

Twenty-One Days With John

Day 3 – John 3

Prayer: Holy Father in heaven, often we wonder just how much You loved us. Often we doubt if You are really here. Sometimes we wonder if Jesus really can make a difference in our lives.

Father, send Your Spirit so that we might see again the overwhelming love You have for us. In Your holy name we pray. Amen.

Meditation:

“God so loved the world.” It’s really a pretty bold statement, isn’t it! How many people do you know actually believe that God “loved the world.”

Many people do not see God as a God of love. Some think that God is impersonal, indifferent and uncaring...if He exists at all. Sometimes Christians can get discouraged when we experience evil, suffering and death in this world. Even in our tears, we can often wonder, “God, are You really there? And if You are, are You really loving?”

To live a life of doubt and fear, wondering if God could love us is a terrible way to live. Perhaps that was Nicodemus’ way of life. He was religious. In fact, he was a highly-placed, highly-respected member of the Jewish religious elite.

But he was looking for a new hope, a new direction, a new way to live. If only he could be born again and start out life all over again...without baggage, issues, difficulties, mistakes and failings. If only...if only...if only.....

When Nicodemus approached Jesus, he did it at the cover of night. Certainly he did not want to be caught by his peers. They would have certainly reprimanded him for meeting with Jesus. But he also didn’t want others to know his desperation, his pain and his inner seeking.

When people share confidences with a friend, a pastor or a counselor, it is always under cover. Whether it be a locked room, a private meeting place or in darkness, in the cover of this protective space we can share our deepest hurts, our most difficult issues, our deepest pains, and our greatest longings.

In the cover of darkness, there on a roof, Nicodemus discovered that he could have a new life. That new life was in Jesus. Because God loved the world, Nicodemus could start this new life...as if he were born again, a new person. As one of the first to truly hear the blessing of new life in baptism, as one Jesus promised new life “by water and the Spirit”, Nicodemus discovered what John’s Gospel tells us in every word. “God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son...”

Are you looking for a new life? Are you tired of dealing with the same problems, issues, and unresolved weakness in your life? Are you ready for some hope? Start a new life. Receive Jesus’ invitation to be “born again” and “born anew” in His grace given in Baptism.

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Are you already baptized? Then you are already born again! Celebrate this every day, every morning, every evening!

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!” II Corinthians 5:7 (NIV)

Prayer:

Father, how great Your love is to us that You sent Your only Son for us. Enable us by our Baptisms to recall and be renewed in the new life to which You have called us. We are a new creation! Let not the old sins, past hurts, hard-to-forget failures plague us. Instead, remind us of Your love. Give us new life and lead us to serve You with joy as dearly loved children of God. For that is what we are! In Your name we pray, Amen.

“How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!”

1 John 3:1 (NIV)

Prayer:

Jesus Christ, thanks for not just speaking to us with words. Instead, You came to be God’s Word for us. In being made flesh, we have God’s Word, God’s promises made more sure. Because You are the word, we do not need to doubt God’s promises. Help us to trust Your Words of grace. Help us to listen to Your Word. Even when we doubt, Lord, keep us steadfast—always—in Your Word. In the name of Christ who is our Word of Life we pray. Amen.

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