

The STORY - Week Twenty-Three

March 19, 2017

Look and Live

JOHN 3:12-18A, NUMBERS 21:4-9

Nicodemus was part of the Sanhedrin. The Sanhedrin was the supreme council, or court, in ancient Israel. The Sanhedrin was comprised of 70 men, plus the high priest, who served as its president. The members came from the chief priests, scribes, and elders, but there is no record on how they were chosen.

When Jesus died on the cross, that was the full and dramatic display of God's love. It wasn't a messy accident; it wasn't God letting the worst happen to someone else. The cross is the heart of John's amazing new picture of Who God is. But evil isn't healed fast—as it were—automatically. Precisely because evil lurks deep within each of us. For healing to take place, we must ourselves be involved in the process. This doesn't mean we just have to try a lot harder to be good. You might as well try to teach a snake to sing! All we can do—just it was all the Israelites could do—is to look and trust: look at Jesus, to see in Him the full display of God's saving love, and trust Him
N.T. Wright (2002).

Saying “I believe,” for instance, marks the difference between life and death. Our words accrue dignity and gravity in conversations with Jesus. For Jesus doesn't impose salvation as a solution; he *narrates* salvation into being through leisurely conversation, intimate personal relationships, compassionate responses, passionate prayer, and—putting it all together—a sacrificial death. We don't casually walk away from words like that. (E. Peterson, 2002).

Next week: *Jesus - No Ordinary Man!*

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THE STORY

FINDING YOUR STORY IN GOD'S STORY

Nicodemus was stuck in the 'lower story'.

Jesus spoke to Nicodemus from the 'upper story'.

Do we get fixated on our own perspective?

Is there something Jesus doesn't seem to understand?

Jesus reveals God's heart in His comments.

What part of John chapter 3 speaks to you?

When you listen to how Jesus interacts with people...

... what do you learn about Him?

He came for all, but the religious had a hard time

No poisonous snakes around, but what is?

Is something keeping you from looking to Jesus?

Look up! Look to Jesus now, and live!

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