



Shiloh Messenger

February 2015

The Exception To The Rule

“There was a man named Nicodemus, a Jewish religious leader who was a Pharisee. After dark one evening, he came to speak with Jesus. “Rabbi,” he said, “we all know that God has sent you to teach us. Your miraculous signs are evidence that God is with you.” Jesus replied, “I tell you the truth, unless you are born again, you cannot see the Kingdom of God.” “What do you mean?” exclaimed Nicodemus. “How can an old man go back into his mother’s womb and be born again?” Jesus replied, “I assure you, no one can enter the Kingdom of God without being born of water and the Spirit. Humans can reproduce only human life, but the Holy Spirit gives birth to spiritual life. So don’t be surprised when I say, ‘You must be born again.’ The wind blows wherever it wants. Just as you can hear the wind but can’t tell where it comes from or where it is going, so you can’t explain how people are born of the Spirit.” “How are these things possible?” Nicodemus asked. Jesus replied, “You are a respected Jewish teacher, and yet you don’t understand these things? I assure you, we tell you what we know and have seen, and yet you won’t believe our testimony. But if you don’t believe me when I tell you about earthly things, how can you possibly believe if I tell you about heavenly things? (John 3:1-12).

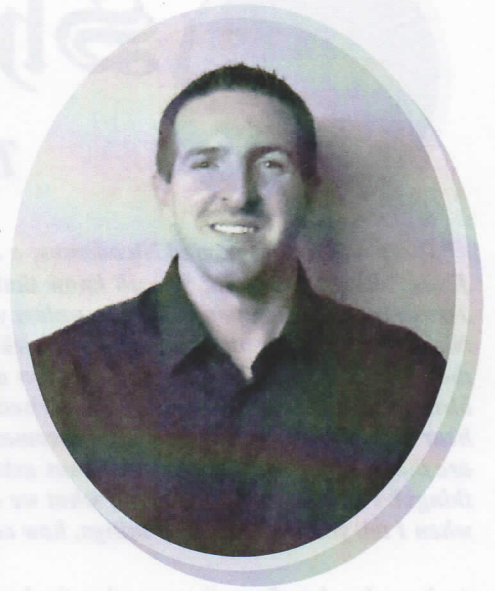
As I pondered (reflected) upon what the Lord wanted to convey in this month's Newsletter, I heard The Holy Spirit say, *“there are exceptions to the rule.”* When He impressed this upon my heart I immediately knew He wanted to direct me to The Scriptures to find what was in His Heart. In researching, it helps to have a proper definition for certain words related to the subject. I went to Webster's Dictionary and I found that the definition of “exception” is, **a case where the rule does not apply.* What rule? In this case, the rules of nature (*natural*). In the Scripture text of John 3:3-12, we read of a certain Pharisee (Teacher of the Law), named Nicodemus, who was curious about Jesus. His curiosity was aroused when he heard Jesus preach and demonstrate “The Kingdom of God” (*verses 1&2*). Little did he know that The Son of God was about to blow his mind about his theology. I heard a well known and favorite preacher of mine say, *“The Lord will never violate His Word, but He will violate our understanding of it.”* This is true because we often violate what The Holy Spirit is saying in The Word by our traditions. ***Jesus replied, “And why do you, by your traditions, violate the direct commandments of God? Matt. 15:3.*** With Nicodemus encountering The Son of God, Jesus demonstrates an “exception to the rule” when explaining to Nicodemus the reason for his lack of understanding is, his perception.

Jesus makes a profound statement in *verse 3*. ***“I tell you the truth, unless you are born again, you cannot see the Kingdom of God.”*** With this statement Nicodemus in his mind is thinking, what is this man saying or what does this man mean, *“You must be born again? I don’t understand!”* We are familiar with his type of thinking, trying to process a spiritual reality with natural reasoning. Truth is we cannot if The Holy Spirit is not illuminating The Spoken Word. Jesus said in John 6:63, ***“It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.”*** In his present condition, Nicodemus could not interpret the supernatural events that was taking place in Israel by Christ Jesus. In fact Nicodemus’s only reference was that Jesus was a Rabbi, but Nicodemus knew in his heart that Jesus was much more than a Teacher (*v. 2*). This was his reason for his quest to find why his heart burned for more of what Jesus was saying when he heard Jesus speak in the Synagogue. It is only when we are born again that our spirit man is awakened (*re-generated*) that we can comprehend that which is Spirit and brings Life. The Apostle Paul inspired by The Holy Spirit wrote in ***Ephesians 3:17-19, “Then Christ will make his home in your hearts as you trust in him. Your roots will grow down into God’s love and keep you strong. And may you have the power to understand, as all God’s people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep his love is. May you experience the love of Christ, though it is too great to understand fully. Then you will be made complete with all the fullness of life and power that comes from God.*** What the Apostle was saying to us is what Jesus was explaining to Nicodemus. Christ wants us to “see” the Kingdom of God. In Romans 14:17 it says, ***“for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.”*** Everything that pertains to The Kingdom of God is in “The Holy Spirit.” You cannot experience or see (perceive) “The Kingdom” unless you are born from above (born again). It is when you receive Jesus as Lord does He (Holy Spirit) come and make His home in your heart and begin to “illuminate” the Scriptures so the “fullness of Christ” can be made known and demonstrated thru a born again believer (*1Cor. 2:12*). When Jesus walked this earth He proclaimed The Kingdom of God has come by demonstrating Love and compassion in healings, raising the dead and casting out devils. He exercised supremacy over every created thing, because He is Lord and the “Exception” to the rule.

I used the account of Nicodemus and his encounter with Christ as an illustration of a mind set that had to be changed so a personal destiny could be fulfilled. All through The Word of God we read of manifestations of miracles happening because of an “exception” altering the laws of nature. It was God altering or interrupting man’s perception of the natural so man would be influenced by the Supernatural. It has always been in God’s Heart to remind man that He was involved in every aspect of his life. That was the reason for The Son Of God leaving His Deity and coming in the likeness of man, to die on “A CROSS” to redeem man in order for fellowship, purpose and destiny to be fulfilled (*Phil. 2:5-11*). What Nicodemus had been taught in his theology as a Pharisee was being altered by “The Exception” (*Jesus*) to the rule. All natural rules change when we encounter Him. Only Christ who is the “Logos” (** The Divine Wisdom manifest in the creation, government and redemption of the world*) can alter a life that is headed towards destruction and make it productive to represent the Kingdom of God as a son or daughter. This was the whole essence of Nicodemus enquiring of The Son of God; destiny was crying out to be fulfilled. So how is it with you? Has Jesus become the ‘Exception’ to the rule in your every day affairs? If not, He is praying that ***“the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,” Ephesians 1:18, Amen.***

Student Testimony

Hello my name is Chance Stewart, I am 29 years of age and from Votaw, TX. Growing up, I had the perfect childhood with the greatest parent. I am truly blessed and thank God every day for a loving family that never gave up on me. After completing High School in my small town, I decided to join the U.S. Navy to serve my country. I joined the Navy also to follow in the footsteps of my family members with a career serving my country. But while stationed in Norfolk, VA, I was in a severe automobile accident that put me in a Coma. After coming out of the Coma, I was given an Honorable-Medical Discharge. I had felt like I let my Country, family, and myself down. So by the age of nineteen, I was back at home. I began drinking heavily trying to medicate the pain of depression that seemed to be overtaking me. It appeared to me that the alcohol was not doing what I needed it to do for the depression that I was going through, so I was introduced to Meth-amphetamines better known as (METH). For the next nine years, it completely controlled my life. I ended up with some criminal background issues, which I know I was not brought up in that type of life style. When I woke up in the county jail not knowing how I really got there, I was given an opportunity by God through the court legal system to do something better with my life. Little did I know that it was going to be a radical change? Addiction of Drugs/alcohol and Depression destroyed relationships with my family, friends and employment. I was carrying around so much guilt it appeared I really did not want to keep on living, at least like that. I was carrying around so much guilt and shame from my addiction that I could barely stay sober a day and had no idea how I was going to break free. I thank God for His Grace and Mercy, that while I was still in my mess, He made a way for me to come to Shiloh Ministries. It still amazes me how God can take the most broken vessel like me and radically change me. I look forward to being a shining light for my Father in Heaven, family and my Community. I would like to thank most of all God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit for a complete transformation in my life. I thank Him for the love He has giving me by setting my feet on a Solid Rock and putting a new song in my mouth. Also thanks for all the supporters of Shiloh who help financially. Without the support and love of generous people like you, me and my brothers would not have a place like Shiloh to come to for restoration. Thanks for all you do for us!



We want to thank everyone who financially partners with us. It is because of special people like you, men have the opportunity to encounter the "Presence of God." Since the year 2000, we have been participating with the Lord in seeing men restored back to Him, so their destiny can be fulfilled. We are thrilled to hear from our graduates testifying about their experiences of advancing the Kingdom of God in their families, the market places and foreign countries where many are serving as missionaries. We would also like to invite others to help us financially in this ministry of reconciliation for restoration. Please consider Shiloh Ministries as good ground for your financial seed. We would also like to ask Pastor's for the opportunity for the students to come & share with their congregation. We invite everyone to come and take a tour of the Shiloh Campus, if you are in the Liberty area (located 45 miles east of downtown Houston). We would be glad to meet you and show you what extraordinary things the Lord is doing at Shiloh. Thanks again, for co-laboring with us and prayerfully considering financially supporting The Lord's Ministry at Shiloh.

Shiloh Ministries is recognized by the IRS as a 501c3 charitable organization. All financial gifts are tax deductible at the end of the year.

Prayer Needs: We are in need of a commercial ice maker. Our old one is broken & needs to be replaced. Thanks for praying & loving the Lord's Ministry @ Shiloh

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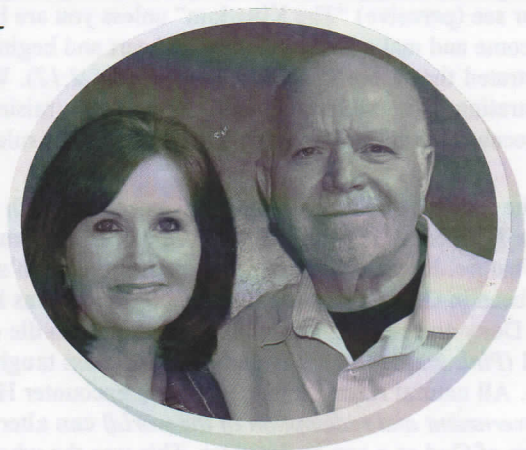
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