

ENCOUNTERS

Nicodemus

Growth Group Opener:

Has there been a time in your life when you were drawn to something you weren't quite ready to fully commit to? What was holding you back?

Read John 3:1-21; 7:45-52; 19:38-42

Why do you think John makes a point of naming the time of day of Nicodemus' first visit?

What might "by night" have represented for Nicodemus?

What might that represent for someone today?

In 3:3, Nicodemus approaches Jesus with a compliment, but Jesus immediately reframes the whole conversation. Have you ever come to Jesus with something you thought you had figured out, only to have him reframe the entire conversation?

We see Nicodemus in front of a group of people openly hostile to Jesus in ch.7. He doesn't fight for Jesus, but carefully makes a procedural move to Jesus' benefit. What might John's inclusion of this seemingly small detail tell us?

Where in your own faith are you making small, careful steps that may not seem impressive, but are real movement?

Nicodemus shows up in 19:39 in a big way, and at enormous personal cost. Why do you think Nicodemus went public at the time most others went silent? What might have shifted in him?

What might that kind of costly devotion with seemingly little gain look like today?

We see Nicodemus slowly go from secret seeker, to cautious defender, to costly disciple. How does Nicodemus' journey challenge or expand your idea of what discipleship looks like? Where are you in the arc of seeker, cautious defender, and costly disciple?

What can we learn about God from this story?

Is there anything you sense the Holy Spirit inviting you to look at more closely?

Prayer:

Father, thank you for your grace and your patience. Thank you for letting us move closer to you in both small steps and large leaps. Help us to measure growth by faithfulness over time as opposed to speed and visibility. Give us a gentle courage to take the next step toward you as we invite others to do the same. In the name of Jesus, amen.