

Ensure fellowship with God through 1 John 1:9

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Historical Chronology between Matt 4:11 and 12 (Review)

1. Jesus returns to Judea after the wilderness testing and John [the Herald] identifies Him as the promised Messiah (John 1:29-36).
2. Christ calls disciples and travels to Galilee (John 1:37-49).
(*Not the same as His withdrawal to Galilee in Mt 4:12*)
 - Andrew and John - - vv. 37-39
 - Peter - - vs. 40-42
 - Philip - - vs. 43
 - Nathanael - - vv. 45-49
3. First miracle was at the wedding in Cana of Galilee (John 2:1-11).
4. Christ travels to Capernaum from the wedding feast with Mary, His brothers, and the disciples (John 2:12).
5. Christ travels to Jerusalem for the Feast of Passover and drives the money changers and their animals out of the temple (John 2:13-21).
 - Different temple cleansing than mentioned in the synoptic gospels.
 - Matt 21:12 - - ; Mark 11:15 - - ; Luke 19:45-48
 - Cleansing the temple was a demonstration of His authority as Messiah to judge.

Roman Flagellum



John 2:23

(23) Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed in His name, **observing** His **signs** which He was doing.

“Observing” - θεωρέω

THEOREO – “Spectate, see, observe or watch”

- As the “observed” they “believed”.
- Jesus remained in Jerusalem after He cleansed the temple, continuing on with His ministry.

“Signs” - σημεῖον

SEMEION

- Signs or miracles indicating who He was.

- These signs pointed to the fact that He was the Messiah, having come from God.
- Only Messiah could have authority over the things that He was healing.

“...believed in His name...” literally believe on the name of Him – tantamount to believing that He was the Messiah.

Problem – many who believed wanted Him to take over and be their political King; they were activists.

Activists, as activists go, are not malleable to the plan of God.

- They always have a better idea and they want things to be done on their timeline instead of the Lord’s.
- They like to take matters into their own hands instead of using the faith-rest drill & prayer.

(24) But Jesus, on His part, was not entrusting Himself to them, for He knew all men,

- Jesus knew the motivation of the people – they were misguided.
- They did not understand the plan of God, because they were devoid of doctrine.
- His kingdom was a heavenly kingdom – a kingdom ruled with heavenly principles – not the current kingdom they wanted Him to take over.
- This kingdom was to be established only of born-again believers (that is why the prerequisite for entering the kingdom is spiritual regeneration).

*These people wanted Him to **take over the existing political system** and place their enemies in subjection to them – which was not the plan of God.*

6. He meets Nicodemus (a Pharisee) and communicates that spiritual regeneration is a requirement to enter the kingdom (John 3:1-21).

John 3:1-4

(1) Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a **ruler of the Jews**;

Jesus had just cleansed the temple and He remained in Jerusalem for an additional seven days (after the Passover) so He could participate in the *Feast of Unleavened Bread*.

“Ruler of the Jews” - ἄρχων τῷ Ἰουδαῖος

ARCHON TO IOUDAIOS

ARCHON – “A Jewish authority”

- A member of the Sanhedrin

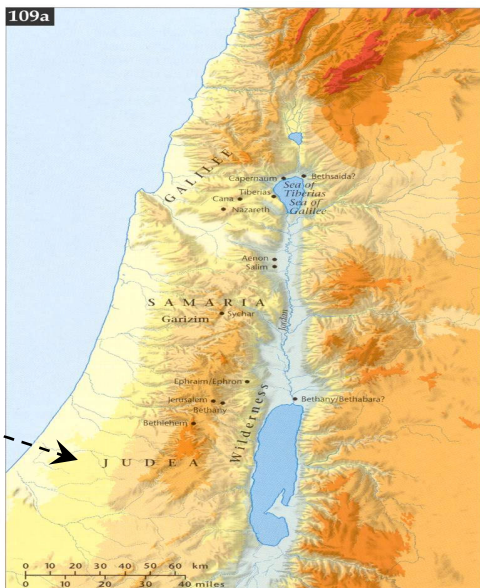
Sanhedrin – A council composed of 70 members - high priests – with jurisdiction limited to the 11 districts of **Judea**.

-- Remember --

There were signs that accompanied His teaching which communicated that the teaching was of God and that He was the Messiah. The signs indicated that He had authority over -

Sin
Sickness
Death
The Demonic World

Judea



- **Sanhedrin** had authority to issue warrants for arrest and judge according to the Mosaic Law. They were a legalistic bunch.
- A self-justified group with a personal righteousness derived from observing the Law. They had established an intricate network of abstaining from things which they felt enabled them to keep the Law.

(2) 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."

- Nicodemus had heard John's message "*repent because the kingdom of heaven is on the brink of being instituted*".
- Nicodemus is well informed on John's baptism leading to the forgiveness of sins which the Pharisees will have no part in because their "washings" are sufficient.

Pharisees considered themselves righteous:

1. Because they kept the Mosaic Law.
2. Because they were physical descendents of Abraham.

- Nicodemus knew that Jesus demonstrated Messianic authority by cleansing the temple with a whip – a sign of Messianic authority and judgment.

Jesus' cleansing of the temple was an audacious cleansing. He drove people out of the temple with a violence of action in-fellowship with the Father because zeal for the father's house consumed Him - A demonstration of wrath and righteous indignation.

- Nicodemus had heard of the miracles that Jesus was performing while in Jerusalem after the temple cleansing and he obviously knows that these miracles are signs of His authority – signs that The Messiah would be able to perform.
- He also knows that judgment is associated with the coming of Messiah and the temple cleansing was a sign of judgment.

- Nicodemus is well versed in the promised kingdom that Messiah will establish upon His arrival. How does he know about most of these things?
 - Some things through experience and word of mouth and things that people have reported to him about what John is doing in the wilderness.
 - Things that people have reported to him about what Jesus is doing in the city after the temple cleansing. The temple cleansing has agitated the Sanhedrin, the Pharisees, the Sadducees – the scribes and teachers of the law and now Nicodemus needs to know what is going on.

Nicodemus has positive volition!

Why does he visit Him at night? He is a member of the Sanhedrin and they are agitated therefore Nicodemus does not want to fall prey to the consternation of his peers on the Sanhedrin. In coming at night, he can avoid the vituperation and the verbal railing he would receive.

(2) 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.**"

“We know” – οἶδα

OIDA – “To know”

Nicodemus had a few friends, an inner circle on the Sanhedrin, who are starting to wonder. There is something they are starting to know – they have come to a conclusion based on the cleansing of the temple and the signs people have been observing from the Messiah.

What is the indication of positive volition?

He address Jesus as **“Rabbi”** - ῥαββί

RABBI – “Teacher”

Hebrew – RABBIY – “My Lord”

- What slaves used to call their masters.
- A very respected address.

Nicodemus has come to learn.

“Come” - ἔρχομαι

ERCHOMAI – “To come”

ἀπό + θεός – APO plus THEOS – “From God”

- An indication that Nicodemus knows Jesus has been sent by God.

“Teacher” - διδάσκαλος

DIDASKALOS – Tells us the purpose in coming from God. He has come to “teach”.

“For” - γάρ

GAR – “Because”

“Signs” - σημεῖον

SEMEION – Plural - “Signs”

Jesus’ signs – He was healing people (signified that He had authority over sickness); forgiving people of their sins (authority over sin).

“Do” - ποιέω

POIEO – “To do”

In essence Nicodemus says “...no one can do these signs that You are doing unless God is with Him”.

BUT they were a few steps shy of faith in Him.

- Faith would require them to abandon their system.
- A system they were rooted in – the formalism of religion; the ritual and observance of ceremonies.
- A system that gave them great power and wealth.
- They were the aristocrats of the day.

(3) Jesus answered and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

- Jesus knows why Nicodemus has come and what his questions are.
- Jesus statement pierces through the soul of Nicodemus.

John 2:24-25

(24) But Jesus, on His part, was not entrusting Himself to them, for He knew all men,

(25) and because He did not need anyone to testify concerning man, for He Himself knew what was in man.

- Jesus knows Nicodemus – He knows what is in him and He knows why he has come.
- Nicodemus and his friends want to make sure they are going to be admitted to Messiah’s kingdom if, in fact, He is the Messiah.
- They are beginning to doubt their current system of legalism in light of John’s message and baptism.

The Pharisee’s would have no part of John’s baptism because they would have to repent and be baptized as they confessed their sins. They tenuously held to the fact that they were approved by God on the basis of two things:

- Physical descendents of Abraham (*note John’s comment in John 3:1*).
- Righteousness derived from obedience to the Mosaic Law (*personal merit*).

Regarding the spiritual life that we live today – regenerated spiritual beings, commissioned as believer priests in this Church Age.

- You are not righteous because of what you do for the Lord.
- You are not righteous because of what you refrain from either.
- You received the perfect righteousness of God apart from the works of the law.
- You received the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ and that righteousness was given to you based solely on the merit of Christ.

You are righteous because God declared you righteous at the point of faith alone in Christ alone and there was nothing you could do of meritorious value to be declared righteous by God.

(4) 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?"

All Scriptures quoted are from New American Standard unless otherwise noted.