



Theme: Jesus Loves People THIS Much! *“Is This All There Is?”*

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Weekly Memory Verse:

⁵ Jesus replied, “I assure you, no one can enter the Kingdom of God without being born of water and the Spirit.” – John 3:5

Meditation Moments for Monday, June 22 – Read **John 3:1-19**. Most of us struggle with asking for help or asking questions that it seems we should know the answer to. We want concrete answers yet Jesus often asked questions that made people think, rather than giving an obvious answer. Nicodemus, a Hebrew leader, faced the same struggle. He saw Jesus’ obvious power and wanted to talk to this new teacher. But he came at night, not ready to risk his status as a leader. Jesus spoke to him of being “born again,” a phrase that was also a pun as the Greek word *anōthen* translated as “again” also meant, “from above.” It led to a key verse as John 3:16 contains a succinct summary of Christian theology.


🏔️ With keen irony, John wrote that Jesus went on to tell Nicodemus in verse 19 (who came “at night”), “This is the basis for judgment: The light came into the world, and people loved darkness more than the light, for their actions are evil.” That must have jolted the cautious, secure Pharisee. When has someone or something brought you up short, and given you reason to think hard about your values and priorities? How has God brought you from darkness into the light? How is that part of your story?


🏔️ Jesus invited Nicodemus to live in the light of God’s kingdom. Their talk seems to have gradually changed Nicodemus as we read about him again in **John 7:45-52** and **John 19:38-42**. How did Jesus connect the ideas of “birth” and “new life”

as he spoke with Nicodemus? In what ways (if at all) do you believe your eternal life has begun due to the impact of God's love on your life?

Prayer: *Lord Jesus, keep breaking me free from any ways in which I love darkness or certainty in a way that draws me away from you. Keep drawing me to your loving, light-giving, new life-giving presence. Amen.*


Tuesday, June 23 – Read **Hebrews 10:24-25 and Hebrews 12:1-3**. Our Christian story did not just appear out of thin air. We each are a product of the saints who have gone before, those who have touched our lives and been witnesses to us, both in big and small ways. Following Jesus means there is a legacy given to us. Sometimes that is friends, family, or historical figures. Our story also joins with others who follow Jesus in our lives today. Our story is impacted by those daily saints as well. We have the privilege of encouraging each other, bringing out the best in one another.


 In Hebrews 12:1 we read that “a great cloud of witnesses” surrounds us. This crowd is much more than just spectators making noise. Some consider this a reference to saints and angels observing us, as the crowd in a great stadium cheer on those on the playing field. Others see us observing the saints of ages past, taking heart from their consistent witness to God's faithfulness. How does the image of this great crowd of witnesses shape your daily behavior and speech? How are they part of your story today?

 Hebrews said it is our responsibility to “...throw off extra baggage, get rid of sin that trips us up, and fix our eyes on Jesus.” Our broken places are part of our story that can shape us for good and for bad, depending on what we do with those experiences. What are some types of “extra baggage” we can pick up during our Christian journey? What are some practical steps that help you fix your eyes on Jesus? How has that extra baggage shaped your story?

Prayer: *Lord Jesus, I'm thankful I don't have to do this “faith” thing all alone. Thank you for the people, in history and in my day-to-day life, who encourage and cheer me on. Amen.*


Wednesday, June 24 – Let's go back and read **John 3:1-5** again. This is the second longest conversation Jesus has in the Gospels so it's worth visiting again. Nicodemus comes to Jesus late at night and praised Jesus' “miraculous signs.” When Jesus said the most important thing was to be born “anew” or “from above”, Nicodemus seemed stuck on understanding Jesus' words literally. But Jesus wasn't saying people should crawl back into their mother's womb. He was comparing the more abstract idea of spiritual renewal to being born again, as a new person, filled with God's Spirit.


 Part of human development is moving from concrete thought patterns to abstract/conceptual thinking. Nicodemus had surely developed that, yet he chose a literal meaning for Jesus' words. Maybe that was because inherent in being born again would be the sense that following Jesus isn't a 9-5 job. It's a new way of living that transforms every part of a person's life. How does following Jesus transform your life? Have you resisted, or do you ever resist parts of that transformation?

 Jesus said it was necessary to be “born of water and the Spirit.” Scripture used the image of water, especially in baptism, to symbolize cleansing from sins. The Holy Spirit is the divine person who comforts, prompts and sustains the daily spiritual life a baptized person has chosen. It is both mysterious and beautiful to think about God being present with us always. Have you chosen both water and the Spirit as means to your life in Christ? (To learn more about baptism at Summit, visit www.summitdurango.org/baptism. You might think about getting baptized or renewing your baptism August 23 in our river baptism service.)

Prayer: *Lord Jesus, cleanse my soul with your water which washes away my sin. I invite the Spirit into my life, that I may be born again. In the name of Jesus, Amen.*

Thursday, June 25 – Re-read **John 3:6-8**. Nicodemus was a devout Jewish leader, and he knew his physical birth automatically made him Jewish. Jesus startled him, saying he needed a new inner “birth.” Scholar N. T. Wright said in his commentary, *John for Everyone, Part 1*, “God’s kingdom is now thrown open to anyone and everyone. The spirit is on the move, like a fresh spring breeze (...the word for ‘wind’, in both Hebrew and Greek, is the same word as you’d use for ‘spirit’) Opening the window and letting the breeze in can be very inconvenient, especially for the Nicodemuses of this world who suppose they have got things tidied up, labelled and sorted into neat piles.” Living with mystery and the larger questions Jesus raises takes courage to look at life differently.


 We can’t see the wind blow, but leaves move and flags flutter when it does. We sometimes see severe damage from wind and hail in our world. Jesus said the Holy Spirit’s power has changed and will change human life in countless ways. Has the Spirit ever soothed your spirit, enlightened your mind or stilled your fear even if you couldn’t pinpoint exactly how that happened?


 Scholar William Barclay in his *Daily Bible Study Series of John, Vol. 1* told of a man whose life the Spirit changed from constant drunkenness to working and caring for his family. Skeptical friends said he surely didn’t believe in miracles. He replied, “I don’t know whether [Jesus] turned water into wine when he was in Palestine, but I do know that in my own house and home he has turned beer into furniture!” In what ways has the fresh wind of the Spirit most changed your life for the better?

Prayer: *Come, Holy Spirit! Blow through the stale, neglected corners of my heart and mind, making me anew in your image and giving me the power to bless all those who know me. Amen.*

Friday, June 26 – Read **Romans 8:1-5**. The apostle Paul echoed the core of Jesus’ words in John 3:17 to Nicodemus: “God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.” We can choose to live oriented toward self, and away from God, or to live by the Spirit oriented toward God. That’s the choice that joins us to Christ’s new community, living in peace. As *The Message* version of the Bible put Romans 8:1, “Those who enter into Christ’s being-here-for-us no longer have to live under a continuous, low-lying black cloud.”


(Meditation Moments for May June 22 to 27, 2026 – For more, go to www.summitdurango.org)


 Paul also wrote in verse 3 that God sent “his own Son to deal with sin.” Moralistic religion often deepens guilt by saying it’s OUR job to “deal with sin.” How can trusting the Spirit to shape your life by the truth that Jesus has dealt with your sin and rid you of condemnation empower you to live in God’s positive principles such as servant love and living in community? How can you stay focused on your Spirit-given freedom from condemnation, rather than obsessing about the bad you don’t want to do?

 Verse 5 said our whole life, not just one day a week or even a few minutes a day, is based on “the Spirit.” How have you sensed a shift, over time, from basing your life on self-interest to basing it on the principles God’s Spirit teaches you and guides you in living? Where is your life’s “growing edge” right now? In what areas is that shift, not without struggles, taking place?

Prayer: *Lord Jesus, I choose the quality of life you showed, that you died to give me. I want to follow you faithfully—yet at times I still lose my way. Thank you for dealing with my sin. Keep teaching me how to base my whole life on the Spirit. Amen.*

Saturday, June 27 – Read **Luke 13:1-9** and **John 9:1-3**. In John’s gospel, people asked Jesus to explain the “why” of a man born blind. In Luke, they asked about Galileans who were randomly killed by Roman soldiers. Jesus’ reply in both instances showed that he knew evil often strikes at random and is part of each of our stories. God did not “single out” those who’d suffered to endure pain or loss. The open-ended parable Jesus told in Luke 13:6-9 pointed to human responsibility to “bear fruit,” not passive acceptance of anything that happens as “God’s will.”

 In John 9, Jesus was less concerned with trying to sort out who or what was to blame for the man’s blindness than he was with looking forward to how God’s power could work in the man’s life. What difficulties and challenges are you facing? How can you open “the eyes of your heart” to recognize and respond to God’s power at work in and through you?

 We could call Jesus’ story in Luke 13:6-9, “The Unfinished Parable.” The gardener asked for one more year to help the tree bear good fruit—but Jesus never said if the tree did or didn’t bear fruit. In verse 5 he challenged his hearers to “change your hearts and lives,” so it was clear what type of “fruit-bearing” was on his mind. So, what about you—instead of blaming God for troubles, how will you grow to finish Jesus’ unfinished parable in your life and share that as part of your story?

Prayer: *Lord Jesus, I want my life to bear the kind of good fruit you desire and are willing to grow in me. Keep me responsive to your guiding voice in my heart. Amen.*