

Well good morning church. Those of you here in the sanctuary those of you gathered over in the Baker Center. Those of you may be watching live on line right now you know what someone that may be watching this days weeks months or even years from right now. We have gathered today in the name of Jesus we have life in his name. Church I'm here to tell you there is life in no place else outside of the name of Jesus Christ. We are spiritually alive in Christ relationally connected by Christ and missional be engaged for Christ. It's why we're on this earth. It is why God has created us and we are taking a deeper look out of the Gospel of John and what that means turn with me please to John Chapter 3 John Chapter 3. I'm going to be guiding us through a look at verses 1 through 21.

*[00:01:19]* It's the it's the account of Jesus meeting privately with a man that was in his day probably the most religious religious man alive on the face of the earth. *[00:01:38][18.9]*

*[00:01:39]* He was part of a religious culture a religious system and and by the way when I talk about religion there I'm talking about a sense of somehow being able to earn his way up to God. And just because he was religious does not mean he was in any way spiritual and we're going to see that. So let's take a look beginning at verse one now. *[00:02:03][23.5]*

*[00:02:03]* There was a Ferris C. A man named Nikodim s who is a member of the Jewish ruling council. He came to Jesus at night and said Rabbi we know that you are a teacher who has come from God for no one could perform the signs that you are doing if God were not with him. Jesus replied Very truly I tell you that condemns no one can see the kingdom of God unless they're born again. *[00:02:39][35.8]*

*[00:02:40]* How can someone be born when their old Nikodim is asked Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother's womb to be born Jesus answered verily. Truly I tell you. No one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and of the spirit. *[00:03:00][19.4]*

*[00:03:01]* Flesh gives birth to flesh but the Spirit gives birth to Spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying you must be born again. The wind blows wherever it pleases you hear its sound. You can't tell where it comes from where it's going. So it is with every one born of the spirit. *[00:03:22][20.4]*

*[00:03:22]* How can this be. *[00:03:24][1.3]*

*[00:03:25]* Nick a Demus asked Israel's teacher said Jesus. *[00:03:29][4.8]*

*[00:03:31]* And do you not understand these things very truly I tell you. We speak of what we know and we testify to what we have seen but still you people do not accept our testimony. I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe. How then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things. No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven. This son of man just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness. So the son of man must be lifted up that everyone who believes may have eternal life. *[00:04:15][44.6]*

*[00:04:17]* In him. *[00:04:17][0.2]*

*[00:04:18]* For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world but to save the world through him. *[00:04:34][15.8]*

*[00:04:35]* Whoever believes in him is not condemned but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of gods one and only son. This is the verdict. Light. Has come into the world. But people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light. And will not come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light so that it may be seen plainly that what they have done has been done in the sight of God. The word of the Lord. The amazing passage. As we look to interpret this passage I actually want to point to three verses at the end of Chapter 2 that really I think help us understand it kind of is a key that helps unlock really ultimately what is going on here not just in chapter 3 but also in Chapter 4. Of John we see here after Jesus has cleansed the temple

throne the religious religious leaders out of the temple as we see at the end of Chapter 2 look with me at verse 23 of Chapter 2. Now while Jesus was in Jerusalem at the Passover festival many people saw the signs he was performing and believed in his name. I don't know about you but are you hearing that come up a lot. Believing in his name believing in his name. This is exactly why John has written this Gospel he tells us in Chapter 20 verses 30 and 31. Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples. [00:06:35][120.4]

[00:06:36] But I have written these down seven of them to be exact. So they you might believe that Jesus is the Messiah the Son of God and that by believing you might have life in his name you know many that were there when Jesus cleanse the temple and saw what he did. Other miracles and signs they believed but. [00:06:58][21.4]

[00:07:01] Verse 24 Jesus would not trust himself to them. What does that mean he would not trust himself to that means that he was not about to get caught up in whatever fanfare whatever procession whatever parade they wanted to have as their believing in Jesus he would not entrust himself to the crowds. [00:07:24][23.3]

[00:07:26] Why not. For he knew all people he knew as we see at the end of verse 25 what was in each person. This is a very important truth that helps us unlock as we move into Chapter 3. As we look at Nikodim us Jesus knew what was in Nikodim as his heart. He knew that in Nikodim us there was a sceptic a skeptic searching skeptic but otherwise he wouldn't have saw Jesus out but Jesus knew the world that Nikodim us came from and it was a world war saw show you this in a minute of of skepticism doubt of arrogance. He was a fair Issie was one of the most religious men on earth and yet he was very sceptical and by the way John Chapter 4 which we're going to get to on Easter Sunday morning. See we also see that Jesus looks into this woman's heart and he sees shame he sees that she is filled with guilt and shame. So as we now look at chapters 3 and 4. The key is Jesus knowing what was in their heart. Did you notice Nikodim that shows up and he says. Came to Jesus night he said Rabbi we know who's the we. The we is. [00:08:57][91.1]

[00:08:59] All of the Farriss the religious teachers the religious leaders that's the we we and I don't know about you but it has this. I mean I know you can kind of see a little bit of a searching soul here but it's also a bit of a condescending. We know that you are a teacher. We know that you must have come from God. [00:09:21][22.1]

[00:09:24] But Jesus then in verse 3 says truly truly I'm going to tell you you can't even see the kingdom of God unless you're born again. Did you catch that. Jesus is answering a question that Nikodim US doesn't even ask no question there. How did Jesus know to answer that question right. He knew what was in Nikodim Ensis heart. He knew the world that Nikodim US was coming from. In fact he says that look over in verse 11. Very truly I tell you we speak of what we know and we testify to what we have seen. I've wondered who's the we in that one translation One we don't know who because he later says for. [00:10:11][47.2]

[00:10:14] But you still you people still don't accept our testimony could be him and the other disciples and this could be a reference to the Trinity God the Father God the Son and God the spirit the testimony of all who truly believed. But what does he say here. [00:10:32][18.1]

[00:10:32] You people and I've given some thought to that and in fact I'm going to use the metaphor the image of a box because that's exactly what Jesus is saying here. Let's kind of wrap our minds around this where he's saying you people he says your world are you being a religious leaders those who think that you've got it all figured out. Your world is very small and you sit at the very top of it. It's when he's saying Nikodim is you and 6000 other Pharisees you have constructed a very nice tight little world. And you then have elected yourselves to sit at the very top to look down on everyone else. This is what's going on when when Jesus talks about you people he's talking about this culture that Nikodim US is a part of. [00:11:35][62.8]

[00:11:36] A culture. [00:11:36][0.1]

[00:11:38] I don't want us to think a little bit about the culture that Nikodim US was part of it was a culture. We know this from the rest of the Gospels from who the Pharisees were they were the religious leaders dominated by a culture of arrogance of scoffing of discrediting and of alternately eliminating for it was the Pharisees who ultimately had Jesus put on the cross and I want us to think about that culture a little bit. I want us to tap into a little bit of this

culture this box that Nikodim us lived in arrogance. Here are some synonyms for arrogance don't try to write all these down. You ready self-importance self-love over swagger priggishness pretentiousness presumption pompousness haughtiness insolence loftiness contemptuousness conceit Edness braggadocio bluster audacity vanity smugness aloofness egotism hubris pride distain you Nikodim has come from a culture that is filled with arrogance and scoffing biting bitter caustic cutting corrosive disparaging jeering mean mocking you listening offensive sneering snarling taunting acerbic acrimonious contemptuous cynical derisive disrespectful irascible sardonic scornful scurrilous trenchant hostile evil. Discrediting defaming degrading disgrace disparage disprove Ruhan slander smear vilify disesteem disfavor dishonor reproach. Bring into disrepute slur destroy and ultimately eliminate cancel defeat dispose of eradicate erase. Get rid of pushouts stamp out wipe out annihilate discard disregard evil expel exterminate invalidate reject blot out liquidate do away with slay terminate murder and kill this. This is the culture that nikkah Demus was part of of arrogance and scoffing discrediting and eliminating nikkah demons. [00:14:05][146.7]

[00:14:07] I know your heart. I know the world in which you live I see right into your heart. I want to open your eyes. Nikodim us and get you out of your little box. Hey Nick. You have to be born again. [00:14:23][16.5]

[00:14:25] If you're going to see spiritual reality spiritual truth you're going to have to get out of your box. [00:14:32][6.9]

[00:14:33] You cannot see the kingdom of God unless you are born again. In fact Nick Demas I want to just I'm going to just kind of jump into your box for a minute and just give you an example to help you begin to open your eyes to spirituality just to the to the work of the Spirit. [00:14:55][22.4]

[00:14:56] Let me just use as a as an example here Nick wind. All right Nick in the minute you hear the wind you can't tell where it comes from. You don't know where it's going so it is with the spirit of God. [00:15:10][14.2]

[00:15:11] You could even say I want to get you out of your box and I want you to understand you may not be voicing the question but I'm going to give you the answer. Do you want to be a spiritual man. Nikodim as you've gotta get out of your box. [00:15:25][13.6]

[00:15:25] Wait what. I like that phrase. Wait wait. Why. Nikodim says says like three times right. [00:15:33][7.9]

[00:15:34] But I want to ask this question from within the box. [00:15:36][2.0]

[00:15:37] Because Nikodim is down in his little world and his box of religion that he's created and Jesus is now saying Nikodim is open your eyes to the realm of the Spirit. Let me use wind as an example and he says Wait what. [00:15:51][13.7]

[00:15:52] And don't you hear what Jesus says. [00:15:54][2.0]

[00:15:54] Oh god demons you're a teacher or you're a religious teacher why don't you get things. [00:16:01][6.2]

[00:16:02] Why because you're in your box. You're not able to see outside of your box. [00:16:10][8.9]

[00:16:11] Jesus is a Nicodemus. I'm I'm telling you of earthly things things like birth and the wind. I mean those are things in your box and and Demas I'm telling you of earthly things and you don't believe the spiritual truth. [00:16:25][14.3]

[00:16:26] How are you going to believe if I tell you of heavenly things. [00:16:32][6.0]

[00:16:35] You won't you can't see the box that Nikodim US is in and what Jesus is trying to do in this conversation he's saying Nikodim as you can discern things of a spiritual nature in this world how can you even begin to discern spiritual realities beyond this world. [00:16:55][20.0]

*[00:16:57] And alternately saying you know what I see your heart can demons. [00:17:00][3.0]*

*[00:17:02] I know how you think. And I know. Your world view and that's a world view filled with arrogance and scoffing discrediting of eliminating a Nikodim us. [00:17:16][13.9]*

*[00:17:17] You've got to get out of your box. In fact let me help you. Let me jump into your box. Another time your Nikodim as you know Nikodim is a religious teacher. Him in the Pharisees were all about the first five books of the Bible the Torah. [00:17:31][14.1]*

*[00:17:32] The pen to TUQ Genesis Exodus Leviticus numbers Deuteronomy Jesus. [00:17:37][4.4]*

*[00:17:38] I'm going to jump back into your world and I want to help you see something of a spiritual nature. Nikodim. Let me remind you of a story that is in your box look with me hold your place and John 3. But look back at numbers 21. Because Jesus refers him to this story and it's it's the this account. Of when the Israelites were wandering in the wilderness after Moses led them out of Egypt and they had failed to believe that the promised land was theirs and so God judged them that they were to wander in the wilderness for forty years and as they are wondering wandering the whole Israeli community traveled from Mount Hor along the route to the Red Sea to go around eat them but the people grew impatient. [00:18:29][51.6]*

*[00:18:30] On the way they spoke against God and against Moses. Oh why have you done this. There's no water there's no bread. We hate this food. Then the Lord got a little upset. Since snakes among them they've been the people many Israelites died the people came to Moses and they cried uncle. OK OK OK OK. We Senda when we spoke against the Lord and against you pray that the Lord will take these snakes away. [00:18:58][28.1]*

*[00:19:00] So Moses prayed and the Lord said to Moses all right here's where you're going to do make a snake and put it up on a pole. Anyone who is bitten can look at it and live so Moses made a bronze snake put it up on a pole then when anyone was bitten by a snake and looked at that bronze snake they lived so what's the lesson here what's going on. [00:19:28][28.6]*

*[00:19:29] If you didn't look on that snake with the hope that you would live. You stood condemned and you would die law. Let me ask you this. In the midst of snakes and people that are hungry and all that was going on in a very earthly way. Let me ask you is this a very spiritual event. How spiritual is it that they had to look on this snake with the hope that they would live and by looking at that snake by believing that that was their only hope God was introducing into the very box that they were all living in a very spiritual truth and that spiritual truth is you've got to look on that snake with all your heart. [00:20:16][47.2]*

*[00:20:17] Is your only hope. You have to believe that that snake is going to heal you to protect you to save you. This is what Jesus pointed him to go back to John 3 three cynical. [00:20:34][16.6]*

*[00:20:35] I'm jumping in your boxier says no one's ever gone into heaven except me who came from heaven and here's why I came just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness. [00:20:49][13.5]*

*[00:20:50] Hey Nick I'm that snake the son of man must be lifted up. [00:20:56][6.4]*

*[00:20:56] What's Jesus pointing to. Clearly the cross that everyone who believes may have eternal life in me you say what does it mean to believe in Jesus seven times in these 11 verses versus 10 down to 21 seven times Jesus uses the word believers believes believes believes it means we have to look to Jesus as the one who came from out of this world. Who came from God. OK. Here we are we live in a box don't we. [00:21:33][37.0]*

*[00:21:34] In fact our box quite honestly is not all that different from the box that Nick Demus was in arrogance disdain elimination discrediting. I don't think we have to listen to the news very long to hear that. [00:21:57][23.4]*

*[00:21:58]* It's our box limosine Bob and we live in the same box as Nikodim is with this mentality that somehow we can earn our way to God I'm telling you right now that's in the box and it isn't going to work for God. Here's the truth. God so loved the world. *[00:22:16][17.6]*

*[00:22:18]* God the Father who is above all things created all things. He said his one and only son into our world said that whoever. *[00:22:28][10.3]*

*[00:22:31]* Believes in him will not perish. *[00:22:36][5.3]*

*[00:22:38]* But be given life eternal life God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world but that the world through Him might be saved. Here's the verdict. Light has come into the world but those who love darkness those who love their little box they want nothing to do with the light. So what do they do. They try to discredit it stamp it out. *[00:23:04][26.0]*

*[00:23:06]* When it discredited the world we live in. *[00:23:11][4.6]*

*[00:23:12]* But here's here's the truth whoever believes whoever looks on Jesus and believes plays with all their heart. *[00:23:24][12.6]*

*[00:23:27]* Will inherit a life new life fact when we believe we're born again. *[00:23:35][7.4]*

*[00:23:37]* The flesh gives birth to flesh but the Spirit gives birth to Spirit. We have the opportunity today to take in our hands the bread the cop here and sanctuary over in Baker to take into our hands this bread this cup. *[00:23:55][18.2]*

*[00:23:56]* These symbols represent these these elements represent the very blood and body of Jesus. *[00:24:03][7.0]*

*[00:24:05]* And here's what I want to encourage you to do today as you take the brand as you take the cup and we'll hold it and then eat and drink it together. I want you to do so with a heart. *[00:24:14][9.2]*

*[00:24:15]* Of joy celebration. We celebrate communion because Jesus has come to save us Jesus. We turn our eyes to you. *[00:24:26][10.4]*

*[00:24:27]* We believe that you are the son of God that you came to give your life for us that you are that snake upon the pole. Lord when we put our faith in you and believe that you died for our sins. *[00:24:38][11.5]*

*[00:24:40]* Lord Jesus when we believe that you came from heaven we get out of our box with a heart of faith open to spiritual truths. We pray Spirit of God that you will blow into our hearts with the wind of your spirit. Blow into our dark hearts wash us clean or when it says that we're to be born of water and spirit. That water I believe is the cleansing of your spirit the cleansing of your blood washed clean Lord give us life. *[00:25:16][36.2]*

*[00:25:17]* We pray in your name amen. *[00:25:18][1.8]*

[1419.1]