

# My Kingdom is NOT of this World

By Jim Golden

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(Back to the Roots)

In the third chapter of John's Gospel Jesus has a very interesting conversation with a man named Nicodemus. Listen as their dialogue unfolds.

*Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews; this man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You have come from God {as} a teacher; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him." Jesus answered and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?" Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. "Do not be amazed that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' "The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is **everyone** who is born of the Spirit." Nicodemus said to Him, "How can these things be?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Are you the teacher of Israel and do not understand these things?" Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know and testify of what we have seen, and you do not accept our testimony. "If I told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things? John 3: 1-12 NASB*

It is interesting to note in the opening verse that Nicodemus came to Jesus by night and that he was a member of the Pharisee party, but not just a member—a teacher and a ruler. Jesus had warned his followers about the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod. As history and Scripture records Nicodemus became a true follower of the Messiah. Now that is the good news, the bad news is that the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod are still very much active.

When Jesus stood before Pilate He said that His Kingdom was not of this world. If it were His followers would fight for it. If I am right, His Kingdom is still not of this world. The opening Scriptures seem to reinforce this view. Whenever Jesus repeats a word like truly we 'truly' need to listen to what follows. In this case it's that it takes a person who is born again or born from above to see the Kingdom of God. This new birth experience is like walking through the "wardrobe" into the kingdom of Narnia, only this is into the true Kingdom of

God. Those who have not experienced this cannot see the true Kingdom much less enter it.

I believe the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod builds counterfeit kingdoms that those who are *not* born again can see and enter. Nicodemus and the party of the Pharisees were definitely interested in establishing the "Kingdom" of God in order to throw off the Kingdom of Rome's yoke of oppression. How ironic that one oppressive yoke would just replace the other. I think that Jesus wanted His Kingdom to remain unrecognizable or unassociated with this world. He said that the Kingdom of God was within you. He said that it was like the wind you could hear the sound of it, but where it came from or where it was going no one could tell. He spoke much about His disdain for the kingdom built by the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod. He used words like get away from me you workers of evil, for I never knew you. At the end He cast them into the lake of fire prepared for the devil and His angels. The terrifying part about this was they all sincerely believed they were building the kingdom of God until it was too late.

I believe there are many "incredible" ministries out there that are building the counterfeit Kingdom of God and that these people will one day hear those terrifying words, "Away from me you workers of evil for I never knew you!" I know that *perfect love* casts out all fear, but we are also admonished to work out or salvation with fear and trembling and *perfect love* is what is missing. This writing is part of a book that I am writing; as a result I have thought much about the Lord's statement, "I never knew you!" I said, "Lord you are omniscient, you know everything." This is not the knowledge type of knowing came back the voice of the Lord, but the consummation of a wedding covenant of love." You use my name as if we are wed and try to spend my resources for your own ends, but deep in your heart there is an emptiness that you fill with anything and everything but me. You talk more about me than to me and you listen even less. The sword of the Lord is truly sharp and cuts deep.

Was the persecution that came on the church in Jerusalem to expand His Kingdom or to protect them from the growing leaven of Herod and the Pharisees? The Apostle Paul, a Pharisee of the Pharisees had an encounter with the true Messiah on the road to Damascus, and spent the rest of his life discrediting his former belief system trying to destroy the leaven of the Pharisees. I believe that there is a great difference between being the light of the world and a gigantic easily recognized kingdom that anyone can see and enter. The thing that we must remember is that Jesus is the light of the world and dwells within us. He is also the true Kingdom and as well dwells within us.

If we could only stop long enough to catch our breath we might realize that the true Kingdom is nothing more than a simple, deep, intimate relationship with Jesus Christ in and through one another. The real Kingdom is nothing more, nothing less, unrecognizable by those who are not born again. But in its simplicity the power and love of the real Messiah is released on an unsuspecting world capturing their hearts and souls. Each of these souls from another Kingdom, a heavenly Kingdom, houses within their bodies the very life of the Savior. They bring true freedom to those held captive by the leaven of

the Pharisees, the leaven of Herod and the leaven of a dying world of darkness.

Even Satan appears as an angle of light and for every real and true thing that exists in God's Kingdom, Satan has spent much of his time counterfeiting it just to try and deceive the very elect. As well, he would stop those who are trying to enter the true Kingdom of God from doing so. The elect will hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church and act before it is too late. My prayer is that the love and mercy of God will expose those held in the power of the enemy's deception no matter what gave him place in their lives.

It is time to look around you and seriously consider what you have built or what you are a part of and allow the Holy Spirit of truth to challenge everything you know and accept as normal and traditional Christianity. I have been shaken to the core of my being by the day that will surely come as a thief in the night. A deep gratitude for the mercy and enduring patience of my Savior has overtaken me and I rejoice in His great love, yet I am found lacking greatly in what counts to God—deep intimacy with Him. We always think of gentle Jesus meek and mild, but remember the One who drove the money changers out of the temple and sternly warned the Pharisees of their appointed fate.

I pray that your kingdom is more than a good looking tomb. Jesus is the Lamb of God, but He is also the Lion of the tribe of Judah and has little tolerance for counterfeit kingdoms, gospels or Christs. God's judgment and wrath will not fall on the One who died on the cross for our sins, but fully upon the heads of these deceived counterfeiters. Jesus said that from the days of John the Baptist until now the Kingdom of God has suffered or permitted violence and the violent take it by force. NOT ANY LONGER! He has ushered in a new era, a new covenant and a new entrance into His everlasting Kingdom. His return is near and it is time for our kingdoms to become the Kingdom of our God and His Christ. I pray that this is a word of life to those who read it and not a pronouncement of your fate.

Remember Israel was not a church or synagogue, but a nation that had a political presence to uphold among the other nations. Because of this Jesus had a nearly impossible task to renew the minds of the Jewish people to a totally alien concept of a heavenly kingdom, a kingdom built on his sacrifice and devoid of political interests and religious conformity. The notion of a kingdom that was spiritual and heavenly was nearly impossible to grasp by the Jews of his day because of centuries of tradition and a gross misunderstanding of the true nature of God. To try and correct this travesty of misinterpretation and tradition God had to come down to earth himself. He did so in the form of his Son Jesus. You would think that would be enough, but the battle for the mind goes on to this day and still the way that leads to eternal life is narrow and few they are that find it.

Take heed how you build on another's foundation. The task that remains before us is to personally embrace and proclaim the true Gospel of the Kingdom to the ends of the earth that Jesus may return. It is only the proclamation of the true Gospel that will do. The Holy Spirit cannot and will not honor or activate the preaching of a counterfeit Gospel. Like never before we need and must have the

leading of the Holy Spirit. A counterfeit Gospel can only produce counterfeit Christians. May the only blood that is upon our heads be the blood of Jesus Christ! AMEN!