

Christ #11
God's Gift & God's Message
John 3:16-21

There is a high road and a low road. There is a good road and a bad road. There is a road of service and a road of sin. **There is a road that leads to heaven and a road that leads to Hell.** Everybody is walking on one of these roads. Many people have forsaken sin and unbelief, have taken Christ as their personal Savior, and are walking on the good road of salvation and service that ends in heaven. **But it is tragic to remember that there are millions that are still in their sin.** They are living lives of rejection of Christ. They are walking the road of sin that leads to Hell and eternal death.

Today, I want to talk to you about the road of life. A man gets on that road the minute he trusts Christ as his personal Savior. He becomes a new creation. **He has a new Friend to walk by his side.** His ultimate destination is the land of eternal happiness and joy. This is the *only* road of life. **All other ways are the ways of death.** You are not really and truly living until you have received Christ as your Savior and had the hope of heaven planted in your heart. **The Bible plainly tells us that a man without Christ is a dead man.** He is “dead in trespasses and sins.” He is dead to *happiness*, dead to *hope*, dead to the *best life*, dead to *service*, dead to *God*, and dead to *heaven*.

Therefore, as we continue our study, we have come to John 3:16, that tells us, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” This verse has been called, “the Gospel in a nutshell.” If everyone in the world acted on this truth, the world would be transformed, and all of us would be on the road to heaven.

Today, we are going to take a close look at the Gospel of John 3:16.

It begins, “For God...” John 3:16 begins where Genesis 1:1 begins, “In the beginning God...” **In the beginning of creation God is the Author.** In the beginning of *salvation* God is also the Author. Without God, there would have been no *creation*, and without God there would be no *redemption*.

It is interesting to note the Bible does not seek to prove the existence of God, but seems to know that no sensible person would argue the point. In fact, Psalm 14:1 tells us that only a “fool” would say, “there is no God.” The reason for this is simple, Psalm 19:1-6 tells us that all the universe speaks of a mighty, all powerful, and all wise God, “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork. Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night reveals knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is

not heard. Their line has gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them He has set a tabernacle for the sun, which is like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoices like a strong man to run its race. Its rising is from one end of heaven, and its circuit to the other end; and there is nothing hidden from its heat.”

It is also interesting to study the word that has been translated “God” in Genesis 1:1, “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” The Hebrew word for “God” here is “Elohim” and is in the plural, and that corresponds with what we have been told in John 1:1-4, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.” We are told in Colossians 1:15-17, “He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.” And then in Hebrews 1:2 we are told that God “has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds.”

My dear friend, the creation is the proof of God. Since there is a world, there must be a world maker. I am aware of all the theories of evolution that we have on the market today. **I am also aware of all the archaeological findings that have been brought to our attention.** But after all the theories have been penned down, and all things findings have been polished and published, there is nothing to disprove the Word of God.

So John 3:16 begins with “God” and goes from there, and that is where you and I need to begin, for that is the anchor that will never be moved.

John 3:16 continues, “For God so loved the world...” **Without getting into the Greek distinction of love, let me just remind you there are two kinds of love – human love and divine love.** Human love is based on feelings and emotions; such as a mother’s love or a father’s love, the love of a husband or wife, or the love of two lovers. But all of these are basically a love that is based on the flesh. **But divine love transcends emotions, for it is the very essence of God Himself.** This truth is seen in 1 John 4:8, “He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.” The love of God is no respecter of persons, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” That means that “**whosoever**” out of all the world, from every tribe and nation, of every tongue and color, can become a child of God by believing in Jesus Christ, and this is made possible because of the love of God.

We are living in a time when the average person has a grave misconception of God. You mention the word “God” and the average person does not think of a great loving being, but of a cruel monster sitting in heaven ready to pounce on and punish anyone who displeases Him. The heathen spends much time trying to please an angry god. They dance before him. They sing praises to him. They even go so far as to sacrifice their children to him. In India they throw their children into the sacred Ganges River in the name of religion. Why do they do all this? It is because they know that they have sinned and deserve punishment. They know nothing of a God of love, and they are afraid of a god of wrath. And by all these things, they hope to gain some measure of approval and hold back the punishment of their gods.

Oh how we need to come to the realization of God’s love. A love that knows no bounds; no waters can quench it; no tongue can explain it; for the love of God is the very essence of God.

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son...” You see, God’s love did not stoop with a mere expression. God loved, but He did more than that – He gave. You can’t really love without giving of self. And because God loved, He gave. He gave *not* all the cattle on a thousand hills, *not* all the gold and silver and precious stones of the world, *not* houses and lands, and *not* stocks and bonds. He gave something worth much, much more to Him than all of these – He gave His Son.

God proved His love for the world by giving His very best. The “world” of John 3:16 does not refer to geology or geography. It does not refer to biology or zoology. It means the world of men.

You see, the love of God reaches to the highest peak and to the deepest valley. It includes white men, black men, red men, yellow men, and all the half-breeds that are in between. The love of God includes the civilized as well as the savage. The cultured as well as the illiterate; the strong as well as the weak; the good as well as the bad. None are excluded, for “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son...”

God gave us Christ as proof of His mighty, matchless love. I have listed just three of those proofs.

First, God gave us Christ in life that we might have an example. Jesus made this statement in John 13:15, “For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you.” Our measuring device for success in the Christian life should always be the Person of Jesus Christ, and not another Christian.

Second, God gave us Christ in death, that He might pay the price of sin for you and me. Hebrews 10:12-14 says, “But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool. For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.” **The broken Law of God was forever satisfied in the death of Jesus Christ.**

Third, God gave us Christ in the resurrection that we might have eternal life. 1 Peter 1:18-21 puts it this way, “Knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you who through Him believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.” **We sing and preach about the cross, but without the resurrection there would be no eternal life.**

Yes, God gave us His only begotten Son, and we could do nothing to earn it, or deserve it, but God gave because of His love. And that is the amazing truth of Romans 5:8, “But God demonstrated His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

Look again at the verse, “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” **The redeeming love of God is traceable back to Genesis 3:15 to the Garden of Eden,** “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.” **From Eden to Calvary God continued to keep before the world His promise, and to keep awake in the hearts of His people, the hope of the promised Redeemer.** The sacrifices, the altars, the ordinances, the Law, and the prophets, were there to keep alive in the hearts of men faith in God’s eternal promise. **That promise that found fulfillment and expression in Christ, God’s wonderful gift of love to the world.**

Galatians 4:4-5 tells us that at God’s appointed time, Jesus came into the world, “made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law.” **The result of God’s gift is “everlasting life,” but it is ours only when we put our faith in the finished work of Christ.** Jesus said this in John 5:24, “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.” **And because of that promise, we have been told in Romans 10:9-10,** “...if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”

Believing on Jesus for salvation means trusting Him fully, entirely, and placing your trust in His hands, knowing that “He is able to save them to the uttermost that comes to God by him, seeing he ever lives to make intercession for them.”

Life is mentioned 36 times in the Book of John. You will notice that John 3:16 begins with God and ends with life. *Everlasting life* is not just *eternal existence*. **What is everlasting life?** In a nutshell – everlasting life is experiencing Jesus as your personal Savior. He put it this way in John 14:6 when He said, “I am the life.” 1 John 5:12 says, “He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.” Jesus says this in John 11:25, “I am the resurrection and the life...” John 1:4 says, “In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.” **Everlasting life is Christ living in me for all eternity.** Colossians 1:27 says, “To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.” And Galatians 2:20 says, “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.”

My friends, that is what Jesus does for us. He just loves us out of sin and into eternal life, even when He had to go to the cross to do it. If you have never received Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, I plead with you to do so today.

Everyone please stand for prayer.

Father,

Your Word is true. Thank you for your love that sent your only begotten Son to die that I might live. Give me the courage to make my life and light in this world of darkness that others might see. In Jesus’ name. Amen.