

Impact 3:16

The So Loved World (Jn 3:16)

INTRODUCTION

1. Good Morning,
 - a. Greetings...
2. Series of lessons from 3:16 that should have an impact on our lives.
 - a. Last week we examined Jesus' Baptism.
 - i. **Mt 3:16** "And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him"¹
 - b. This week we are examining "The So Loved World."
 - i. **Jn 3:16** "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." (NKJV)
3. Has there ever been a more talked about or quoted verse in the entire Bible?
 - a. There are more **Jn 3:16** charities, tee shirts, bumper stickers, etc. than I would surmise the rest of the Bible has all together been quoted and or published.
 - i. Considering the verse and the power of the message there is no wonder.
 - b. However, the reason for this verse being overwhelmingly used is because there has been such an egregious miss step with it.
 - i. We will discuss this a bit more later on.
4. Background on our text.
 - a. John 3 begins with Nicodemus, a Pharisee and ruler of the Jews, coming to Jesus at night acknowledging that Jesus was, at the very least, a teach from God.
 - i. **Jn 3:1-2**
 - b. John 3 continues with Jesus ignoring Nicodemus' statement and has Jesus move right into the real reason Nicodemus was there, to get information concerning the kingdom.
 - i. **Jn 3:3**
 - c. John continues with Nicodemus not understanding what Jesus meant by being born again.
 - i. **Jn 3:4**
 - d. John continues with Jesus further explaining it to Nicodemus that one had to be born of water and Spirit which is being born again through obedience of the gospel.
 - i. **Jn 3:5-8**
 - e. John continues with Nicodemus still being confounded by this.
 - i. **Jn 3:9**
 - f. John continues with Jesus letting Nicodemus know that if he could not understand these simple matters that were easily illustrated (new birth) how could he understand the deeper spiritual matters. Remember Nicodemus was a Pharisee.
 - i. **Jn 3:10-12**

¹ All Scriptures are taken from the ESV unless otherwise noted. If other translations are used this is not necessarily an endorsement of the translation.

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- g. John continues with Jesus approaching the matter from a different vantage point. He draws from the O.T. making an analogy between Himself and the bronze serpent of **Lv 21**. Here he shows that the Son of Man is He that must be believed in, in order to be born again and have eternal life.
 - i. **Jn 3:13-15**
- 5. That brings us to our text.
 - a. It is here in our text that Jesus make the statement that has come to be known as the “Golden Text” of the Bible.
 - b. It is here we find the...
 - i. Greatest Giver
 - ii. Greatest Gift
 - iii. Greatest Blessing
- 6. With this in mind let us examine this truth today.

I. The Greatest Giver

A. “For God...”

- 1. Has there ever been a greater gift giver than the Father?
 - i. **Ro 5:8** “but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”
- 2. Has there ever been a giver equal to the Father?
 - i. **Jn 3:16** “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.”
- 3. This is foreign to the thinking of those that made up the idols of old.
 - i. Illiad wrote of what Juno says to Vulcan, “Dear son, refrain: it is not well that thus A god should suffer for the sake of men.” (Vincent, M. R. (1887). Word studies in the New Testament. New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons.)
 - ii. Illiad wrote of what Apollo said to Neptune, “ Thou would’st not deem me wise, should I contend With thee, O Neptune, for the sake of men, Who flourish like the forest-leaves awhile, And feed upon the fruits of earth, and then Decay and perish. Let us quit the field, And leave the combat to the warring hosts.” (Ibid)

B. Jesus’ gift of His life was surely greater right

- 1. As a parent think about this for just a moment.
 - i. Would it be easier to give your child to be tortured and sacrificed or yourself?
 - a. It really is that simple.

C. Thus...

- 1. When the evidence is weighed the conclusion is clear, the Father is the greater gift giver there ever has been.
 - i. **Ro 8:37-39** “No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38 For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

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II. The Greatest Gift

- A. “only begotten Son”
 - 1. Has there ever been One more loving than He who gave His life?
 - i. **Jn 15:13** “Greater love has no one than this that someone lay down his life for his friends.”
 - ii. **Ro 5:7-8** “For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— 8 but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”
- B. Jesus, the greatest gift, was my sacrifice
 - 1. **Ti 2:11** “For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people”
 - 2. **I Co 15:3** “For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures”
- C. Thus...
 - 1. If Jesus was willing to do so much for His creation what am I willing to do for the Creator and His creation?
 - i. **I Jn 3:16** “By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers.”

III. The Greatest Blessing

- A. “whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”
 - 1. Here we have the promise of the greatest blessing, the blessing of everlasting life.
 - 2. Mankind has never wavered in searching for immortality.
 - i. However this search has led many to abuse this Scripture and turn it into saying something it simply does not say.
- B. The misnomer here is...
 - 1. This verse teaches that all you have to do to be saved and not perish is believe Jesus is the only begotten Son of God.
 - i. This has been the so called breadwinner verse of the “faith only” doctrine for many years.
 - ii. It is this assumption that has led to so many using it as their slogan to “reach the lost.”
 - 2. Is that what Jesus is saying, that all you have to do is believe?
 - i. Within this text there is one word that few denominational people seem to pay close attention to and in many instances change.
 - ii. That word is “should.”
 - a. “whoever believes in Him **should** not perish but have everlasting life.”
 - iii. Often those of the denominational world will read it as such...
 - a. “whoever believes in Him **will** not perish but have everlasting life.”
 - b. “whoever believes in Him **shall** not perish but have everlasting life.”

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3. There is a big difference between the word should and will or shall.
 - i. The Greek word under consideration is “ἀπόληται” or “apoletai” from the root “ἀπόλλυμι” or “appollymi.”
 - a. This word means to perish or to destroy.
 - b. This word is in the subjunctive mood.
 1. “The mood that normally presents the verbal action as being probable...” (Heiser, M. S. (2005).Glossary of Morpho-Syntactic Database Terminology. Logos Bible Software.)
 - ii. Why is all that necessary to know?
 - a. Because it shows that the word perish should have attached to it the word “should” and not will because it is probable not guaranteed.
 4. All this points to the truth that Jesus was not saying that those that believe will not perish but that they shouldn’t perish.
 - i. Notice these verses...
 - a. **Jn 3:16** “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.” (NKJV) (emphasis mine)
 - b. **Jn 1:12** “But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, **he gave the right** to become children of God” (emphasis mine)
 - c. **Ja 2:19** “You believe that God is one; you do well. **Even the demons believe**—and shudder!” (emphasis mine)
- C. Thus...
1. The greatest blessing is the fact that Jesus gave each of us the opportunity to spend eternity with Him one day.
 - i. **Jn 14:1-4** “Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. 2 In my Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. 4 And you know the way to where I am going.”

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CONCLUSION

1. Steve Ray wrote concerning Jn 3:16 “It is a verse that encapsules the Gospel of Christ in one elegant and pregnant sentence, a sentence that reaches to the heart of God and explains the essence of history and salvation in twenty-five short words. The key action words stand out with stark clarity: loved, gave, believe, perish, and have. We can possess (have) something because of God's act of love, and a response by man. The loving act of God in history, opened an otherwise locked and bolted door, providing man with an escape from damnation and an offer of eternal life.” (<http://goo.gl/nctNLI>)
2. Question: Have you put your full trust and hope in the Greatest Gift to mankind?
 - a. If so continue therein and grow thereby.
 - b. If not why not?
3. Invitation
 - a. For those that are Christians but are not living for Christ repent by confessing your sins to God that He may forgive you and dedicate your life/time back to Him.
 - i. **I Jn 1:7, 9** "But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin...9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."
 - b. For those that are not Christians or for those that think they are Christians and want to know for sure notice what is required to become a child of God or Christian according to God and God only.
 - i. Hear/Study **Rom 10:17; II Tim 2:15**
 - ii. Have Faith In Jesus **Jn 3:16; 8:24**
 - iii. Repent/Turn To God **Ac 17:30; Lk 24:47**
 - iv. Confess Jesus As Lord **Mt 10:32; Rom 10:9**
 - v. Immersed For The Forgiveness of Sins **Ac 2:38; 22:16; I Pt 3:21**
 - vi. Live A Faithful Life **I Jn 1:7; Eph 5:8**