



Northland Christian Church Group Discussion Guide For the Week of December 12, 2021

Use the questions below as a springboard for discussion. You do not have to answer every question. Pick the ones you think will be helpful. These are intended to help spark discussion. Remember, Ultimately we want God's answers, not man's opinions. Always land where God lands. (ex: Where do we see that in the Bible?) Give grace. Give time for growth. Don't force it. Growth takes time, love, good questions, & support.

Connect

- Share about the best gift you ever received. Share about the best gift you've been able to give.
- In what ways do people demonstrate they have a relationship with someone?
- How do sports fans show their pride in the teams they follow?

The Context

Today, we begin to unpack Jesus' teaching into John Chapter 3. We find out through an interaction between Jesus and a religious leader, Nicodemus, how we enter the Kingdom of God (Heaven). This is a crucial teaching as most human beings have a natural desire to earn things. To work for things. We want to please God and naturally think we have to earn that. We have to produce in order to be blessed, loved, or saved and forgiven. However, we find out that entering the Kingdom of God is all about what Jesus has done and invites us into. It's not church attendance, or the amount of money given to religious organizations, or being good that qualifies us for the kingdom. We only qualify based on the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus. It's about placing our faith and trust in Jesus and His perfect and completed work. It's about being born again (born from above) - having our heart, our inner person, reborn and remade to real and eternal life spiritually by the Holy Spirit through the grace of God. We become a new person in Christ Jesus. Let's dive a little deeper.

Engage the Bible

Read the passage and share Surprises, Takeaways, and Observations from:

John 3:1-13 NIV

"Now there was a Pharisee, a man named Nicodemus who was a member of the Jewish ruling council. 2 He came to Jesus at night and said, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the signs you are doing if God were not with him." 3 Jesus replied, "Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again." 4 "How can someone be born when they are old?" Nicodemus asked. "Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother's womb to be born!" 5 Jesus answered, "Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. 6 Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. 7 You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.' 8 The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit." 9 "How can this be?" Nicodemus asked. 10 "You are Israel's teacher," said Jesus, "and do you not understand these things? 11 Very truly I tell you, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen, but still you people do not accept our testimony. 12 I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things? 13 No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven--the Son of Man."

Discuss

1. In your own words, what is the overall message of this passage?
2. What stands out to you as we read the scripture verses?

3. In this passage, we see that Nicodemus wants to check out Jesus. What do we know about Nicodemus from this passage? Why did he want to visit Jesus? Why do you think Nicodemus came to Jesus at night?
4. How are we all like Nicodemus? How would you compare your own search for God compared to Nicodemus?
5. What is the requirement for “seeing” and “entering” the Kingdom of God? See John 3 verses 3, 5 & 7.
6. If someone were to ask you what it means to be “born again,” what would you say?
7. How might a born-again (born from above) life look different from other lives? Have you had someone in your life that modeled this? Explain.
8. If a person truly believes in something, how is it reflected in his or her life?
9. What does a person’s lifestyle look like if he or she truly believes in Jesus and follows Him?
10. The longer we are Christians, the easier it becomes to trust our own sensibilities, rules and human “goodness.” Nicodemus had religion and the Scriptures, but he did not have Jesus. How do you know that you are trusting Jesus (not your accomplishments, behaviors, or religion)?
11. How have you experienced spiritual rebirth in your life as Jesus describes it? Where is God at work in your life and relationships now?

Apply It Challenge

If you feel led, feel free to discuss any of the questions below - or - You can dedicate some time in your group in prayer and silence to begin processing these questions, but also encourage everyone to process these one-on-one with God, or with a trusted and mature follower of Jesus.

12. Take inventory of your spiritual life. Have you been trusting the wrong things to get you into the kingdom or to please God or earn His favor?
13. In what ways could you be trying to cling to your own efforts for salvation, rather than looking to Christ?
14. Make a commitment to trust solely in the perfect work of Christ Jesus and nothing else. Ask the Lord to allow love for Jesus and being born again drive the transformation and changes in your life.

End Your Group Time in Prayer