

The Nighttime Visitor

John 3:1-21; *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 167-177

When a mother says she's going to "change the baby," what does she mean? How is she going to change it? Into what? You know what she means. But what did Jesus mean when He said, "You must be born again"?

Crickets chirped in the grass. Night birds sang. Quietly Nicodemus walked toward the place where he had heard he could find Jesus. He didn't want anyone else to see him talking to Jesus.

When he found Jesus, Nicodemus said, "Teacher, we know You came from God! Your miracles tell everybody so!"

Jesus may have smiled in the darkness. He knew that Nicodemus really wanted to believe in Him. But Nicodemus was an important Pharisee, a member of the Jewish council. He came to Jesus late at night because He didn't want the other Pharisees to know.

Nicodemus knew that Jesus was a teacher sent from God. But he wasn't sure that Jesus could really be God's Son.

Jesus looked steadily at him. "Nicodemus," He said, "miracles are not the most important thing! Unless you are born again, you will not see God's kingdom."

"Born again? What does that mean? I can't go back inside of my mother! I'm a grown man!" Nicodemus exclaimed.

"You're right, my friend," Jesus answered. "But I'm not talking about being born physically. I'm talking about being born spiritually. Truthfully, Nicodemus, unless you are reborn by God's Holy Spirit, you can't be part of God's kingdom."

"I don't understand," Nicodemus said thoughtfully.

"Think about the wind for a moment," Jesus replied. "You can't see the wind itself. But you can see

what happens when the wind blows. You can see the treetops sway and hear the rustling of the leaves. When the Holy Spirit comes into a person's life, it's like that. You can't see inside a person's heart, their mind. But you see what happens in their life, because their life is new and clean. Their life is changed."



The Message

God's love
changes us.

Memory Verse

**"See what great love the
Father has lavished on us,
that we should be called
children of God! And that
is what we are!"**

(1 John 3:1).

It was quiet as Nicodemus thought about what Jesus was saying.

"Nicodemus, your physical life came from your parents," Jesus continued. "But a person's spiritual life comes from the Holy Spirit. When a person chooses to let God come into his or her life, God helps them change their sinful mind, and gives the person a brand-new one. That's being born again.

"Nicodemus, I have good news for you! God loves the world so much that He sent His only Son here to save the world. When someone believes in Him, God can give them

that brand-new life! And that new life means you are born again! And those born again will receive the gift of eternal life!"

Nicodemus learned something that night that everyone must learn. Jesus loves us so much! He is ready right now to take our sinful

hearts and lives and give us new ones! Will you let Him give you that new, clean heart today? Will you be born again? Will you take the gift of eternal life that He wants to give you?

You might want to say something like this to Jesus: "Dear Jesus, thank You for loving me! My life is sinful. Right now I want to give it to You. I ask You to give me a new, clean heart and mind instead. Change my life to be more like Yours. Thank You for Your gift of eternal life. I love You, Jesus! Amen."





S A B B A T H

DO If possible, go for a walk with your family to a windy place. While there, read your lesson story together. Ask everyone to close their eyes and listen to the wind. Then talk about what each person has heard and felt. How does this remind you of the Holy Spirit?

PRAY Thank Jesus for the wind. Thank Him for the Holy Spirit too.

DO Make three large hearts. Write a part of your memory verse on each. Mix them up and ask your family to put them in the right order. Ask: What does it mean to be a child of God?

S U N D A Y

READ Ask your family to go with you to a dark place. While there, read John 3:1, 2 together. Ask: Why did Nicodemus go to Jesus at night? How did he know Jesus was sent from God? How do you know that Jesus was sent from God?

SHARE Share the butterfly or heart made in Sabbath School with someone. (Or draw a heart and write the memory verse on it.) Tell them about Nicodemus and his visit with Jesus. Talk about how God's love changes people.

M O N D A Y

READ With your family, read and discuss John 3:3, 4. What is the difference between being born as a baby and being born again? How would you answer Nicodemus's question?

ASK Ask to see your baby pictures. Talk about how you are different from when you were a baby. Are you growing in Jesus too? How can that happen?

SING Sing some praise songs, then thank Jesus for loving you. Is His love changing your life?

Pharisees like Nicodemus were very strict about keeping religious laws.



T U E S D A Y

READ For worship today, share John 3:5-9 with your family. How did Jesus explain the work of the Holy Spirit to Nicodemus? How do you know when it is windy? How do you know when the Holy Spirit comes into your life?

DO Find out how caterpillars turn into butterflies. (Hint: Look in an encyclopedia, or with your parents' permission, look on the Internet.) Draw a picture of the life cycle of a butterfly that lives in your country. How does that remind you of being born again?

PRAY Thank Jesus for beautiful butterflies.

W E D N E S D A Y

READ For worship today, read and discuss John 3:10-15 together. Then read Numbers 21:4-9 to learn more about Moses and the snake. How is Moses' experience with the snake like Jesus' experience years later? Did the snake save those who looked at it? When and how was Jesus "lifted up"? (Read Mark 15:32.) Who was saved then?

DO Look at a picture of a human heart. Is it really "heart" shaped? Does Jesus really "change" your heart? What does He change when people accept Him into their life? (Read Philippians 2:5.)



THURSDAY

READ

Read and discuss John 3:16, 17 with your family today. Ask your family to close their eyes and say these verses together. What gift has God given to the world? Why?

MAKE

Make and give someone a present (it can be small) just because you love them. How does it make you feel? How do you think God feels about His gift of Jesus to the world? How do you feel about it?

DO

Say your memory verse together, then thank God for giving us Jesus.



FRIDAY

READ

For worship tonight, find out what happened to Nicodemus after that nighttime visit. Read together *The Desire of Ages*, pages 176, 177 (last four paragraphs of chapter 17). What do you think Nicodemus remembered about his secret meeting with Jesus?

SHARE

Ask family members when and why they chose to accept Jesus' love. Were they baptized? What was their life like before knowing Jesus? after? Do you want to be baptized too?

SING

Sing about Jesus and how His love changes people. Praise Him for His love that changes lives.

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PUZZLE

Directions: Find what Jesus told Nicodemus by using the grid. First, look across the top of the grid to find the letter, then move down the number of spaces. Write that word on the line above the code. Not all words in the grid will be used.



B-1

C-2

A-3

B-2

C-3