

17<sup>th</sup> September  
Sandy Lane (Cowdenbeath Gospel Hall)

Reading: John Chapter 3 verse 21 and 31-36

This is the story of a man named Nicodemus. He was a Pharisee by practice, Judaistic by religion and a Ruler. We can assume he was an upright man with authority. He came to Jesus by night with an inquiring mind seeking the answers to his questions. He came with an idea in mind with the focus being on finding the answer to the meaning of the statement: "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3).

Nicodemus would be used to debating but the Lord cuts to the chase and tells him "Ye must be born again" Nicodemus could not understand by natural reasoning how this could be achieved, it was a physical impossibility.

The Lord explains, "That which is born of flesh is flesh" (3:6). A natural man with all the baggage that comes with being a fleshly man, in particular with all the sin, cannot see the kingdom of God.

"That which is born of spirit is spirit" (3:6). There needs to be a spiritual birth as well as a physical birth.

Nicodemus had had the physical birth but he still needed the spiritual birth.

The Lord continues with, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit" (3:8). You can feel and see the effects of wind but you cannot physically see wind. In the same way, you cannot see the Spirit of God but you can see the effect of Him at work.

The Spirit of God does His own work and God wants to do something in us that we can never achieve by natural effects. He wants to fill us with His Spirit so that we are born again and can have a spiritual relationship with God.

Jesus speaks to Nicodemus regarding what he knew. He had a knowledge of the Law of Moses. In Moses day the children of Israel had been released from Egypt yet the people moaned to Moses about their condition (Numbers 21:5-9). God had provided everything for them, but still they were sinning against God and could not go unpunished. God sent fiery serpents in amongst them and when they were bitten they died. The people were perishing physically but their problem was spiritual as their hearts were out of tune with God. The people went to Moses and asked what they could do? they probably thought that they would need a penance but God is not looking for a penance. He is looking for a change of heart.

God told Moses to make a brass serpent and raise it up on a pole. The pole would be in full vision of the camp. If you had been bitten all you had to do was look at the serpent and you would be healed. The command was simply, "Look and live". God had said this was the way it would be so it was so.

"For God so loved the world" is a statement of fact. This is right but there is something else behind it. "He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life".

Some things you can measure height, length, volume. The love of God you cannot measure. "So" is an

immeasurable word. Includes the whole population beyond our scope.

There is a choice to be made between perishing or having everlasting life. Choose your category. How can you get everlasting life? - by believing on the Lord Jesus Christ and making Him your Saviour.

Everyone of us has a personal possession that belongs to only them. You can have personal salvation and eternal life will be yours.

In our hearts is sin, we are all born with it. Sin is rebellion against God - you just have to look at a child one of the first words they learn is "No".

Saying "No" to the Saviour is an act of defiance. God has made provision that we can be saved but we have to make the choice to receive or reject.

"Perish" is an old-fashioned word but the perishing of the soul means it will languish in hell for eternity. Hell is a place of weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth: a place of regret. God wants to save us now through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Procrastination - putting off or delaying. Procrastination is the thief of time. Don't put off till tomorrow what you can do today. None of us is promised tomorrow (Proverbs 27:!). Don't procrastinate!

In verse 18, the condemnation has gone for the one who believes. If you have not trusted in Him when you come to be tested by the light of God, you will be found wanting.

Where do you stand with God?

What is it to be?

He is above all (v 31).

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life" (3:36), this is your opportunity to take it.

"Everlasting life" is a present and perfect possession.

What is the alternative?

"He that hath not the Son shall not see life"

Under the sentence of death and condemnation to a lost eternity but the sentence has not been executed yet. You have another opportunity.

Defiance leads to a lost eternity. Submission to God's word leads to salvation. We are forgiven if we receive God's Son as our Saviour. What are you going to do with Jesus Christ?

What you do determines where you will spend eternity. The choice is Heaven or hell; there is no grey area.

If you reject Christ in life, he will reject you for eternity.

Salvation - something to look forward to - that can't be taken away.