

Lent 2

Wednesday, March 4

Looking toward Sunday, March 8

Scripture: John 3:1-21

¹Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. ²He came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God." ³Jesus answered him, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above." ⁴Nicodemus said to him, "How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?" ⁵Jesus answered, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. ⁶What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷Do not be astonished that I said to you, 'You must be born from above.' ⁸The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit." ⁹Nicodemus said to him, "How can these things be?" ¹⁰Jesus answered him, "Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?"

¹¹Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. ¹²If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? ¹³No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. ¹⁴And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

¹⁶For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

¹⁷Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. ¹⁸Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. ¹⁹And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. ²⁰For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. ²¹But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God."

Questions:

1. What word/phrase stands out to you in this passage?
 - a. How does that word/phrase connect with your Lenten journey?
 - b. How does that word/phrase connect with your life?
2. Imagine that you an opportunity to go and speak with Jesus, like Nicodumus did. What is that question that you want to ask Jesus? Put it another way: what's that question that keeps you up at night?
3. As Nicodemus' conversation with Jesus continues, it seems he becomes more and more confused by Jesus' answers. Though perhaps seeking to believe, he can't seem to wrap his mind around what Jesus is suggesting.
 - a. Can we believe that which we don't understand?
 - b. What in your faith has been difficult to understand and/or to accept?
4. As Jesus talks with Nicodemus, he notes that people love darkness rather than the light (vs. 19-21).
 - a. Where have you experienced being "in the dark"?
 - b. Why is it easy to stay in the dark?
 - c. What does that look like for you to move away from the darkness and into the light?
5. What in this passage reflects your journey with Jesus? What in this passage reflects specifically your *Lenten* journey this year?

My prayer to Jesus this week is...

Return to the word/phrase that stood out to you as you began engaging with the text. Turn that word/phrase into your own prayer to Jesus.

Prayer of the Week

Father God, you loved this world so much that you sent your own Son, Jesus Christ, to live and die among us, all so that we might have life. What gift you have given us, and what love you have bestowed upon us! And yet, O God, at times, your promises seem like words on a page. At times, they seem too good to be true. And at times, it's all just too difficult to comprehend. Time and time again, we hear your promises, and yet, we still struggle to believe. So, Father God, come, and seek us out. Come after us in the dark corners of our doubts and fears, and bring us into your abundant light. Teach us to follow in the way of your Son, and birth us all anew, that we might come to see you with new eyes of faith. This we pray, in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.