

John 3

ENGAGE FELLOWSHIP

“You shouldn’t be amazed by my statement ‘You must be born from above!’” (John 3:7)

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This discourse between Jesus and Nicodemus has personal relevance to each person “born of woman”; to each of us, to you, to me. It’s this shared experience of being born again that makes us part of His family, a shared community of Jesus followers.

In His family, we, like Nicodemus, have been challenged to embrace Him as more than “teacher” but to receive Him as Lord. We, like Nicodemus, have been provided the opportunity to add to our natural life, His Supernatural life.

It’s this miracle of being “Spirit-born” that unites us by the Holy Spirit to both Jesus and to one another. It’s this connection of the born-again that creates true fellowship, a community of Spirit-empowered followers who embrace the imperative to “let us run with endurance the race set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith” (Hebrews 12:1-2). The pursuit of revival and Spiritual awakening is for “US”, not a solo race but for a community of Jesus followers to co-labor with Him for His purposes and His glory.

Pause together with a partner or small group:

- Sharing your personal “born again” stories.
- Celebrating that His Spirit, like the wind blows where it will bringing the new birth to all kinds of people, some like Nicodemus (and possibly you), the most unlikely.
- Pray for one another that your walk with Jesus would experience the freedom to be characterized less by the “natural” and more by the Supernatural.

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ENCOUNTER JESUS

“For this is how much God loved the world – he gave his one and only, unique Son as a gift. So now everyone who believes in him will never perish but experience everlasting life.” (John 3:16)

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The Startling Love of Jesus
Possibly the most familiar of all Bible verses is about a God who loves. How startling it is when we begin to imagine the wonder of such love, the miracle of the gift named Jesus!

All across the pages of scripture we’re touched by the uniqueness of the God-man Jesus.

Christ’s words were startling and His miracles amazing, but everything He said and did was meant to call attention to how He loved. Take a moment now to reflect on how Jesus loved people and how He startled them with His love.

Jesus startled lepers by healing their bodies and bringing dignity to their lives, sometimes even touching them in order to heal them (Luke 5:12,13; 17:11-19).

Christ startled a Samaritan woman when He broke all cultural conventions by asking her for a drink of water. In the midst of her shame and rejection, the Savior entrusted her with a conversation about eternal things (John 4:4-26).

Jesus startled the woman caught in adultery when He knelt down beside her, joining her at the point of her hurt and providing protection for her life. He dispersed her accusers with His words, and then offered restoration to her as He lovingly said, “Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you? Neither do I condemn you. Go now and leave your life of sin” (John 8:10,11).

Pause now and reflect on the startling love of Jesus:

- Jesus, you first startled me with love as you brought me into relationship with you; pause to give Him thanks. “Dear Lord, I give you thanks for loving me to yourself when...
- Jesus, do it again; keep it up! “Dear Lord, open the eyes of my heart that I not miss the abundance and constancy of your startling love.”

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EXPERIENCE SCRIPTURE

*“So it’s necessary for him to increase and for me to be diminished.”
(John 3:30)*

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From this significant discourse, we find a critical imperative to living a life of personal revival, contributing salt and light in the daily traffic patterns of life; a two dimensional imperative: HE must increase and I must decrease!

The imperative is not just for John the baptizer, but for each Spirit-empowered follower. But practically “what does it look like” for Jesus to gain preeminence? Think about your daily living, your thoughts and activities, your attitudes and priorities.

Scripture reminds us that:

- His THOUGHTS are higher than yours (Isaiah 55:8).
- His ACTIVITY is characterized by the fruit of the Spirit, and never the deeds of the flesh (Galatians 5:19-24).
- His ATTITUDE is characterized by humility and thinking more highly of other (Philippians 2:3-7).
- His PRIORITIES focus on loving His Father, loving people and imparting the gospel that others might embrace His and these priorities (Matthew 22:37-40, 28:19-20).

For Him to increase and me to decrease will impact all of life, my thoughts and activities, my attitudes and priorities. Living out this one Bible verse gives a powerful but simple goal for each day...” let Jesus increase!”

A lifestyle of revival and following Jesus is characterized by living out John 3:30 each day with evidences of His thinking and activity, His attitude and priorities.

Pause to reflect and celebrate recent evidence of Him “increasing”:

- I recently was having more of HIS thoughts as I ...
- Recently in my daily activity I sensed the fruit of His Spirit when ...
- His attitude of humility and thinking first of others was evident recently as I...
- His priority of love toward Him and others was expressed recently when...
- His priority of sharing my life and the gospel was recently demonstrated as I...

Celebrate one or more of these evidences of Him “increasing” and then pray for one another that these changes would continue as you “decrease.”

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