SMITH FOR CHRIST

TEACHING THE WORD · WATCHING THE TIMES

REFLECTION JOURNAL · FIVE DAYS

John

Chapter 3

You Must Be Born Again

MEMORY VERSE · JOHN 3:16

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life."

THIS JOURNAL BELONGS TO _____

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

This week in John 3

Nicodemus had a title, a reputation and a head full of Bible, and Jesus told him he needed to start over from above. This week, come to these verses the way he finally did — honestly, out of the dark and into the Light — and let the Son who was lifted up for you do what you could never do for yourself.

How to use this journal

1. Each day, read the passage slowly — out loud if you can.
2. Answer the **Observe** question from the text before you write what it means.
3. Write honestly on the **Reflect** questions. No one grades this.
4. Do the **Respond** step today, not someday. Say the memory verse.
5. Bring this journal to the group. The last page is for the table.

The full Deep Dive, the O·I·A study and the slides for this chapter are on the John study page.

WHERE I AM AS I START THIS CHAPTER

What is going on in my life right now that I want to bring to God this week?

DAY 1 OF 5

Born from Above

READ · JOHN 3:1–8

OBSERVE — WHAT DOES IT SAY?

Who is Nicodemus, when does he come, and what does Jesus say a man must have before he can see the kingdom of God (3:1–3)?

REFLECT

Nicodemus came "by night" (3:2). What part of your life with God have you kept in the dark, where you would not want other men to see you asking questions?

REFLECT

Jesus said you cannot birth yourself — "That which is born of the flesh is flesh" (3:6). What have you been leaning on to make you right with God that is really just your own effort?

RESPOND — TODAY

Tell God plainly today, in your own words, that you cannot make yourself new, and ask His Spirit to do what only He can do (3:8).

☐ READ IT ☐ PRAYED IT ☐ SAID THE MEMORY VERSE (JOHN 3:16)

DAY 2 OF 5

Look and Live

READ · JOHN 3:9–15

OBSERVE — WHAT DOES IT SAY?

What did Moses lift up in the wilderness, and what does Jesus say must happen to the Son of Man (3:14)? Read Numbers 21:8–9 if you can.

REFLECT

The bitten Israelites did not fix themselves; they looked at the serpent on the pole (3:14–15). What "bite" in your life are you still trying to treat on your own instead of looking to Jesus on the cross?

REFLECT

Nicodemus was "the teacher of Israel" and still did not understand (3:10). Where has knowing a lot about God gotten in the way of simply trusting Him?

RESPOND — TODAY

Spend two minutes picturing Jesus lifted up on the cross for you, and say out loud, "I look to You, Lord, and I live."

☐ READ IT ☐ PRAYED IT ☐ SAID THE MEMORY VERSE (JOHN 3:16)

DAY 3 OF 5

Love and Light

READ · JOHN 3:16–21

OBSERVE — WHAT DOES IT SAY?

Write out what God did, why He did it, and what He promises to the one who believes (3:16–17).

REFLECT

God loved "the world" — people who loved darkness (3:16, 19). What changes in how you see yourself when you remember He loved you before you ever turned to Him?

REFLECT

Verse 20 says a man avoids the Light "for fear that his deeds will be exposed." What deed are you most afraid of having exposed, and what would it look like to bring it into the Light with one trusted brother?

RESPOND — TODAY

Bring one hidden thing into the Light today: confess it to God, and if He leads, to a man you trust (3:21).

☐ READ IT ☐ PRAYED IT ☐ SAID THE MEMORY VERSE (JOHN 3:16)

DAY 4 OF 5

He Must Increase

READ · JOHN 3:22–30

OBSERVE — WHAT DOES IT SAY?

What do John's disciples complain about, and how does John describe himself in answer (3:26–29)?

REFLECT

John says, "A man can receive nothing unless it has been given him from heaven" (3:27). Where are you jealous of what God has given another man, and how does this verse speak to that?

REFLECT

The friend of the bridegroom "rejoices greatly" to hear the groom's voice (3:29). Where in your home, job or group could you step back so that Jesus gets the attention instead of you?

RESPOND — TODAY

Do one quiet act of service today that no one will thank you for, and pray, "He must increase, but I must decrease" (3:30).

☐ READ IT ☐ PRAYED IT ☐ SAID THE MEMORY VERSE (JOHN 3:16)

DAY 5 OF 5

The One from Above

READ · JOHN 3:31–36

OBSERVE — WHAT DOES IT SAY?

List what these verses say about Jesus — where He comes from, what He speaks, what the Father has given Him (3:31–35).

REFLECT

"He who believes in the Son has eternal life" — has it now (3:36). How would your day look different if you really believed you already have that life?

REFLECT

The verse also says the one who "does not obey the Son" stays under God's wrath (3:36). Who do you love that needs to hear about the Son, and what is holding you back from telling him?

RESPOND — TODAY

Write down the name of one man who needs Jesus, pray for him by name, and look for a chance this week to tell him what the Son has done for you.

☐ READ IT ☐ PRAYED IT ☐ SAID THE MEMORY VERSE (JOHN 3:16)

WHEN THE GROUP MEETS

Questions for the table

FOR THE GROUP · 1

Nicodemus came by night in John 3:2, but in 19:39 he comes openly to bury Jesus. What do you think changed in him, and what would that kind of change look like in one of us?

FOR THE GROUP · 2

Jesus compares the Spirit to the wind (3:8). How have you seen the Spirit move in someone in this group, even if you could not explain how it happened?

FOR THE GROUP · 3

John the Baptist lost his crowd and called it joy (3:29–30). How can we as a group make Jesus bigger and ourselves smaller in the way we treat each other this week?

MY PRAYER

Father, You loved me before I ever looked Your way and gave Your only Son for me, so today I look to Him and ask You to...

CUT OUT · CARRY IT · JOHN 3:16

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life."