



John

Lesson 3 Chapter 3

In New Testament times the area that is today Israel and Syria was referred to as Palestine. This area and many others were under the rule of the Roman Empire. Though the Romans had the final authority over all legal matters, they allowed the Jews of Palestine to maintain most of their own influence over religious matters. The Temple was the main headquarters of this authority, but many larger towns had their own synagogue which was an extension of the Temple authority. The Temple and all its activities were governed by three groups of religious leaders. The Pharisees, though not the largest group, had the most influence on the people. The word Pharisee means "separated ones". They attempted to separate themselves from all ordinary life to maintain purity in every detail of the Law for the purpose of pleasing God. This holy life-style much impressed the average Jew, but Jesus saw through their hypocrisy and confronted them with it many times during

His earthly ministry. It was because of this that they sought to kill Him. The Sadducees were the priests of that day, and the Scribes were those who thoroughly studied the Law and worked to maintain and preserve it in its original form. Each group had their own beliefs and doctrines which led to continual conflict, but they somehow managed to work together to keep their governing system functioning.

Chapter 3 introduces Nicodemus who was a Pharisee as well as a member of the Sanhedrin or Jewish Supreme Court. This court had seventy members who maintained religious jurisdiction over Jews throughout the world limited only by the Roman government. Nicodemus had probably been with some of the groups of Pharisees that had questioned and criticized Jesus on many occasions. This time he comes alone to Jesus at night to question him personally about His teaching.

READ CHAPTER 3

1. *Why did Nicodemus think Jesus was from God?*



John's gospel records seven miracles or "signs" that John felt were significant, even though he stated in Chapter 21:25- "and there were also many other things that Jesus did that if it were written in detail I suppose that even the world itself would not contain the books which were written." Nonetheless, he chose just seven to reveal the person and mission of Jesus. It was these very miracles, or signs, that caused the Pharisees to question His authority because in doing several of these, He broke the man-made Sabbath laws they observed religiously.

2. *Jesus responds to Nicodemus' first statement with a truth that seems to be unrelated. What does this infer that Jesus knew about what Nicodemus was actually seeking?*

3. *What does Jesus tell Nicodemus is required to see the Kingdom of God?*

4. *What does it mean to be "born again"? See also John 1:12-13; 1 Peter 1:23; Titus 3:5.*

5. *Explain what you think Jesus means in His analogy between the wind and being born of the Spirit in verse 8.*

6. *Why should Nicodemus have understood what Jesus was saying? Why didn't he?*

7. *In verses 14-15, Jesus gives Nicodemus an Old Testament example of what He was there to accomplish. Read Numbers 21:5-9. What takes place in this passage, and how does it relate to what Jesus is saying?*

8. *What is the motivating factor behind Christ giving Himself for the world? John 3:16*



In John 3:16 the word "believe" is the Greek word "pisteuo". The Vines Dictionary of New Testament Words defines it as follows: "to believe, and also, to be persuaded of, and hence, to place confidence in, to trust, signifies in this sense of the word, reliance upon not mere credence." The same word is translated "commit" in 1 Timothy 1:11, and "entrust" in John 2:24 as well as Romans 3:2.

9. *What does it mean to you to "believe" in Jesus?*
10. *How does the mere presence of Jesus in the world bring judgement?*
11. *What seems to be the attitude of John's followers toward Jesus in vs.26?*
12. *What did John explain to them was his role in following Jesus?*

Word study 1

Wrath - Strong's 3709 orge - anger; violent passion; the anger of God which stands opposed to man's disobedience, obduracy, and sin, and manifests itself in punishing the same.

Romans 1:18

Romans 4:15

Romans 9:22a

Hebrews 3:11

Hebrews 4:3

Revelation 14:10

Revelation 16:19

Revelation 19:15

Prayer requests:

Group time notes:
