

to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred weight." Then Joseph and Nicodemus "took the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen cloth with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury. Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid." There Joseph and Nicodemus laid Jesus.\* These men are coupled as kindred spirits, as if alike disciples of Jesus secretly for fear of the Jews. The expression that Nicodemus came to Jesus by night "at first" appears to imply that he was advanced from that beginning, that he had profited by that great interview.

It is remarkable that in the first mention of Nicodemus, after the conversation, it is said he was "one of the Pharisees," but in the second mention of him, in connection with Joseph, this description is omitted, as if to denote that he had ceased to be "one of them."

What Nicodemus heard at first by night has stirred the hearts of countless multitudes and led them into life. Many, it is to be feared, have heard and read it in vain, because of their counter-choice, their inattention and unbelief; many, probably, have heard or read it at first with Nicodemus-like ignorance and incredulity, but afterwards pondered it with profit, and multitudes by means of it have been born again. It is for every man and for all time. It is for every pulpit and Sunday-school and family. And its influence and efficacy are widening with the suns. The foremost doctrine of the Lutheran era was justification by faith; the foremost doctrine of the Methodist era has been regeneration by the Spirit. The one is the complement of the other, the one implies the other; and both, in their Scriptural completeness and validity, are the mighty means of spiritual conquest and culture. They can never be superseded or rivalled; and their function will never be finished till, as the seed of the kingdom, they fill the face of the world with fruit, and the last believer is born into the family of God.

\* John xix. 38-42.