



KNOW:TRUTH

# The Gospel of John

A New Covenant Study

WEEK THREE | DAY TWO

# JOHN 3

**Know:** Read John Chapter 3

**Note:** Mark keywords, including pronouns and phrases. (time, location, repeated words, born, born again, eternal life, believe)

**Ask questions:** (Use tools such as interlinear bibles to search the original meaning of words-[free tool here](#)) For example:

- Who is Nicodemus?
- What did Jesus tell Nicodemus?
- When did Nicodemus come to Jesus?
- Where was Jesus when the confrontation occurred?
- Why did Nicodemus come to Jesus?
- How

**Observation:** Read Numbers 21:4-9, Hebrews 9:28, John 12:31-33

**What:** What does today's study reveal to you about the nature of God? What truth do I need to apply to my life today?

**“Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again.”  
John 3:3**

In today's observation, you read about the Israelites being bitten by snakes after complaining about God and Moses. Keep in mind that the law had been given at this point. Before the law was given, God was never angry at his people, no matter how much they complained. The law condemned anyone who rose against God because it demanded obedience. God had given the people everything they needed, yet they were discontent. The vipers were sent out as judgment against their disobedience to the law. Moses was instructed to make a bronze serpent placed on a high pole. Anyone who looked at the serpent was healed.

That serpent represented Jesus.

In John 3, you read a conversation between Nicodemus and Jesus. Nicodemus was a scholar of the Scriptures, and yet he failed to see the prophecy and all that had been written concerning Jesus and the promise of new birth found in them. The prophets had written about God turning stony hearts into soft ones, of sins being washed whiter than snow, of going from old to new. What Jesus spoke about was a spiritual birthing. To keep eyes on the flesh leads to death. Like the Israelites in the desert, they condemned themselves when they fixated on the natural. To look upon the bronze serpent was life. Nicodemus was an expert in the law. He had been taught that to obey the law, there was life, but the law forced one to rely on their flesh for life because their obedience to the law is what brought life.

Jesus was explaining that He was the end of self-righteousness. Jesus explained a truth to Nicodemus he could not comprehend, one who spent a lifetime relying on his performance for righteousness. Yet, no longer would one rely on their ability to obey or to make one righteous; Jesus would become for us our righteousness. What we would experience could not be a natural rebirth but a spiritual one. When one looked to Him and relied on His perfect performance on our behalf, one was made perfectly righteous. Like when the Israelites looked only on the bronze serpent to be healed, one who looks upon the cross lifted for us is made righteous!

Once our hearts were stoney and hard, Jesus made them soft and pliable. Where once our sins were as scarlet, He makes us whiter than snow. Where we were hardened and self-reliant, He made us alive and new. His life now dwells within believers- "Zoe" life. (Click on the link to read about Zoe life- look for Vines Dictionary on that page to read more).

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." John 3:16-17

This verse is probably the most memorized one among Christians, yet the most misunderstood. As a whole, many Christians came to faith because of this verse, but they were told, "For God so loved the World that He sent His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him will go to heaven rather than Hell." Verse 17 is rarely ever mentioned.

Although heaven is a beautiful hope we have, Jesus did not come to help us escape this world. He told us to bring Kingdom reality to the Earth and to keep making it so until His return. We somehow believe that God is judging the world and is angry with sinners, yet verse 17 tells us that God did not send His Son to condemn it. Jesus was sent to save it (world=kosmos). When sin entered the world through Adam, the most tragic thing is that sin became the lens through which we viewed God. God became distorted, angry, and vengeful. However, God never changed from the God who lovingly made humankind. It was we who changed how we saw Him. Our lens changed because of sin. From the foundation of the world, God enacted a plan to deal with the thing that kept us from seeing Him as Father- sin. He wanted us to know Him. "And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent." John 17:3. Eternal life is not our "ticket out of hell" card. It is to know God as Father. Jesus came to reconcile the world to himself so that the lens through which we viewed God would be removed, and we would be restored to our original design. That is why Jesus came.

### **"He must increase, but I must decrease." John 3:30**

We spent some time in the Prologue learning about John's testimony concerning Jesus. In this portion of scripture, John testifies again about Him. I only want to focus on this verse above because it is greatly misunderstood. How many times have we quoted this verse as a sign of humility? Yet, read in context, it is not a verse meant to mention as a mark of humility.

John was resolving an argument among his disciples about John's baptism and Jesus'. They felt offended that more were following Jesus. John corrected them by helping them understand that he was not the Christ.

John was the last of the Old Covenant prophets. All the prophets before him longed to see what he did. They could only prophecy in part regarding Jesus. John saw Him in person and recognized Jesus as the Anointed One- the Christ. Now, the prophets of the Old who could only point to the future hope were no longer needed because He had arrived. The prophets of old, after John, would decrease, and Christ would now take center stage- all eyes, all of Heaven, and all on earth were turned to Him.

Further Study: “Christ is not a name” -Bible Project