

**Transition:**

After the loud, public commotion at the temple, John transitions to a quiet, nighttime discussion. The speakers are Jesus and a Pharisee, Nicodemus, who is sincerely interested in understanding Jesus' ministry. These verses make it clear that Christ—and Christ alone—is the means of salvation for the entire world. This text also states that those who reject Jesus are rejecting God.

**Tell the story:**

Tell the story (with passion!) the best as you can, don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story. Perhaps leave some parts out or make a mistake, just to see if your group catches it!

**Rebuild the story:**

Chronologically rebuild the story by asking questions. Have the group look for what was added or left out by looking in their Bibles and going back over the story. Then have someone else tell the story the best they can – just like you modeled the first time.

**Discussion Questions:**

1. What important group was Nicodemus part of? Why did he visit Jesus by night?
2. In what way does Nicodemus misunderstand Jesus? What does it mean to be born of water and the spirit?
3. Do you identify with the confusion of Nicodemus? Do you remember a time when you were just as confused, how were things cleared up for you?

**Fundamental:**

Jesus knew men better than they knew themselves. Nicodemus was the ancient equivalent of a politician, cleric, and professor all rolled into one. Jesus makes a clear distinction between physical birth and spiritual birth, necessary for salvation.

**Homework/Challenge:**

1. There is a need for a spiritual transformation that goes beyond intellectual understanding or outward religious practice, what religious practices have been holding you down? Share them with your group, ask for prayer
2. Share with someone this week what being “born again” is according to John 3; make sure to share your personal testimony as well.
3. Challenge your thinking: religion vs. relationship with Jesus, do you have a clear understanding of the difference.

**Discipleship Tip:**

This rebirth is not simply a change in behavior, but a spiritual regeneration enabled by the Holy Spirit.

**Prayer:**

Father, thank you for our new birth because of Jesus and the miracle you alone can do in our lives.