

Confronting The Cloudiness

A Visit With John

Chapter 3

“Now there was a man named Nicodemus. He was of the Pharisees, the rulers of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night and said to him, ‘Rabbi, it is clear to us that you are a man of God and a teacher. No one is able to do these signs which you are doing unless God be with him.’ (3) Jesus answered, ‘**Amen! Amen! I am saying to you, unless one be reproduced from above, one is not able to see the kingdom of God.**’ [Reproduced as in born as an offspring (in like kind)] Nicodemus said toward him, ‘How can a man be reproduced when he is old? Shall he enter into his mother’s womb and be born a second time?’ Answered Jesus, ‘Amen! Amen! I am saying to you, unless one be begotten out of water and out of spirit, one is not able to enter into the kingdom of God. The one reproduced out of flesh is flesh, and the one reproduced out of spirit is spirit. (This is a clear statement of distinction between the two natures.) You should not marvel that I said, “One must be reproduced from above.” The wind blows where it wills, and you hear its sound, but you do not know from where it comes and to where it goes. Thus is everyone reproduced out of the spirit.’”

(9) “Nicodemus said, ‘How can these things be?’ Jesus answered, ‘You are the teacher of Israel and you do not know these things?’”

Nicodemus was an eminent member of the group of Pharisees teaching Israel. And Jesus is saying that he doesn’t know these things. In other words, “You are totally immersed in religion yet you’ve missed it. You don’t get it.” So being immersed in religion doesn’t make us get it necessarily. Jesus continues:

(11) “ ‘Amen! Amen! I am saying to you, we proclaim what we know and we bear witness of what we have seen, and you do not receive our testimony. If I tell you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you ever believe when I tell you heavenly things? No one is ascending into heaven except for the one descending out of heaven, the SON OF MAN. Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, thus it is necessary that the son of man be lifted up (that is, manifested in plain sight), so that everyone trusting in him may have life everlasting. For God loves the world **thus**: He gives the monogenic son, so that everyone believing into him might not be destroyed but might be having life everlasting. God sets the son apart into the world not to judge the world, but rather to deliver the world through him. The one believing into him is not judged. The one not believing is judged already, because he has not believed into the name of the monogenic son of God. This indeed is the judgement: light has come into the world, yet men love darkness rather than light, for their behaviour is erroneous. Everyone practising worthless (deeds) hates the light and shuns it for fear that his behaviour be confuted; the one practising the genuine (the authentic way) comes toward the light, that it be plainly seen that his deeds were done in divinity.’”

This visit with Nicodemus, Jesus is laying down what I think to be clearly the distinction between the heavenly and the earthly, and how man has so much tried to bring down heaven to earth rather than receiving the heavenly in order to rise into the heavenly. Traditionally, Christians use the scripture in verse 16 in the New King James Version, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son that whoever believes in him might not perish but have everlasting life.” Christians quote this all over the place and they interpret it to mean that God gave His son to be killed on a cross, and to be our perpetual substitute sacrifice, etc. What John is writing and recording what Jesus is saying is this: “For God loved the world in this way...” Not “so much” in the quantitative sense, but rather it is the descriptive love, the type of love. “God loves the world in this way: He gives the monogenic son (not the only begotten son, but He gives the template of the son of a single father) so that everyone believing into him (God and the monogenic son) might not be destroyed but might be having life everlasting.” If I don’t believe in a monogenic son, if I don’t believe that I need to be of one, single father, then I can’t get it (what God intends for me). It is key to receiving the light. God gave the template of a monogenic son. As we read through the witnesses, John and Matthew, and read the stories about Jesus, we keep hearing Jesus referring to his father as being his single source of life and the single source of his learning, the only one in whom he believes, and he only wants to do His will, and so forth. It is a singular focus. This is the invitation of God. But when we are independent, and we claim independent thinking and we philosophize about God this, and God that, and we read this teacher and we read that preacher, and we assemble a whole hodgepodge of theories, and we make up a theological, religious thesis, we get nowhere. Jesus dispels all of that. Monogenic... Monogenesis...