

▼ **Jesus and Nicodemus**

Rocklyn Clarke Sr. - Sunday May 17, 2026

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<http://www.LifeChurchBoston.org/>

▼ **Opening Material**

▼ **Welcome!**

- Praise the Lord!
- Welcome to another Life Church sermon!

▼ **Transition**

- Welcome to another Sunday at Life Church.
- The QR code (also available on our song sheets) links to our Visitor Landing Page.
- Use it to access our notes, share your contact information, and access our giving page.
- Questions? If you took the time to visit us, you deserve to get answers!
- Email: Questions@LifeChurchBoston.ORG
- We are beginning John 3.
- We will have Life Group after the message.

▼ **Thoughts**

▼ **Video**

- [Chase: We Talkin' Bout Cashbacking | Chase Freedom Unlimited](#) - YouTube (00:00:30)
- [Talking About Making Disciples](#) - YouTube (00:00:25)

▼ **Acts 2:42-43 - The 4 Devotions:**

- The apostles' teaching
- fellowship
- the breaking of bread
- prayer
- **Cultural Rivers**

▼ **Overview**

▼ **In today's message we will do the following:**

▼ Why are we here?

- Acts 2:36-39
- Acts 17:29-31
- Review passage - John 3:1-21
- Explore what Jesus is teaching us.
- Transition to Life Group.

▼ Opening Material

▼ Why are we here?

• Acts 2:29-39 - Spoken to Jews

“Fellow Israelites, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day. But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne. **Seeing what was to come, he spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah**, that he was not abandoned to the realm of the dead, nor did his body see decay. **God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it.** Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear.

For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said,

“The Lord said to my Lord:

“Sit at my right hand
until I make your enemies
a footstool for your feet.”

“Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: **God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah.**”

When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?”

Peter replied, “**Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.** The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.”

• Acts 17:29-31 - Spoken to Gentiles

“Therefore, since we are God’s offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone—an image made by human design and skill. In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. **For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead.**”

▼ Welcome to John!

▼ Video

- [Bible Project: John 1-12](#) - (00:08:46)
- John 20:30-31

Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

- John 21:25

Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written.

▼ Embrace Jesus' Mission

▼ Jesus' mission, (expressed in the synoptic gospels) still applies.

- Matthew 4:17 – “Repent, for the Kingdom of God has come near!”
- Mark 1:14-15 – “The Kingdom of God has come near . . .”
- Luke 4:14-21 – “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me . . .”

▼ Feed on the Life of Jesus

- Are you “worded up”?
- Eat his flesh; Drink his blood - John 6:53-59; 2 Samuel 23:13-17
- Does the Word of Christ dwell in you richly (Colossians 3:16 - KJV)?

▼ What if you read a Gospel every month - a chapter a day?

- The Gospel of Matthew in May (5/1 – 5/28)
- The Gospel of Mark in June (6/1 – 6/16)
- The Gospel of Luke in July (7/1 – 7/24)
- The Gospel of John in August (8/1 – 8/21)

▼ For May this means:

- Read Matthew 16 on May 16 (yesterday).
- Read Matthew 17 on May 17 (today).
- Read Matthew 18 on May 18 (tomorrow).
- etc.
- As you read, write down any questions you have.

▼ Ask yourself the following questions:

- What did this chapter teach me about how Jesus viewed himself, his mission, his relationship to God, and his relationship to others?
- What would I like to better understand about this chapter?
- What did I find challenging about this chapter?
- What did I learn as I tried to apply this chapter to my life?

- Would an outsider who read this chapter recognize that I was trying to apply it to my life?

▼ **Jesus explained his teaching to his disciples:**

With many similar parables Jesus spoke the word to them, as much as they could understand. He did not say anything to them without using a parable. But when he was alone with his own disciples, he explained everything. – Mark 4:33-34 (NIV)

- Did you grow up in church without getting your questions answered?
- Did you grow up apart from church wondering what all the fuss was about?
- Either way, don't be afraid to start from scratch or start over from scratch with someone who can walk you through the Bible so that you can understand God's Kingdom.
- Read and listen to God's Word in community!

▼ **Video:**

- [Discipleship.ORG: Key Disciple Making Definitions for Church Leaders - YouTube \(00:05:26\)](#)
- [The Chosen: Season 5 Temple Cleansing - YouTube \(00:07:18\)](#)

▼ **John 3:1-21**

Now there was a Pharisee, a man named Nicodemus who was a member of the Jewish ruling council. He came to Jesus at night and said, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the signs you are doing if God were not with him."

Jesus replied, "Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again."

"How can someone be born when they are old?" Nicodemus asked. "Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother's womb to be born!"

Jesus answered, "Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit."

"How can this be?" Nicodemus asked.

"You are Israel's teacher," said Jesus, "and do you not understand these things? Very truly I tell you, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen, but still you people do not accept our testimony. I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things? No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven — the Son of Man. Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him."

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son. This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that their

deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what they have done has been done in the sight of God.

▶ **Parallel & Related Passages**

▼ **Narrative**

- Nicodemus comes to Jesus at night. Nicodemus is a Pharisee and a member of the Jewish ruling council.
- Nicodemus tells Jesus that they know he is a teacher from God because of the signs that he does.
- Jesus responds that unless someone is born again he cannot see God's Kingdom.
- Nicodemus asks how a second birth is possible.
- Jesus explains that unless someone is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter God's Kingdom.
- Nicodemus asks how this is possible.
- Jesus points out Nicodemus' inadequacy as one of Israel's teachers.
- Jesus explains that the Son of Man must be lifted up the way Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness. so that everyone who believes may have eternal life.

▼ **Observations**

- Nicodemus comes to Jesus at night - perhaps to avoid being seen by his colleagues.
- Nicodemus seems to treat Jesus as a peer.
- This passage contains another example of "Johannine Misunderstandings". These are occasions where Jesus says something that is interpreted one way by his audience, but Jesus' actual meaning is different. We saw an example of this with his words "destroy this temple".
- ▼ The phrase translated "born again" in John 3:3 is better understood as generated from above.
 - The same word translated "born" appears in John 1:12-13
Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God — children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.
 - The same word translated "again" is translated "above" in John 3:31.
The one who comes from above is above all; the one who is from the earth belongs to the earth, and speaks as one from the earth. The one who comes from heaven is above all.
 - The same word translated "again" is translated "above" in John 19:11.
Jesus answered, "You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above. Therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin."
 - The words translated "wind" and "spirit" are the same Greek word: pneuma

- Here again Jesus refers to himself as the ‘Son of Man’ evoking the human being in Daniel 7 who receives authority, glory, and sovereign power in God’s presence.
- ▼ The serpent of bronze is a reference to Numbers 21:4-9, which takes place after the death of Miriam and Aaron and after Moses as been barred from entering the promised land because he struck the rock the second time.

They traveled from Mount Hor along the route to the Red Sea, to go around Edom. But the people grew impatient on the way; they spoke against God and against Moses, and said, “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? There is no bread! There is no water! And we detest this miserable food!”

Then the LORD sent venomous snakes among them; they bit the people and many Israelites died. The people came to Moses and said, “We sinned when we spoke against the LORD and against you. Pray that the LORD will take the snakes away from us.” So Moses prayed for the people.

The LORD said to Moses, “Make a snake and put it up on a pole; anyone who is bitten can look at it and live.” So Moses made a bronze snake and put it up on a pole. Then when anyone was bitten by a snake and looked at the bronze snake, they lived.

- This is yet another instance of the Israelites complaining on the way to the promised land.
- God sends venomous snakes in response.
- When they repent, God instructs Moses to place an image of the thing that is biting them on a pole. If they were bitten, they only had to look at that image to live.
- They had to look at an image of the thing that was biting them so that it wouldn’t kill them.
- When we look to Jesus on the cross, we’re looking at the penalty for our own sin.

▼ Video

- [Bible Project: Eternal Life](#) - YouTube (00:05:30)
- [Bible Project: New Humanity](#) - YouTube (00:05:08)

▼ Lessons

- ▼ Jesus refuses to be placed in an ordinary human category:
 - He is not merely a great teacher.
 - He is not even merely a teacher sent from God.
- We can’t really see God’s Kingdom unless we are born from above (i.e. from God).
- We can’t enter God’s Kingdom unless we are born of water (i.e. natural birth) and the Spirit.
- We can’t understand what people who are born of the Spirit are really up to unless we are also born of the Spirit.
- We must look to Jesus by faith in order to have the life of the coming age.

▼ **Life Group**

▼ **Welcome (5 - 10 minutes)**

- [Icebreaker](#)

- **Worship (optional for life group meetings during Sunday service)**

▼ **Word - Discussion Questions**

For each question, spend 1 – 2 minutes in silence before you begin to respond.

- **What did this passage mean to the people who first received it?**
- **What does this passage mean to you?**
- **How will you apply this passage this coming week?**

▼ **Witness**

How will we work together as a team to be "good news" to the people around us?

▼ **Explore the Harvest Skills in the Training Page “Big Blueprint” diagram.**

- ▼ What level are you at with these?
 - Are you a “wanderer”, “follower”, “achiever”, or a “leader”?
 - What’s your plan for developing these skills?
- **Pray for the unchurched people you’ve been identifying.**



Jesus and Nicodemus

Sunday May 17, 2026



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Thoughts



- Acts 2:42-43 - The 4 Devotions:
 - the apostles' teaching
 - fellowship
 - the breaking of bread
 - Prayer
- Cultural Rivers



Overview



In today's message we will deal with the following:

- Why are we here?
 - Acts 2:29-39
 - Acts 17:29-31
- Review our passage – John 3:1-15
- Explore what Jesus is teaching us.
- Transition to Life Group.



John's Purpose



John 20:30-31

Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

John 21:25

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Embrace Jesus' Mission:



Jesus' mission, (expressed in the synoptic gospels) still applies.

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Feed on the Life of Jesus (1 of 4)



Are you “worded up”?

Eat his flesh; Drink his blood – John 6:53-59; 2 Samuel 23:13-17

Does the Word of Christ dwell in you richly (Colossians 3:16 - KJV)?

What if you read a Gospel every month - a chapter a day?

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Feed on the Life of Jesus (2 of 4)



For May this means:

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Feed on the Life of Jesus (3 of 4)



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Feed on the Life of Jesus (4 of 4)



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Key Disciple Making Definitions





John 3:1-21 (NIV) 1 of 3



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John 3:1-21 (NIV) 2 of 3



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John 3:1-21 (NIV) 3 of 3



“You are Israel’s teacher,” said Jesus, “and do you not understand these things? Very truly I tell you, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen, but still you people do not accept our testimony. I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things? No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven —the Son of Man. Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him.”



Narrative



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Observations



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John 1:12-13 (NIV) - Born



Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God — children **born** not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but **born** of God.



John 3:31; 19:11 (NIV) - Above



The one who comes from above is above all; the one who is from the earth belongs to the earth, and speaks as one from the earth. The one who comes from heaven is above all. – John 3:31 (NIV)

Jesus answered, “You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from **above**. Therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin.” – John 19:11 (NIV)



Observations (continued)



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Observations (continued)



- Here again Jesus refers to himself as the ‘Son of Man’ evoking the human being in Daniel 7 who receives authority, glory, and sovereign power in God’s presence.
- The serpent of bronze is a reference to Numbers 21:4-9



Numbers 21:4-9 (NIV)



They traveled from Mount Hor along the route to the Red Sea, to go around Edom. But the people grew impatient on the way; they spoke against God and against Moses, and said, “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? There is no bread! There is no water! And we detest this miserable food!”

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Bible Project: Eternal Life





Bible Project: New Humanity





Lessons



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Life Groups



Word - Spend 1 – 2 minutes in silence before you begin each question.

- What did this passage mean to the people who first received it?
- What does this passage mean to you?
- How will you apply this passage this coming week?

Witness (How we work as a team to be "good news" to others)

- Explore the Harvest Skills in the Training Page "Big Blueprint" diagram.
- What level are you at with these?
 - Are you a "wanderer", "follower", "achiever", or a "leader"?
 - What's your plan for developing these skills?
- Pray for the unchurched people you've been identifying.



Announcements



Visitor Page

- Sunday Service May 17, 2026
- Men's Bible Study Wed (5/20) 7pm - 8:30pm - via Zoom
- Sunday Service May 24, 2026
- Men's Bible Study Wed (5/27) 7pm - 8:30pm - via Zoom
- Sunday Service May 31, 2026
- Men's Bible Study Wed (6/3) 7pm - 8:30pm - via Zoom
- Sunday Service (Communion) June 7, 2026
- Sunday Connection June 7, 2026 12n - 2pm
- Men's Bible Study Wed (6/10) 7pm - 8:30pm - via Zoom



Life Groups



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Q&A / Discussion





Benediction, Life Groups



Announcements

Benediction

Life Groups

Leave Service From Life Groups