

Jesus Continues His Conversation With Nicodemus John 3:17-21

by David Servant

David Servant's sermon emphasizes the necessity of individual belief and repentance for salvation, as illustrated through Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus.

Scripture: John 3:19

Topics: "Salvation By Faith", "Repentance From Sin"

Description

David Servant preaches about the necessity of believing in Jesus for salvation, emphasizing that it is a free gift from God earned through Christ's sacrifice. He explains that people's disbelief stems from their love for sin and reluctance to change their ways. Those who repent and turn away from sin demonstrate their true belief in Jesus as the Son of God. Servant highlights the importance of living a life that reflects one's faith in Jesus, as true Christians strive to please and obey God.

Transcript

Jesus really wanted Nicodemus to understand how he could have his sins forgiven and be born again. Nicodemus needed to know that salvation is not something that he could earn, but something that was earned for him by Jesus Christ and is therefore a free gift from God. It is only through Jesus that anyone can be saved. That is why Jesus told Nicodemus that God sent His Son into the world, not to condemn it, but to save it. God wants everyone in the world to be saved because He loves us all.

If God wants every person to be saved, then why isn't everyone saved? The reason is because people have a part to play in their salvation. As Jesus explained to Nicodemus, every person must individually, by himself, believe that Jesus is the Son of God.

But why doesn't everyone believe that Jesus is the Son of God? Jesus explained the answer to that question by using the words darkness and light. Darkness represents ignorance (which means not knowing the truth). Light is symbolic of knowing the truth. When you turn out the lights in your bedroom at night, you are somewhat ignorant of where things are. You can't see where you're going and might stub your toe on your bed. But when the light is on, you can clearly see your path. Now you know what you didn't know when you were in darkness.

Jesus said that light from heaven came into the world. He was speaking of the truth that He brought from God the Father and shared with people on earth. Jesus said that people love the darkness and hate the light. They stay away from the light. That is, they don't want to know the truth that Jesus brought.

But why don't people want to know the truth? Jesus also explained that. The reason is because people don't want to stop sinning, and they know that if they come to the light and believe the truth, they will have to change the way they live. So they remain in the darkness, purposely believing all kinds of lies from Satan so that they can continue rebelling against God.

That is the reason, for example, that some people believe that there is no God. Even though it is obvious from looking at all God has made that He must exist, people don't want to believe it because they know that if there is a God, He has a right to tell them how to live. They want to control their own lives and keep sinning, so they believe the lie that God doesn't exist.

Thankfully, some people come out of the darkness into the light. Those are people who willingly repent of their rebellion against God because they believe the good news that Jesus is the Son of God who freely offers them salvation. This is why it is necessary to repent, or turn away from sin and selfishness, in order to be saved. Repenting of sin doesn't earn us our salvation---but repenting is the proof that we really believe that Jesus is the Son of God.

Some people think they are saved even though they have never repented of sin, but they are mistaken. True Christians, although not perfect, are trying to please God and obey Him. People who are constantly sinning aren't really saved. They are still living in darkness, believing the lie that they can have a relationship with God while they continue a lifestyle of disobedience to Him. They will go to hell when they die. But those who have truly believed in Jesus, as proven by how they live their lives, don't have to worry about going to hell. As Jesus said, "There is no judgment awaiting those who trust" Him (John 3:18).

Q. Nicodemus heard everything he needed to know in order to be saved, but our reading today doesn't tell us if he believed it. Do you think Nicodemus ever "came to the light"?

A. According to other scripture verses, we know that he did. He helped another man, Joseph of Arimathea, bury Jesus' body after He was crucified (see John 19:38-42). By doing so, because he was a ruler and well-known teacher of the Jews, Nicodemus risked being rejected by many people who hated Jesus. But it is better to believe in Jesus and be rejected by others than not to believe in Jesus and be rejected by God and cast into hell!

Application: Sometimes kids who are raised in Christian homes and who have always been taught to do the right thing have a hard time remembering when they first believed in Jesus and repented of their sins. Perhaps you are one of those kids. If you are, don't let it concern you. The important thing is, do you believe in Jesus right now? And is your faith in Jesus evident by how you live your life? Are you trying to obey God? Perhaps your parents, if they were not raised in a Christian home, can tell you about when they first believed in Jesus and repented.

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