

Online Bible Study Notes

Date: 03-Feb-2016	Teacher: Rev. Keith
Verses: John 3:1-17	Topic: Born Again
Notes: What is born again, and why is this Nicodemus guy sneaking around at night? Jesus often uses analogies and parables to “hook” people and get those who had an “ear to hear” to seek understanding. Water = the word of God; Spirit = Holy Spirit. Scriptures: Water (Ephesians 5:25-27, Psalm 119:9, James 1:18); Spirit (1 Peter 1:22-23, Titus 3:5, 1 Corinthians 12:13, Ephesians 1:13)	Thoughts: Nicodemus snuck in by night, but he referenced “we know”...meaning others knew that Jesus was <u>at least</u> (in their mind) a prophet, if not more. Life Application: The new birth is scriptural. Christianity is not something we are because friends or family are “Christian”. Being a Christ-follower requires transformation through faith – with the work being done by the Spirit of God as we accept the word (and the Word) by faith
Next Week: No homework. We'll study chapter 4	

Date: 10-Feb-2016	Teacher: Min. Bobbie
Verses: John 3:1-8 (review); rest of chapter	Topic: Born Again
Notes: Review of Born Again. What is the water (word of God) and the Spirit (Spirit of God)? Faith in the Son goes beyond simple	Thoughts: Nicodemus snuck in by night, but he referenced “we know”...meaning others knew that Jesus was <u>at least</u> (in their mind) a prophet, if not more.

<p>assent but is belief to salvation – it is transformational and causes us to be new creatures.</p>	<p>Life Application: The new birth is scriptural. Christianity is not something we are because friends or family are “Christian”. Being a Christ-follower requires transformation through faith – with the work being done by the Spirit of God as we accept the word (and the Word) by faith</p>
<p>Next Week: No homework. We’ll study chapter 4</p>	

<p>Date: 17-Feb-2016</p>	<p>Teacher: Rev. Keith</p>
<p>Verses: John 4:1-45</p>	<p>Topic: Living water for the thirsty (Jesus speaks life to the marginalized)</p>
<p>Notes: Our story continues with the Pharisees realizing Jesus is beginning to gain more followers than John. God has shifted the spotlight to His Son. Jesus & crew need to go through Samaria (wording indicates ministry/missions need) despite Samaritans and Jews being bitter rivals. Jesus breaks down barriers while His disciples go fetch food; He interacts with a Samaritan woman by asking for a drink. Discussion goes from cordial to insightful as Jesus causes the woman to pause her life. His offer of “living water” and insights into her life and sins both engage her and cause her to come to grips with the fact that He is the Messiah.</p>	<p>Thoughts: Nicodemus was learned and a ruler; this woman was not a theologian and not a ruler. Jesus met them both where they were at. Roberto re-emphasized the work required to get H₂O in the heat of the day; the imagery of water as life is significant.</p> <p>Life Application: To be like Jesus, we always need to have our “spiritual antennae” up so we can hear what God would have us to do and say. He uses ordinary situations (water anyone?) and ordinary people (us) to reach others who are broken or in need. Life is not “cookie cutter” and the Master gives a good template in chapters 3 & 4 of the diversity of people (rich, powerful, marginalized, etc.) we will engage. In each case, we have to meet them where they are at, and give them the living water.</p>

Next Week: No homework; we'll finish chapter 4 & go into chapter 5

Date: 24-Feb-2016

Teacher: Rev. Keith

Verses: John 4:43 - 5:23

Topic: Authenticity through the Spirit

Notes:

The narrative picks up with a nobleman - who had not yet believed that Jesus was Christ - asking Him to heal his (the nobleman's) son. Jesus "meets the man where he's at" in his faith (or lack thereof) even after pointing out that people (especially in Jesus' home region) won't believe without seeing. After all, a prophet has no honor in his own town.

After healing the boy (from afar - He wasn't at the nobleman's house), Jesus goes to Jerusalem and heals a man (who had been disabled/paralyzed for 38 years) at the Pool of Bethesda. Jesus does this on the Sabbath, and tells the man to "sin no more" and "take his bed and walk", which he does. The Pharisees are not "happy campers" - they confront the man and plot against Jesus for His "infraction" against the Law for working on the Sabbath day, and causing the healed man to do likewise. Jesus points out that He does nothing of Himself (even on the Sabbath) and all that God does, the Son follows suit (even on the Sabbath!)

Thoughts:

Adline pointed to Jesus' mixture of humbleness and boldness. He was humble and gave God all credit, but was bold in who He was. Brenda highlighted that sometimes people are waiting (like the man paralyzed for 38 years) rather than going ahead and moving in faith. If God is telling us to wait, that's fine, but otherwise, we need to put faith into action rather than just waiting for "something to happen" when it's on us to spark that action. Priscilla noted that God has a plan of action; we may not see it from where we are standing, but He is always working. John observed that Jesus gave the command to "sin no more" - transformation is true change. Jesus met the man where he was at, but was not content to leave the man where he was at, or let the man think it was okay to continue living as he had

Life Application:

Jesus modeled authentic relationship and showed what it means to be a child of the Most High. As Christ-followers, we foster relationship, not religion. "Doing church" and following Pharisaical rules is not the same as being a true child of God. Finally, the people we meet are on a journey, and it's our job to help them connect with God. But, God is the one doing the work, and He gets the glory as we play our roles in helping people move from religion to relationship

Next Week's Homework: Did Jesus follow tradition (yes/no)? Give at least one scripture to back up your position. We'll also finish chapter 5

Date: 02-Mar-2016	Teacher: Rev. Keith
Verses: John 5:23-40	Topic: Authenticity through the Spirit
<p>Notes:</p> <p>We covered homework from last week. Yes, Jesus followed tradition (as long as it was not in conflict with God's will or worshipping in "<i>spirit and in truth</i>". And yes, Jesus also broke with tradition when it followed the "<i>letter but not the spirit</i>". Sometimes, Jesus (and we) follow tradition so that we can be have an open door to minister and be heard (e.g. starting His ministry at age 30). Depending on the context, tradition is neither good nor bad, or it can be good or bad if we elevate it above the Word of God.</p> <p>Examples: Luke 4:16 (Yes), Luke 6:1-10 (No), John 4</p>	<p>Thoughts:</p> <p>Jesus always met people where they were at. He was always faithful to God but also was never disrespectful of His heritage. Sometimes He broke with tradition, if tradition was a stumbling block for people seeing the need to connect with God (or how to connect with God), but He also maintained tradition when there was no conflict. Remember, <u>Jesus (Yeshua) was a Jew</u>. He was circumcised on the 8th day, went to Temple, learned Hebrew, and obeyed His mom and step-dad (who were both Jewish). He was radical against the wrongs the religious leaders were practicing, but He also respected the culture and tradition when it wasn't contrary to God.</p>

<p>(No), Luke 3:23 + Numbers 4:1-3 (Yes)</p> <p>Scriptures for tonight: The God-Man Jesus is the One who has been given ALL authority to judge. He is the source of Everlasting Life. He has full authority and power to exonerate us, and is the only Judge that will determine the ultimate fate of every person.</p> <p>You may hear people say “only God can judge me” - the Word made flesh is the Person in the Godhead who will judge man</p>	<p>Life Application:</p> <p>We all have traditions and preferences we have learned or acquired. Many traditions are neutral - they are neither good nor bad, but we have to make sure that we do not elevate anything above God - even our traditions and preferences that are “neutral”. Also, as ministers, we need to be mindful of other peoples’ traditions, even if we do not hold to them ourselves. We do not want our brethren to stumble because of our liberties, and we also may need to conform to tradition so that others will be able to hear us (door opening).</p> <p>Some traditions and preferences may be in conflict with our relationship with God. If so, we need drop them immediately regardless of who/why/where we learned them. Finally, for whatever traditions we practice, <u>we should know why we do what we do</u>, and not blindly do things out of habit</p>
<p>Next Week’s Homework: Read 1 Cor. 2:15 & Mat 7:1. Is the Bible confused? What kind of judgement is spoken about in these scriptures, and how do those scriptures relate to what we read in John 5?</p>	

Date: March 16, 23	Teacher: Rev. Keith
Verses: Romans 5,6; Hebrews 9, 10	Topic: Why did Christ have to die?
<p>Notes:</p> <p>First covered: names for Jesus the Christ: Son of God, Emmanuel, Prince of Peace, <u>Lamb of God</u>, <u>Son of Man</u>.</p> <p>The last two give us insight into His role as redeemer. As our High Priest, Hebrews 9 & 10 show: a) the blood of bulls and goats could not take away our sins and, b) there needed to be an equal-for-equal exchange. A man (not a lesser animal) needed to substitute for a man.</p> <p>Romans 5 & 6 illustrate that Adam, as the “Federal Head” or race’s presiding member gave dominion to Satan and effectively sold the race into bondage. It required a “Second Adam” – One who was born exempt from the curse (but still able to represent the race) to become our new “Head” and free us from the bondage the first Adam sold us into. Just as sin entered the world through one man, salvation comes to all of us through the Second Man. Another “equal exchange” by God.</p>	<p>Thoughts:</p> <p>Roberto took us through the “Roman Road” and Adline pointed us to the confession of faith in Romans. Both of these examples show the fairness of God. Although we were not there when Adam sinned, we weren’t there when Jesus died and rose either. We are subject to the drawbacks and benefits of both of those situations, due to our first nature (which we were born with) and our new nature (which we are born-again into).</p> <hr/> <p>Life Application:</p> <p>As we minister to people, we must always remember that the gift of salvation is just that: a gift. We did not earn it, and God offers it to any and every one. The “equal exchange” is freely given, but never forced on anyone. We cannot make a person be saved (no matter how much we want them to be); we are not saved because we go to church (although that’s a good thing); and there’s no one that we can prevent from being saved – if they authentically repent and turn to Christ (it’s above our pay-grade and in God’s hands).</p> <p>Knowing this, we can rest in the knowledge of “For God so loved the world...”</p>
<p>Next Week’s Homework: At the crucifixion – the two thieves on the cross were with Jesus. “This day you will be with me in paradise” was the promise to one. What did that mean, and where did the faithful saints before Jesus died go when they died? Amanda will lead us through that discussion next week!</p>	