

Nicodemus

by John Walsh

Auditorium is darkened. Stage is lighted on lone figure, Nicodemus, who is slowly, thoughtfully pacing – hands clasped behind his back, talking to himself. His mood goes back and forth from questioning to discounting belief as he wrestles within his thoughts.

Nicodemus shaking his head:

*This man is such a puzzlement –
(stops pacing, straightens, speaks to the audience)*

Yet, I feel compelled, strangely drawn to find out more about who he is – (extends his arm out) this man, ..Jesus.

*I've heard of him for weeks – what he has said – how the crowds were taken with him.
(pause) Now he is here - in Jerusalem.*

*(begins slowly pacing again – speaking in disbelieving tone)
But this has happened before, (uses arm gesture to elaborate the audacity of what he is thinking) men claiming to be prophets, sent from God. (shakes his head)*

The people are so easily led – discontent with being ruled by Rome and dissatisfied with the teachings of the Pharisees. Looking for the Messiah. Part of me thinks they are desperate and would follow anyone.

(as if addressing the audience)

Today - He threw out the money changers and scattered the animals – claiming they were mis-using the temple. What a ruckus he caused!! (half chuckles)

(mood becomes pensive, reflective)

But somehow, it seemed he was speaking truth to me (places his hand on his chest). I have to admit, he was right.

(discounting belief)

How could this be? His teachings challenge so much of what I have believed and practiced all my life!

(with mix of excitement and fear)

Now, he's here – in this very city.

(briefly looking upwards as he speaks)

I feel compelled to see him, ...to speak with him, ...to ask him questions.

(takes a few steps, then has a thought that stops him in his tracks)

What if someone sees me? It could jeopardize my position, my reputation.

(he is coming to grips with the reality of meeting Jesus)

Yet, I feel an urgency to speak to him.

(with determination in his voice) I will find him – tonight – *(looks around)* it is late – the city is asleep – perhaps I can have a moment alone with him – no one need ever know I have sought him out. *(confirming his statement)* No one will ever know. I must go to him.

deep in thought again:

No, no. Even if it were true, it couldn't be Jesus. Herod killed all of the children around Bethlehem. That child, who was born in a stable, was killed by Herod.

as if addressing the audience

So who is Jesus, and why haven't we heard of him before.

with some excitement

Well, I did hear about the wedding in Cana. It seems they ran out of wine, and then ... But of course I wasn't there so I don't really know what happened.

But I was there today. I saw with my own eyes how He threw out the money changers and scattered the animals – claiming they were mis-using the temple. What a ruckus he caused!! (half chuckles)

mood becomes pensive, reflective

But somehow, it seemed he was speaking truth to me (*places his hand on his chest*). Somehow, I knew he was right.

How could this be? His teachings challenge so much of what I have believed and practiced all my life!

I must speak to him. I have questions.

with excitement

Wait! He's here – right now – in this very city. Now is my chance to talk to him.

with a bit of fear, as if he has a thought that stops him in his tracks

But what if someone sees me? (*looks around*) It could jeopardize my position, my reputation.

with determination in his voice

Yet, I **MUST** speak to him. I will find him – tonight – (*looks around*) it is late – the city is asleep – perhaps I can have a moment alone with him – no one need ever know I have sought him out. (*confirming his statement*) **No one will ever know.** I must go to him.