

John 3:1-16
Desire for God, the Truth

I believe that the more difficult and difficult the reality is, the greater the comfort and peace of the Lord will be to us. As it gets harder to gather together, I hope that we will deeply reflect on the meaning of community and discover the will of the Lord who has called us as one body.

This text is about a man who set out in search of God who is the truth. His name is Nicodemus. He was a Pharisee. He was a graduate of the rabbinical school that taught the law at the time. And he was one of the leaders of the Jews. At that time, Judea had a council that made judgments. Nicodemus was a member of that council. He had a high social reputation. To have these privileges means to be the envy of everyone. Nevertheless, there was an unfilled space in his heart. In such a situation, he saw the traces of God, a clue to God through the work of Jesus.

At that time, the Pharisees, the scribes, and the council were displeased Jesus and rejected the influence of Jesus, who had no rabbinic education. They were trying to knock Jesus out anyway.

Nevertheless, Nicodemus went to Jesus. "You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." If we believe in this Word, don't we need such a passion for the truth like Nicodemus?

He discovers the truth through conversation with Jesus. So, what did Nicodemus discover through Jesus?

First, Nicodemus found where he was standing.

This is verse 3. "Jesus answered and said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Jesus says that Nicodemus must be born again. He had an education, fame, power, and social status that most people would not have. Nevertheless, it is impossible for Nicodemus to see the kingdom of God. If even Nicodemus could not solve the problem, what about us?

When we stand before the truth, we know that we are sinners. When faced with the truth, we are faced with the fact that I am wrong, that I am a failure, and therefore I must be born again. It makes us feel guilty. We want to deny this fact.

But the great men of faith all confessed that they were sinners. So was Isaiah, Moses, John and so on. No one has met God and raised their head. Whenever we come before the truth, we are asked to repent. You are asked to turn around. Every time we come to church, every time we pray, if we repent, it is evidence that we see ourselves standing before the truth. The starting point of God's work of salvation is on that place. When we discover that we are wrong, we are eager to find the way to salvation. He discovers the truth through conversation with Jesus. So, what did Nicodemus discover through Jesus?

Secondly, it is a way of salvation.

This is verse 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." To enter the kingdom of God, a person must be born again of water and the Spirit.

It means that it is not something that we can do with our human will and effort. What we can do with hard work, sweat, and effort is to become like Nicodemus at best. Don't you have to work hard to get to the point where

Nicodemus is standing? Even if we could get to the position of Nicodemus, it would be too far away from the kingdom of God.

I am not denying that we strive to live well and create a happy family. Rather the opposite. We must do our best to live the life we have been given. However, I'm here to point out that acquiring a position, fame, or wealth that everyone would envy may not bring true satisfaction and happiness.

If being born again is possible with water and the Holy Spirit, it would be not material things but a spiritual change, a change of heart. If it is the kingdom of God that can be achieved with many materials, that God will be called unfair. Because some people can have a lot of wealth from birth, while others can't get as much as they want no matter how hard they try. However, if entering the kingdom of God is a matter of the heart, the story is different. Even a small child can have it, and over hundred years old people can have the kingdom of God. It will be possible for a healthy athlete going to the Olympics and for a patient in an intensive care unit as well.

Beloved, God is fair and has opened the door of His kingdom to everyone. Whether you are stuck in lockdown or in a situation where it is difficult to move on your own right now, the kingdom of God can come to you. How happy is this?

He discovers the truth through conversation with Jesus. So, what did Nicodemus discover through Jesus?

Finally, he discovered who the subject of salvation was.

Verse 16. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."

Western-oriented Australian culture is egocentric. We want to be the subject of our own life. We live in a world where we believe our lives are worthwhile when we set goals for ourselves, plan our lives, and achieve those goals.

However, Jesus speaks to Nicodemus from a different point of view than we think. He says that the problem of salvation is not something we can solve. It is that God did it, God does it. God loved you. God had a plan to save you, he has executed the plan, and he has completed it.

Beloved, the subject of our salvation is God. How much God loves us, can he give himself up for us? God has done it all. All we can do is accept Him. The best expression of our love for God is accepting by faith what God has done.

Nicodemus appears three times in the Gospel of John. Before meeting Jesus in chapter 3, Nicodemus was a man who had to go to see Jesus at night, avoiding other people. But after meeting Jesus, who is the truth, he changed. In 7:51, he becomes the defender of Jesus. "Does our law judge a man before it hears a man and knows what he has done?" Nicodemus knew what bad things would happen if he sided with Jesus. Nevertheless, he stood on the side of Jesus. In chapter 19, he appeared as the keeper of the end of Jesus. Unlike the disciples who ran away because they were afraid of personal threats, he held the funeral of Jesus. And finally, according to tradition, Nicodemus went to the point of martyrdom like

Jesus. Because when he met Jesus, who is the truth, he knew that he had received eternal life.

Loving brothers and sisters

When we stand before the truth, we discover that we are ashamed and sinners. Still, you have to stand there. Let us remember that our salvation is not in the abundance of things, but in our hearts. Remember that true satisfaction and salvation come from God and through God in God.

There is a saying that a person born once dies twice, and a person born twice dies once. Desire for God who is truth. He alone will set your life free.

May this blessing be upon you all in Jesus' name.