

One of the distinctive features of the Gospel of John is his emphasis on conversations Jesus had with various people. He seems more intent on presenting what Jesus said more so than what He did. It is not a coincidence that he began his gospel describing Jesus as the Word. He has several long conversations with various people including a long conversation with the Samaritan woman. The Lord's supper is a really long conversation too. You have the conversation with religious leaders and the conversation in Chapter 17 which the conversation with His Father in that great intercessory prayer. But of all the conversations John records this one must be one of the top three in significance. It takes place early in the ministry of Jesus. Jesus has made quite a splash as he has started his ministry with the campaign through Galilee and now several trips into the south Judean region. Not only has Jesus sparked a lot of interest on the part of the common people but now he has the attention of the religious establishment. One of the things all four gospel writers emphasize is how closely the ministry of John the Baptist was to the success of Jesus ministry getting off the ground and provoking such popularity. John truly was a forerunner, and he paved the way for Jesus to so easily garnish such an audience.

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His association with John the Baptist, the fact he was literally preaching the same message of repentance because the Kingdom of God is at hand and his being baptized of John in the Jordan and even having John’s confirmation that He was the Messiah and King. John had said He was the one who would come after him and when John was taken off the scene it left a vacuum for Jesus to command center stage. Those in the religious community were concerned when these movements arouse among the people. It was always a concern for them when big crowds were gathering for spiritual or religious meetings, and it was outside the jurisdiction of their religious hierarchy. If they were going to lead and be in command of representing the people especially to the Roman authorities they needed to keep the people adhering to them and what they were doing. Consequently, they were always suspicious and even threatened when someone like John the Baptist comes along and is preaching anti-establishment stuff and operating outside the structure and apparatus they had in place. John was very problematic for them because John was not pulling any punches, and he was calling even them out for their hypocrisy and corruption.

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John didn't just preach against the sins of the people; he talked about their sins and publicly criticized them for things they were doing.

They had been stung by the events of John being so popular and then him being arrested and executed by Herod. Everyone saw John as a legit and a prophet and many people blamed them and accused them of his death. They felt like they were responsible, and they did not do enough to save him from being killed by Herod. When the ministry of Jesus took off like a jet and it was said he baptized more disciples than John, they became concerned and worried about how Jesus might challenge their authority and leadership as God's representatives. They did not want to repeat the mistake they had made with John and clearly at this early stage in the ministry of Jesus they wanted to see if they could work with Jesus and not suffer more damage to their reputation.

The conversation takes place after Jesus had taken Galilee by storm. His fame had spread throughout the entire Jewish community. Jesus even got the attention of King Herod who supposed he was John the Baptist resurrected.

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He too, was concerned about the ministry of Jesus but killing John the Baptist had made him very unpopular, and he knew messing with Jesus might provoke a full stage revolt by the people. He knew better than to cause a stir because the Romans would likely remove him from office.

Nicodemus was a highly ranked member of the Sanhedrin. I would suspect that he came representing the entire council of religious leaders. He came at night because he was not certain of the outcome, and he did not want a lot of public attention. He clearly says we are meaning that he was not merely talking for himself.

Clearly Nicodemus is confused as to what exactly Jesus was doing. He wanted to know what Jesus had in mind with all this preaching, baptizing and especially doing miracles. He acknowledges that Jesus must be of God otherwise he would not be able to do the miracles that He was doing.

However, he was sent to Jesus to find out what Jesus literally planned to do given all this attention and activity that was created by His ministry. He wanted to find out where was all this going. Was Jesus planning to overthrow the Roman occupation and set up an independent state like they had under David and Solomon?

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What they really feared was that He would set up a competing religious structure and literally replace them and cause them to lose their jobs and position? When he said repent for the Kingdom of God is at hand, did he mean He would become the king over a new earthly kingdom? Nicodemus needed to know so that the religious establishment could know how to respond to all this attention being given to Him.

The Romans were pretty much entrenched and firmly in control of all of Palestine. Jesus did not appear to have any army or any ambitions to get together a fighting force to drive out the Romans. And yet he and John the Baptist before he was executed keep talking about the Kingdom of God. The only kingdom they knew was a military kingdom with a massive army and conflict to fight to get their freedom. Nicodemus comes to him by night because he doesn't even want the Roman authorities to know that he was meeting with him because it was what He was planning they might implicate him too as being a part of the coup.

The first thing out of the mouth of Jesus is state distinctly and defiantly that the Kingdom He was talking about required for the people to be born again to see it and later he says enter it.

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In other words, the kingdom He was talking about was a spiritual kingdom not merely a physical nation. You must have the experience of being born again. You must have a spiritual birth in which you interact with this kingdom through your spirit. He says again because he is not referring to your birth into the world. He is talking about a birth into the realm of the Spirit.

Jesus says verily, verily I say unto you. When Jesus said that he was about to say something very significant and very serious. Listen to what I am about to say. It is a warning that what I am saying must be heard. Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. You cannot understand what this is about from the outside of it. You can't grasp it or perceive it if you are not in it. You want to know what the Kingdom of God is requires that you experience it before it will be real to you. You can't see it from a vantage point of merely looking at it, it doesn't work like that. The Kingdom of God is something that requires you to be in before you can really see what it is. You can't stand on the outside and see what is going on in the inside. He is letting him know that what he is trying to discern is undiscernible from his standpoint, from where he is. If he wants to see it, he has first to position himself so that it is visible to him.

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Being born again is about being converted, becoming a part of those who have fully bought in and are a part of what God is doing through what Jesus is preaching. Nicodemus wants to get the benefits of something that he has paid the price for. Jesus puts it back on him, you can't get what I am saying if you remain detached or not a part of it.

Once you come in you will recognize what it is, but you can't know it if you are going to stand outside. It is something that must be internalized to be fully comprehended. It makes no sense if you are not in it.

You must undergo a change inside to experience what is available and being offered for you today. Perception and access are only for those who are transformed. Being born again is the birthing of a new you in which you repent of your life you lived in the past and receive forgiveness through the provision of Jesus Christ redeeming you by his sacrifice. You become a type of person that did not exist before. You are a child of God. This is a change because before all you had to do was to be born into a Jewish family and you were automatically the chosen people of God. The promises made to Abraham applied to everyone born as a part of Abraham's seed.

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This is a radical departure because Jesus is explaining that that is no longer the criteria to be God’s people. Now what is required is that you become born again before you can be in the kingdom of God. No more of this family stuff, group stuff and attaching yourself to your Jewish heritage. This is going from something you are born into to something everyone must do on their own. It is a personal decision based on an individual basis as opposed to something you receive simply because of your race and family background.

All this formalism, tradition and following rituals and lifeless procedures is no longer in play. It is time to shift from carnality to spirituality, from the flesh to the spirit, from natural to spiritual, from external to internal, from material to otherworldly, from dead works to invigorating life, from human to supernatural.

Jesus wants him to understand that he does indeed mean that He is setting up a new kingdom. He is setting up a new world order. This is a revolution in a sense that Jesus was calling people to come under divine leadership. This is literally an insurgence and departure from secular and worldly submission to human or physical authority to coming under the oversight of God Himself. This is not a political change.

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This had nothing to do with a military war with the Romans. Jesus was not seeking to organize the people to set up a rebellion to go back to have a Jewish nation like they were before under David and Solomon. Jesus is talking about as spiritual Kingdom. He is advocating for a personal spiritual transformation from the inside out.

It is funny because here we are two thousand years later and most people to this day are still confused about what Jesus was doing.

Jesus did not come to set up this present church system where people go worship in a building and that is how they practice their faith. Kingdom means the reign of God. It means the rule of God over all those who come under His rule. He established a King that we are to relate to and to have a personal relationship with. It is not being a church member; it is being a citizen of the country we call the Kingdom of God. Just like you may be a citizen of America or Germany or France, when you are a part of the Kingdom, you are a citizen of God. The term church is only mentioned three times in the gospels and all those times are only in the book of Matthew. The term Kingdom of God is mentioned over 50 times in the four gospels and more if you include kingdom of heaven as in Matthew who didn't want to offend the Jewish readers.

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The benefit of being born again is twofold. First you can see and perceive in the spiritual reality and second you can be in the spiritual reality. Salvation is about being able to have access a realm of reality that enables you to see things that are not visible or recognizable in the natural. God reveals things to you that your physical senses cannot comprehend. Because you are in this realm of reality you have a shield of protection. You have resources that are beyond this world. You are in the world but not of the world.

You have weapons of warfare that are not carnal but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds. You are positioned in a place where no weapon formed against you can prosper. Nothing can separate you from the love of Christ. All things work together for your good. Your enemies become your footstool. It's like you get double for your trouble. You get beauty for ashes and the oil of joy for the spirit of heaviness. It is all about your perception and placement of the spirit. Being under the rule of God means you are literally able to be privy to the best information available to thrive and succeed. Your alignment to God allows for you to always see exactly what you need to do and how you are to respond. The perception of the Kingdom of

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God allows you to be more influenced by God’s power and authority than anything or anyone in the natural.

Being that you are in the rule of God you are in the world, but you governed by the rules of God. Think of it this way, you can travel to another country, but you are a citizen of the United States. You can be in another country, but you have the backing of the United States government. The difference is that while the government of the United States is limited but the rule of God is unlimited. God’s jurisdiction is anywhere all the time in any place. Faith is possible when you know you are under the rule of God.

Your entire perspective changes when you know the real state of things and you are in a place where God is in control of what you are always. When you are conscious of God’s rule over you there is never any reason to be concerned. Never any reason to panic. You are never at the mercy of any situation. The Lord is the ultimate authority, and he can do anything at any time that is necessary for you.

At no time in the entire ministry of Jesus did He ever experience anything where He did not know what to do and not be in the position to access God for

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whatever He needed. When you see God and you are under his rule you just find yourself living freely and without fear or anxiety.

It is a Kingdom mindset where you process everything differently and live beyond your physical circumstances. For example, you know you have access to unlimited resources. You have power originating from places out of this world. You have ways God can move in your life that are out of this world. Nicodemus is trying to figure out how is He able to do the things that He is doing because he doesn't see where this power is coming from but things in the Spirit cannot be seen with your natural eyes. The things in the Spiritual realm are unexplainable in natural terms. It's like you can see things happening but you can't see how it is happening because it is coming from the realm of the spirit. This is a game changer because when you have a kingdom mindset you are doing things that people who are not in the Kingdom cannot see how you are doing it. Faith is a kingdom mindset where you draw from a realm that is invisible, unlimited and all-powerful. You are living in the world with this invisible shield bubble allow you to live victoriously no matter what is going on around you. When you have a kingdom mindset you get healed and the doctors cannot figure out how it happens. They cannot see it or know it

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because it came from the rule of God. A kingdom mindset allows you to lose your job and still have more money than you ever had before because your money is coming from sources that are supernatural.

What God does for us is impossible because it is coming from sources out of this world. Have you ever thought where the food came from when Jesus fed the five thousand? What about when the Manna fell from on high for the children of Israel. If you think about it some of the things God has done in your life, you have no idea how it happened other than there were some sources out of this world.

When we have kingdom mindset things come to you that you cannot explain are coming from places beyond this earth. You have these lapses in your mind because at various times things happen that you have no idea how it happens. It's like you have money that came literally out of nowhere.

You have things happening to you that you cannot attribute to any human source. You cannot tell exactly how you got from point A to point B.

(Footprints in the sand poem).

When you look at me, I am more than meets the eye. (David and Goliath)

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Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Promotion does not come from the east or the west it comes from the Lord. When the enemy comes in like a flood, the Lord lifts the standard against Him. Elijah and the widow are an example of provision coming from the spiritual realm.

The miracles he performed was because He is king and He is bringing to this realm things coming from the realm of the Spirit that He rules over. Another way to put it is God rules over this world by drawing from a power and authority in His rule over the Spiritual realm. He calls those things that be not as though they were. Things that are seen were not made of things that are seen.