

JOHN 3

Startup: If some in the group are parents, talk about your most meaningful memories of seeing your child born.

SEEING WHAT'S THERE

1. What do we learn about the man Nicodemus in this chapter?
2. In verse 12 Jesus uses the terms "earthly things" and "heavenly things." As He continues speaking to Nicodemus, is He speaking of earthly things, heavenly things, or both?
3. How would you summarize the main points of what Jesus told Nicodemus?
4. What would you say are the most important things this chapter teaches about the Holy Spirit?

5. Imagine how Nicodemus might have felt after hearing the words Jesus spoke in verses 10-12. How would you describe those feelings?

6. For background on the reference to Moses and the snake in verse 14, look together at Num 21:4-9. What similarities do you see between the situation of the Israelites in this Numbers passage, and the situation of unbelievers today?

7. Let the words of verse 18 form a picture in your mind, and then describe that picture.

8. In verses 22-36, what one-word adjectives would you use to best describe John the Baptist as you see him here?

9. Look at the words of John the Baptist in verse 27. What exactly had John received from heaven?

10. Are John's words in verse 27 true also of the Man Jesus? If so, what did God the Father give to Jesus?

11. Review again verse 18 in chapter 1 —where John said Jesus makes God known to us, and shows us what God is like. From what you see in Jesus in chapter 3, what is God like?

12. EYE FOR DETAIL—From what you recall seeing in this chapter, try answering the following question without looking at your Bible: As He was speaking with Nicodemus, what did Jesus note about the wind? (See verse 8.)

CAPTURE THE ESSENCE

13. From what you see in verses 5-8, how would you describe what it means to be a spiritual man or woman?

14. What do you think Jesus meant when He said we must be born "of water and the Spirit" in verse 5? (For interesting background, look at an Old Testament Scripture that both Jesus and Nicodemus would have been familiar with: Ezek 36:25-27.)

15. Many people consider verse 16 to be the key verse in the entire Bible. Try compressing the content of this verse into a statement that uses as few words as possible.

16. Compare the message in verse 16 with Rom 5:8 and 1 John 4:9-10. Why do you think so many people in the world do not believe this message?

17. Together, list aloud all the character traits of God for which you find evidence in this chapter.

18. From what you see in chapter 1 and in verses 22-36 in chapter 3, how much did John the Baptist understand about who Jesus really was?

19. John the Baptist speaks in verse 29 of the joy that was his. How would you describe this joy he felt?

20. What do the last three verses in this chapter indicate about the relationship between the three Persons of the Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?

21. If you had only this chapter in Scripture to refer to, how would you use it to help show someone that Jesus is truly God?

FOR LIFE TODAY

22. What kind of mental habits do you think could most easily block the words of Jesus in this chapter from coming alive in our minds and hearts?

23. How could you use verses 16-17 to help an unsaved friend who expressed a desire to become a Christian?

24. If a non-Christian said to you, "But God is too good and loving to condemn anyone to hell," how could you use verses 18 and 36 in reply?

25. Look closely at the statement John the Baptist makes in verse 27. Is this statement true also of you? If so, what exactly have you been given from heaven?

26. In light of how you're doing spiritually in your life today, which verse in this chapter do you think is the most important at this time—and why?

FOR GOING DEEPER

Look ahead to John 7:50-51 and 19:39-40. What else do you learn about Nicodemus in these passages? (You may want to look also at Rom 8:5-9; 1 Cor 12:13, and 2 Cor 5:5.)