



## 2

# Night Visitor

### Study Word



*Pharisee* (far'ə sē): a Jewish ruler who knew the laws of Moses

One dark night a man came to visit Jesus. The Bible does not say why the man came at night. Most likely it was because he wanted to talk with Jesus alone. During the day whenever Jesus appeared in Judea, people gathered around Him. They felt His love for them. They enjoyed hearing Him talk. They hoped to see Him do a miracle. Only after dark, when everyone had gone home, could you hope to talk with Jesus by Himself.

The man's name was Nicodemus. He was a **Pharisee**. Pharisees taught the people to obey the Scriptures. That was right, because God had given those laws to Moses. God wanted His people to obey them.

However, the Pharisees had made up many other rules. They added them to God's laws and

said people must obey them. They said their made-up laws were just as important as God's.

Most Pharisees talked and acted very holy when others were watching them. They pretended to love God. They acted as if they were better than anyone else.



## *Lesson 2*

The truth was that many Pharisees were not holy at all. They were proud and greedy and dishonest. They disobeyed their own laws and God's laws. At the same time they expected others to honor them for being wise and good.

Yet not all Pharisees were like that. Nicodemus was a Pharisee, but he did not think he was more holy than the common people. He knew Jesus was one of the common people. Yet he believed the Teacher from Galilee was a man of God. He had questions to ask Him.

He said, "Teacher, we know You have come from God. No one could do the miracles You do unless God were with Him." That is how the ruler of the Jews began his talk with Jesus.

Jesus had said people must repent because the kingdom of Heaven was near. That is not what the Pharisees taught. They believed they were already part of the kingdom, because the Jews were God's chosen people. Besides that, they kept the Law of Moses.

Evidently Nicodemus was not so sure about that. He wanted to know. This Teacher who had come from God

ought to be able to tell him how to get into the kingdom.

Jesus said, "Unless a man is born again, he cannot even see the kingdom."

Nicodemus could not understand how anyone could be born as a baby a second time. Who would want to become a child again?

Jesus explained that He was not talking about being born again in that way. He was talking about starting a new life as a child of God. That would take a change in the heart. It was something God did, but you could not see it happen.

Then Jesus said, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Everlasting life! That is what Nicodemus wanted. That is what the kingdom of God was all about. At that very minute this ruler of the Jews was talking with the only begotten Son whom God had given to the world. Did he realize it?

Probably not. But we believe that later Nicodemus did enter the kingdom of God by believing in Jesus.



*Lesson 2*

**Underline one thing the Pharisees did that was right.**

3. They taught the people to obey the Scriptures.

They pretended to love God.

They said the made-up rules were as important as God's rules.

**Underline the answers.**

4. During the day, night many people went to hear Jesus talk.
5. Nicodemus went to Jesus during the day, night.
6. Nicodemus knew Jesus was a **Ruler, Teacher** who had come from God.
7. To be born again means to start a new life with God, become a child again.

## For Me Today

**Write the answers.**

8. Nicodemus had to wait until after dark to talk to Jesus. When can you talk to Him? anytime
9. Most Pharisees acted holy only when someone was watching.  
You know that God is always watching.

## We Remember

**Fill in the blanks.**

Mary	servants	Nazareth	water	
first	governor	best	boy	last

10. The person who said "Do whatever He tells you" was Mary.

11. The man in charge of the wedding feast was the governor.
12. Growing up in Nazareth, Jesus acted like a normal Jewish boy.
13. Jesus did His first miracle at Cana where He told the servants to fill the jars with water.
14. At a wedding they usually served the best wine first.
15. That day they served the best wine last.



## 3 Learning on the Journey Home

Jesus had become a very busy teacher. He knew that in a few years He would go back to Heaven. He wanted to teach many things before He left this earth.

One night He had taught Nicodemus how to enter the kingdom of God. Now He and his disciples were leaving Judea and going back home to Galilee. Jesus knew that before they got there He would have to be able to teach some other people about salvation. And along the way, He would

teach His disciples things they needed to know.

When they started for Galilee, Jesus did not take the road most Jews took. He took a shortcut straight through Samaria.

Most Jews did not go through Samaria. They did not like the people who lived in that country. The Samaritans were only part Jew. They did not worship at the temple in Jerusalem. So the Jews thought they were better than the Samaritans. They called them dogs.