

The Gospel of John

Chapter 3, Verses 9-15

Review

- General Introduction to the Gospel of John
 - one of the five ***Johannine*** books, all of which are among the last books in the Bible to be written
 - one of the four ***gospels***, each of which is a biography of Jesus and an historical narrative of his life
 - originally written in Greek ***to Jews and Gentiles***, including but not limited to those who had already accepted Christ
 - First read within the context of ***early Christian literature***, the ***Jewish Bible*** and ***other*** religious and philosophical writing.

Review

- **Prolog (1:1-18)**
 - Jesus Christ was the Word become flesh (1:14).
 - “**Flesh**” emphasizes that Jesus was exactly what we are.
 - The Word (Greek, **Logos**) was what God was and did what God did from the beginning.
 - He is **rejected by the world**, in general.
 - But he is **the savior of all who receive him**.
 - **Only** those who receive him shall be **children of God!**

Review

- **Jesus was revealed to Israel by John the Baptist (1:19-34)**
- **Disciples began to follow Jesus (1:35-51)**
- **Jesus did his first sign at Cana of Galilee (2:1-11)**
- **Jesus cleansed the temple in Jerusalem (2:12-22)**
- **Jesus performed signs in Jerusalem (2:23-25)**
 - Many saw these signs and believed
 - But Jesus did not entrust himself to them
 - Because he knew what was in the hearts of men

Review – Last Week's Lesson

- **Chapter 3, Verses 1-8**

- Jesus was approached by Nicodemus, a Pharisee and member of the Sanhedrin (who will later become a follower of Christ).
- Nicodemus and others had been convinced by the signs Jesus had performed, that Jesus was a true prophet of God.
- Jesus told him that a man must be born again from above before he can see the Kingdom of God (enter eternal life).
- Jesus called this a birth of water and Spirit.
- Nicodemus had trouble understanding.

John 3:9-15

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3:10イエスは彼に答えて言われた、「あなたはイスラエルの教師でありながら、これぐらいのことがわからないのか。

3:11よくよく言っておく。わたしたちは自分の知っていることを語り、また自分の見たことをあかししているのに、あなたがたはわたしたちのあかしを受けいれない。

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3:12わたしが地上のことを語っているのに、あなたがたが信じないならば、天上のことを語った場合、どうしてそれを信じるだろうか。

3:13天から下ってきた者、すなわち人の子のほかには、だれも天に上った者はない。

3:14そして、ちょうどモーセが荒野でへびを上げたように、人の子もまた上げられなければならない。

3:15それは彼を信じる者が、すべて永遠の命を得るためである」。

John 3:9-15

9. Nicodemus said to him, "How can these things be?"
10. Jesus answered him, "Are you the teacher of Israel and yet you do not understand these things?"
11. Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know, and bear witness to what we have seen, but you do not receive our testimony.

John 3:9-15

12. If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things?
13. No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man.
14. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up,
15. that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

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- Remember who this man is:
 - A Pharisee --- among the best of his people, a teacher
 - A member of the Sanhedrin --- a leader of his people.
 - One who saw Jesus do signs and knew Jesus was from God

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- And we know that Nicodemus eventually did understand.

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- We know that Nicodemus eventually did understand.
- But Nicodemus could not understand at first.

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- What things are difficult for Nicodemus to understand?

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Nicodemus said to him, "**How can these things be?**"

- **What things** are difficult for Nicodemus to understand?
 - **Not** the signs (miracles)
 - **Not** Jesus' God-given authority to teach
 - It was the **content** of the teaching he found difficult

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- What teachings did Nicodemus find difficult?

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 - That a man must literally be changed by God before he can enter the Kingdom of God and eternal life.

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- **What teachings** did Nicodemus find difficult?
 - That a man must literally be changed by God before he can enter the Kingdom of God and eternal life --- i.e. that a man must become spiritual through a birth of water and Spirit.

Christian Baptism

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- However the ordinance is itself profoundly important:
 - (1) God commands it,
 - (2) God uses it to regenerate us,
 - (3) what it symbolizes is the redemptive work of God.

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- To say that Nicodemus did not understand Christian baptism, is another way of saying that that he did not understand the Gospel, of which baptism is a picture.
- That Nicodemus did not understand the Gospel until later is understandable.
- Christ had not yet completed his work.

John 3:10

イエスは彼に答えて言われた、「あなたはイスラエルの教師でありながら、これぐらいのことがわからないのか。

Jesus answered him, "Are you the teacher of Israel and yet you do not understand these things?"

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Jesus answered him, "Are you the teacher of Israel and yet **you do not understand these things?**

- Nicodemus has confessed his inability to understand what Jesus is teaching about spiritual rebirth.

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- Nicodemus has confessed his inability to understand what Jesus is teaching about spiritual rebirth.
- Jesus suggests that his incomprehension is particularly noteworthy in view of his role as the teacher of Israel.

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- Why?
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 - Christ had not yet completed his work.

John 3:11

よくよく言っておく。わたしたちは自分の知っていることを語り、また自分の見たことをあかししているのに、あなたがたはわたしたちのあかしを受けいれない。

Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know, and bear witness to what we have seen, but you do not receive our testimony.

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- Jesus indicates that what follows is a particularly important pronouncement.

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Truly, truly, I say to you, **we speak of what we know**, and **bear witness to what we have seen**, but you do not receive our testimony.

- Jesus is no longer speaking just for himself.

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- On behalf of what group of people is Jesus speaking?

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 - Those who speak and bear witness to what they know and have seen.

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- On behalf of what group of people is Jesus speaking?
 - Those who speak and bear witness to what they know and have seen.
 - Those whose testimony is not received.

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- In addition to Jesus, who are some of the people whose true testimony has been rejected:

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- In addition to Jesus, who are some of the people whose true testimony has been rejected:
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 - Patriarchs and prophets of the Old Testament

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Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know, and bear witness to what we have seen, **but you do not receive our testimony.**

- Here Jesus is no longer speaking just to Nicodemus.

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- To which group of people do you think he is speaking?

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- Here Jesus is no longer speaking just to Nicodemus.
- To which group of people do you think he is speaking?
 - Everyone who rejects the true testimony of God's people.

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- Here Jesus is no longer speaking just to Nicodemus.
- To which group of people do you think he is speaking?
 - Everyone who rejects the true testimony of God's people.
 - Certainly including Jews who reject the testimony of Christ.

Kingdom People

- According to Jesus, a man cannot see the Kingdom of God until he has been born again from above.

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- Conversely all who do not accept such witness and testimony have not, yet, been born again from above.

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- According to Jesus, a man cannot see the Kingdom of God until he has been born again from above.
- Therefore all who truly bear witness and give testimony to that which they know and have seen, must have been born again from above.
- Conversely all who do not accept such witness and testimony have not, yet, been born again from above.
- Not even a man like Nicodemus or Paul could accept the gospel without being born again from above.

John 3:12

わたしが地上のことを語っているのに、あなたがたが信じないならば、天上のことを語った場合、どうしてそれを信じるだろうか。

If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things?

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If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you **heavenly things**?

- There are things which Jesus alone among men can tell.

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If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, **how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things?**

- There are things which Jesus alone among men can tell.
- But who among men can believe him?

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If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things?

- There are things which Jesus alone among men can tell.
- But who among men can believe him?
- Certainly not those who refuse to believe in Jesus, himself, and in the simple earthly things that Jesus has told them.

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If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things?

- For example baptism was ordained by Christ as the means whereby man might understand, and the Spirit accomplish a new birth from above, thereby making the man spiritual, bringing him into the Kingdom of God.

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- However Nicodemus is presently unable grasp the meaning and importance of Christian baptism.

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If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things?

- However Nicodemus is presently unable grasp the meaning and importance of Christian baptism.
- Therefore how could he believe anything greater that Christ might teach him regarding the Kingdom of God.

John 3:13

天から下ってきた者、すなわち人の子のほかには、だれも天に上った者はない。

No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man.

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No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man.

- Christ is the only mediator between God and man.

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天から下ってきた者、すなわち人の子のほかには、だれも天に上った者はない。

No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man.

- Christ is the only mediator between God and man.
- Those who will not have Christ and his simple teaching, will certainly discover nothing about heaven on their own.

John 3:14

そして、ちょうどモーセが荒野でへびを上げたように、人の子もまた上げられなければならない。

And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up,

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- The previous verse makes the point that only Christ has come **down** from heaven and, therefore, all information about heaven must come down to us from him.

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- The previous verse makes the point that only Christ has come **down** from heaven and, therefore, all information about heaven must come down to us from him.
- Now the direction is reversed --- he shall be lifted **up**!

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And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so **must the Son of Man be lifted up**,

- The expression “lifted up” has the primary sense of giving honor and glory to Christ.

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And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so **must the Son of Man be lifted up**,

- The expression “lifted up” has the primary sense of giving honor and glory to Christ.
- Though he descended from heaven, the earth will be the place from which he shall again be exalted, all the more!

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And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up,

- The manner in which he will be exalted, is compared to the serpent which Moses lifted up in the wilderness.

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- Do you know the story?

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- The manner in which he will be exalted, is compared to the serpent which Moses lifted up in the wilderness.
- Do you know the story? (Numbers 21:4-9)

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And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up,

- The story of the serpent in the wilderness is a wonderful way for Christ to explain how he himself will be exalted.

John 3:14

そして、ちょうどモーセが荒野でへびを上げたように、人の子もまた上げられなければならない。

And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up,

- The story of the serpent in the wilderness is a wonderful way for Christ to explain how he himself will be exalted.
- Israel already had this story and, in it, a type of Christ until he came!

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- They knew full well that it was not magic, but faith, that had saved the children of Israel in the desert when they looked at the image of the serpent. (c.f. 2 Kings 18:4)

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- They knew full well that it was not magic, but faith, that had saved the children of Israel in the desert when they looked at the image of the serpent. (c.f. 2 Kings 18:4)
- Likewise it is faith which saves those who look to Christ.

John 3:15

それは彼を信じる者が、すべて永遠の命を得るためである」。

that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

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- Here again is a simple “earthly thing” a man must believe if he is to enter into the Kingdom of God and eternal life.

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- Here again is a simple “earthly thing” a man must believe if he is to enter into the Kingdom of God and eternal life.
- The object of this belief is a person, Jesus Christ.

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that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

- Trusting in Christ is necessarily the first step Nicodemus and every man must take if he would be born again from above and enter into the Kingdom of God and eternal life.

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that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

- Only one man has come down from heaven to earth, and only one man has been lifted up from earth to heaven.

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that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

- Only one man has come down from heaven to earth, and only one man has been lifted up from earth to heaven.
- It is amazing that the manner of his “lifting up,” both literally and figuratively, should be the cross!