

# Crisis Man

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[ 0 : 00 ] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. This is the seventh message in our series on the book of John, entitled, Jesus is God.

In our few minutes remaining of the night, we'll look at a few verses here, and we'll talk about how great our God is. What a beautiful song, what a beautiful truth. And we'll see it more on Sunday morning, but you know, no man through his vain attempts in religion has ever left the earthly and ascended into heaven.

No Hindu man has ever walked in the Ganges and went to heaven for a few minutes. No Buddhist has ever meditated and got to spend a few minutes in heaven. No moral man has given money to the Salvation Army and was afforded 30 seconds at the throne of our King.

None of us have ascended up in the heaven, but our God came down here to earth 2,000 years ago to make it possible that when we die, we can go and spend all of eternity with Him.

And so not only do we know that there's a great God, but our great God came so that we can know Him personally through the person of Jesus Christ. And I can't tell you how thankful I am to be in a room full of people tonight that know that.

[ 1 : 08 ] And as I said in my update, it is so much sweeter to get to worship King Jesus when you've been in the land of a million idols and so many people don't know of the truth. John chapter number 3. I love John chapter number 3.

We're going to be there tonight and also again on Sunday. And those of you that came in a little bit early, you saw a video up here. And I won't show it because it's not that great quality of the video.

I didn't mean to record it. But those of you that were in here, you saw that there was a man in the market. And he's kind of, you've been in a grocery store before where they're always announcing something and you have no idea what they're talking about.

But he's just still continued to be the grocery store DJ and make announcements. Well, they have that there in Var Narsi, India. There's a large market and a man's over an intercom and he's talking. And I made eye contact with the guy and I was trying to get him to say my name over the intercom.

And he invited me up there. And when I did, I got the microphone and I said, Hello, my name is Trent Cornwell and I'm so glad to meet all of you. And it went over and there's thousands of people there listening.

[ 2 : 11 ] Well, I went home that night to the hotel and it was hard to sleep as every night was hard to sleep for many reasons in India. But I couldn't sleep and I began to think. I said, Hello, my name is Trent Cornwell.

I'm so glad to meet you. I began to count my words and I thought, Man, what a dumb thing to say. I've been there before. All right. Ask me why. I've been there. I don't normally say it to thousands of people.

I don't usually regret it when I talk to thousands of people. But I thought, Man, why didn't I say something about Jesus? Why didn't I say something? And then, you know, they wouldn't have understood me in English there, there in Barnard, Narsie. But I was thinking that and I couldn't sleep.

I wouldn't necessarily say I was convicted or that it was guilt. But I was just laying there thinking, What? And the same amount of words, what could I have said? But as I was laying there, God said, You know what, Trent? Tomorrow, you'll probably speak several thousand words between you and your wife.

You know, one-fourth of all the words in the world are said between me and my wife. We say a lot of words on any given day. And so tomorrow, Trent, you're going to say thousands and thousands of words. Why don't those words be just as weighty?

[ 3 : 12 ] Why don't you think about those words with the same intensity that you're thinking about these few words that you wasted tonight? And so as I look at John chapter number 3 and I look at our Creator and gives us an incredible example, the God of heaven in flesh is sitting down with one man in the middle of the night.

What an incredible love he has for mankind. That his zeal for the Lord in chapter number 2 that the pastor talked about did not become a zeal that kept him so busy that he only worked among the masses. But he was willing to sit down, not sleep, stay up at night, and speak to a man one-on-one.

I want that type of zeal for the house of the Lord. I don't want a type of zeal that keeps me so preoccupied that I never have time for a one-on-one conversation with somebody in the middle of the night. At the end of chapter number 2, you can go online.

The guys in our nerd boat, as it's been called, they've done a great job at our streaming services. And you can see the pastor that he preached on this. If you didn't on Sunday night, I encourage you to listen to chapter number 2.

But it ends in chapter number 2 like this. It says, Those last few words.

[ 4 : 35 ] He knew what was in man. And the pastor taught me something as I listened to the service. I wasn't here, but I listened to it. It said that these men, it said that they believed, it said that they believed in his name, but Jesus did not commit himself unto them.

It said they said that they believed, but he said, I don't believe you. They saw many signs, they saw many miracles, and they say, we believe. But we've seen this type of belief before when the rich young ruler came up and many other people.

And they said, I believe. But Jesus said, you may say you believe, but I don't believe you. And that's what is most important. But then he goes on to not only say that, but he said, the Bible says, for he knew what was in man.

That God would know what was in man. Big surprise that the creator would know what was inside man since he made us. You know, you do much better instead of examining one person to another to try to find out what's in man.

Ask the creator what is inside of us. You've heard the illustration before. Instead of just looking if you was a watch and instead of taking a watch apart, the best thing you do is talk to the creator of that watch and ask what's inside of it.

[ 5 : 36 ] And so if we really want to know what's inside man, we'll ask the God of heaven to show us what is inside man. And he does that in the word here. Jesus knows what is in man.

And we would be wise to learn what he teaches us about what is in man. And in John chapter number 3, we see a great example of this. So the last two verses of chapter number 2 lead us into what's in chapter number 3.

He said, there's a lot of people say they believe, but I know what's in man and I know they don't believe. And now let me illustrate that with you with a story. And that's how we get to chapter number 3 and I'll read the first five verses.

And there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. The same came to Jesus by night and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God. For no man can do these miracles that thou doest except God be with him.

Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. And then he goes unto the scribe what the new birth is and he explains it to this man.

[ 6 : 59 ] And so knowing that there's a necessity in the new birth, all of us that are believers in here that want to do what we were challenged to do for the missionary presentations tonight, we want to share the gospel, that we want to speak the gospel, as Brother Bo said.

If there's a necessity in the spiritual new birth, then that must dictate that in our conversations that we talk about the new birth. That there's nothing else that is at more at the heart of the matter when we speak to a new believer, that this truth that know that there has to be a new birth, it should create a desire in our heart to be a crisis man or woman.

That's what I challenge you tonight, is that you will decide that you will be a crisis man or woman when you speak to people about the things of God. I believe it was our dear Uncle Sam that said about Mark Tolson, our missionary in China, that Mark Tolson was a closer.

Uncle Sam had visited here sometimes, and if this story isn't correct, don't tell me Uncle Sam till afterwards, because I'm going to use it to make an illustration here, okay? But Mark Tolson took Uncle Sam aside, a man that he didn't know, and he said, Let me ask you, Mr. Paxson, do you know that you're born again?

Do you know that you have eternal life? And he became a crisis man, and he asked him for a testimony. Are you born again? Benjamin Franklin received a letter from George Whitefield.

[ 8 : 21 ] You're probably familiar with both of those names. And George Whitefield, he said, I find that you grow more famous and famous in the learned world, speaking to Benjamin Franklin. He says, Mr. Franklin, you may know a little about electricity, but there's no study in the world that's more important than the new birth.

And the word born again, you know, you've heard it before, and it seems to be outdated, but it is a biblical term, and it's something that we should be used to using, and we should be comfortable speaking about.

Let me give you a few things real quickly that are unique to Nicodemus, and then I'll give you some things that are not unique to Nicodemus, but it's going to be true about every non-believer that we talk to.

First of all, he illustrates the them. In verses 23 and verse number 24, it speaks about them that say that they believe, but they really don't believe. Here in this passage, Nicodemus, he illustrates that.

Verse number 4, also as you're drawing a mental picture, and I hope you are tonight, of Nicodemus. Nicodemus apparently was an older man, because he said, how can I, as an older man, enter back into my mother's womb?

[ 9 : 38 ] Most older people I know don't admit that they're older, so he must really have been older if he was comfortable saying that. He was a teacher of the Jews, it says in verse number 3.

You won't meet probably many like that around here. He was a Pharisee. Jesus had confronted the Pharisees in Matthew 23. He rebukes them. For time's sake, we know that the Pharisees are people of an exterior conformity to the law, but there's no love for others in their heart.

They made laws because that was the easier thing. Let me give you a couple funny ones real quick. Pharisees were right on many occasions, like a clock that's broken might be right twice a day. Many of the things they said were right, but their heart was not on the affections of the Lord.

Women, you could not on the Sabbath look into a looking glass or a mirror on the Sabbath, because if you looked into a mirror, you might find something that you need to fix, and because of that, you would be cause of the work, okay?

I don't suggest that, ladies. Look into your mirror, okay? On Sunday. Men, too. Secondly, women, you were allowed to eat an egg that was laid on the Sabbath day, only if you promised to kill the chicken the next day and punishing him for laying an egg on the Sabbath.

[ 10 : 49 ] And for medical reasons, they would drink vinegar. So you could drink vinegar, but you could not gargle vinegar because that was work, where drinking vinegar was not work. And any time they would come up with a law, it was contained in a book, and you can go to a Jewish library and see the laws that they've added.

This is an example of just the exterior that Nicodemus had made. We also know that he came at night. Many people said that he did that to be secretive. He might have done that just because that was where he would get the most amount of time, and he knew that he needed to have a serious conversation.

He had many questions that needed to be asked. And then he leaves that night, and we know that he returns to the dark, because he leaves in the night, but we also know spiritually. Many people said this is a conversion of Nicodemus.

We don't see that in chapter number 3, but by chapter 17, that we do see that Nicodemus identifies himself with the people of the Lord. But there's nothing to tell us in chapter number 3 that it is that.

So everyone has elements in their story that are unique to them, and we must listen and pray and direct truths at the lies that they believe. And their story is important to us. As I said, in India, Hinduism is very ambiguous.

[ 11 : 55 ] You don't know what it means. So you must listen to the story of the person that you're sharing the gospel with. And everybody's story is important, and there's elements that are different, and you ought to find the lies that Satan has told them, and you ought to direct truth at it, and ask God for wisdom and discernment as you do that.

But can I tell you that their story is not near as important as the story of the gospel, because the story is the same in everybody that we share it with. And that's why you don't need a lifetime of learning somebody's story before you share the story of the gospel with them.

What is true of all men here? A belief in Jesus as a good person is not sufficient in making him Lord of their lives. Verse number two, We know that you are a teacher sent from God.

Many of us today in America, the Christian would say that's sufficient. They would have said, Thank you, Nicodemus. That's sufficient. If you recognize that Jesus was a historical figure, that he was sent from God, that's good enough.

You are my brother and sister. But Jesus, he knew, much more had to be done than that. They were thinking about the kingdom of God, and they were thinking about eternity. It's true that Nicodemus' questions might have been about one thing, but God knew exactly, Jesus there knew exactly what he was asking about.

[ 13 : 05 ] He was asking, How do I spend eternity with God? He was asking about the kingdom. No matter what plethora of questions the unbeliever may ask you, what's at the heart of that person is, what is going to happen in eternity?

Because the Bible tells us that's hidden in their heart, that they want to know about their afterlife in all of eternity. No amount of religious energy I spent has ever brought anyone closer to salvation.

They must start all over. That was true of Nicodemus. Nicodemus had done everything that you could imagine. In coming to Jesus, he must have expected a pat on the back and said, You are so close.

Let me explain this thing to you a little bit further, and you will be there. And what does the creator of the universe look into Nicodemus' eyes? And he says, Buddy, you have to start all over.

You're in the wrong system. You have to be born again, because nothing you have done has added one measure to you. Can I tell you tonight that a narrow walk on a broad road will never change a person's destination.

[ 14 : 08 ] No matter how narrowly they're walking, if they're on the wrong road, you must be a crisis person in their life and say, You may be living a good life, but you're on the wrong road.

So you must come to Jesus by faith alone. And so Jesus goes right to the heart of it, and he did not mix words, and he goes to the heart of matter. And only God can read a man's heart, but we can see the effects of the wind as he goes on to say there.

He says, I know you don't understand this, but you don't understand the wind either, and you can see it. And so we should ask God through his word to tell us about man, how this applies to our witness before I pray tonight.

We must believe what God says about a person is true, regardless of what they tell us about themselves, or what emotions will tell us. John 3.18 tells us that he that believeth is not condemned, that he that believeth not is condemned already.

The reason I tell you this is because in India, with this man in a rickshaw that I knew was a Muslim, I didn't have much issue in my heart knowing that this man was on a wrong path because his religion would never get him there.

[ 15 : 11 ] But to my aunt, whoever might be in my family or to your aunt, they are following religion, and they're a good person, and I don't want to admit to me, admit to them or to myself, that they are on the same path that that Muslim man is.

In America, have you ever been to the funeral of a lost person? You don't. Everybody becomes Christian, at least before they die, or we draw a picture of it.

And I understand why we do that. I understand why I've done that in my life. I understand why you've done that in your life as a person passed away. And you say, I'm going to have hope believing that they're in heaven. And I can understand why you do that for yourself emotionally.

But the next time you see that person living, not that person obviously, but another person like that, you cannot allow your theology to say, that person's going to heaven because I want them to, and it makes me feel better.

You must tell yourself that the Bible says, regardless of how I feel about it emotionally, no matter what I believe about the situation, if this person is caught up in religion, and not in a relationship with Jesus Christ, they are on a broad world that leads to destruction.

[ 16 : 15 ] We must take the heart of the matter to the heart of man. He looked at them and says, you must be born again. We can't entertain what they're saying. We cannot condone what they're doing. We cannot pat them on the back.

We cannot look at the similarities between their faith and our faith. We must say, buddy, friend, loved one, you must be born again. And we must be a crisis man or a crisis woman in their lives.

The Bible says here in these verses, I want you to see the necessity of the new birth. Except the man be born again, he will not see the kingdom. There's no other way. And that's a hard thing to swallow, but it's true.

And it's stated here clearly. Let me end here tonight with a quote from Jim Elliott, the famous missionary. And I want you to make this decision tonight. You might make it in your seat.

I'm here in a second when I pray. I'll ask Miss Christian to come play the piano. Make this decision at the altar. Maybe you'll be at your workplace tomorrow when you have an opportunity to share the gospel and your heart is beating out of your chest.

[ 17 : 13 ] I want you to make the decision to say, I will be a crisis man or a crisis woman. That when I talk to these people, they will know that there must be a new birth. That the system that they're currently in is not getting them to where they're going.

Walking narrowly on a broad path is not going to get there. That they must be born again if they're going to enter into the kingdom of God. And I challenge every one of us tonight to make that decision.

Jim Elliott says, Father, make of me a crisis man. Bring those eye contact to a decision. Let me not be a mile post on a single road. Make me a fork that men must turn one way or another on facing Christ in me.

Can I tell you tomorrow at your work or your place of school, wherever you're at, there's plenty of Christians that are willing to be a mile post and let that hell bound sinner continue on their way just believing what they're doing is going to get them there.

But could some of us be man and woman enough and the children of God say that I'm not going to be a mile post but I'm going to stand there and I'm going to be a fork and say I'm going to bring a crisis here and I'm going to let you know.

[ 18 : 20 ] And no matter how well you present the gospel, nobody could present the message more than the message, which was Jesus. They may walk back into the darkness but when they walked back into the darkness they would know where the light was and that they had an opportunity to walk into it.

May God make all of us in here crisis men and women and may we be forks in the road to those that we make. Heavenly Father, Lord, thank you for your word. Thank you for showing clearly the necessity of the new birth.

Lord, I pray that you'll raise up people in here, Lord, that will be crisis men and women in this community and around the world. Lord, we do not desire to be a mile post. We do not want millions and millions of unbelievers that pass by us as they would other Christians.

Lord, we want to be forks in the road and that they will see Christ in us because we know that they must be born again if they're ever going to see the kingdom. Because we know that they must be born again if they're ever going to see the kingdom.

You have been listening to Trent Cornwell Pastor at Vision Baptist Church. For contact information, location, service times, or more audio and video recordings, log on to [www.visionbaptist.com](http://www.visionbaptist.com).