

Ponca City Christian

First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
210 North Fifth Street
Ponca City, OK 74601
580.762.1667 www.fccponcacity.com

Seeking, Serving, Sharing
March 5, 2023



Devotional Christian

John 3:1-10 ~ Nicodemus ~

Nicodemus was afraid to be seen with Christ, so he came in the night to avoid detection. When religion is out of fashion, there are many Nicodemites among us. But though he came by night, Jesus welcomed him, teaching us to encourage new beginnings. Nicodemus was attracted, as others had been, by the "signs" which Jesus had brought about; but he had gone further and deeper than the others, and Jesus "knew it." Nicodemus is an illustration of Christ's knowledge of what was in mankind. He did not talk with Christ about the affairs of the state, though he was a ruler, but about the concerns of his own soul and its salvation. In the case of Nicodemus, Christ did open His very heart; and to a "ruler of Jews," to a "Pharisee," he agreed to unveil the deepest realities of the kingdom of God and of the salvation of man. "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." He was speaking to all of us when he said that. Nicodemus was not a special case. You and I must be born again, or we will not see the kingdom of God; we will not be part of God's family. What Nicodemus needs, and what you and I need, is not religion but life. The point of referring to new birth is that birth brings a new life into the world. In one sense, of course, Nicodemus is alive. He is breathing, thinking, feeling, acting. He is human, created in God's image. But evidently, Jesus thinks he's dead. There is no spiritual life in Nicodemus. Spiritually, he is unborn. He needs life — not more religious activities or more religious zeal. He has plenty of that. In the new birth, the Holy Spirit gives us new spiritual life by connecting us with Jesus Christ through faith. New birth is not getting new religion but getting new life. Or, to say it another way, the Spirit unites us to Christ where there is cleansing for our sins, and he replaces our hard, unresponsive heart with a soft heart that treasures Jesus above all things and is being transformed by the presence of the Spirit into the kind of heart that loves to do the will of God. No stronger expression could have been chosen to signify a great and most remarkable change of state and character. Nicodemus was the only one of all the teachers of Israel who had come to Jesus Christ, and who thus would be able to teach Israel the knowledge of Him.



**Mondays
@ 1:30 pm
in the Chapel**

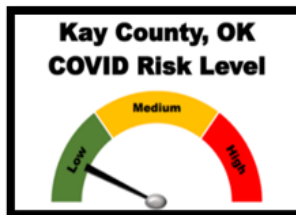
Talking About Teenage Guy Stuff
the masculinity workbook for teens
discover what being a guy means to you
cracking the code on the authentic self
First Christian Church - 210 N 5th Street
Please let Pastor Stephen know if you plan to attend.

**Tuesdays
5:30 - 7:00 PM
Begins Feb. 28th
Pizza, Tacos,
Burgers & Fries**

A Lenten Discussion Series Wednesdays at Noon

(Bring Your Own Brown Bag Lunch)

- March 1, 2023 ... *You shall not murder*
- March 8, 2023 ... *You shall not commit adultery*
- March 15, 2023 ... *Whoever divorces his wife*
- March 22, 2023 ... *You shall not swear falsely*
- March 29, 2023 ... *An eye for an eye*
- April 5, 2023 ... *You shall love your neighbor*



Giving in Review
As of February 28, 2022
Budgeted Expenses
\$54,750.00
Actual Expenses
Coming soon...
Income Received
\$44,500.48

Prayer

Heavenly Father, come to our hearts: that we may be renewed and reborn. Open our minds: that we may perceive Your kingdom. Lift up our eyes to where the cross of Christ stands for our healing: so, we may believe, and in believing not die but have eternal life.

Amen.