



The Harvester

*Preparing Souls
To Serve The Lord!*

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Two Encounters; One Jesus

Brian R. Kenyon

Only the apostle John reveals Jesus' encounter with Nicodemus and the Samaritan woman. A comparison and contrast of these two Jesus-seekers gives encouragement to all who are interested in reaching lost souls for Christ. Sometimes we think people are in too high positions to accept the Gospel, while at other times, we think people are too immoral to accept the Gospel. Jesus' encounter with these two individuals proves both those assumptions wrong!

Encountering Backgrounds

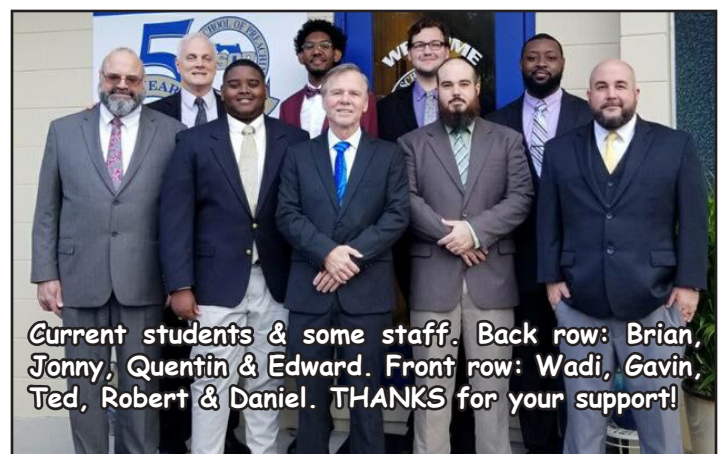
Nicodemus was "a man of the Pharisees ... a ruler of the Jews. This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, 'Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him'" (Jn. 3:1-2).

The Samaritan woman met Jesus as she arrived at Jacob's well to draw water (Jn. 4:5-8). She had no husband. In fact, Jesus told her, "you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband," to which the woman responded, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet" (Jn. 4:16-19).

There is quite a contrast in their personal backgrounds. Nicodemus lived in Jerusalem, the Jewish religious center of the world. He was a Pharisee and a "ruler of the Jews [a leading Jew, JB; of the Jewish counsel, NEB]." He was very educated and lived a life of apparent distance from the sinful. Nicodemus appears again in John 7:50-52 (where he questioned the unlawful treatment of Jesus) and in John 19:38-39 (where he assisted Joseph of Arimathea in

taking and preparing for burial the body of Jesus). From knowing the miracles of Jesus, Nicodemus rightly concluded that He was from God (Jn. 3:2 cf. Jn. 5:36; Mt. 16:17).

The woman of Samaria, on the other hand, was from the remote village of Sychar, in the despised land of Samaria. She was surprised that Jesus even spoke to her, reflected by her question, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?," and John even acknowledged, "For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans" (Jn. 4:9). As a woman, especially from Samaria, she would have lacked formal education, although she was knowledgeable of some worship practices. Her life was marred by fornication. Due to all the men she claimed as husbands (Jn. 4:18), her reputation was likely that of an adulterous. She is mentioned nowhere else after John 4. After Jesus, a Jewish stranger, revealed her marital life, she acknowledged His prophetic nature, and



Current students & some staff. Back row: Brian, Jonny, Quentin & Edward. Front row: Wadi, Gavin, Ted, Robert & Daniel. THANKS for your support!

brought to Him her long held desire: to know the truth about worship (Jn. 4:20-24).

Encountering Jesus

To Nicodemus, Jesus revealed the well known words, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (Jn. 3:16). Other great truths about the only begotten Son of God and the new birth were also revealed to Nicodemus (Jn. 3:1-21). However, though we like to think he did, the Bible nowhere says he became a disciple of Jesus. The Samaritan woman also learned great truths. After Jesus spoke truth about worship, "The woman said to Him, 'I know that Messiah is coming' (who is called Christ). 'When He comes, He will tell us all things.'" ²⁶Jesus said to her, 'I who speak to you am He'" (Jn. 4:25-26). Usually, Jesus told His disciples not to reveal who He was (Mt. 8:4; 16:20;

Lk. 9:20-22), but to this obscure woman at the well, He revealed what He told no one else!

Conclusion

Both Nicodemus and the Samaritan woman learned great truths from Jesus. Even though they came from drastically different backgrounds, they had one thing in common: once they realized who Jesus was, they sought to learn truth from Him! Unlike Nicodemus, the Samaritan woman quickly left her water pot to tell her village about Jesus. After her people encountered Jesus, they told her, "Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we ourselves have heard Him and we know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world" (Jn. 4:42). Do we know who Jesus is? Do we seek to learn truth from Him? Are we willing to follow that truth where it leads? May we have the same attitude as both these examples and respond as the Samaritan woman! 🙏



The FSOP Cheer Team did a great job at our annual appreciation dinner on Tuesday night of the lectureship! These girls simply reflected how many of you already think about the school ... and show it! We had special financial challenges this year due to unforeseen circumstances, but the Lord and you, our supporters, came through as always! We have been blessed every year to have Christians truly interested in souls and the work of training Gospel preachers! At the time of this writing, we were short of our expenses by **\$96.91**

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*Our final deposit for the month is usually made on the last Wednesday of the month. All contributions received after that time are reported on the next month's financial statement.



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Practicing What We Teach

On Tuesday night of our 45th annual lectureship, those present were blessed to witness a new birth. God's providence was at work. It just so happened the director sent students to bring in a case of water from the church van. It just so happened when the students came to the van, a car was broken down on busy South Florida Avenue. It just so happened this semester's classes include personal evangelism. When the students helped Carlos push his car into our parking lot, they invited him to attend the two Monday evening lectures. He responded to the invitation, but based on a brief discussion, the preacher suggested they study a bit more. The next day, students picked him up from work and studied into the evening. Toward the end of the second sermon, word came to the director that Carlos was ready to be baptized. As soon as the invitation song ended, the curtains opened, Robert took his confession, and Carlos was baptized into Christ for the remission of his sins (Acts 2:38). Rest assured, our students learn, believe, practice, and preach the Gospel! Thanks be to God for Jesus and for your generous support!



Were You Over-Taxed?

If you are receiving a tax “refund” this year, you are likely getting money back you did not expect. A great way to “lay up in heaven” that extra cash (Mt. 6:19-20) is to help us train preachers. Your donations are tax deductible, but better yet, you will be helping to prepare men to bring the “gospel of peace” (Rom. 10:13-15). The world needs the Gospel, and FSOP needs your prayers and help.