

**day 1:** (John 3: 1-2) Nicodemus slips away in the night to speak with the revolutionary teacher, Jesus. His curiosity has gotten the best of his rule keeping and entrenched religious career. A man of “professional religion” he lacks true conversion. He knows much about God, but he’s never met God. In this passage, he finally comes face to face with the God he has studied, yet struggles to recognize him. How is this possible? How can one know so much about God, yet not believe? Do you see yourself in Nicodemus at all?

**day 2:** (John 3: 1-2, 16-21) Re-read these rich verses. Why is Jesus so “magnetic” to Nicodemus? Why do the crowds throng to Jesus? In Nicodemus’ own words, we catch a glimpse into the answer. “Rabbi, we know you are a teacher who has come from God...” To Nicodemus and to all people, Jesus is Light. He is God daring to enter the darkness of humanity’s lost-ness. As the first glimmers of dawn’s sun, Jesus warms, wakes, and bids us come near him. Let’s think of how we were/are drawn to Jesus.

**day 3:** (John 3: 1-8) The Greek word for wind is also often translated spirit. At first glance, Jesus’ statement about the wind seems disconnected from this conversation. However, when we hear it as Nicodemus heard it, it teaches us. We know the wind blows, but few of us can really explain why or predict its patterns. So it is with the Spirit of God. We know he works. The Spirit is everywhere and always at work, after all, it has reached us. But who can explain why or how it has truly happened? Instead, perhaps we should praise. We should thank God for allowing his Spirit to reach us and give us the chance for a transformed life.

**day 4:** (John 3:3, 5, 11) Please forgive the overly simplistic observation. Jesus uses this phrase often (did you catch it?), so often, in fact, that we nearly gloss right over it. Jesus always tells the truth. His words are without equal. When he speaks, it is only truth. In a world where words seem redundant and meaningless, Jesus speaks truth...always. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John contain Jesus’ words. Beyond these little devotional thoughts printed here, I challenge you to read Jesus’ words. Let them penetrate your thoughts. Meditate on them.

**day 5:** (John 3: 14-15, Numbers 21: 4-9) Moses’ entourage of reluctant followers had a problem with snake bites. As Moses prayed, God offered a strange remedy. Make a snake, put it up high on a stick, and when the people are bitten, if they look at the snake, they will live. Jesus rescues this story from historical obscurity and re-invests it with a powerful truth. The Son of Man must be lifted up for real life to occur. Jesus was lifted up on the cross, and we know that his death gives us life. And, Jesus must be lifted up among us who are living—exalted, praised, honored with obedience. Lift up the Savior.

## *Lifting Jesus Up*

Sunday, March 22, 2009

John 3:14-21