

## The Secret Disciples John 19:38-42

### Introduction

- Combing Colors
  - Blue plus Yellow = Green
  - Blue plus Red = Purple
  - Red plus Yellow = Orange
  - When you combine two separate colors they create a whole new color
  - When life and faith collide, they create new life
- Sermon Series: Jesus Christ: Friend or Foe
  - Jesus encountered many people in his life, especially in his final walk up the hill to the cross
  - With every encounter, there was a response
  - One such person that encountered Jesus was Nicodemus
- **John 19:38-42**
- Why is this story significant?
  - Because one of the most famous and most profound encounters Jesus ever had was in “secret”
  - Nicodemus is challenged between his role as a Jewish official (life) and his expression of faith.
    - Life and Faith collide
    - How will Nicodemus allow the “light of the truth” to guide his life?
- In Jesus, Life and Faith collide
  - This is the very reason why people have such a strong response to Jesus: both positive and negative.
  - The question we must ask ourselves, “Will we allow our life to collide with faith?”
- Joseph and Nicodemus are tied closely together

<b>Joseph</b> <i>Luke 23:50-51</i>	<b>Nicodemus</b> <i>John 3 &amp; 7</i>
Member of Jewish Council	Man of the Pharisees
A good and righteous man	Acknowledged Jesus
Did not consent to council's actions	Questioned judicial process
Looking for the Kingdom of God	Entrance to the Kingdom of God

- Their decision to be friends of Jesus set them apart, in a dangerous way, from the council they served.
  - Secret disciples for fear of Jews
  - Nicodemus came to Jesus at night

- Day of Preparation close at hand which indicates burial took place in the evening

#### What happens in “secret” can be life altering and necessary if life and faith are to unite

- **John 3:1-3; 20-21**
  - Dialog with God
  - Challenged with the Truth
  - Remain in darkness or walk in the light
- This conversation alters Nicodemus’ life to the point that Nicodemus feels compelled to take a stand for Jesus.
- Example of some Life altering conversations
  - Will you marry me?
  - Congratulations, you are pregnant!
  - We would like to offer you a job.
- When was the last time you had a life altering conversation with God?
- “Secret” conversations with God are necessary if life and faith are to unite.
  - Nicodemus had examined the evidence regarding Jesus’ ministry and concluded that “no one can do these signs unless God is with him.”
  - Despite the opposition of the Jewish Council, Nicodemus’ curiosity drew him to Jesus at night
  - Nicodemus exposed his heart to God’s truth.
- The “secret” conversations that we have with God provide the opportunity for our life to be exposed to the light of God’s truth. (John 3:20-21)
  - So that what is in our life might be clearly seen
  - Is how we are living our life a reflection of God’s work?

#### Transformation Takes Time and May Seem Minimal

- Think of how Jesus’ words in John 3:20-21 must have sat on Nicodemus.
  - I have all this power-a ruler of the Jews
  - My fellow colleagues believe that Jesus is just another washed up teacher who is seeking the attention of the crowds
  - But something inside of me says that this man is more than just another teacher. There’s something about him that is authentic. There’s something about him that is “Godlike.”
  - What responsibility do I have to Jesus? How does this faith impact my job as a ruler of the Jews?
- Questions surrounding Nicodemus’ faith
  - Inevitably, just about anytime I’ve taught on John 3 the question gets posed: Did Nicodemus ever become “born again”? In other words, did Nicodemus get saved, or become a Christian?
  - It’s a good question to ask, because Jesus is very clear as to how anyone can enter into heaven.
  - Plus, for a man as curious as Nicodemus, how could he just walk away from Jesus without being impacted by the Truth?

- Conclusion regarding Nicodemus: 3 passages reveal transformation or might offer evidence of being “born again” they might offer some applications for us as well.
  - Curiosity
    - this is what brought Nicodemus to Jesus in the first place
    - “you are a teacher from God, for you could not do these signs unless God was with you” (John 3:2; ESV)
    - Interest to go deeper
  - Listen and Learn
    - John 7:40-52
    - Listening and learning
    - Sounds like Nicodemus is speaking from personal experience
    - Jesus’ words impact Nicodemus to the point that he was willing to risk his reputation.
    - Something has occurred in Nicodemus’ life between John 3 and 7
  - Honor
    - Took the body of the crucified Jesus and gave him a proper burial fit for a king (John 19:38-42)
    - Again putting his reputation at risk
    - Faith in Jesus
    - Think about the progression of faith that occurs in Nicodemus’ life between John 3, 7, and 19- something happened where life and faith collided
- Transformation takes time and may seem minimal
  - Nicodemus didn’t fit in with the Jewish Council. He was set apart because he walked into the light
  - He wrestled with his life, and his faith- If Jesus really is the Son of God, then how does that impact my life?
  - Yet, Nicodemus doesn’t fit into our normal protocol of “born again”
    - Where is the sinner’s prayer?
    - Does he ever come before an altar and repent of his sins?
    - We need to know that he did all these “things” that will convince us that he made a profession of faith!
  - I sometimes have a hard time telling that my kids have grown
    - I’m around them all the time
    - They look the same each day
    - I’m very familiar with them
    - BUT, every once in awhile they will come down the stairs for school and have pants on that somehow have become shorts. Or, they will stand beside a kid that is younger than them, and I’ll think, “Wow, they have grown!”. Or, they will point to a baby picture in our house and say, “Was that me?”
    - The truth is, my kids are constantly growing right before my eyes, whether I recognize it or not.

- I can't tell you whether Nicodemus went home after talking with Jesus on John 3, knelt beside of his bed, repented of his sins, and asked Jesus to come into his heart.
  - However, I can tell you that God had to be working inside of Nicodemus before Nicodemus even came to Jesus in John 3.
  - He had looked at the evidence and concluded that Jesus was from God, while his colleagues could not accept this reality.
  - Nicodemus speaks from personal experience in John 7 as one who has listened and learned from Jesus
  - Nicodemus takes a stand for Jesus, sets himself apart from his colleagues.
  - And while other disciples denied, betrayed, and scattered when Jesus was crucified, Nicodemus was there to pick up his friend's body, and honor him with the proper burial a king deserved!
  - Nicodemus' transformation takes time, so much so, that we often miss the profound impact that Jesus had on his life.
  - It's quite possible that Nicodemus had more faith than any of the other disciples!
- Transformation takes time, and may seem minimal
  - Lesson from Nicodemus for our own transformation: listen, learn, and then respond to the truth.
  - Ask the question: "How does my faith in Jesus impact the way I live my life?"
  - But don't stop by just examining yourself.
    - We need to apply this same concept in the grace that we show toward others
    - We may find that we want people to conform, or prescribe to certain expressions of faith before accepting that God really has worked in their life.
    - However, it may be that God is working in their heart in ways that we cannot see!
    - I don't know whether you are aware of it, but Christians have a bad habit of judging other people.
      - Consider what Nicodemus says, "Does our law judge a man without first giving him a hearing and learning what he does?" John 7:51 ESV
      - Listen to other people's life-stories
      - Get to know them
      - It's quite possible that in conversation with them that it might become a "life altering" experience! And not just for them, but quite possibly for you too!
- Transformation takes time, and may seem minimal-BUT at the end of the day it's still growth!

Honor Jesus by Living for Him

- Review **John 19:38-42**
  - Joseph and Nicodemus would have had the means and authority to bury Jesus
    - Jewish council members communicate with Pilate
    - Money- 75lbs worth of myrrh and aloes
    - A new tomb
  - Does Nicodemus fit the description of Jesus' commandment in **John 15:12-15**
    - Love as I have loved you- honored Jesus
    - Lay down his life for his friend- risked his reputation
    - A friend does what Jesus commands- allowed his life to be exposed to the light of truth
    - Jesus makes known all that he has known from his Father to his friends- listened and learned from Jesus
- How have you honored Jesus with your life?
  - If Jesus really is the Son of God, what does that mean for your life?
  - Easter is not the destination. If it were, then we would just wait until next year to celebrate Easter again.
  - The world celebrates Easter as a holiday, Christians should celebrate Easter everyday of their life!
  - Easter gives direction for how we should live our lives.
  - We honor Jesus when our life and faith unite.

### Conclusion

- Secret conversations with God are necessary if faith and life are going to unite.
- Transformation takes time, so listen and learn
- Honor Jesus by living for him
  - Our faith should cause us to question our life
  - Our faith should draw our life closer to God
  - Our faith should inspire us to live for more than ourselves
- A friend of Jesus lives a faithful life!