

**GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD** John 3:16 “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.”

## **I. INTRODUCTION-**

- a. This morning we take a break from our sermon series on revival from the book of Nehemiah... to look at John 3:16.
- b. While this verse obviously is not in the book of Nehemiah...this is a verse that most definitely has a great deal to do with revival in the church.
- c. More than any other verse in the Bible... this verse reminds believers of how we were saved...and this verse reminds us of the message that Christians have been called to share with the lost world.
- d. When Christians and churches lose our focus on the message and power of John 3:16... we need revival.

## **II. THE CONTEXT OF THE JOHN 3:16-**

- a. Let me remind you of the context of this verse... Jesus is in the first year of His three and a half year public ministry.
- b. In John 3... Jesus is in Jerusalem for the first time after He had been baptized by John the Baptist... and after His public ministry has begun.
- c. During this trip to Jerusalem... Jesus...an unknown carpenter/Rabbi from the province of Galilee... created quite a stir.
- d. First...in defense of the holiness of God’s Temple... and in judgment of their greedy and ungodly scamming of those who came to the Temple to worship... Jesus forcibly ran the moneychangers and sellers of sacrificial animals out of the Temple courtyard.

- e. When the religious authorities who were in charge of the Temple ... who profited from the business of the moneychangers and sellers challenged Jesus... Jesus boldly and publically denounced these powerful men for turning the Temple ... a place of worship... into a marketplace... where those who came to worship God were taken advantage of and ripped off.
- f. Also, according to John 2:23...during this first trip to Jerusalem Jesus performed multiple miracles...probably healing many sick people.
- g. All that Jesus did... created quite a stir in Jerusalem... and gained the attention of the religious leaders of Israel.
- h. It motivated one of those religious leaders... to come to Jesus at night to talk to this upstart Rabbi from Galilee.
- i. That religious leader was a man named Nicodemus... Nicodemus was one of the most prominent religious teachers in Israel.
- j. He was also a member of the Sanhedrin... a group of 70 wealthy, powerful and influential men who under the authority of the Romans ... ruled the religious life of Israel.
- k. Nicodemus had watched Jesus... he had listened to Jesus... he may have personally witnessed some of the miracles that Jesus had performed.
- l. Nicodemus was drawn to Jesus... and so one night Nicodemus sought Jesus out to talk with Him.
- m. Nicodemus did not come to Jesus to accuse Him or to attack Him... he came to Jesus to learn more about Him...to talk with Jesus.
- n. It was during the course of that conversation... recorded in John 3... that Jesus spoke the most powerful words that have ever been spoken in the history of the world.

- o. *John 3:16 (KJV) “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.”*
- p. Throughout history...God has used those words to change the lives of multitudes of people... and He is still using those words to do the same today.
- q. Today... if you are not a Christian... you need to hear the words of John 3:16 again for the first time... the course of your life in this world ... and your eternal destiny depends on what you do with the truth of John 3:16.
- r. And for Christians...we may need to come back to John 3:16.
- s. We need to be reminded of the love that made our salvation possible ... we need to regain our first love for the One who loved us first... we need a revival of love for the God who so loved and loves us.

### **III. THE DECLARATION OF GOD’S LOVE-**

- a. *John 3:16 (KJV) “For God so loved the world...”*
- b. The God of John 3:16... is the God of the Bible... this is the God who created all that there is... this is the God who controls, sustains and holds together all that He has created ... this is the God who rules and reigns over creation.
- c. The Baptist Faith and Message... makes this statement about the God of John 3:16.
- d. There is one and only one living and true God... He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe.... God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections.... God is all powerful and all knowing... and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future... including the future decisions of His free creatures.... To Him we owe the

highest love, reverence, and obedience.... The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit... with distinct personal attributes... but without division of nature, essence, or being.

- e. The God of John 3:16... is the God who knit you together in your mother's womb.
- f. You know the biology of your creation ... but the Bible tells you the theology of your creation... the God of John 3:16 is the God who created you... He is the One who gave you life.
- g. You are not the product of mindless and thoughtless chance ... you are a special and precious creation of God.
- h. The God who created you... is the God who loves you.
- i. John 3:16 says that God loves the world He created... this does not just refer to the material or physical world that God created... this specifically refers to humanity... to the world of people that God has created.
- j. God's love for the world is universal... God loves all the people of the world... and God's love for the world is personal... God loves the world... one person at a time.
- k. Augustine said... "God loves each one of us... as if there was only one of us to love."
- l. John 3:16 declares... that the God who made you loves you.

(Declaration of God's love...)

#### **IV. THE DEMONSTRATION OF GOD'S LOVE-**

- a. *John 3:16 (KJV) "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son..."*
- b. Every good parent loves their children... that love motivates them to care for their children... to provide for their children... to protect their children.

- c. And that love motivates them... if necessary...to suffer and sacrifice for their children.
- d. Every good parent who loves their child... would be willing to die for them if necessary.
- e. Because God is good... He has provided for us... He has protected us ... and He cares for us every day.
- f. And because God is good... and because God loves us... and because we all have a serious problem that only He can solve... the God who made us... and the God who loves us...gave Himself... sacrificed Himself for us... in a very real and miraculous way.
- g. The problem we all have is this... there came a time in all of our lives when... like Adam and Eve in the garden... that we chose to rebel against God... we chose to disobey God... we chose to go our own way ... we chose to break His law and His heart...we chose to sin against God.
- h. And we all are guilty of disobeying this good God who made us... and the good and kind God who loves us.
- i. The holiness and the justice of God demands that our sin be punished ...the holiness and the justice of God demands... that the punishment of our sin and rebellion be death and eternal separation from Him.
- j. But the love of God motivated Him to provide a way in which the demands of His holiness and justice against our sin could be satisfied... while at the same time we could be saved and forgiven from the penalty of our sins.
- k. The only way that could be done... is if an acceptable sacrifice could be found to take our place and die for our sins.
- l. An acceptable sacrifice for our sins... would have to be a human being ... no angel could die for us... no animal could die for us.

- m. An acceptable sacrifice would have to be without sin... one sinner could not die for the sins of another sinner.
- n. An acceptable sacrifice... would have to be willing to take the sins of others upon themselves and die for them... and how could that possibly happen?
- o. For a sacrifice to be for all people for all time... an acceptable sacrifice would have to be more than just another human being... they would have to be a human being with an eternal nature.
- p. No one on earth...with an inherited sin nature...born to human parents ... could possibly be an acceptable sacrifice for the sins of all mankind.
- q. How then could we ever be saved... from the penalty of our sins? ...
- r. *John 3:16 (KJV) "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."*
- s. On the cross... Jesus the Son of God...who through the miracle of the incarnation and virgin birth came into this world as a human being.
- t. Jesus who was fully human and fully God... Jesus who lived a perfect and sinless life in this world.
- u. On the cross... Jesus willingly gave Himself... He willingly took our sins upon Himself... Jesus willingly died for you and me... and He died for the whole world... that we might be saved from the penalty of our sins.
- v. Do you want to know how much you are loved?... the God who made you and the God who loves you... loves you so much that He died on the cross for you that you might be forgiven of your sins.

(Declaration... Demonstration of God's love)

## **V. THE DECISION DEMANDED BY GOD'S LOVE-**

- a. *John 3:16 (KJV) “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him...”*
- b. Every person has to make a decision concerning God’s love... “I will either believe what the Bible says about who Jesus is and what He has done for me... or I will not.”
- c. To believe in Jesus... you have to believe in Jesus in two places... in your head... and in your heart.
- d. In your head... you must believe the truth about yourself... that you are a sinner separated from God... and you must believe the facts about who Jesus is... and what He has done for you... as presented in God’s Word.
- e. In your heart... you must be willing to confess and repent of your sin ... and you must be willing to receive Jesus as your Savior who died on the cross for your sins ... and you must be willing to surrender all that you are and all that you have to His Lordship over your life.
- f. If you are not willing to believe in Jesus with your head and your heart... then you are not willing to believe.
- g. The decision demanded today by God’s love is this... you will either believe in Jesus... or you will not... the choice is yours.

(Declaration... Demonstration...Decision Demanded by God’s love)

## **VI. THE DESTINY DETERMINED BY GOD’S LOVE-**

- a. *John 3:16 (KJV) “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.”*
- b. Today... you are free to choose to believe in Jesus... or not to believe.
- c. But while you are free to choose to believe or not to believe in Jesus ... you are not free to choose the consequence of your choice.

- d. If you choose to believe in Jesus... what Jesus did at the cross for you will be applied to you.
- e. You will be forever saved from the penalty of sin... you will be forever forgiven of your sin.
- f. God will change you ... He will give you a new heart... and a new life ... a new spirit... He will give you a new meaning and purpose in life... He will give you an abundant life in this world... and eternal life in the next.
- g. But if you do not believe in Jesus... because of your sins and because of your rejection of God's love for you in the Lord Jesus Christ... you will continue to perish... and if you die without Christ... you will perish for all eternity in hell.
- h. What you choose to do with Jesus Christ... determines the course of your life in this world... and it determines your eternal destiny.

## **VII. CONCLUSION-**

- a. The Declaration of God's Love ... The Demonstration of God's Love ... The Decision Demanded by God's Love... The Destiny Determined by God's Love.
- b. Sometime you will hear people say... "I have received Jesus as my Savior... but not as my Lord"... as if such a thing is possible.
- c. The evidence that a person has received Jesus as their Savior... is the fact that they have gladly surrendered to His Lordship and control over their life.
- d. There is a story told about President Abraham Lincoln that probably is not true... but it illustrates a very important point.
- e. The story says that the President went to the slave market one day to purchase a slave girl with the intent to set her free... As the young African girl looked at the bearded white man... she could only assume

that he was purchasing her to use and abuse her as others had done... After winning the auction for the girl and walking with her away from the market... Lincoln turned to her and said, "Young lady, you are free."... "What do you mean?" she asked... "It means you are free. You are no longer a slave."... "Does that mean that I can say whatever I want to say?"... "Indeed, you can say whatever you like."... "Does it mean I can be whatever I want to be?"... "Yes, you can be whatever you want to be."... "And does it mean that I can go wherever I want to go?"... "Yes, you are free to go anywhere you want to go."

- f. After a moment of reflection with her head bowed...the girl looked up at the President with tears on her cheeks and said... "Then I choose to go with you."
- g. If you receive Jesus as your Savior... and you experience the freedom from sin's bondage and penalty that He gives... that He bought for you with His own blood on the cross... you will gladly surrender your life to His Lordship and control.
- h. Dear God... today I confess that I am a sinner... I am sorry for my sin and I want to be forgiven... today I believe that you are the Son of God... who died on the cross to pay for my sins... I believe that God raised you from the dead... today I turn from my sin... and by faith I receive you as my Savior... and I surrender to you as the Lord of my life... please come into my heart... forgive my sins... and save me, Lord Jesus... In your name I pray... Amen.