

Books of the Book Series

The Gospel of John Outline of Script for TV Production 3ABN Studios March 4-12, 2013

8. *The Nicodemus Story (John 3:1-36)*

8. Scene A. Nicodemus: Representative Character

The concept of acted parables and representative characters

Read [3:1-2](#)

Transition (*de*)

Never the start of a new section

Connected to 2:23-25

“A man” (of the Pharisees)

Builds on “knew what was in a man”

Example of inadequate faith

“By night” (genitive of time)

Emphasizes quality of time

Soul in darkness

Belief on basis of signs

Three types of faith

Nicodemus an illustration of inadequate faith, based on miracles

Jesus knows what Nicodemus came for, but He doesn't commit

Himself to Nicodemus

An example of the best Judaism could offer

Pharisee, wealthy, educated, Sanhedrin

“The” teacher of Israel ([3:10](#))

“Signs” were the basis for Nicodemus' faith

Sometimes “seeing” does more harm than good

At least he comes from darkness to light

Judas goes from light to darkness

8. Scene B. Solution One: Water and Spirit (3:5-8)

Read [3:5-8](#)

Water of birth or water of baptism?

Rabbis: Babies made from uterine water, residue is left

Mainstream Jews didn't need to be baptized until John the Baptist

	Physical	Spiritual
v.3	--	born from above
v.4	womb	--
v.5	water	spirit
v.6	flesh	spirit
v.7	--	born from above

If water = birth, Judaism is regarded as birth oriented

Cf. Negative water of John 2

Cf. Physical water of John 4

But water can also represent Jesus (water and Spirit tied together)

Cf. John 4 (*hallomenu* = used of the spirit in LXX)

Cf. John 7 (springs of living water from belly)

Could water of John 3 be baptism?

– If Nicodemus is one of the Pharisees in 1:24-28

Birth is enough for a Jew, wouldn't naturally think of baptism

– Concept of water/spirit cleansing is a live concept in Judaism

[Ezek 36:25-27](#)

1QS 3:6-9

Ps Sol 18:5-6

Cleansing of Israel precedes Messiah

– 3:22-36 shows that “born from above” is related to John’s baptism

8. Scene C. Solution Two: The Cross

John 3:9— How can these things be? [3:14-15](#)

As a result of the “lifting up”

Monogenês in [3:16](#)

“World” = world of men in John

“Believes” = faith = a verb in John, never a noun

Object of the verb = Jesus (trust)

Present tense = ongoing action

monogenê = unique, darling, dearly beloved, used of Isaac in Gen 22

Can mean only child (*gennaô*)

Can mean unique or special child (*genos*)

Which is intended here?

John emphasizes uniqueness of Jesus’ sonship

Believers are always *tekna* of God
1:12; 11:52

Only Jesus is a *huios* of God
1:49; 3:16-17

“Only-begotten” Latin also has two options
Unicus, Unigenitus

(choice reflects doctrinal debates of 4th & 5th Cent)

“Whosoever”

Acted parables: Nicodemus, Samaritan woman (cf. later), Gentile
nobleman

8. Scene D. Judged by the Light (3:18-21)

Read 3:18-21

3:16-17 = God's positive purpose

Salvation, not condemnation

3:18-21 = possible negative result

v.18 Judged by the gospel

Believing is the decisive element

v.19 Light = call to faith

Rejection of light → judgment

[Why do people reject, when it's free?]

v.20 Fear of exposure

Authenticity → acceptance of Jesus

v.21 Acceptance of Jesus → authenticity

The call to faith always brings judgment

Faith in Jesus is the only way to God's positive purpose

Rejection of faith blocks the way

Therefore, every call to faith brings judgment

Jesus and the Baptist (3:22-36)

3:22-30

John's disciples upset because the crowds are going to Jesus

John's humility

3:31-36

Evangelist's comment on 3:30, the greatness of Jesus

All things are under His control

8. Scene E. Spiritual Lessons

- Reasons for lack of faith (3:18-21)

Why would anyone turn down the gospel since it's absolutely free?

Because it means coming clean about all the dirty little secrets

Sinful human nature runs from reality

It feels threatened when others come to the Light

That's why unbelief ---> persecution

The gospel brings out either the best or the worst in people

What areas in our life are we most trying to hide from Jesus, others?