

Introduce Eveylnn... How can she be born again?

Assurance is a wonderful thing isn't it. We spend lots of our time, energy, and money on assurance.

- Industries are built because of our human desire to be assured.
- We buy items that we really don't need b/c of assurance...

In John 3, Nicodemus went to Jesus b/c he wanted to be assured that he was living right...

- Nicodemus was a Pharisee, which is a branch of the Jewish faith, and he was a teacher of the law.
- The Pharisee's had an extremely systematic approach to spirituality... ($a^2+b^2=c^2$)

This formulaic approach produced the same person every time... It produced a person who looked the same, acted the same, talked the same, thought the same... **It also is controlling...**

- Since Nicodemus had rigorously followed the 'plan' he was in... and he came to Jesus to verify that...
- But he came to him after hours (**Throughout John, the contrast between dark and night occurs... John 11:9-10**)

And Jesus' response to Nicodemus was confusing at best... (**Be born again & the wind blows...**)

- It's obvious that **Nic** is perplexed w/ Jesus' words.

Renaissance started in the 14th century
Known for being the start of highly realistic painting and linear perspective
Realism was achieved through studies in light, shadow, and human anatomy
Artists- think of the **Ninja Turtles**- Michelangelo, Donatello, Raphael, Leo (Da Vinci)
Renaissance became the rule for painting...

Young artists went to the schools and were disappointed with their lack of options. All paintings looked the same
Artists learned the rules and then moved to new styles of artwork
Impressionism was born from these artists in the 1800's, the most famous is Claude Monet.
Impressionism focuses on bright, light colors, outside scenes (landscapes, seascapes), fast painting to capture a moment without worrying about detail.

The most dangerous threat to spirituality is a formulaic approach... **We were created as impressionists...**

- None of us are the same. There may be similar brush strokes and familiar patterns, but we are all unique.
- Our spirituality should reflect that.

In this interaction between (**J&N**), (**J**) isn't scorning (**N**). He's seeking to break his stony heart, hardened by the pride of his position and the affirmation of those around him.

Jesus said to Nicodemus, **"no one can see the kingdom of God without being born again."** (**anōthen**)

- Jesus is saying to Nicodemus that the formula is insufficient.
- You want a step by step manual that you can force on yourself and others, but that won't cut it...
- **You need to be born of the Spirit which you can't control...** (Salvation isn't something you do...)

John 19:38-39 Later, Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for the body of Jesus. Now Joseph was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly because he feared the Jewish leaders. With Pilate's permission, he came and took the body away. He was accompanied by Nicodemus, the man who earlier had visited Jesus at night.

And then Jesus tells Nicodemus what it looks like to be born of the Spirit, **“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.”**

He's saying to Nicodemus, the movement of the spirit produces what the formula cannot...

- The spirit allows one to be obedient to Jesus' call to “come and see.” Jesus says do as I do. Live as I live
- Formulas cannot be obedient to the Spirit, because just like the wind, you cannot tell where the spirit is coming from, or where it is going...
- You know that it's doing something, b/c you hear it, but it can't be defined or contained or reproduced...

Jesus is calling Nicodemus to move from a place of control and entitlement to beauty and freedom...

He is inviting him to come into the light, **John 3:19-21**

As far as we know, (N) leaves the conversation confused, we don't see him again until the death of Jesus...