

Nicodemus was a Pharisee, a member of the Jewish ruling council, and “a ruler of the Jews”. (John 3:1) But he was conflicted. He had questions about the carpenter, turned preacher, called Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus’ popularity was a threat to the Pharisees, the ruling class, and Nicodemus dared not betray his interest in Jesus to his peers. So he arranged to meet Jesus at night, under the cover of darkness. (John 3:2)

Jesus could have insisted that they meet in the temple courts, in full view of Nicodemus’ contemporaries. He could have said: “If you are not willing to meet with me publicly, then I cannot meet with you at all.” But Jesus didn’t say that. He let Nicodemus set the guidelines for the meeting. In other words, He accepted Nicodemus for who he was - “the teacher of Israel” with a reputation to protect. (John 3:10) Jesus’ gentle approach with Nicodemus resulted in him ultimately defending Jesus to the Sanhedrin (John 7:50-51), and helping to bury Him. (John 19:38-42) Jesus demonstrates the depths of His love by unconditionally accepting people who want to meet with Him.

John 3:1 “There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews.”