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THE WHEELBARROW

What does it mean to "believe" in Jesus? And what does "wheelbarrow" have to do with the answer? These great questions come right up from the familiar passage of Nicodemus visiting Jesus in **John 3: 1-21**. And it gives you a great outline of how to share faith in Jesus with people around you.

In this compelling dialogue, you gain urgent important information you can use. *First*, the truth about eternal life. *Second*, the truth about Jesus. *Third*, the truth about you. Good news you can pass along! Nicodemus was a leading religious authority in Jerusalem, highly trained, serving on the Sanhedrin court of law. Because of His miracles, Nicodemus told Jesus the leaders knew He was a teacher sent from God. Jesus proceeded to demonstrate their error. Actually, **Jesus was God come to teach**.

1 - ETERNAL life -- starts the moment you believe. Jesus gets right to the point in v3. "**Unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.**" Nicodemus understood the Old Testament promises to refer to life after death, when righteous people would experience eternal resurrection life with God. Incredibly, Jesus says you can have this new spiritual life NOW -- by being re-born from above by the Holy Spirit. "**Truly truly I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, He cannot enter the kingdom of God.**" Jesus teaches this teacher what the Bible says and how to receive it now. The lights come on as Nicodemus finally understood God's promises in numerous Old Testament passages. As John 1:12 explains, those who believe in Jesus are those who are "born of God" by the Spirit.

2 - JESUS -- is the only way to eternal life. Nicodemus asks, "**How can these things be?**" See, you can't save yourself. You can't somehow be born again on your own. That's something God does by the Holy Spirit. And it happens when you put your trust in Jesus. "**For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.**" - John 3:16. When you are born again from above by the Holy Spirit, you trust in Jesus, and are reborn with His eternal spiritual life. Because God sent Jesus "*in order that the world might be saved through Him.*"

3 - YOU are dead -- until you believe in Jesus. John 3:18 spells it out, "**Whoever believes in Him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.**" It echoes John 1 how God's light has come into the world, but people who refuse to believe in Jesus instead love the darkness and will not come to the light. You can't save yourself because you're spiritually dead. See, if you are only born once you will die twice, once in the flesh on earth and also spiritually as you perish eternally in hell. But if you are born twice, both in the flesh and by the Holy Spirit, then you only die once -- and earthly death simply ushers you into continuing eternal spiritual life in heaven, and in the resurrection your body is reunited with your eternal soul.

What about the wheelbarrow? Useful for gardening or construction or any number of tasks, would you ever guess it's for crossing Niagara Falls? With a terrifying vertical drop over 165 feet, it has the highest flow rate of any waterfall in the world. Back in 1859 the world's greatest high-wire artist, Charles Blondin, crossed it on stilts. He made an omelette out on the wire. He carried his manager on his shoulders.

Then he pushed a wheelbarrow across. Amongst the wildly cheering crowd, he picked a man shouting "I knew you could do it" and asked him if he really believed that. Of course, he replied, you're Blondin the Great! So Blondin said, "Then, get in the wheelbarrow."

The man declined. **What would YOU do?** You see, everyone has faith. The question is, how reliable is the object of your faith? Blondin could fail, but you have to admit your helplessness and trust him. But what if it was Jesus, offering to wheel you across the raging torrent? He would never fail. Now, consider your crossing from this earthly life to eternal life. Can you cross the chasm of sin and hell -- by yourself? The Bible says no, and you know you agree in your heart you cannot save yourself. You need a Savior.

Jesus is your wheelbarrow. He will not fail. **When you "believe" in Jesus, you trust Him completely and get in His wheelbarrow.** You believe with all your mind that He *can* save you. You believe with all your heart that *only* He can save you. And you believe with all your will -- *you get in the wheelbarrow.*

It's not a deal you make. You simply trust Him, believing in Jesus, while He carries you to heaven. That's being born again from above by the Holy Spirit. *I pray this is true of you today -- in His wheelbarrow!*