



spiritual infant

DISCIPLE ME

THE ONE ABOUT BEING BORN AGAIN

DISCUSS:

- Share about a time when you made a significant change in your life. (Marriage, dating, job, diet, exercise routine, behavioral change, etc.)
- Regarding your answer to the previous question, how would you describe what that process was like?
- When you think about all that you went through, is there something you are proud of?

DISCIPLE-MAKER: SHARE

- Share about the process by which God grew and matured you spiritually.

READ: NICODEMUS & JESUS' SECRET MEETING

In the passage we will explore today, a man named Nicodemus sought out a one-on-one meeting with Jesus. In order to understand what's happening better, there are a couple of things we need to know. First, Nicodemus was a Pharisee. The Pharisees were a group of Jewish religious leaders in the first century in Judea. They had a very legalistic and strict understanding of the laws, and because of that, they were often very negative about anyone who had a different opinion or interpretation of the scriptures. But instead of being suspicious of Jesus, Nicodemus was curious, so late at night, when no one would see them, Nicodemus arranged a meeting with Jesus.

The other thing that is helpful to understanding this passage is knowing that Jesus references a story from Israel's history. It can be found in the Old Testament book of Numbers chapter 21, and it's something that a Pharisee like Nicodemus would have been very familiar with. In that story, there were people who had been bitten by poisonous snakes, so Moses was instructed to make a bronze serpent and hold it up on a pole, and any who were bitten could look to it and be saved.

Honestly, it's a strange story in the Old Testament, but it will make more sense when you see how Jesus uses it as an example of what He wants Nicodemus to understand.

STUDY: JOHN 3:1-21

Read John 3:1-4

- Is Jesus intentionally trying to be confusing here?
- What do you think He wants Nicodemus to understand?

Read John 3:5-9

- Why do you think Jesus chose the analogy of birth to answer Nicodemus' question?

Read John 3:10-17

- Based on Jesus' word in these verses, what seems to be the most important point?

Read John 3:18-21

- Jesus' final words to Nicodemus are, in some ways, a warning. How serious does this warning sound?
- If you had to summarize this encounter between Nicodemus and Jesus, how would you describe it?

DISCUSS: BORN OF THE SPIRIT

In this exchange between Nicodemus and Jesus, we learn something of vital importance. Jesus says, *"No one can enter the Kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit."*

- How can you tell if someone has been born again or born of the Spirit?
- What sort of evidence would you need to see in someone's life to know that God's Spirit was working in them and through them?

CHALLENGE:

- This week, set aside time each day to read John 3:16. Even if this is a passage you are already familiar with, slow down, eliminate all distractions, and focus on this verse. Read it at least 20 times this week, and let Jesus' words really sink in.