



SHADOW MOUNTAIN

LEADER

Packet

Getting Started

1. If you were to describe Heaven to someone, what words would you use? What pictures might you promote to your listener?

2. As you understand what the Bible teaches about Heaven, in what way will it be different from life here on Earth?

Going Deeper

1. Read John 2:23-25. From this passage what do we learn about Jesus' insight into man's condition? How did His understanding of human brokenness inform the way He evangelized those He spoke with? **What distinguishes our Lord's approach to evangelism from ours is His singular insight into the human condition. We cannot understand in reality what's going on in the third chapter unless we read the end of the second chapter. From the text, we learn that many people who saw the miracles of Christ had sign faith. That is, they believed in Him because of what they saw Him do, not who He was. They were wrapped up in the supernaturalism and special nature of what Christ was doing and not in His role as Savior of the world and King of Kings. Jesus did not commit Himself to them.**

2. In what way do people look for signs and wonders today? How do we see an earnest search for supernaturalism as a way to be spiritual? Describe the difference between seeking after signs and placing one's faith in Jesus Christ. **The latter portion of the twentieth century saw a massive revival of the church in America. And, understandably, it was a delight and a great encouragement to us who are in the Church to hear more people talking about the right kind of things at last. At the same time, one of the bad derivatives of this is that, if we're not careful, it can be a snowballing, bandwagon sort of thing. And everyone gets on the bandwagon, and everybody's excited about the Gospel. But this breeds a view of salvation that is just on the surface, on the periphery of it all, and not really requiring anyone to know what it is to truly be a born again follower of Christ.**

3. Read John 3:2. Why do you suppose Nicodemus came to talk to Jesus “at night?” For this question, consider Nicodemus’ role as a member of the Sanhedrin and how that political/religious body viewed Jesus’ ministry. Think of these two men in their historical context. Also, consider that both men were in full-time ministry, and what that may have looked like in their daily lives in terms of the demands on their time.

Note: From this point, Jesus and Nicodemus have a deep, theological discussion. And Nicodemus didn’t get the point of what Jesus was saying to him.

4. Read John 3:10. Describe someone you know who has heard the good news of the Gospel and didn’t get it. When have you read the Scriptures and missed the point? Why do you think this happens? It’s possible to be the best “formalistic Christian” (having a firm grasp on outward behaviors of religion) that you could ever hope to be and still be confused (or totally miss) about what the Bible teaches. Here was Nicodemus - a respected member of the Sanhedrin, a man of the Pharisees, and possibly the most religious person of his day. He had risen to the top of his professional ministry and was a teacher in Israel, and yet he didn’t know the basic things that a man needs to know to get to Heaven.

