Changed By Jesus
John 3:33

We are made up of spirit, soul and body. **1 Thessalonians 5:23 says,** "**May the God of peace Himself make you holy in every way. And may your whole being, spirit, soul and body remain blameless when our Lord Jesus, the Messiah appears."** Every man, woman and child consist of these three elements. The body is the part that interacts with the physical world. The soul is the mind, will, emotions and personality. The soul is where our free will is exercised. The soul is where we choose to obey God or follow our own path. The spirit is where we have the opportunity to accept the invitation that the Holy Spirit makes to us the moment we accept Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. It is important that we understand how we arrive at the decisions we make both spiritually and naturally. Until we are changed by Jesus, our decision making is outside of the influence of God.

Before we accepted Jesus as Lord and Savior we lived in the natural, we lived according to our own desires whatever they may have been. God was a foreign experience in many of our lives. We heard people speak about God but had no relationship with the creator of this world.

I want to speak to everyone through the life of Nicodemus. Nicodemus is truly a classic example of someone who wanted to know God but did not want anyone to know he was seeking God. The journey in the night was merely an exercise in spiritual camouflage. He wanted to know God but didn't want anyone to know about it. Nicodemus was no different than many of us today. We want to be Christian but we don't want anyone to know that we are. Nicodemus was a Pharisee and could be caught associating with the likes of Jesus.

Nicodemus learned the real truth of the Gospel, which was that we cannot get around it in any way shape form or fashion. You cannot know God. You cannot see the things of God. You cannot see or begin to understand the kingdom of God without spiritual renewal, without being changed by the Holy Spirit of God. It is impossible to know the spiritual world of God. If we are honest, we can see ourselves in Nicodemus. I wonder what was going through his mind when he first heard about Jesus and then ventured out surreptitiously to see for himself. This must have been quite challenging for a learned man who knew the scriptures. He thought he knew what he read in the Bible but he could not read "The Word" walking in the flesh.

We must be careful that we do not witness the things of God going on in our in our individual lives and fail to give credit to the "One" who makes it happen. However, we must give Nicodemus credit. It didn't matter in the final analysis whether Nicodemus sought Jesus in the day or the

night. What mattered was that the relationship with the Savior was sought. It was in that relationship that Nicodemus received instructions that would improve his life and save his soul.

Seeking Jesus is not a one and done pursuit. Seeking Jesus is a life time quest. It is search that will draw you closer to what is real and more lasting than anything else you will ever do. The pursuit of Jesus grows you. The pursuit of Jesus Christ changes you. The pursuit of Jesus renews. The pursuit of Jesus gives you a new perspective, an entirely different mindset. When your relationship with Jesus grows, everything in your life gets better. Your understanding of who you are grows. It is not because we have suddenly become so much better so quickly. It is because we began listening to our Counselor, our Comforter. When we let go and give in out of a genuine love and trust, life changes for the best.

After his encounter with Jesus, Nicodemus' life got better. His life did not necessarily get easier but it got better. Nicodemus changed after his night time encounter. It can literally be said that Jesus showed Nicodemus the light in the midst of the world of darkness he was living in. What happened to Nicodemus? Did Nicodemus change? According to the Gospel writer John, he did. John writes, after Jesus' death, Nicodemus would later come and take His dead body and prepare it for burial, using ***"a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds weight. So they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen wrappings with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews."*** **(John 19:39-40)**

It seems that Nicodemus grew in his courage to acknowledge his relationship with Jesus. The change that took place in Nicodemus life was because of his face to face encounter with Jesus. In our Christian we can only grow stronger. We can only become better as we grow in our relationship with Jesus. Won't you take the time to study His word? Won't you take the time to grow spiritually?

I want to remind everyone to spend time reading the entire chapter of Romans 8. It will grow you in ways you do cannot begin to imagine.

Peace and blessings to you all,

Pastor Gool