

March 4th 2007: Holy Spirit: At Work in the World: John 3:1-21

In our Studies of the HS.....we come this morningto perhaps the most exciting aspect of the HS work...as far as we are concerned

The Work of the Holy Spirit in our World Today

- **Since the coming of Christ**.....the Spirit's work w/in.....has intensified
He has always been activesince creation.....
But concerning the re-creation of man in Christ....the Spirit.....is a Prime Mover

He works :→ within the area of the unbeliever

:→ within the believer and the Body of Christ on earth.....

It's His work within the unbelieving world.....look at today

- **Turn with me to John chapter 3**

To an incredible story.....of a friendly meeting between an important Pharisee and Jesus

It's incredible.....Because Pharisees didn't meet.....Except in groups...in order
To test Him.....argue with Him.....abuse Him....find fault with Him

Yet this most important of Pharisees.....A member of the ruling body
Came secretly to Jesus.....in the darkness of night.....with deep burning questions on his heart

(I was trying to think of an equivalent situation today.....Howard's cabinet...Pauline)

In that Society Nicodemus was seen as having.....a lot of power....authority....prestige

Jesus was seen as having very little

Yet when they meet.....The place of authority....clearly belonged to Jesus

- **Note how Nicodemus begins**

3:2 "Rabbi, we know you are a teacher who has come from God."

What a statement to begin with

Then he goes on to say "For no one could perform the miraculous signs you are doing if God were not with him."

- **A group of** ...Had broken free from the political restraints-(*Can't be ...not one of us*)
And they wanted....to be part...of what Jesus was doing
Jesus preached about the Kingdom.....**That's what they wanted**....Sincerely.....

And Jesus knew that.....**BUT His** reply shut the door in their faces
3:3 *“I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.”*

That’s great Nicodemus that you want.....but no one can even see the Kingdom.....
Unless he is born again

(South Africa.....Amenities that were labled::No Whites.....)

- **We can feel a little for Nicodemus**.....

Courageously he had decided to go against the party line.....To throw his support....
And now Jesus is saying.....that as things stand.....Nicodemus is not eligible
He must first go through a process....no control over
Of being born all over again !!!

- **Thankfully Jesus went on to explain.....**

In v5 He says *“I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit.”*

Many have argued about the meaning of water.....

But from what Jesus then goes on to say.....**I think** born of water...ref....natural birth
In v6 *“Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit.”*

Everyone who lives.....has been born by natural means

But the inner spirit.....is suffering death::: **Separated** from God by the ugliness
Because its dead it can’t enter God’s kingdom

- **But if by some miracle**.....Our inner being can be reborn.....

Our Spirit re made....cleansed.....pure.....secured against the disease of sin
Then entry into God’s kingdom....Presence....Family.....IS Automatic

That’s why Jesus said to Nicodemus::: You **must** be born again.....It’s the only way
And its only the Spirit that can do that in you.....

But the Good news is that He is at work.....**Unseen**....unexpected....nonpredictable
But Powerful.....Just like the wind.

And because of the death and resurrection.....**the Spirit** is able to give a new heart
And then to take up residence in those ...who seek the Lord.....and call upon Him....

- **Jesus didn't go** on to explain the way the Spirit would do so.....to Nicodemus
Instead He waited till just prior to His death
Then in chapter 16:8-11—He said this about....Spirit's work in the world

..v8 “When He comes He will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment:...”

v9.. “in regard to sin, because men do not believe in me;”

The greatest sin.....is not believing that Jesus is the Son of God.....the only Saviour

Only the Spirit can convict a person.....that not believing in Jesus.....
will mean their personal condemnation

- **On the cross next to Jesus**.....two criminals.....Both were at first mocking Him
But then one became convinced that Jesus was innocent.....and who He claimed to be
To Him he cried.....LORD remember me.....And Jesus said

What caused that sudden change.....I believe that the Spirit of God....even then
Beginning His work of conviction.....And this criminal responded

At the foot.....a Centurion.**Just** one of several Roman Soldiers
He couldn't care less about Jesus one minute.....Then suddenly he proclaims....
Surely this was the Son of God.....**The Holy Spirit** at work

V10... “in regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer;”

- **To be convinced** that Jesus had gone to the Father.....was to be convinced.....
That the resurrection had taken place

Which in turn meant.....that God had accepted His death as washing away our sins
And had also clothed us in the perfect righteousness of Jesus

The Holy Spirit convicts sinners.....that the only righteousness we need.....to stand before a holy God.....Is found not in our good acts...But in Jesus through Resurrection

Then v11 “and in regard to judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned”

- **The Holy Spirit** convicts man of the truth....that the cross spelt final defeat for Satan

All around us we still see the powers of evil.....**And even** as believers we can sometimes feel....that Satan is winning

But what the Holy Spirit does.....is to proclaim the victory of Jesus....
And He does so into the hearts of men and women.....at those times when His challenge
On their lives....is the strongest

(Young people having a séanceWho drove them to the church...as a refuge →HS)

So what does this have to say to uswho are part of God’s family

BE ENCOURAGED

BE AVAILABLE

BE IN PRAYER