

“Nic” at Night

John 3:1-21

“His Lamp Am I” Annie Johnson Flint



UPON THEM A LIGHT DAWNED

“THE LAND OF ZEBULUN AND THE LAND OF NAPHTALI,
BY THE WAY OF THE SEA, BEYOND THE JORDAN, GALILEE OF
THE GENTILES—

“THE PEOPLE WHO WERE SITTING IN DARKNESS SAW A GREAT
LIGHT,
AND THOSE WHO WERE SITTING IN THE LAND AND SHADOW OF
DEATH,
UPON THEM A LIGHT DAWNED.”

From that time Jesus began to preach and say, “Repent,
for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

Matthew 4:15-17

Rich, respected, righteous, ruler...



The Journey From Night To Light

1. The World's Greatest Tragedy (1-10)
2. The World's Greatest Truths (11-15)
3. The World's Greatest Text (16)
4. The World's Greatest Test (17-21)

The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to **repentance**. (2 Peter 3:9)

The Heart Reader

This beginning of *His* signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory, and His disciples believed in Him. (John 2:11)

But Jesus, on His part, was not entrusting Himself to them, for He knew all men, and because He did not need anyone to testify concerning man, for He Himself knew what was in man. (John 2:24-25)

“The Lord read the hearts of them all!”

➤ The World's Greatest Tragedy (1-10)

Nicodemus-How did he see himself? A rich, respected, righteous, ruler of the Jews. (Rabbinical tradition makes him one of the three richest men in Jerusalem.)

How did he see Jesus? A God-sent miracle-working Doctor of the Scriptures!

The Tragedy- He neither saw himself nor Jesus as God saw both of them.

Jesus-Doctor of the Soul

Somewhere in the depths of his soul the Lord had struck a chord that awoke echoes of deep longings that no religion or moral code could satisfy.”

Nicodemus said to Him, “**How** can a man be born when he is old? (4)

Nicodemus said to Him, “**How** can these things be?” (9)

“Water and the Spirit” (5)

“Who had been hammering at the conscience of Israel, seeking to prepare the people for the coming of the King and the Kingdom using those very two words? John the Baptist of course! Nicodemus would think of John’s words, ‘I indeed baptize with **water**, but there comes One who will baptize with the **Spirit**.’ You can read it for yourself in Matthew 3:1-12, Mark 1:1-8, Luke 3:1-16, John 1:24-28, here in John 3:1-10, and again in John 3:22-24.

That is the key to this otherwise cryptic statement.” –John Phillips

“brood of vipers”

The religious leaders, of which Nicodemus was a representative, had rejected the ministry and baptism of John. Why? Why? Because they saw no need for repentance.

The challenge to Nicodemus, and us, is this:

NO JOHN-NO JESUS

NO REPENTANCE-NO REBIRTH

NO CONVICTION-NO CONVERSION

NO WATER (5) NO WIND (8)

➤ The World's Greatest Truths (11-15)

"We speak..." "We know..." Who we? Christ and John the Baptist of course! Both had been preaching the very same message:

"The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

The "world's greatest tragedy" was that this Doctor of the Law was a "blind leader of the blind", completely unaware of "the word's greatest truths", like those recorded in Numbers 21:6-9. **Repent, look, and live!**

Folly to Reason...Life to Faith!

The picture is one of sinning people bitten by deadly snakes and dying without hope. Moses was commanded to make a bronze snake and hold it high on a pole. It was to be "lifted up" where all could "look and live."

For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God (1 Corinthians 1:18).

“As Moses lifted up the serpent...



“...so must the Son of Man be lifted up”

To be born again, Nicodemus must see himself “bitten by sin”, a perishing sinner, abandon all hope in the Law of God for salvation, and to look to the Son of God alone. That is where eternal life begins!

Where then is boasting? It is excluded.
By what kind of law? Of works? No, but by a
law of faith. For we maintain that a man is
justified by faith apart from works of the
Law. (Romans 3:27-28)

➤ The World Greatest Text (16)

“We have arrived at the great metropolis of gospel truth. No other single statement in the Bible so aptly sums up God’s redemptive purpose in Christ for the human race...”

¹² For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same *Lord* is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him; ¹³ for “WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED.” (Romans 10)

Divine Dimensions of God's Love

Contemplate its width! "For God so loved the world ..." There will be people in heaven from every nation, tribe, and language; rich and poor, all washed in the blood of the Lamb!

Consider its length! "...that He gave His only begotten Son..." From eternity past, long before the creation of man, was not God's Son 'the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world'? God has loved us with an everlasting love. Rejoice!

Can we plumb its depth? "...that whoever believes in Him shall not perish..." When we were sunk in the depths of unspeakable sin, rebellion, and depravity, Christ came from heaven to rescue us from the wrath of God and eternal fire.

Can we scale its height? "...but have eternal life." We have been given God's life, raised up with Christ in the heavenly realms, and will one day reign with him forever. Hallelujah!

Eternal Life!

We are engineered out of the stuff of eternity! The very life of God Himself pulses through our "spiritual veins"!

It begins with the One who had no beginning. It ends with that which has no ending. It is called the New Birth and is the possession of all who have truly repented of their sin and have believed on God's one and only Son.

How do we know it is ours?

➤ The World Greatest Test (17-21)

It's the "love-hate" test!

**He who loves his life loses it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it to life eternal.
(John 12:25)**

This earth is a rebel planet, yet Jesus did not come to condemn, but to save. It's how we respond to the light that determines where we will spend eternity. If we come confessing our sin and our need of Christ, we will be forgiven.

Walking in the Light

The proof of our salvation, that we have been born again, is that we **continue to come into the light of God's Word,** allowing it to reveal our sin to us, that He might continue to cleanse, for forgive, and change us into the image of Christ.

"If you continue in My word, *then* you are truly disciples of Mine." (John 8:31)

For God so loved the world...

“When the church comes to understand the love with which God loved the world, she will be restless and ill at ease, until all the great empires have been captured, until every coral island has been won.”

Repent and believe the love of God. Come out of the darkness and into the Light.

Unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

The Rest of the Story...

And what of Nicodemus? Did he leave the night and come into the Light. I believe he did. The Scriptures tell us that it was he and Joseph of Arimathaea, both now disciples of Jesus, who **boldly** went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. (John 19:38-40)

All that remained to confirm their well placed faith was a resurrected Savior, and you know the rest of that story.

...Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day, and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations...Luke 24:46-47

