

# **John 3**

## **John 3.1-9**

**V1** – **Who were the Pharisees?** They believed in the resurrection and spiritual life

-**Where else do we read about Nicodemus?** *John 7:50-52* – He defended Jesus' right to be heard, and *John 19:38-39*, where he assisted Joseph of Arimathea in the burial of Jesus

**V2** – **Why by night?** For fear of ridicule (*John 7:50-52*), or for more time to talk to Jesus

-**Describe his addressing Jesus?** Very guarded

-“As a teacher” - Nicodemus was obviously impressed

**V3** – Notice that Jesus did not carry on a courteous exchange of words, but got down to business right away – Sometimes we need to do the same with people

–Nicodemus had been born of Abraham's seed, but Jesus said: “*You must be born again*” - being a son of Abraham no longer worked for God

**V4** – **Reaction of Nicodemus?** Very confused

-Notice *John 2:20* – Jews took statements of Jesus literally, but John recorded symbolic statements

-Physical birth cannot be repeated!

**V5** – Current Baptist and evangelical explanation of being born of the water: the breaking of the water shortly before birth of the baby (believe it or not!)

-But we see in the New Testament (especially *Acts*) that it was the water of baptism that allowed people into the Lord's church

-**Why is it also a spiritual birth?** If not, then just going under water while swimming would be a baptism

-**When did Christian baptism start?** *Acts 2.38*

**V6** – Being a Christian is spiritual

**V7** – Apparently Nicodemus was “in shock”

**V8** – We find the gospel by means of the Word (Spirit)

## **John 3.9-15**

**V9** – **What was the reaction of Nicodemus to this?** Really confused

**V10** – Jesus: Your fleshly birth means nothing

-Nicodemus should have been able to understand this

-**Why couldn't he?** Because of his prejudice as a Jew

**V11** – **Who does the “we” refer to?** Disciples of Jesus

-**Who does the “you” refer to?** Unbelieving Jews

**V12** – If a person cannot understand the simple things, how can he understand the complicated

things?

**V 13** – Only one had come from heaven: Jesus

-**No-one has ascended into heaven?**

-Elijah – *2 Kings 2:1, 11*

-*Proverbs 30:4* – ascended and descended

-*Ephesians 4:8-10*

**Possible interpretations?**

-“No-one” of those present

-Only Christ could tell us what heaven is like

-“Ascending to heaven” = understanding heaven, “knowing” heaven as Christ knew God

-*Deuteronomy 30:12-13* - “heaven” as compared to the “sea” - seems to refer to sky (not literally heaven)

**V 14** – **Read Numbers 21:4-9**

-**How does this apply to Jesus?** It was symbolic for salvation through Jesus Christ

**V 15** – We must believe in Him

## **John 3.16-21**

**V 16** – One of the most famous passages in all of the Bible

-This was a radically new thought for Jews

-John: God loves everybody, including the Gentiles

-**What was the cost (price) of that love?** The giving of God's only son

-**Whose fault is it if some are lost?** Their own, for not believing in God's son – they prefer darkness to light

-**Does *John 3:16* justify salvation without baptism?** No, this is just one aspect of salvation (*Matt. 4.4*)

-Notice the use of the word “*perish*” here – a dreadful and ominous word

**V 17** – **How do we take the word “judge”?** Condemn

-**Why did Jesus not come to condemn the world?** It already stood condemned

-John brings out the positive side: Jesus came to save the world

**V 18** – This reaffirms that judging is really the day of condemnation (very interesting usage)

-John uses simple words in their deeper meanings

-**What will condemn us?** Not believing in Jesus

**V 19** – **Why are people condemned?** They love darkness rather than light

-**Literal darkness?** Sometimes yes and sometimes no

-Remember the crimes that are committed at night, but all sin also has its dark side

-**Why does something like drug addiction continue?** People love it, and they have a choice in life

**V 20** – Light exposes evil deeds

-**Why do people not like to hear the gospel?** It exposes their evil deeds

V 21 – Those who do right love the light

## **John 3.22-30**

V 22 – Notice *John 4.2* - Jesus was not literally baptizing at this point, but his disciples were

- "The president submits his budget to Congress," but really his staff members prepared the budget
- **Was this Christ's baptism?** No, see *Romans 6:3-4* – no death, burial, resurrection of Jesus yet
- **Which baptism was it then?** The baptism of John the Baptist

V 23 – Very Interesting

- **What does this tell us about the “mode” of baptism (apart from Greek studies)?** It had to have been immersion

V 24 – Just an historical note by John

- There are no other details of John the Baptist's death in the gospel of *John*
- **Why?** The goal of John's gospel was to cause people to believe in Jesus
- John the Baptist and his experiences in prison were not necessary for the purpose of the apostle John in this gospel

V 25-26 – A “Jew” started an argument

- **What was the attitude of John the Baptist's disciples?** A little jealous of Jesus' number of baptisms

V 27 – A general answer first

- **What is John saying here?** God gave him a mission – that is all that is important in life

V 28 – **Of what does John the Baptist remind his disciples?** His earlier statement

V 29 – **What is the role of “best man” at a wedding?** He doesn't get the bride, just celebrates over the happiness of the groom

- **Jesus is the groom, but who is the bride?** The church

V 30 – The humility of John the Baptist

## **John 3.31-36** – Probably words of Apostle John

V 31 – John reflects on the words of John the Baptist (ignore quote marks)

V 32-33 – The testimony of Jesus is trustworthy

V 34-35 – God the Father gave words of truth to the Son

V 36 – **What does belief involve (NASB)?** Obedience!

