

September 5, 2021

Nicodemus

by Rickie Jenkins

Nicodemus was religious. He was a Pharisee. The Pharisees get bad press, and as they are recorded in Scripture, there is much about them not to admire. But, we need to remember their basic, initial intention. They were to be a separated people, wholly devoted to the laws of God.

The Pharisees were not a big group. In fact, there were never more than 6,000 at one time. They were sort of an elite brotherhood who separated themselves from ordinary life to really devote themselves to the perfect keeping of the laws of God and of the scribes. Gamaliel was a Pharisee, and a good man. Paul, the apostle, was a Pharisee. And Nicodemus was a Pharisee.

Nicodemus had influence. He was a “ruler of the Jews,” which probably means he was a member of the Sanhedrin. That was the highest council of the Jewish people. We know politically the Romans were in charge. But, in a spiritual sense, the Sanhedrin had jurisdiction over every Jew in the world. So, it was quite an honor to be in the Sanhedrin. But, a powerful life does not necessarily mean a purposeful life.

Nicodemus had education. A prerequisite for membership in the Sanhedrin was through academic training by the finest Rabbis in the land. But, a sea of diplomas do not guarantee a sense of direction.

He is “THE” teacher. This is a subtle

thing, but notice verse 10, Jesus said, “You are “THE” teacher in Israel.” Apparently Nicodemus was considered to be very astute in religious matters. And the people considered him “their teacher.” He was considered the preeminent teacher in Israel. In fact, later in John 7, notice that Nicodemus knew the law very well.

Nicodemus had money. Later in John 19, we read of how Nicodemus took Jesus’ body and buried it in 75 pounds of expensive spices that the common people couldn’t afford. In fact, the amount was so much, it was usually reserved for kings. Nicodemus had a lot of money, but you can have a lot of money and not have a lot of meaning in life.

Most people believe that if you get more of all of those things, life will work. And if it doesn’t, there is one more thing you could have, and Nicodemus had it.

And so the question then is this, “Why is this man who has everything, coming at night to see a man who has nothing?” And the answer is, all of those things that Nicodemus had are external, and they have nothing to do with really being alive. Nicodemus was still missing something. Nicodemus did not have life. He needed to be born again to have true life (John 3:3).

Prayer: Lord, it is not this world, nor the things in and of this world that give us life. You have provided life through

Welcome!

When you visit our assemblies, you will be received friendly, kindly and courteously. We believe this to be the natural attitude of those who truly love God and mankind. Though you may at first be among strangers, we hope that you will come to know us well and count us as your friends.

We offer Bible studies as well as correspondence courses for those interested in learning more about what God expects of us.

Important Dates

Mark your calendar! Our next gospel meeting will be September 12-15 with Mike Walls.

If you know of upcoming events, please inform Darrell so they can be included here.

Your son. No matter how great we are in this life, without You we have no life. We thank You and praise You for Your wonderful love for us. Amen.

Strength and Weakness

By George Slover

And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. (2 Corinthians 12:9)

In the context of the above passage Paul refers to his thorn in the flesh (vs. 7,8). Many have speculated as to just what that thorn was. It is my opinion that "the thorn" is a figurative reference to the various persecutions and distresses referred to in chapter 11 and verses 22-28.

Concerning this thorn, Paul had asked God three times for its removal. God's answer was "no"! God's reason: "My strength is made perfect in weakness". (vs.9) God said, "Paul, I'll match your weakness with my strength! I'll be with you in the tough times, and I'll help you get up when you are weak."

One of our greatest fears is insufficiency! We reason, "how can I possibly get through this difficulty?" We worry about being deprived of life's basics such as love and appreciation. God promises that when all else fails: "My grace is sufficient! I'll be with you!"

So, brother, take it to heart! Live each day and face each challenge with renewed strength, and trust God to supply the lack.

Prayer Requests

Jack Wilson is at home and undergoing physical therapy.

Jerry Richardson is still undergoing cancer treatments.

Nancy Richardson is doing better but still dealing with breathing problems.

Karen Hallmark has improved but is still struggling with her health and her eyes, as well as asthma.

Dinah Williams continues to be homebound due to mobility issues. She had a small fire at her house and is staying at the Comfort Inn while repairs are being made.

Wilma Shipley is recovering from covid.

Henry & Beverly Barth are ill with covid

Don Simmons is ill with covid

Mike & Debbie McMurray are ill with covid

If you know of someone that needs to be on this list, please tell Darrell (email preferred) and provide updates so names stay on the list as long as needed.

"praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,"
(Ephesians 6:18 ESV)

The Oaks West church of Christ is a group of individual Christians who have been added to the Lord's body through baptism (Acts 2:38, 47; Gal 3:26, 27), and have joined themselves together (Acts 2:42ff) in an effort to do the Lord's will.

We are not a part of any larger organization - we do not follow any man-made creeds and we do not answer to anyone other than the Lord.

Our standard of faith and practice is the Word of God. We believe in the God of revelation (Eph 3:1-7; 2 Tim 3:16-17) and follow his instructions in an effort to have an ongoing relationship with him (1 John 4:7-11; 5:3).

Our times of study and worship are open to all, and our members are happy to meet with interested individuals or families for study.

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