

Prayer Updates



ENCOUNTERS WITH
CHRIST
Jesus' Life in the Gospel of John

**"Christ's Encounter with
a Seeker of Truth"**

Message by René Schlaepfer January 14–15, 2006

THANKS AND PRAISE

Congratulations to Paul and Ruby Flaming, who are celebrating their 70th wedding anniversary! You can send them a card at:

Sea Aire Assisted Living
1882 N. Highway 101
Yachats, OR 97498

We praise God as he continues to provide for the many necessary logistics as Faith Community Church (FCC) prepare to launch in Fall 2006. Please pray for office space and provision of startup costs.

HOSPITALIZED

Bonnie Black – multiple sclerosis complications
Laura Larue – kidney transplant complications
Daniel Vienna – heart surgery
Thelma Martin – testing

HOME HOSPICE CARE

Jim Emmons – hospice care

HOME WITH THE LORD

One of our precious shut-ins, Marjorie Grensted, is now present with the Lord. Marjorie, Beth Grensted's grandmother, would have been 100 this year and up until the very last she always greeted you with a twinkle in her eye and a smile.

Another very sweet lady, Amy Cosens, went to be with the Lord one month before her 99th birthday. Amy is Norma Welty's mother and Kelly Welty's grandmother. Amy loved the Lord, evidenced by her perpetually happy attitude.

Heartfelt prayer is extended to Greg Larue and family in the loss of his dear mother, Laura Larue. It is a comfort to know she is no longer suffering and is with the Lord whom she loved.

We want to provide pastoral support...

Please call 465-3395 when someone is hospitalized, scheduled for surgery, becomes a shut-in, or in special need. Prayer support is available through our pastors and numerous prayer groups — call 689-9400. Please pick up a Prayer Update at the Information Desk or Welcome Center.

How to find what you are seeking spiritually

"Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish ruling council. He came to Jesus at night and said, 'Rabbi, we know you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the miraculous signs you are doing if God were not with him.'" John 3:1,2

"There was a man named Nicodemus..."

- He was a _____
Never more than 6,000. Took vow to keep 10 commandments for life.
- He was a member of the _____
70 men who ran religious affairs of the nation
- He was _____ teacher of Israel (verse 10)
Nicodemus was at the top: Religiously, morally, politically, socially

Key: Do not let your _____ keep you from your _____

What does Jesus say to a sincere seeker?

1. It's not about _____ ; it's about _____

"In reply Jesus declared, 'I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.' 'How can a man be born when he is old?' Nicodemus asked. 'Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb to be born!' Jesus answered, 'I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit.'" John 3:3-6

2. It's not about _____ ; it's about the _____

"You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit." John 3:7-8

How is the Spirit like the wind?

- It's real, but you can't _____ it.
- It's powerful, but you can't _____ it.

"How can this be?" Nicodemus asked. "You are Israel's teacher," said Jesus, "and do you not understand these things?" John 3:9-10

3. It's not about _____ ; it's about _____

"I tell you the truth, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen, but still you people do not accept our testimony. I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things? No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven — the Son of Man." John 3:11-13

"Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life." John 3:14-15

Moses lifting up the snake: Numbers 21:4-9

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him." John 3:16,17

Have I _____ ?

Daily Meditations

Brief daily Bible readings related to this weekend's topic

This week's memory verse:

"Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life." John 3:14-15

Monday

Read John 3:1-2. What can you find out about Nicodemus in verses 1 and 2?

Why do you think a man in his position would seek out a meeting with Jesus, especially considering the harsh words Jesus had for the religious leaders in John 2?

Why do you suppose he came to Jesus at night?

How was your background similar to our different from that of Nicodemus?

We discover later in John's gospel that Nicodemus becomes sympathetic to Jesus, arguing for him to get a fair hearing among the Pharisees, and then later he does become a disciple of Christ — although secretly at first. If you are a believer, in what ways did you have to go through the same process to become a follower of Christ?

Ask God to open your eyes to the Nicodemus-like seekers around you. Pray for some people by name: That they might find the Jesus they seek.

Tuesday

Read John 3:3-5. The phrase "born again" has been used in so many ways for so long that Jesus' original meaning is lost for many people. How can you summarize, using as little "religious" language as possible, what Jesus meant by "born again"?

Look up the following verses that also talk about being born again. What do you learn about the new birth from these verses?

John 1:12,13

James 1:17,18

1Peter 1:3

1Peter 1:23

The obvious question we should all ask is: Have I been born again? Ask God to confirm in you this new birth.

Wednesday

Read John 3:14-21. In Numbers 21:4-9, the Israelites are dying from poisonous snake bites for which there is no antidote. God tells Moses to make a bronze serpent and put it on a pole. Anyone who looks on it in faith is miraculously healed. How does this story parallel what Jesus does for us?

Presumably there were those in Israel who refused to look at the snake. Why do you think people would refuse a free gift of healing? How does this parallel peoples' response to Christ's offer (verse 18,19)?

Thank God for His free gift of grace and healing for your spirit!

Thursday

Read John 3:22-36. It's fascinating to me that so early in Jesus's (and John the Baptist's) ministry, people are already complicating the simple message with arguments about rituals (v. 25). How does John respond to the apparent jealousy of his followers about Jesus' growing ministry?

What is the point of the analogy about the best man and the bridegroom?

How is John's response in verse 30 a good role model for you and me regarding our relationship with Jesus?

What facts about Jesus does John bring out in verses 31-36?

Ask God for wisdom in understanding what the Bible says about Jesus, especially the parts that are hard for you to grasp. Ask Him for a true personal encounter with Christ.

Friday

Today, read the passage we'll look at during this next weekend: John 4:1-42. What impressions do you have of Jesus from this story? What puts a smile on your face in this story?

Ask God today how can you apply this story to your life.

Saturday

Please pray for the services this weekend: That we would truly encounter Christ! Polish up the memory verse and finish any devotions you may have missed.