

Seven Great Discoveries of Nicodemus

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The most important thing in our lives is an encounter with the Lord Jesus, who is as stable as a rock; who was the same yesterday, today and forever. We need to know this Lord.

When Nicodemus encountered the Lord Jesus, he understood the Lord Jesus and made seven discoveries. Let's look to the Bible and see what Nicodemus discovered.

The Gospel According to John [International Standard Version]

3:1 Now there was a man from the Pharisees, a leader of the Jews, whose name was Nicodemus.

3:2 He came to Jesus at night and told him, "Rabbi, we know that you have come from God as a teacher, because no one can perform these signs that you are doing unless God is with him."

3:3 Jesus replied to him, "Truly, I tell you with certainty, unless a person is born from above he cannot see the kingdom of God."

3:4 Nicodemus asked him, "How can a person be born when he is old? He can't go back into his mother's womb a second time and be born, can he?"

3:5 Jesus answered, "Truly, I tell you with certainty, unless a person is born of water and Spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

3:6 What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit.

3:7 Don't be astonished that I told you, 'All of you must be born from above.'

3:8 The wind blows where it wants to. You hear its sound, but you don't know where it comes from or where it is going. That's the way it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit."

3:9 Nicodemus asked him, "How can that be?"

3:10 Jesus answered him, "You're a teacher of Israel, and you can't understand this?"

3:11 Truly, I tell you with certainty, we know what we're talking about, and we testify about what we've seen. Yet you people do not accept our testimony.

3:12 If I have told you people about earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you about heavenly things?

3:13 "No one has gone up to heaven except the one who came down from heaven, the Son of Man who is in heaven.

3:14 Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up,

3:15 so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.

3:16 "For this is how God loved the world: He gave his unique Son so that everyone who believes in him might not be lost but have eternal life.

Nicodemus was sincerely in pursuit of the truth. He belonged to the people of Israel and was a well-accepted teacher. As we can see from the chapter 3, verse 10, the Lord Jesus said to Nicodemus, 'You're a teacher of Israel'. According to the Bible, he was referred to as the only one, and a very special teacher for the whole land of Israel. Furthermore, as we can see from verse 1, 'now there was a man from the Pharisees, a leader of the Jews, whose name was Nicodemus', he was one of the Jewish leaders, which implies that he belonged to the special class of teachers.

Nicodemus received the most excellent education available at that time. He was widely recognized as a person of high integrity. He lived a highly ethical and exemplary life, yet he felt isolated and had an empty feeling at the deep bottom of his heart. Hence, he was seeking the truth even after he reached old age. He knew every detail of the Old Testament. There is no doubt that he knew about the promise of the coming of Messiah. Nicodemus heard a lot about the Lord Jesus – the teachings of the Lord, as well as the miracles the Lord had done. He had been in pursuit of truth throughout his life, and he aspired to come and see Jesus personally and know His thoughts better.

We know that the Lord Jesus was extremely busy throughout His life. He did not have time to take a rest. Every day, people with all kinds of sicknesses were brought to the Lord from all around the country and He could hardly find a time to have a meal. Furthermore, when His disciples were exhausted and fell asleep on the ground, Jesus went up to the mountain and prayed alone, standing on His feet.

In such a situation, it was nearly impossible for anyone to have a private conversation with the Lord Jesus in the daytime. That was why Nicodemus waited until late to come to talk with the Lord Jesus.

Nicodemus came and confided his own problems to Him, and he found through his experience that coming to the Lord Jesus resulted in something meaningful. The Lord Jesus answers any questions, solves all problems and brings people to the truth.

In the presence of the Lord Jesus, Nicodemus discovered an astounding fact, which was that in spite of the ethical and sincere life he had been leading, he was spiritually blind and dead. In all actuality, he was the lost one. He did not understand the most fundamental truth regarding the kingdom of the God.

To this day, some people never fail to attend worship, get baptized and serve the Lord enthusiastically, and as such are proud of their many good deeds. Nevertheless, just like Nicodemus they are spiritually

blind, spiritually dead and spiritually lost in the eyes of the Lord God. There are many such people

2Timothy

3:5 They will hold to an outward form of godliness but deny its power. Stay away from such people.

3:6 For some of these men go into homes and deceive foolish women who are burdened with sins and swayed by all kinds of desires.

3:7 These women are always studying but are never able to arrive at a full knowledge of the truth.

Through his conversation with the Lord Jesus, Nicodemus made "seven great discoveries." In this article, I would like to explain what these discoveries were.

The First Discovery

The Lord is always ready to meet any souls who want to meet him. This was Nicodemus' first discovery. In other words, he understood that God cares for each person. Nicodemus spoke to the Lord with these words:

John

3:2 He came to Jesus at night and told him, "Rabbi, we know that you have come from God as a teacher, because no one can perform these signs that you are doing unless God is with him."

Here, Nicodemus stated three things: that the Lord Jesus had come from the Lord God, that the Lord God always stayed with the Lord Jesus and that the Lord could do anything He wanted.

The question that Nicodemus had deep inside his heart was how people could enter the eternal kingdom of God. However, before Nicodemus put his question into words, the Lord gave him the answer. Actually, when people seek the truth and want salvation, the Lord Jesus already has the answer for them. The Lord is always the same – yesterday, today and forever.

We are given the same invitation from the Lord:

John

7:37 On the last and most important day of the festival, Jesus stood up and shouted, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink!

7:38 The one who believes in me, as the Scripture has said, will have rivers of living water flowing from his heart."

Matthew

11:28 Come to me, all of you who are weary and loaded down with burdens, and I will give you rest.

Psalms

107:9 He has satisfied the one who thirsts, filling the hungry with what is good.

Those who are hungry and thirsty for the truth will eventually experience that the Lord Jesus is the one who can satisfy the hunger and thirst of their minds. Nicodemus was a seeker of the truth. His heart could not be fulfilled by knowledge on the Scriptures. Although he was a widely accepted and well-respected scriptural scholar, very knowledgeable about scripture, scriptural knowledge could not give him true salvation.

His heart was not truly satisfied by obeying the commandments in the Bible. What Nicodemus needed was the 'water of life' and 'peace of mind'. If you truly desire to obtain eternal salvation, you need to put aside all preconceived ideas, stop relying on yourself and just seek the living God of salvation.

Isaiah

55:6 "Seek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near.

55:7 Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous person his thoughts. Let him return to the Lord, So he'll have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he'll pardon abundantly.

While he was with the Lord Jesus, Nicodemus realized that all the efforts he had made – all his religiosity and his own righteousness standards – were totally valueless in the presence of this everlasting Lord.

The Lord Jesus accepts all souls that seek Him. The Lord Jesus makes time to talk to all of them. The Lord Jesus knows all kinds of pains and worries, and thus can help us to resolve any problem. This was the first thing that Nicodemus discovered.

The Second Discovery

His second discovery was that 'Jesus was someone more than just a great teacher'. Before Nicodemus met the Lord Jesus, he was certain that Jesus was incomparable to any others in terms of His teaching and His deeds. The conclusion that Nicodemus drew from what he had heard was that the Lord Jesus was the one sent from God, and that the Lord God Himself was with the Lord Jesus. However, scarcely had Nicodemus met the Lord Jesus when he instantly realized that Jesus was someone far greater than he could have imagined.

Needless to say, the Lord Jesus has been the best teacher throughout history. No one has ever taught like the Lord Jesus. The words of the Lord are far superior to any other teachings by humans. This fact was already recognized, even back then.

Matthew

7:28 When Jesus had finished saying all these things, the crowds were utterly amazed at his teaching,

7:29 because he was teaching them like a person who had authority, and not like their scribes.

But more importantly, the Lord Jesus is ‘the savior’, rather than being a teacher. He is not someone just to educate us, but is the one who can save us, which is what we truly need.

Even the most comprehensive scriptural knowledge will not save people. Salvation is what only the Lord God can produce inside the hearts of the people. Salvation is the solution to our sins. At the Nativity of the Lord Jesus, the Holy Spirit clearly explained the reason why the Lord was coming down to the world.

Matthew

1:21 She will give birth to a son, and you are to name him Jesus, because he is the one who will save his people from their sins."

The meaning of the name Jesus is ‘the savior from all sins’.

The Third Discovery

The third discovery was that ‘what is born of the flesh is flesh’. Flesh remains as flesh forever. We can’t change our own nature, what we were when we were born. It is a sinful nature – a nature that allows us nothing but to commit sins.

Psalms

51:5 Indeed, in iniquity I was brought forth; in sin my mother conceived me.

Isaiah

64:6 All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like a filthy rag;

Flesh, or humanity’s innate nature, might look very polite, sincere and good to the outside world, but in the eyes of the Lord God it is unacceptably stained with our sins.

We have to experience the regeneration of the spirit of the Lord God, which is more important than anything.

The Fourth Discovery

The fourth great discovery was that ‘true salvation had nothing to do with any religion’. It also had nothing to do with knowledge. All kinds of human deeds are nothing but obstacles in the way to obtaining salvation. The Lord Jesus made this very clear.

John

3:3 Jesus replied to him, "Truly, I tell you with certainty, unless a person is born from above he cannot see the kingdom of God."

3:4 Nicodemus asked him, "How can a person be born when he is old? He can't go back into his mother's womb a second time and be born, can he?"

3:5 Jesus answered, "Truly, I tell you with certainty, unless a person is born of water and Spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

3:6 What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit.

3:7 Don't be astonished that I told you, 'All of you must be born from above.'

Those who want true salvation must go through a regeneration. More importantly, it has to bring not a noticeable outward change, but a totally new creation.

2 Corinthians

5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in the Messiah, he is a new creation. Old things have disappeared, and —look!—all things have become new!

Regeneration is not just about making a decision, such as ‘I will attend the gathering today,’ ‘I will read the Bible’ or ‘I will start to pray.’ These are all just outward changes, external changes. The salvation of the Lord God begins with true regeneration.

People will obtain totally new lives when they come to the Lord Jesus as sinners and accept the Lord as their savior. Those who have the Lord Jesus have the eternal lives. Regeneration is gaining eternal life.

The Fifth Discovery

The fifth great discovery was that ‘this regeneration was absolutely necessary’.

John

3:3 Jesus replied to him, "Truly, I tell you with certainty, unless a person is born from above he cannot see the kingdom of God."

The Lord Jesus explains in His own words that ‘unless we are born again for the second time, everything we do is meaningless, empty and useless’.

John

3:7 Don't be astonished that I told you, 'All of you must be born from above.'

The Lord Jesus explicitly used these words: ‘all of you must be born from above.’ Those who wish to be saved have to be born again. Those who want to go to heaven must be born again. This is why it is

extremely important whether or not we are truly reborn. This can be summarized this way:

Without regeneration, all humans are destined for eternal destruction.

Without regeneration, there will be no true joy or peace.

Without regeneration, there will be no hope to have a vibrant life.

The Sixth Discovery

The sixth great thing he found out was that 'no one is too old to be saved'.

John

3:4 Nicodemus asked him, "How can a person be born when he is old? He can't go back into his mother's womb a second time and be born, can he?"

The Lord Jesus gave Nicodemus a clear and definite answer: 'Nicodemus, you too can be born again into new life.' Of course, He does not refer to a natural phenomenon, but one that is supernatural. This refers to a spiritual awakening, which cannot be explained on theoretical grounds. Even if you have been spiritually dead until today, you can be born again into a totally new life. You can be connected to the living God, your debts will be redeemed and you can experience the certainty of true salvation. Those who believe in the Lord Jesus and accept Him will be saved and become the children of the Father God.

John

1:12 However, to all who received him, those believing in his name, he gave authority to become God's children

The Seventh Discovery

Nicodemus' seventh great discovery was that there was only one way to be born again. There are many different routes to reach the top of mount Fuji, but there is only one route that leads to salvation.

John

3:14 Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up,
3:15 so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.

3:16 "For this is how God loved the world: He gave his unique Son so that everyone who believes in him might not be lost but have eternal life.

The Lord Jesus loved Nicodemus and said clearly to him, 'I will have to be lifted up just like the serpent in the wilderness. I will have to be crucified. This way, I will take the punishment that is due to you. Only

through my vicarious death, will your debts be canceled and will your sins be forgiven.

'If you desire to be saved and born into the new life, believe in me. Believe that my redemptive death is enough to pay out all debts of sins of this world. The living Lord God loves you from the bottom of His heart. The Lord God will sacrifice me for you and forsake me. He will do so for you to have eternal life by believing in me.' So said the Lord Jesus to Nicodemus.

'The way that leads to your salvation is extremely easy.' Anyone who desires to have eternal life will obtain it. No one is too old or too young to be saved. Also, there is no one in this world who is too bad to be saved or too stupid to be saved.

The one who was crucified took the punishment upon Himself, in our place. He who was resurrected from the dead still resides among us to this day to provide the complete forgiveness of sins to anyone. Please lend your ears to the words of the Lord, to what He promises to you.

John

5:24 Truly, I tell all of you with certainty, whoever hears what I say and believes in the one who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged, but has passed from death to life.

Those who believe in the Lord Jesus and His words are assured eternal life. Those who have eternal life won't be judged. This is because the one who sacrificed Himself and took our judgment upon Himself now pleads for us and mediates for us to God. Those who have the Lord Jesus have passed from death to life.

Those who are saved are 'those who discovered the same seven great facts' that Nicodemus found. They all make the following confessions:

1. The Lord Jesus accepted me and found me before I even started to seek him. The Lord Jesus not only understood my pains, but He cleaned all my sins and solved all my worries.
2. The Lord is far more than just a great teacher. He is my savior and my redeemer. The Lord forgave my sins and paid all my debts. The Lord gave me true peace of mind.
3. I learned from my own experience that flesh is always the flesh and that flesh can't change flesh, as clearly stated by the Lord Jesus. Any effort of the flesh will not help me to obtain the joy of true salvation.
4. The Lord Jesus did not create any religion. It was through regeneration that I was given an eternal life.

5. Not only did the Lord Jesus grant me a new life through the regeneration, but He also gave me true joy, profound peace and strength to live. Without His regeneration, I would have had no hope.

6. I was saved. Even someone like me was redeemed. Thus, the possibility of salvation is open to all. The grace of the Lord is sufficient for anyone, and the Lord wishes to have mercy on all men.

7. There is only one way that leads to eternal salvation and it is the Lord Jesus. To know the Lord is vital to living a truly meaningful life. What the Lord Jesus gives us is perfect satisfaction.

These are the testimonies of the saved brothers and sisters. May the name of this amazing Lord be praised and revered through the lives of all our brothers and sisters.

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