

Why is truth important to belief? Why do people sometimes choose unbelief?

We are often tempted to love the deeds of darkness (which ultimately produce death) rather than living in the light. What does it mean to live in the light? What is the risk? Why is it beneficial?

How does the Spirit enable us to walk away from the darkness and live in the light?

Pray that God will continue to enable you, by his Spirit, to believe his Word and walk in a manner that is pleasing to him.

### Prayer Response

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If you are not currently in a Small Group, we encourage you to discuss your reflection questions with a family member or a close friend. Additional questions are available on-line at [www.sgc.org/John](http://www.sgc.org/John).

If you would like to be part of a Small Group, please contact Dori Sear at [dsear@sgc.org](mailto:dsear@sgc.org)



# John 3:1-21

**Lesson 4**  
For October 12, 2008

Dr. Jerry Nelson

## Nicodemus

1. According to verse 1, with what religious party is Nicodemus identified and what is his current role?
2. Nothing can fairly be deduced from Nicodemus coming to Jesus at night. According to verse 2 how would you describe Nicodemus' attitude toward Jesus? (open, hostile, knowledgeable?)
3. What does Nicodemus conclude about Jesus, in verse 2, and on what basis does he make that conclusion?
4. According to Jesus, in verse 3, what is the prerequisite for seeing ("entering" v6) the Kingdom of God?
5. What literal definition of being "born again" does Nicodemus give in verse 4?

6. Compare 1:31-33 with 3:5 and indicate what Jesus might have meant by being born of water and of the Spirit.
  
7. According to verse 6 what does and does not give birth to spirit? Compare John 1:12-13. What can we conclude about the source and power for spiritual rebirth?
  
8. Looking at verses 7 and 10, why might Jesus have expected Nicodemus to know these things?
  
9. In verse 8, how is the new birth likened to the wind?
  
10. The audience of verses 11-21 may be more than just Nicodemus. In fact 11-21 may be John's comments rather than a direct quote of Jesus. Whether of Nicodemus' personally or of a larger audience, in verses 11-12, what is Jesus' or John's negative assessment of the hearers?
  
11. How does verse 13 relate to verses 11-12? (Hint: It has to do with Jesus' authority to speak truth.)
  
12. Compare Numbers 21:4-9 with John 3:14-15. What comparison is Jesus making?
  
13. Verses 16-18 make explicit what Jesus infers in verses 14-15. What does Jesus state God's purpose was NOT and what WAS it?
  
14. Of those who hear of Jesus Christ and are condemned, what is one basis of their condemnation according to verse 18?
  
15. According to verses 19-20 what several reasons are given why people refuse the light?
  
16. In verses 19-20 lovers of darkness and doers of evil hate the light. With whom are they contrasted in verse 21 and what is the motivation of such a person?

### **Personal Reflection**

Have you ever asked a hard question, been given an answer that you knew to be true, then decided not to believe that answer because the answer would result in a high, personal cost?

Nicodemus knew that the miraculous signs performed by Jesus testified to his divine nature, yet he (representing others), had difficulty believing that Jesus was who he said he was. Why? How are you prone to the same kind of unbelief?