

John 3:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:

Analysis

Nicodemus is introduced with three significant identifiers: 'a man of the Pharisees,' 'named Nicodemus,' and 'a ruler of the Jews.' The name Nicodemus means 'conqueror of the people'—ironically, he comes secretly, conquered by curiosity about Jesus. As a Pharisee, he belonged to the strictest sect of Judaism; as a 'ruler' (archon), he was a Sanhedrin member. This is Israel's religious and political elite coming to Jesus.

Historical Context

The Pharisees numbered about 6,000 and were known for meticulous Torah observance. The Sanhedrin was the 71-member supreme Jewish council. Nicodemus risked reputation and position by this visit. He appears two more times in John's Gospel—defending Jesus (7:50-52) and assisting His burial (19:39).

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. What barriers of reputation or position might hinder people from coming to Christ today?
2. How does Nicodemus's journey from secret inquiry to public support encourage patient evangelism?

Interlinear Text

Ἦν	δὲ	ἄνθρωπος	ἐκ	τῶν	Φαρισαίων	Νικόδημος
There was	G1161	a man	of	G3588	the Pharisees	Nicodemus
G2258		G444	G1537		G5330	G3530
ὄνομα	αὐτῷ	ἄρχων	τῶν	Ἰουδαίων·		
named	G846	a ruler	G3588	of the Jews		
G3686		G758		G2453		

Additional Cross-References

John 19:39 (Parallel theme): And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight.