

# JOHN 3 vs 1

Is the land really holy? Is God, Deus, aloof and detached from His creation? Or is God, Theos, active and engaged in His creation? Is the temple / the **hieron** of brick and stone... really his holy residence? Is the secret place / the **naos** of the people of God his holy home? Are lifeless, loveless hocus pocus traditions, lighting candles; or bowing heads and closing eyes; done to be seen by others, instead of watching when we pray; is that really important? **Are the 7 Days of the Lord important?** John, the disciple who Jesus loved was **eye-witness to Jesus Christ**, who was inspired to tell these details.



<sup>1</sup> **There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus** / little is known about him; he sought out Jesus with many questions; he defended Jesus at the trial before the chief priests of the Sanhedrin; he assisted Joseph at the burial of Christ; little is certain beyond what John wrote; an apocryphal book **the Gospel of Nicodemus or the Acts of Pilate** describes the civil and religious trials of Jesus before his crucifixion; but none of this was his starting point.

**a ruler of the Jewish people:**

<sup>2</sup> **this one came to Him by night, and said, Rabbi, we know You came from God as a teacher:** / in Greek: **didaskalos**, usually translated throughout the NT: **master** by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John: only here calling Jesus a **teacher**. Jesus was the greatest Teacher, and His disciples put it together piece by piece; His first-grade class which is why His first word to us was: **metanoia = change your mind** which we all can do until we graduate, which will be when we're boxed and shipped, hopefully to heaven.

**for no one / no man or woman can do these miracles** / the word is: **semeion**, translated: miracles, signs, wonders; a word most frequently attributed to what Jesus was doing. Next the word is used mostly to describe what deceivers will do revealed during the last days; but this word is rarely used of His disciples.

**that you do, except God is with him** / to Nicodemus and to those he associated with, it was evident; the explosion of loving kindness toward those Jesus encountered... through the many miracles, wonders, and healings – both physical and spiritual, that Jesus did, touching those present and absent, and onlookers too.

[Sarah Coleman](#) once related a particular incident walking along the beach in San Diego with Dr. Francis Schaffer, who was known to always greet with a kind word, everyone he passed. After a while they paused, and Sarah turned to look behind them, and so many were peacefully transfixed, still glued to where they were when she and Dr. Schaffer passed them by.

**for no one can do these miracles you do, except God is with him.**

<sup>3</sup> **Jesus answered and said to him, Amen! Amen! I say to you, Except one is born again** / in Greek: **anōthen**, meaning: higher, above; implying anew, **Except one is born from above, you cannot see the kingdom of God.**

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<sup>4</sup> Nicodemus said to him, How can one / a man or woman, be born when he is old? can he enter a second time into his mother's womb, and be born? / Dr. Vine writes: Nicodemus was not puzzled about birth from Heaven; what perplexed him was a person must be born a second time; the context is clear.

<sup>5</sup> Jesus answered, Amen! Amen! I say to you,

Except one be [1] born of water... and [2] of the Spirit, you cannot enter the kingdom of God / John baptized with water, it was external; but One coming would baptize with Spirit and fire – internal.

<sup>6</sup> What is [1] born of the flesh is flesh / when the water breaks, the baby is coming, right?

and what is [2] born of the Spirit is spirit / Jesus is a good Teacher; not at all confusing, is He? The first part involves water... the second part involves spirit.

Now good legalists will quickly jump in and bludgeon us with their genius: the first part involves a lot more than water, and start mentioning male and female body parts... but Jesus didn't have time; and He was not teaching some biology or sex education lesson to Nicodemus who already knew how babies were made. Jesus taught lessons of the heart... and in that culture Jesus knew Nicodemus had already heard a mountain full of weird religious sounding teaching.

<sup>7</sup> Do **not** marvel that I said to you, You must be born again / born anew, born from above.

<sup>8</sup> The Spirit breathes / the 2 words are: pneuma = **spirit**, or wind + pneo = **breathe**, or blow, translators should have worked harder to be consistent; Jesus is talking about what cannot be observed in a microscope; Jesus knew Nicodemus had a heart.

The Spirit breathes / like wind blows... where it desires,

and you hear the sound of it,

but cannot tell where it comes from, and where it goes:

so is everyone who is born of the Spirit / Jesus says, rarely can you pinpoint and nail down exactly when and where the Spirit moves.

Like the old church hymn says: How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is given; so, God imparts to human hearts the blessings of His heaven. No ear may hear His coming, but in this world of sin; where meek souls will receive Him still, the dear Christ enters in. – even today!

<sup>9</sup> Nicodemus answered and asked Him, How can this be?

<sup>10</sup> Jesus, sizing up the situation, said to him, Are you a teacher in Israel, and do not know this? / Nick needed a metanoia moment – time to change his thinking; he needed to understand this,

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<sup>11</sup> Amen! Amen! I say to you, We speak what we know, and **testify** / in Greek: **martyreo**, which is the word **martyr**; one willing to forfeit their life for the cause; Jesus speaks for Himself and His disciples.

 We speak **[1] what we know, and willingly forfeit our lives...**


**for [2] what we have seen** / do you think most religious leaders now days testify to that? And do they mean what they say? Or are they just grinning carnival frauds, jumping around... who would switch in a minute to be spared; who have their proxies... usually the young and innocent who forfeit their lives;

**We speak what we know, and willingly forfeit our lives, for what we have seen;**

and you do **not** welcome our **witness** / our **willingness to forfeit our lives**.

<sup>12</sup> If I told you earthly things, and you do **not** believe,

how will you believe, if I tell you heavenly things? / now days, if Jesus went to the 21<sup>st</sup> century college and university campuses, He would find plenty sitting in confusing seminars of science and research... while their government is smashing and destroying countless lives -- adding to global warming, I'd imagine. Since they don't even know why they sit in those classes... Jesus would have to remind these very competent class passers... there is a difference between sight and insight; both require brains... one requires a microscope; the other requires a heart; and the heartless might object, but it's true;

 how will you believe, if I tell you heavenly things?

<sup>13</sup> No one has ascended to heaven, but He who descended from heaven, even the Son of Man / prophet Daniel's Messiah King, frequently preferred by Jesus. [Proverbs says surely you know His Name](#)

<sup>14</sup> And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so the Son of Man must be lifted up / to learn why He is lifted up... read about the Bronze Serpent -- [Numbers 21:5-9](#):

<sup>15</sup> that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.

 <sup>16</sup> For God so loved the world,

that He gave His only begotten Son / God gave the only Son born of the Father, the very best of eternity, to come and do some heavy lifting, for poor folks who owed a debt, who were penniless to pay,

**that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.**

<sup>17</sup> For God did **not** send His Son into the world **to condemn the world** / even though most doom and gloom preachers poorly teach their listeners and swear that He did; condemnation preachers do that. Too bad the divisive crowds and angry people... had not heard more of what Jesus actually taught;

**but that the world through Him be saved.**

**18 He who believes in Him** / pisteo, it's an action word: 4 Hebrew words often used in the OT show action: shub, **turn to...** hasa, **run to...** batach, **lean on...** amen, **stand, anchored confidently**

**He who believes in Him** / who turns to Him, who runs to, who leans on, who stands anchored confidently

**is not condemned** / wow! It's not just sitting on our butts... thinking or wishing about something. For believing, for faithing, for turning, for rethinking what God said, for trusting God -- something we can do; we eliminate any need for penance and self-flagellation! It's amazing, isn't it?

**but he who does not believe** / who does not turn around, who does not lean on Him

**is condemned already, for he has not believed**

**/ he has no faith**, and no faith = faithless, right?

**in the name of the only Son born of God** / Jesus says, God has done His part for us, and the Spirit is doing His part for us; **but THEY will not do our part... while we sit and do nothing**; for if we are living we're going to do something. We have a simple part to do: the part of faith and faithfulness. God may take 9 steps our direction; but He expects us to respond 1 step toward Him; He will not do that for us.

**19 And this is the condemnation, that light has come into the world** / this is the judgment; John already wrote: the Word became flesh, in Him was life, not mere bios, but life eternal, the light of mankind,

**and mankind / men and women, loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil** / they are **poneros**, small or great; our evil is nothing to glibly ignore. C.S. Lewis said the terrible reality is our smallest evil after a million years might not look so small.

**20 For everyone who practices evil, hates the light, and does not come to the light, so his deeds are assayed** / so what he does reveals who he really is; to verify the traits present and absent.

**21 But he who does truth comes to the light** / but those who move away from what is false, incorrect, the dark way of dishonesty and deception; **come to the light**. To the Ephesians, Paul said, Speak truth, one to another. Dr. Dallas Willard reminds us: when we enter a room, **and turn on the light...** the darkness is instantly gone; so, **turn on the light,**

**that his deeds may be shown, that they are shaped and transformed in God.** On the first page of the Bible, we read our great God's fatherly first intentions: Let Us make them in Our image and in Our likeness. That first lesson: our destination, has not changed: and though something long ago got messed up, Jesus came to give us His life in payment for us all.

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