

John 3:11-13

- A. These words were uttered in response to Nicodemus' perplexity. **JOH 3:1-10.**
1. Jesus was expounding upon the spiritual nature of the kingdom of God.
 - a. The kingdom can only be seen or entered by being born again of the Spirit. **vs. 3, 5.**
 - b. Being born of the Spirit is distinct from being born of the flesh. **v. 6 c/w JOH 1:12-13.**
 - c. The Spirit's work is regeneration and washing. **v. 5.**
 - (1) Water is the Spirit's symbol. **JOH 7:37-39.**
 - (2) Washing is the Spirit's action. **TIT 3:5.**
 - d. The Spirit's work is that of a free agent not controlled by man's will and which is only known by its effects in all circumstances. **v. 8 c/w JOH 6:63.**
 2. Jesus used plain similes taken from earthly things.
 - a. Generation and birth are earthly things in which the individual is *passive*.
 - b. Wind is active and uncontrolled by human will, its power known only by the visible effect it has on *passive* objects.
 - c. Nicodemus, though, translated the theme of human passiveness into human power and *activity* (**vs. 4, 9**), a common error.
 3. As a master in Israel, Nicodemus should have known about such spiritual things in which God is active and man is passive. **v. 10.**
 - a. The O.T. spoke of God inwardly circumcising the heart. **DEU 30:6.**
 - b. The O.T. spoke of God putting a new spirit in man to empower for obedience. **EZE 11:19-20.**
 - c. The O.T. spoke of God writing His law inwardly, precluding man-to-man instruction. **JER 31:33-34.**
 - d. The O.T. spoke of God blowing life into the dead and cleansing them. **EZE 37:4-5, 23-24.**
 - e. The O.T. spoke of the child of promise's miraculous begetting. **GEN 17:15-17; 18:11-14 c/w GAL 4:28-29.**
 - f. Theme: God changes men inwardly, God imparts knowledge inwardly, God makes alive by unseen wind, God cleanses from sin and forgives, God begets the children of promise miraculously, *man is passive in all*: "...the flesh profiteth nothing..." (**JOH 6:63**).
- B. **v. 11.**
1. Jesus certified the validity of His knowledge of these things using the first person plural: "...We speak...we do know...we have seen...our witness."
 2. Jesus was not speaking as a lone witness with some new outlandish doctrine.
 3. John the Baptist was a *master of Israel* (rabbi = master) who knew that Jesus had been with the Father and properly testified in accord with Him. **JOH 3:26, 31-34.**
 - a. Jesus often declared that He and the Father were concurring witnesses. **JOH 7:16; 8:17-18, 26, 38; 12:49-50; 14:23.**
 - b. Christ is the *faithful witness* of the Father and His ways. **REV 1:5.**
 - c. Therefore, he who receives or rejects the Son receives or rejects the Father also. **JOH 12:44-48; 13:20; 2JO 1:9.**
 4. The Holy Ghost (Spirit) was also a concurring witness of Jesus' teaching. **HEB 10:15-17.**
 5. There are three that bear concurring record *in heaven*. **1JO 5:7.**
 6. Three heavenly witnesses are greater than any number of earthly witnesses. **1JO 5:9; ROM 3:4.**

C. v. 12.

1. earthly: Pertaining to the earth, terrestrial. Chiefly and now almost exclusively with implied opposition to *heavenly*.
2. If teachings of the Spirit's work in men and of the spiritual kingdom of God by means of earthly terminology was unbelievable, then teaching heavenly things themselves would be futile.
 - a. The eternal counsel of God in predestinating unworthy sinners (Jew or Gentile) unto eternal glory through Himself by grace would be futilely taught. **EPH 1:3-11.**
 - b. His creation of all things invisible, and reconciliation through His death of all government in heaven and earth would be futilely taught. **COL 1:16-20.**
 - c. The heavenly Jerusalem and its intercourse with the church of believers on earth through the blood of God would be futilely taught. **HEB 12:22-24; ACT 20:28.**
 - d. The heavenly things of which the weak and temporary Mosaic order was only a pattern would be futilely taught. **HEB 8:1-5; 9:23.**
3. The glory of heaven and how sinners obtain it is only knowable because of the Spirit. **1CO 2:7-16.**
 - a. Without the Spirit's *regeneration*, such knowledge is impossible. **1CO 2:14.**
 - b. Without the Spirit's *apostolic revelation*, such knowledge would have remained a relatively unrevealed mystery. **EPH 3:1-6.**
 - c. Without the Spirit's *indwelling of*, and *teaching ministry in* the church, even the heavenly powers would be "in the dark" about God's eternal purpose in Christ. **EPH 3:9-11 c/w 1PE 1:12.**

D. v. 13.

1. All that Nicodemus could have known about heavenly things from Moses and the prophets was according to what they wrote by divine inspiration, not of personal knowledge (like Jesus had). **2PE 1:21 c/w JOH 1:18.**
2. None had gone to heaven and personally witnessed the eternal counsels. But the Word of God had been there before His incarnation, and still had intercourse with heaven. **JOH 1:1-3, 14.**
3. Under the O.T., God's favors to his people were expressed by such things as:
 - a. *hearing* from heaven. **2CH 7:14.**
 - b. *answering* from heaven. **1CH 21:26.**
 - c. *looking* from heaven. **PSA 80:14.**
 - d. *speaking* from heaven. **NEH 9:13.**
 - e. *feeding* from heaven. **NEH 9:15.**
 - f. *sending* from heaven. **PSA 57:3.**
4. But the Son of Man is *God come down* from heaven.
 - a. Christ is "...the Lord from heaven" (**1CO 15:47**), God manifest in the flesh.
 - b. No greater favor or witness could be imaginable. **1JO 5:9-11.**