



PRAYER: God of all knowledge, we confess that like Nicodemus, we often rely on our own understanding and try to fit Your infinite grace into our finite boxes. Strip away our need to be “experts” and give us the humility of a child, ready to be born again by Your Spirit. May we share this study less concerned with what we know about You, and more captivated by the love You showed us through Your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

ICEBREAKER: What is one “expert” topic you could give a 10-minute presentation on right now, and how would you feel if someone told you that everything you knew about it was wrong?

INTRODUCTION: Nicodemus approached Jesus under the cover of night, confident that his religious credentials and intellectual observations had given him a clear handle on who Jesus was. However, Jesus quickly dismantled his assumptions, revealing that spiritual rebirth cannot be calculated or earned through the “knowledge” of a scholar. These questions invite us to step out of our own expertise and consider where our certainty might be standing in the way of a true encounter with the Spirit.

SCRIPTURE: Read **John 3:1-17:** Now there was a Pharisee, a man named Nicodemus who was a member of the Jewish ruling council. ² He came to Jesus at night and said, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the signs you are doing if God were not with him.” ³ Jesus replied, “Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again.” ⁴ “How can someone be born when they are old?” Nicodemus asked. “Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother’s womb to be born!” ⁵ Jesus answered, “Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. ⁶ Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. ⁷ You should not be surprised at my saying, ‘You must be born again.’ ⁸ The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So, it is with everyone born of the Spirit.” ⁹ “How can this be?” Nicodemus asked. ¹⁰ “You are Israel’s teacher,” said Jesus, “and do you not understand these things? ¹¹ Very truly I tell you, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen, but still, you people do not accept our testimony. ¹² I have spoken to you of earthly things, and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things? ¹³ No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven—the Son of Man. ¹⁴ Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, ¹⁵ that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him.” ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

DISCUSSION:



1. **What stood out in today's message?** What's one thing you learned? What questions came to mind as you listened to the message today?
2. **The Pedigree vs. The Person:** In verse 2, Nicodemus starts with **"Rabbi, we know..."** based on the signs Jesus performed. He approaches Jesus as a peer evaluating another peer. In what ways did Nicodemus's status and "knowledge" act as a barrier to him truly seeing who Jesus was? How does our own expertise get in the way of a simple, honest connection with God?
3. **The Mechanics of the Spirit:** When Jesus introduces the concept of being "born again" (v. 3-4), Nicodemus immediately pivots to the physical: *"How can a man be born when he is old?"* * Nicodemus tried to fit a spiritual truth into a physical box he could understand. Where in our lives are we trying to use logic and "common sense" to explain away things that God is doing on a spiritual level?
4. **The "Master" Who Didn't Master the Basics:** Jesus asks a piercing question in verse 10: *"Are you the teacher of Israel and yet you do not understand these things?"* * Nicodemus was an expert in the Law, yet he missed the heart of the Prophets. What does this tell us about the difference between *knowing about* God's word and *being transformed* by it?
5. **From Knowledge to Trust:** The passage culminates in the famous verse 16, shifting the focus from "knowing" to **believing** (trusting). By the end of this exchange, Jesus moves the goalposts from intellectual agreement to sacrificial love and belief. Why is it often harder for "knowledgeable" people to move from their heads to their hearts? What is one "certainty" you might need to let go of to trust God more fully?

CHALLENGE: Stop trying to master the mechanics of God with your mind and start surrendering to the mystery of His Spirit in your heart.

SERVE: March 29 is **INVITE SUNDAY**. Create a list of people you will invite to worship with you and then practice "radical hospitality" by inviting them now.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Take this time to share group announcements. Church wide and campus specific announcements can be found at www.myspbc.org. You can also "find, follow and like" our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/myspbc. Turn on your notifications.

CELEBRATIONS: Take this time to share praise reports (e.g. answered prayers, birthdays, anniversaries, promotions).

PRAYER REQUESTS AND PRAYER: Take this time to share prayer requests. Close with prayer.

GPS is a study guide based on the weekend message. The purpose of this guide is to assist small groups in study.

Previous GPS Guides are available online at www.myspbc.org.

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Welcome!

Today's Message:

What You Think You Know Might Be Messing You Up
Dr. Lance D. Watson, Senior Pastor

We Care!

NOTICE: PLEASE BE PATIENT AS WE GRADUALLY REOPEN OUR CAMPUSES IN THE SAFEST MANNER POSSIBLE. As a small group leader, we depend on you to show members that we care. Here's a list of resources to help you.

FOR PRAYER:

CALL: 804.463.2472

EMAIL: prayer@myspbc.org.

TO REQUEST A HOSPITAL VISIT:

CALL: 804.304.3890 (For Emergencies)

EMAIL: ecare@myspbc.org.

TO FIND A SUPPORT GROUP:

CALL: 804.643.6177

EMAIL: Barnabas@myspbc.org.

TO CONTACT MY LIFE STAGE PASTOR:

CALL: 804.643.4000 and Press 1 for the Dial By Name Directory

EMAIL:

Imagination (0-10): Vernita Williams: Vernita.Williams@myspbc.org

SMB (11-19): Martina Jones-Smith: Martina.Jones-Smith@myspbc.org

Dreamchasers (20-29): Juan Shackelford: juan.shackelford@myspbc.org

Aspire (30-39): Lance Watson, Jr.: lance.watsonjr@myspbc.org

Fusion (40-49): Michelle Townsend: michelle.townsend@myspbc.org

Encore (50-59): Lisa Johnson: Lisa.Johnson@myspbc.org

Prime Time (60-69): Maceo Freeman: maceo.freeman@myspbc.org

Refiners (70+): Roscoe Jones: roscoe.jones@myspbc.org

FOR COUNSELING:

CALL: 804.643.6177

EMAIL: Barnabas@myspbc.org

TO REQUEST FUNERAL SUPPORT:

CALL: 804.304.3890 (Pastor On Call)

EMAIL: ecare@myspbc.org.

TO REQUEST EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE:

CALL: 804.643.4000

EMAIL: emergencyassistance@myspbc.org.

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