

John: Deconstructed by Love

John 3:1-21

Summary

In this passage, Jesus has a conversation with Nicodemus, a Pharisee who recognizes the work God is doing through Jesus. Instead of offering Nicodemus explanations that align with his interpretation of Scripture, Jesus lovingly and directly deconstructs Nicodemus' identity and worldview by presenting himself as the true source of eternal life. By revealing God's radical love for the whole world and his intention to save it, not judge it, Jesus calls Nicodemus, and us, to open our hands and receive him as the provider of abundant life.

Application

1. Jesus offers himself as our deliverance and source of life. Sometimes we miss the grandeur of this offering because we're content with lesser gifts. Is there a smaller desire in your life that is keeping you from experiencing Jesus as your source of life?
2. Even in our brokenness, we have an innate sense of rightness that rises within us when we encounter injustice in our world. God, who is perfectly just, loves this world enough to send his own unique Son to save it. Take a moment to contemplate this awe-inspiring gift. How can this truth change the way you relate to the world and to those you believe deserve judgment?
3. Jesus is clear that he must be received as he offers himself. In what ways have you been expecting him to serve your identity? What would it take for that identity to be destroyed so you can receive Jesus as your true source of life?

Key Points

- Sometimes we miss Jesus because our appetites are too small. We are content with less than what he is offering.
- As a Pharisee, Nicodemus misinterpreted and reduced God's Old Testament promises. We too can misinterpret Scripture, which was not written to justify our own sense of rightness. It was given as a witness to who God is.
- Just like Moses lifted the snake in the desert, Jesus offers himself as a greater deliverance. If we receive him on his terms, despite our lack of understanding, he will give us life that cannot be destroyed.
- Jesus was sent not to judge the world, but to save the world. Judgment is therefore dependent on us and our reception of Jesus as he presents himself.

- Jesus wants to give us more. He holds himself out as the fulfillment of Scripture, as the source of life, hope, forgiveness, and salvation. When our identities are challenged, Jesus reveals whether or not he is our real source of life.

Other Scripture References

Numbers 21

John 20:31