Spirituality
Pencil Preaching





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“‘You must be born from above” (John 3:7b).

Acts 4:32-37; *Jn 3:7b-15*

Nicodemus the Pharisee is on the threshold of faith in Jesus. But the Gospel adds one small detail that tells us he is still in a state of puzzlement. Nicodemus comes at night so no one will see him. It is simply too soon and too risky for him, a brilliant scholar of the Law, to be thought a disciple of this new, hill country preacher, Jesus of Nazareth.

Like Thomas in Sunday's Gospel from John, Nicodemus wants proof before he will commit to faith in Jesus. Under cover of darkness, he approaches him and acknowledges that the many miracles and the power of his teaching are signs that Jesus must be from God.

Jesus engages Nicodemus and goes to the heart of faith. Unless he is "born again from above," Nicodemus will not be able to enter the Kingdom of God. Only by a baptism of water and the spirit will this great scholar be able to begin again like a newborn to understand what God is doing through Jesus.

Nicodemus is stuck at the literal level: "How can a man grown old be born again? Surely, he cannot reenter his mother's womb?" Jesus tells him that he is still in the "flesh," whereas only when he is in the "spirit" will he understand what it means to be born from above. Faith comes like wind. We don't know where it comes from or where it is going but know it by its affect in the movement in the trees.

We have been given an Easter season of 50 days to begin to grasp the need for the rebirth of our minds and hearts that will open us to the mystery of risen life in Jesus. The gift of Easter is not something we will know only after death. It is for now, the second wind that lifts us to a new level of understanding and purpose. Come at night if you need to but find Jesus and begin the conversation that will change your life forever. He will welcome you any time you seek him. Take your windbreaker and a hat.

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