eternity with him.

And the only way to get to heaven is (23:20) through Jesus, his son, who said, I am the way, I am the truth, I am the light, I am the door. (23:29) It's through Jesus we make it to heaven. Peter said in one of his many sermons in Acts 4.12, (23:41) salvation is found in no one else for there is no other name under heaven given to men (23:47) by which we must be saved.

So Jesus is the way, he's telling Nicodemus here. Verse 17, (23:56) for God didn't send his son into the world to judge the world, but that the world should be (24:03) saved through him. So everything is in order.

First, save people, then judgment. In Christ's (24:12) first coming, his mission was to get people to believe in him and to die for them and then to (24:19) rise again. He accomplished these tasks and made it possible for mankind to be saved if they believe (24:27) in him.

In his second coming, we'll bring judgment and destruction to those who reject the gospel. (24:36) Listen to John 5, 21 and 22. For just as the father raises the dead and gives them life, (24:45) even so the son also gives life to whom he wishes.

For not even the father judges anyone, (24:53) but he has given all judgment to the son. So even though he tells Nicodemus here, (25:00) he doesn't come to judge the world. No, not in his first coming.

In his second coming, (25:07) he's coming to judge the world. Verse 18, he who believes in him is not judged. He who doesn't (25:17) believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the one and only son (25:23) of God.

These terms and conditions that were laid out in the first century for salvation have been (25:33) clearly stated and are easily understood by everybody. We will have no excuse for our unbelief (25:43) or rejection, is what it really is, of Christ on that great thing when he returns. (25:50) Happy are we who believe and are not judged.

For the unbelievers, their future is darkness (25:58) and weeping and gnashing of teeth. Verses 19 through 20. This is the judgment that the light (26:11) has come into the world and men love the darkness rather than the light.

For their works were evil. (26:19) For everyone who does evil hates the light and doesn't come to the light, lest his works would (26:25) be exposed. In verse 18, he said that unbelievers have already been judged.

Though the day of (26:34) judgment has not occurred yet, what this is saying is that their end has already been decided by them (26:41) deciding not to believe or follow the Christ. Verses 19 and 20 give the reason people reject (26:50) Christ's offer of salvation. Simply put, they love the sin.

Verse 21. But he who does the truth (27:01) comes to the light that his works may be revealed that they have been done in God. So God wants us (27:11) to bear good fruit for his glory.

Our good works are our fruit. And we are that city on a hill (27:20) that can be seen at night. And we don't want to hide our light by placing a basket over it.

We (27:27) let our light shine so that others can see that light and give God praise. We let our light shine (27:35) to dispel the darkness in this world. We let our light shine to give light to others so they too (27:43) can receive the words of life that can lead them to life.

We're not told if Nicodemus believed (27:51) enough to become a disciple. This ended their conversation or at least what was recorded for us. (28:02) He was definitely dedicated to the Lord though. In John 7, as I said earlier this morning, (28:10) he did defend the Lord before the Sanhedrin when the guard was supposed to come back with him (28:16) and arrest him. But they came back saying we've never heard anybody talk with such authority. (28:23) He talked with such authority he ignored the real authorities, those who ran Israel. And as they were (28:33) condemning Jesus, Nicodemus had the courage to stand up and say do we condemn a man who has not (28:41) even appeared before us? You know what they did at that point? They all went home. That's recorded (28:52) for us. They couldn't argue against Nicodemus. What they were about to do was wrong.

And then later (29:00) Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea went to a Gentile leader themselves, the Pilate, and they (29:11) asked for the body of Jesus so that they could bury him. Nicodemus did that. Joseph of Arimathea (29:21) who was said that he was a secret disciple of Jesus. Is there such a thing? Well at that time (29:28) there was. And I'm thinking that Nicodemus was as well.

But we're told in Acts that many of the (29:37) leaders and many of the Pharisees became open followers of the Lord. And I'm praying that it (29:46) was these two men and mainly Nicodemus here. Nicodemus bore good fruit. With his own money, (29:54) he purchased 100 pounds of expensive spices to embalm the Lord. And Joseph gave the Lord his (30:04) own tomb to fulfill what Isaiah said, that Jesus would be buried in a rich man's tomb. (30:17) So I'm hoping when we get to heaven, we see Nicodemus. He's a great character.

And again, (30:25) I would encourage everyone to check out The Chosen. I have no stock in the company. (30:34) I just plug them because it's actually a very good work. And it brings the gospel to people (30:41) who might not have ever seen it. So it's a good portrayal of a good man.

And this evening, (30:48) if anybody needs the prayers of the saints or any type of requests come forward, this is the (30:54) invitation. And let your wants be done. Thanks. (30:58)