

Jesus Teaches Mysteries John 3:9-17

9 Nicodemus answered and said to Him, "How can these things be?"

10 Jesus answered and said to him, "Are you the teacher of Israel, and do not know these things? 11 Most assuredly, I say to you, We speak what We know and testify what We have seen, and you do not receive Our witness. 12 If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things? 13 No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven. 14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, 15 that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. 16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. 17 For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. NKJV

Jesus might seem kind of rough on Nicodemus. Really, no one knows the things Jesus is telling him. But you see Nicodemus thought he did. He thought that because he had been reading and studying on the Bible that there was just not much that Jesus could tell him that he did not already know.

But right away Jesus tells him that although he thinks of himself as a scholar, he is but only a child in understanding heavenly things. And so it is with everyone, without the Word of God and the Spirit of God to teach us we could not more find out the mysteries of God than a duck could write an encyclopedia.

So let us open our minds and hearts to allow God to teach us today His mysteries.

I. The mystery of who Jesus was. V-13

A. Jesus was a man but much more than that.

1. But He was not an angel.
2. He was not Michael the Archangel either.
 - a. Michael is one of the chief angels.
 - b. Dan 10:13 "Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me" NKJV
3. One of the grand purposes of John in his gospel is to show that Jesus is unique, there is none like Him in relationship to the Father.
4. That is why He is referred to in v-16 as the only begotten Son of God.

- B. He descended from heaven where God is.
 - 1. All the secrets of the ages are in Him.
 - 2. All the workings of God from eternity are known and understood by Him.
 - 3. Col 2:2-3 to the knowledge of the mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ, 3 in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. NKJV
- II. **The mystery of God's working** v-14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up,
- A. How can God save the world.
 - 1. They have sinned and all fallen short.
 - 2. Some are better than others but none are acceptable.
 - 3. In the Old Testament there are pictures of what that salvation will look like. Jesus give Nicodemus one of them.
 - B. The serpent in the wilderness.
 - 1. The children of Israel were complaining about God's provision.
 - 2. So God sends a plague of poisonous snakes among them and many died.
 - 3. They claim to repent and ask that Moses might ask God to take away the snakes.
 - 4. But instead God commands Moses to make a likeness of one of the snakes out of bronze and place it on a pole in the middle of the camp.
 - 5. Anyone bitten who will look in faith to this bronze snake will live, while those who refuse to look will die.
 - 6. How do you think it would have worked if someone said, you know I don't like that bronze serpent, I will make one of silver, or gold.
 - 7. That was God's solution for the poisonous snake problem among the children of Israel.
 - C. The Son of man must be lifted up.
 - 1. In a similar fashion Jesus would be lifted up on a cross.
 - 2. All those who would look in faith and depend upon the sacrifice of Jesus for their sins will live, while those who do not will perish.

- D. This rules out all other plans.
 - 1. Not a matter of self-reformation.
 - 2. Not a matter of finding something else to put your faith in.
 - 3. You cannot give your way in.
 - 4. Your mother can't get you there.
 - 5. It doesn't matter who you are, what you have, or what you know.

III. **The mystery of faith** v-15 that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

- A. John 3:15 In order that everyone who believes in Him [who cleaves to Him, trusts Him, and relies on Him] may not perish, but have eternal life and [actually] live forever! AMP
- B. Gen 15:6 And he believed in the Lord, and He accounted it to him for righteousness. NKJV
- C. Real faith know the one in whom faith is entrusted.
 - 1. Abraham come first to know God and knowing Him brought about faith.
 - 2. Those who do not know God or have a false idea of who Jesus is cannot have saving faith for you cannot have blind faith.
 - 3. Faith is not a magical potion that works regardless.
 - a. Those who take the wrong medicine even though they have faith it was the right one will be just as harmed as if they knew what they were doing.
- D. According to the simplest conception of it, faith is a personal confidence in God. This implies that the individual has come to know God to some degree of real experience. *Chafer's Systematic Theology*.
 - 1. Many people say they have faith in Jesus and yet they have never met Him, took time to get to know Him, or ever talked with Him.
 - 2. James describes a living faith saves and a dead faith that does not.

IV. **The mystery of God's great plan of salvation** v-16, 17

- A. God's love
- B. He loved His creation
- C. He provided, He gave
 - 1. Only He only could provide for our salvation, for our atonement.

2. Since perfection is required, only the perfect will do.
- D. His Only Begotten Son
1. His unique Son.
 2. Does not have to do with birth order
 3. Does not have to do with generation but preeminence.
- E. That God would make the demands and meet them by Himself, alone.

Salvation is by grace alone through Christ alone by faith alone.

Those who would earn it can never labor enough.

Those who would earn it by buying it will never be rich enough.

Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but by His mercy He saved us. Tit. 3:5