

Quarter 1 Lesson 5
Sixth Grade
Jesus' Early Preaching and Healing
A. Nicodemus Visits Jesus

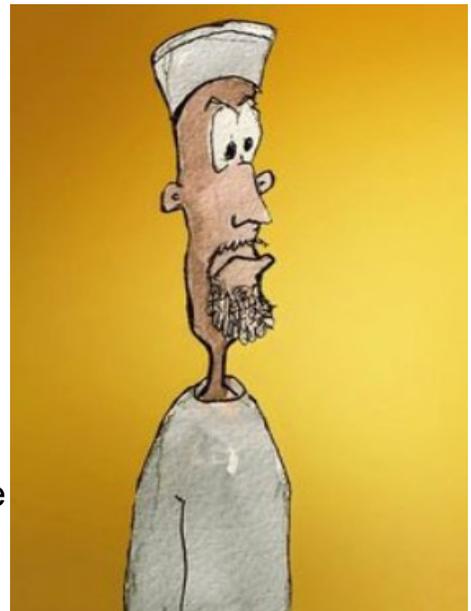
Memory Verse: "For God so loved the world, that He gave his only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life."

John 3:16 (ESV)

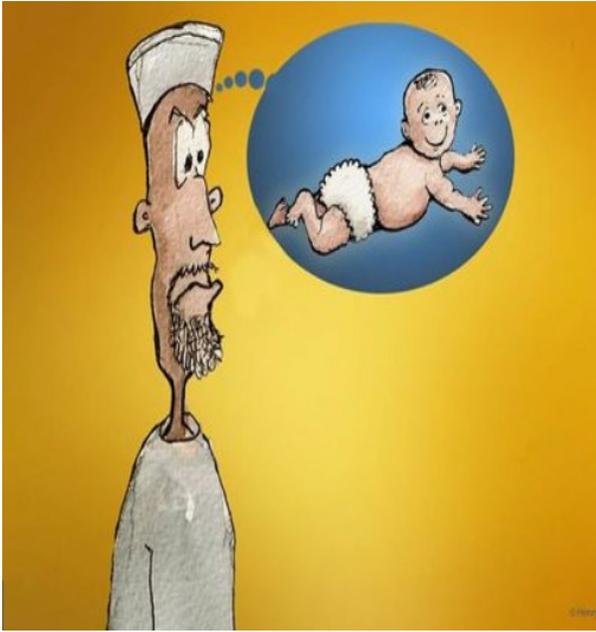
A. Nicodemus Visits Jesus John 3:1-21 (ESV)

*"1 Now there was a man of the **Pharisees** named **Nicodemus**, a ruler of the Jews. 2 This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, '**Rabbi**, we know that You are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him.'"*

(Nicodemus was a member of the Sanhedrin, the highest ruling court of the Jews. He was also a Pharisee which was a Jewish sect that believed in the resurrection. From other scriptures which mention Nicodemus, we can infer that he was a sincere and just man. He had obviously seen some of the miracles which Jesus had performed and was wise enough to understand that these signs would not be possible unless God was with Him.)



*"3 Jesus answered him, '**Truly, truly**, I say to you, unless one is **born again** he cannot see the kingdom of God.'"*



"4 Nicodemus said to Him, 'How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?'"



*"5 Jesus answered, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, **unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.** 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7 Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'"*

(It is very likely that Nicodemus had heard of the kingdom about which John the baptist had preached, and Jesus is telling him how to enter that kingdom. The problem is that Nicodemus just doesn't "get it." He is thinking about a physical birth when Jesus is talking about a spiritual birth. So Jesus explains further.)



"8 'The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.'"

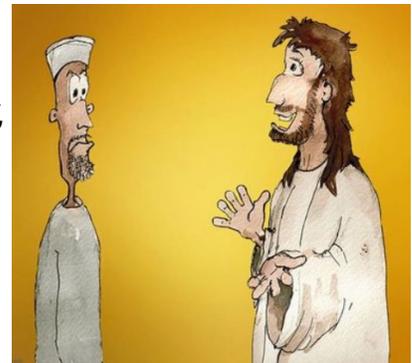
(Let's look at this poem by Christina Georgina Rossetti:

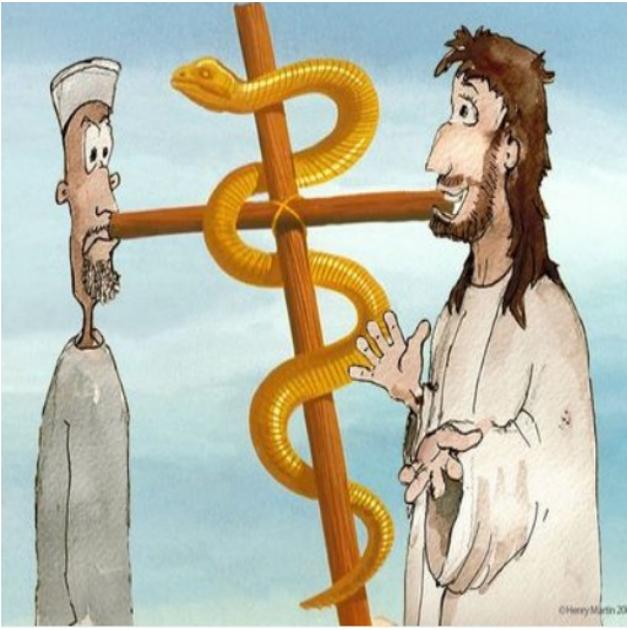
*Who has seen the wind?
Neither I nor you;
But, when the leaves hang trembling,
The wind is passing through.*

*Who has seen the wind?
Neither you nor I;
But, when the trees bow down their heads,
The wind is passing by.*

Just as we cannot physically see the wind, we can see the effects of the wind as it blows. Believers don't go around wearing a sign that says, "Look at me. I'm a Christian!" Instead, the world should be able to see the effects of following Jesus in our lives. The world should see that we are different. Our behaviors and our hearts are to change. Even if we were considered to be "good" people already, as Christians we are to strive to be even better--more focused on God and serving Him. The world can see the effects of the Spirit in our lives by our attitudes, our conduct, our joy, and our love for God.)

*"9 Nicodemus said to Him, 'How can these things be?'
10 Jesus answered him, 'Are you the teacher of Israel and yet you do not understand these things? Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know, and bear witness to what we have seen, but you do not receive our testimony. 12 If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things?'"*

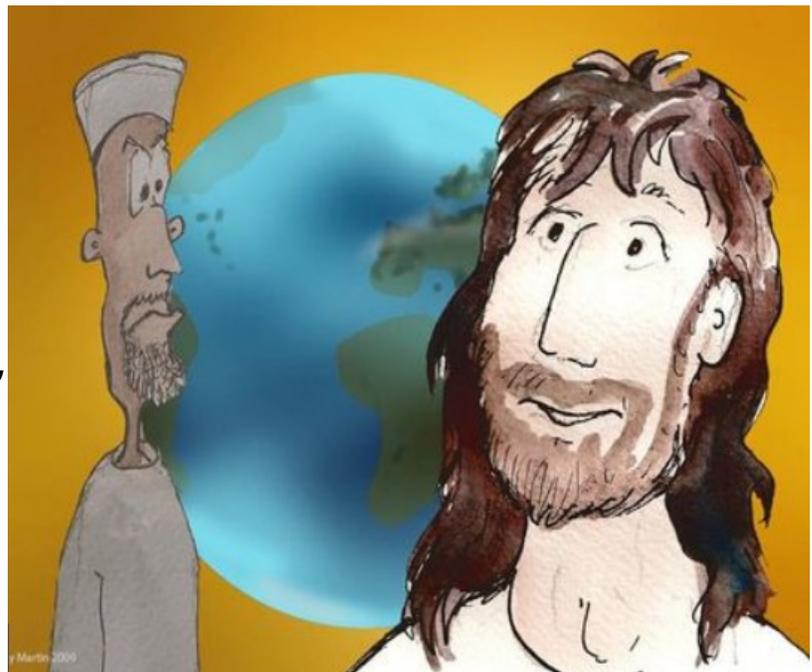


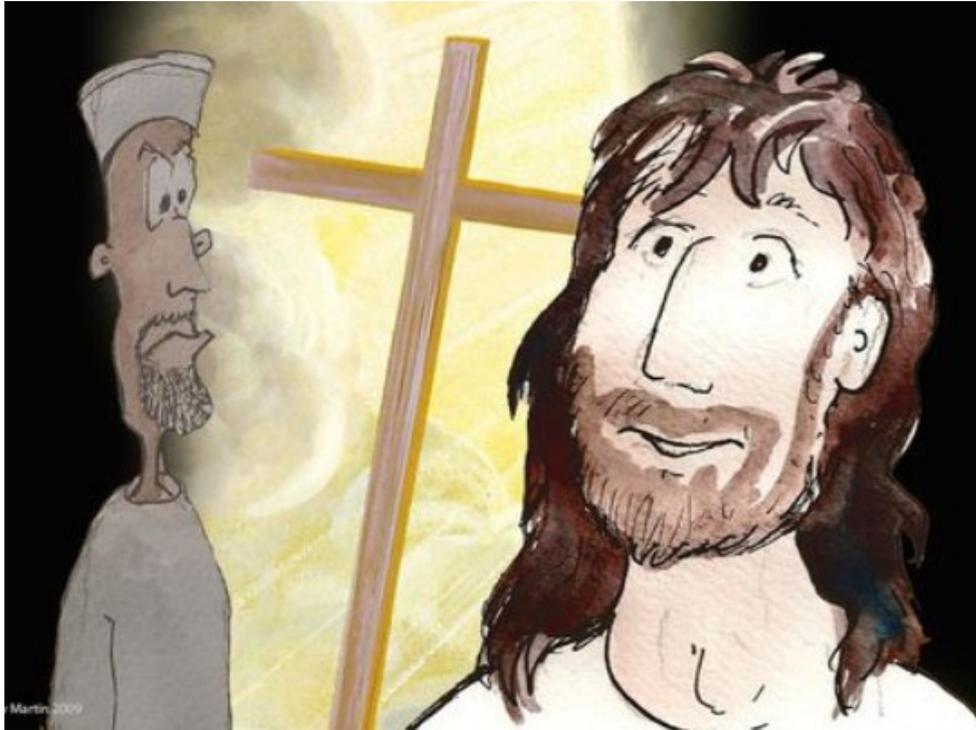


*"14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, 15 that whoever believes in Him may have eternal life. 16 **For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.**"*

*"17 For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that **the world might be saved through Him.**"*

(The next few verses go on to explain how Jesus is "the light" that "has come into the world." Unfortunately, people who do evil love the "darkness", or sin, more than they love Jesus.)





*"21 But **whoever does what is true comes to the light**, so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God."*

Just think about it. Nicodemus had the opportunity to have a one-on-one conversation with the Messiah, but did he realize it at the time? After his visit with Jesus, how did Nicodemus feel? That night did he get a restful sleep, or did he toss and turn as he thought about the words of the Master? Later on when Jesus was crucified, we do know that Nicodemus helped Joseph of Arimathea prepare His body for burial and watched as it was laid in the tomb. Did he ever become a Christian? The Bible doesn't tell us. We certainly hope he did.

What about us today? Do we have any idea of how much God loves us? He gave His Son so that the world would have a chance to be saved and spend eternity in heaven. However, so many people prefer to live in darkness--sin--rather than living in the light--following after Jesus. God gave us free will. He allows us to choose how we will live. What do you choose?

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