

PRELIMS. The last para in chap 1, speaks of Jesus being at the Passover Feast in Jerusalem and many **believing in His name**. It was hard **not to believe** in such a Person, when you *saw the signs/miracles* He was doing (1:23)! But then we read: *Jesus on his part did not entrust Himself to them!* Ie, Jesus did **not reveal** Himself to **them** - and neither did these 'believers' **commit** themselves to Him!

The Man - John now writes about someone **different** (particle 'de'), someone who did commit himself to Him and to whom Jesus revealed Himself! *a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews*. In the Sanhedrin, the Highest Jewish Court! **This man came to Jesus by night* (2)! He was **brave** - Jesus was a **controversial** figure, especially with estab'mt! He had just **cleansed** the Temple of 'Bazaars of the Sons of Annas' - whose standard practice was to rob the public!

So there was **conflict** in N's mind re Jesus! He was clearly **troubled!** He knew the Scriptures, Messianic hope, and recognised the wonderful things Jesus was doing - but the Jewish estab'mt did not accept Jesus! **APP** Today many people are in conflict about life and **feel** there is **more** to life than what this world is offering - **something missing!**

Addressed Jesus as *Rabbi, we know You are a teacher come from God ...no one can do...unless God be with him* (2b) that was quite a **concession** for a Member of the Sanhedrin to confess! But again we see that he only had **nominal faith!** Many people have nominal faith and believe the Bible is true and that there is a God, etc. But N himself realised he needed something **more!** That is **why** he came to Jesus.

APP That is **why** some people begin to **pray** and begin to come to church - they are **searching** for the **missing link** with God!

We see here how the **man without God**, for N did not have God in his heart, **needs spiritual life!** N knew **about** God, but he did not **have** God! **God's Holy Spirit** had not entered N's soul! Even when Jesus explained the truth to him, he did not understand. *How can these things be?(9) Paul the natural person...is not able to understand them(1Co2)*

That is why we all need to come and speak (in private) with Jesus in prayer! And Jesus of course **knew** what was **missing** in N's life!

The Sermon - *Truly, truly, unless one is born again* (3) *You must be born again* (7). The Greek word is deliberately chosen because it means 'both again' and 'from above!' Ie, from heaven, from God!

It is **essential** (must in Gr=**necessary**). Of course being born takes a **long time**. You are not born overnight! There are **months** of **preparation** - although **you** know nothing about it! The actual birth time may be short (not often), but the **process** of being **born from above** takes time - that is the way God **appointed** it! So **spiritually!**

As the term suggests, it means a **radical change**, like a **new life**, a new birth, a new **beginning!** The beginning of a new life of understanding the real **world of God**. We realise this is God's world and we belong to God! We really do get a **sixth sense!** There is a **new dimension** in life! Paul in correcting the Gals who wanted religion, said *For neither circumcision (religion) counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation* (Gal 6:16) To Roms Paul called it **newness of life** (R 6:4)

You know everyone has **hope!** This **changes** your hopes! The only other passage where 'born again' appears in Bible is Peter: *He (God) has caused us to be born again to a living hope* (1P1:3) Xns have something to really **look forward to!** There is **an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven** for you! Do you know **why** this has come about? Because of this Man Jesus Christ! It is *through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead!* (1Pet 1:3)

To **return to N!** He **naturally** could not grasp **How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?** (4) God's work of **regenerating** a man's spiritual life, is an **imperceptible mystery!** God works in a **mysterious way!** You do not really know when He is at work in a person's soul! It is like the wind, it *blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes.* **So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit** (8) Jesus: *The kingdom of God is not coming in ways that can be observed...the kingdom of God is within you* (L17:20)

Solomon, the wisest king: *As you do not know **the way the spirit comes to the bones in the womb of a woman with child, so you do not know the work of God who makes everything*** (Ecc 11:5)

Jesus now **challenged** N's **sincerity**! Have you noticed that Jesus did **not** always answer the Phar's questions? That was because they were **not** always **sincere**! So Jesus asks N, 'Did he believe Jesus regarding the **earthly** things He spoke about?' *If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you **believe** if I tell you **heavenly** things?*(12) probably referring to other Phars - but just letting N know **sincerity is vital** because as He says in (11) *you do **not receive our testimony***! (Note: You here and the 4 times in (12) are all **plural**!)

Only One Way! Jesus now explains there is **Only One Way** to God! **No one has ascended into heaven** - except Jesus - *except He who descended...the Son of Man* (13) The same way as **Moses** in the OT, by **faith** in God's **Word**! God told the Israelites to look at the Serpent for healing, they did and were healed! 'You believe in Moses, N, don't you? **APP** we live in an age when most people believe there are **many ways** to God! As long as you are sincere and believe in **that** way, whichever way you **choose for yourself**, that will do it! No! As Jesus said in another place *I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father **except through Me**. If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also* (John 14:6) Jesus is God!

Well, Jesus **elaborates** on the familiar subject of Moses to N. He explains the **very simply gospel**. It is such **good news!** *as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, **so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that **whoever believes** in Him may have **eternal life***** (14,15) Eternal life is really what we are all after! Life which is excellent and **never to end** or **grow weary** or **bored**! There are **two great points** to note.

One: Eternal life does **not** come through a **physical** act, but rather by a **look of faith** and **trust**! Moses **believed** what God said about looking towards the **Bronze Serpent** lifted up on the pole, when the Israelites were bitten. When the Israelites looked up to the serpent they were healed. In the same way, when Jesus Christ, the Son of Man, is lifted

up, not on a pole, but on the **Cross**, whoever **believed in Him** will have **eternal life**! It seems so **simple** and different from what people, imagine that Jesus goes on to **explain**!

Jesus tells us the **most amazing statement the world has ever heard!** The **holy, sin-hating** God, has sent His one and only Son into the corrupt and perverted world, **not to condemn** the world but to **save the world**! Did you get that? Not even to give them **another chance**, but to actually **save** them! The offended, just God, **organised, arranged, provided all the necessities**, to fully and completely **SAVE whoever believes it!** Listen: *For God **so loved** the world, that He **gave** His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through Him. **Whoever believes** in Him is **not condemned*** (16-18)

Jesus also tells N the **big problem** with mankind. What it is that keeps people back from becoming Xns! Ans: we **love** the wrong things! We love **darkness**! We love darkness *because* - guess what? We are dark ourselves! That's **sore** for us to take! I find it very sore - but it is true! We are **prejudiced** in our own favour. Because **our deeds are evil** (19)

Solution - we need to ***come to the light*** - the light of God's Word. The only answer is to **be humble** and come and 'face the music'-meet with God and **admit** we have sinned and **receive His grace free of charge!**

Note how Jesus **defines** unbelievers! *everyone who does wicked things **hates the light and does not come to the light*** (20) and the **reason** is *lest his works should be **exposed!*** (20) **I met a **doctor** who told me some patients did not come to him in case they would be told **bad news!** I told him ministers had the **same problem** - many **do not come to church** in case they hear what they do not want to hear. In case they feel **guilty!** But just as a **surgeon** through the scalpel brings healing, so Christ brings healing after **conviction of sin!**

God can **change** you. He can **make you** love the light! **Ask God** to make you love Him more than anyone else! **Come in prayer** to Jesus - He is **gentle** and full of understanding and **compassion**.