

GETTING PAST KNOWLEDGE FOR AN ENCOUNTER WITH JESUS

November 8, 2006

John 3:1-21

SUMMARY:

Nicodemus is an intellectual, political and religious leader. He comes to Jesus wanting to gain more KNOWLEDGE about who He is. And yet, Jesus senses that Nicodemus is really wanting to know something more – wanting to EXPERIENCE something more. Jesus lets Nicodemus know that beyond all the knowledge and learning we can and should get, there must be a supernatural ENCOUNTER for one to receive the assurance ETERNAL LIFE.

NOTES:

There is a difference between an EXPERIENCE and an ENCOUNTER ...

Jesus came up with the phrase “BORN AGAIN” to describe what must happen to an individual if they are going to receive assurance of eternal life. This being BORN AGAIN results from more than simply acknowledging the facts of who Jesus is – but it comes from an ENCOUNTER with the real, living PERSON, Jesus Christ, through the work of the Holy Spirit.

YOU are not just a NATURAL person. You have a spirit, a soul, that will never die. That spirit of yours has got to have a NEW BIRTH in order for you to know that you are going to spend ETERNAL LIFE with Jesus.

Don't stop asking questions – but don't wait until all your questions are answered, either, before you enter into this ENCOUNTER!

DISCUSSION POINTS:

Introductory Question: How would you explain the difference between an EXPERIENCE and an ENCOUNTER?

Discussion: What does it mean to be “BORN AGAIN”?

What questions did you ask, or are you still asking, that may hinder you from entering into a PERSONAL ENCOUNTER with Jesus?

Do you understand the concept of confessing with you mouth and believing in your heart in order to receive eternal life?

Is the knowledge you have leading you closer to an encounter with Jesus, or farther away? Where are you seeking for knowledge?

Have YOU had an ENCOUNTER with Jesus?

APPLICATION:

- Do you have the ASSURANCE that you have received ETERNAL LIFE by having the BORN AGAIN ENCOUNTER as Jesus described in John 3:1-21?
- Take the opportunity to explain to someone else what it means to have a BORN AGAIN ENCOUNTER and why everyone needs to have a BORN AGAIN ENCOUNTER with Jesus.

ON YOUR OWN...

- Schedule time to reflect on this topic and re-read John 3:1-21. Contemplate what it means to have an ENCOUNTER with Jesus that goes beyond mere KNOWLEDGE.
- Read Numbers 21:4-9. How does this relate to what Jesus is saying in John 3:1-21?
- Read Romans 10 – What is Paul saying about Israel's experience that relates to having an ENCOUNTER with Jesus?
- Have an ENCOUNTER with Jesus!