

11–30–2020 John 3.16–21 Bible Study # 11

Do not give up on the complete outline of John's Gospel. I just have not had the time to get that working properly. If I do not get it done this week, then I would hope to get it done next week. As you all know, this is a busy time of the year.

Today our reading begin with the Bible verse considered the best known by many. I don't have the tools to check the accuracy of that claim, but I do remember seeing for many years a man who attended football games wearing a multicolored wig and whenever the camera was on him, he held up a sign with John 3:16 written on it. I will admit I didn't believe it was a strong witness for the Lord, but I changed my mind.

Several Bible Study sites reported that whenever he was on camera holding up his sign, they had a significant increase in the number of people who searched for the passage and wanted to see what it said. Anything that gets a number of sports fans to do a Bible Search, seems like a good thing to me. God can use any and all who will witness for him.

Why is this such a good verse? It starts on a positive note which our world doesn't believe. It seems that the majority of unbelievers have the idea that God is more anxious to send people to hell than to win people for eternal life. They believe the church is composed of people who believe they are better than most and are very judgmental of people who are not like them.

Not only does God love, but he loves the world. His story begins with inclusion, not exclusion. His love made him also a giving God. He did not share just his spare change. He gave his one and only son (not an extra son or unneeded son). The purpose of this gift was so that whoever (or anyone) would not perish but have eternal life.

Even the word "perish" is not negative in this context because it says God wants to prevent people from perishing. God is interested in being a life giver. In John 1:1–5 he was the life giver in creation. Now in John 3:16 he is the life restorer.

Then in v. 17 God the Father makes it clear he did not send his Son to condemn the world, but so that he could save the world. The world has forgotten that it is under the sentence of death. As Paul tells us in Ephesians 2, we were once dead in sin ourselves.

In v. 18 the real issue is defined for us. When we do not recognize that we are dead because of sin, we are trapped in death. I always used a simple illustration when I was teaching the youth confirmation class. I told them that if I collapsed in front of them and was not breathing, they should not gather around me and begin to clap and cheer, "Come on pastor, breath."

Why is that worthless? Because dead people cannot do anything on their own. Someone needs to help them. You need to call 911 so professional help can get there as quickly as possible. Then if there is an Automated External Defibrillator available, open it up and follow the instructions carefully. If not, hopefully someone has had the training on doing chest compressions to keep blood moving to the brain to prevent brain damage.

No matter who the person is that is lying on the floor or wherever, they cannot do anything to save themselves. I think that is a wonderful picture of a spiritually dead person also. We are rescued by God who was the original life giver and now is the life restorer. As the Bible tells us in Ecclesiastes 7:20 "Indeed, there is not a righteous man on earth who continually does good and who never sins." (NASB95)

Why is this true? Because Jesus is the light of the world and instead of coming to the light they remained in darkness. We all practiced sin when we as children and parent or teacher asks us, "Who started the fight?" Most of the time they point at each other. Sin likes to remain hidden. The ultimate degradation is when we find

people going on talk shows to brag about their adultery or sinful lifestyles. Police today often find pictures or references on social media where people seem to be glad to reveal their sin, even posting picture of themselves with stolen items.

That is why it is important to confess our sin rather than deny it. To confess is to admit we want the light of God in us and we are willing step into the light and not hide in the darkness of sin. I would recommend John3:16–21 as a wonderful tool to share the gospel message. Our lesson is short today, but extremely important. I encourage you to read the comments at least twice and then pray through the message God has in these words.