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| John 3:1-17  | The Nicodemus Delema | Pinelands – 9am – 13/07/2025 |

A Ski jumper appeared in good form as he headed down the jump,

 **but then,** for no apparent reason,

he tumbled head over heels off the side of the jump,

 bouncing off the supporting structure down to the snow below.

What the spectators **did not know** was that the ski jumper…

**chose to fall rather than finish the jump.**  ***Why?***

He explained later,

*‘the jump surface had become too fast, and midway down*

 *the ramp, he realized if he completed the jump, he would*

 *land on the level ground, beyond the safe sloping landing*

 *area, which could have been fatal.’*

**To change one's course in life…**

can be a dramatic and sometimes a painful undertaking,

***BUT*** **change** is better than a fatal landing at the end.

**This is the problem Nicodemus is having.**

Jesus tells **Nicodemus** that he is facing a fatal landing…

***IF…***  he does not change his direction.

**Nicodemus** hears the words of Jesus and he **is confused.**

It is surprising to us that **Nicodemus** is so confused.

He’s a religious leader and teacher…

He should understand the spiritual lesson

***BUT…***

Somehow he feels he has ***MISSED*** some crucial truth…

 There is… **something…** missing,

**Something…** not there,

**Something…** he cannot put his finger on.

**Nicodemus** ***has an inkling*** that Jesus has the answer…

That Jesus is offering something new /different.

**BUT…** **Nicodemus** is hesitant, uncertain about…

making such a change, being different.

***Why?*** - Is he… SO slow, SO hesitant,

SO uncertian to make the change?

Let us look at this man **Nicodemus…**

He was a Religious Man…

  He clearly knew the Decalogue and Torah by heart

He was A Teacher of Israel…

If anyone knew the truth about God…

and God's people, surely it would be this man.

 Knew the law… Therefore well educated

He was a Member of the Sanhedrin…

 He came from the right pedigree / the elite

 He would judge cases and disputes…

 Everything except capital punishment.

 Therefore he was a powerful person.

**Nicodemus:** *- had it all -* ***Success, Power,***

***Position, Religion…***

It is possible to **HAVE** and **BE** all these things…

***AND*** still be unfulfilled, directionless, LOST

Are we not soo… similar to **Nicodemus…**

 **We -** - Have all we need… *(is there anything you need)*

- Are rich *(car, house, computer)*

 - Are educated *(read… how many cannot)* - Powerful *(speak - listen, employ)*

 - Religious in a sense *(have a faith)*

**But…** There must be more than **THIS…**

 **Is there not an inkling,** a desire, a longing for more?

 A sense… of unfullfillment, of lostness

***That*** there must be more…

***What we need…*** whether we admit it **or** not is…

 **To CHANGE.**

**Jesus** knew **Nicodemus** needed it… **and so do we.**

**Nicodemus** had an inkling he needed it… **and so do we**

**BUT…** ***Why?*** is **Nicodemus…** ***Why?*** **are we…**

Soo slow, hesitant and uncertain to make the **CHANGE**

**MAYBE…** **It is because WE ARE…**

**1) TOO Comfortable Spiritually**

***TOO******COMFORTABLE…***

 - Being **OK** with small excuses not to attend a shared life group

 - Being **OK** in not attending community worship

 - Being **OK** with not reading the scriptures daily

 - Being **OK** with broken relationships

 *(in-laws, friends, collegues)*

 - Being **OK** with not praying daily

 - Being **OK**…. Living LIFE differently…

outside of your church context

 ***“Is God happy with where you are?”***

**Why are we** soo hesitant to make a ***CHANGE…***

**MAYBE…** **It is because WE ARE…**

**2) TOO Focused on things that are not eternally significant.**

 ***TOO FOCUSED ON…***

 - Keeping up with the latest fashion trends

 - Having the latest electronic gadget

 - Climbing the corporate ladder at the expense of others

 - Isolating ourselves from the world / community around us

 - living in excess of what we need and want

 - How many - cars do you really need

 - shoes do you really need

**Why are we** soo hesitant to make a ***CHANGE…***

**MAYBE…** **It is because WE ARE…**

**3) TOO blind to the ‘God Needs’ around us**

 - Ignoring the plight of the hungry,

those who will not eat tonight

 - Being oblivious of those being persecuted

 - Having a lack of compassion for the destitute

 - Not inviting the lonely into your group

 - Unconcern for the unsaved

If you have an… **INKLING….**

That there must be MORE… *in your Spiritual life*

 That something is… *missing / not there*

Then **maybe** you need to make a ***CHANGE.***

The ski jumper had to make the change…

**OR ELSE…** face a fatal landing.

 **What change do you need to make…**

 **What needs to change in your life?**

**MAKE THE CHANGE…**  before the **FATAL LANDING**

***Payer…***

God of second chances,

who is patient with our confusion

 and who leads us into greater understanding

day by day…

We ask you God,

give us ears to hear and souls willing to search,

grant that we may be…

born anew each day into hope,

born anew each day into joy,

born anew each day into your realm.

God, When we become legalistic in our living,

teach us the language of forgiveness.

When we become concrete in our thinking,

lift us into the ways of your Spirit.

When we become stuck in religious patterns that lead us away from you,

bring us back to a living faith with You.

Lord, May your grace become the context of our days.

Amen.

**John 3:1-17**

**Jesus and Nicodemus**

There was a Jewish leader named Nicodemus, who belonged to the party of the Pharisees. One night he went to Jesus and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher sent by God. No one could perform the miracles you are doing unless God were with him.”

Jesus answered, “I am telling you the truth: no one can see the Kingdom of God without being born again.”

“How can a grown man be born again?” Nicodemus asked. “He certainly cannot enter his mother's womb and be born a second time!”

“I am telling you the truth,” replied Jesus, “that no one can enter the Kingdom of God without being born of water and the Spirit. A person is born physically of human parents, but is born spiritually of the Spirit. Do not be surprised because I tell you that you must all be born again. The wind blows wherever it wishes; you hear the sound it makes, but you do not know where it comes from or where it is going. It is like that with everyone who is born of the Spirit.”

“How can this be?” asked Nicodemus.

Jesus answered, “You are a great teacher in Israel, and you don't know this? I am telling you the truth: we speak of what we know and report what we have seen, yet none of you is willing to accept our message. You do not believe me when I tell you about the things of this world; how will you ever believe me, then, when I tell you about the things of heaven? And no one has ever gone up to heaven except the Son of Man, who came down from heaven.”

As Moses lifted up the bronze snake on a pole in the desert, in the same way the Son of Man must be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life. For God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not die but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to be its judge, but to be its saviour.