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Title: Loving and Giving

SCRIPTURE: 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.”

CONTEXT:

Jesus is speaking with Nicodemus who came to him during the night. Please note that Nicodemus is a Pharisee, ruler of the Jews, and a master teacher to Israel. Jesus takes time to explain for Nicodemus what it means to be born again and as a master teacher should know these things. Jesus also points out that Nicodemus has a shortcoming – his inability to understand heavenly things.

Jesus related being born again to something Nicodemus should understand by being a master teacher – Moses and the serpent of brass (Numbers 21:8-9). Jesus stated that the Son of man should be lifted up just as Moses lifted up the serpent of brass in obedience to God’s instruction. Both acts are related to believing for life. The serpent of brass was lifted up for Israel needing to be delivered from the serpent’s bite. As Israel looked upon the serpent, they lived. Jesus Christ is lifted up for those needing to be delivered from sin – born again. The Son of man must be lifted up just as the serpent of brass in order for the world to receive eternal life.

John 3:16

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*Sermons for Pastors and Leaders
of the Christian faith!*

JOHN’S HISTORICAL FACT

Date and Place of Composition: According to scholars, John spent his last years at Ephesus where he carried on a ministry of preaching, teaching, and writing. From Ephesus he was exiled to Patmos in the reign of the Emperor Domitian. His Gospel seems to presuppose knowledge of the synoptic and so is placed last in the series possibly somewhere between 80 and 90. The discovery in Egypt of fragments of the Gospel, which have been dated from the first half of the second century, requires the writing of the Gospel within the limits of the first century (Ref. KJV 984).

Purpose: John hopes that a conviction will be created in the reader that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, so that life will come through faith in Him (John 20:30-31).

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INTRODUCTION:

John 3:16 is a restatement of John 3:14-15. The declaration that the Son of man must be lifted up so that mankind has the opportunity to believe in him is the salvation message Christ would teach to Nicodemus. There is also an expectation that Nicodemus would teach this message to others because he is a master teacher for Israel. Jesus statement in John 3:15 declares that whosoever believes should not perish. John 3:16 go a step further by addressing the love that God has for all humanity. Jesus wants Nicodemus to understand how eternal life is possible through the Son of man being lifted up.

MESSAGE:

Jesus states, "**For God so loved the world**" this statement suggests that something happened before hand – *for God*. This *for* explains how God wills eternal life to everyone that believeth. It was necessary for Christ to state the sentence this way because Nicodemus (Pharisee) would believe that salvation comes to God's chosen people only (Israel). Therefore, Christ had to include the world in his salvation statement, which ultimately continues the conversation of becoming born again.

God's love had to be in question which is why Jesus reminded Nicodemus of God's love for the world.

(1) **Love** [Greek – *agapáō*] means *I love, wish well to, take pleasure in, long for; denotes the love of reason, esteem.*

(2) With the believer, *agapáō* "to love" means *actively doing what the Lord prefers with Him (by His power and direction).*

(3) True *agapáō* "loving" is always defined by God – *a discriminating affection, which involves choice and selection.* (HELP Word Studies, 477)

Therefore, Christ is explaining to Nicodemus the nature of being born again (salvation) requires the acceptance of God's love and by doing so you make a choice to involve yourself with what the Lord prefers.

Jesus states, "**that he gave his only begotten Son,**" this statement suggests that Jesus had to touch on the training and tradition of the Pharisee. It would be a reminder to Nicodemus of the offering of Isaac. Nicodemus would be familiar with the story of Abraham's attempt to sacrifice Isaac. The only begotten Son of God being sent into the world that mankind might live through him (I John 4:9) is God showing forth love. This love is compared to Abraham willing to sacrifice his only begotten son to show forth love and obedience to God.

Jesus continues to say, "**Whosoever believeth in him**". The tradition of the Pharisee is now challenged because Nicodemus thinking would have been - God cares for His chosen people only (Israel). Therefore, God would not have sent his Son for any other people group. Now, Christ is offering something to all mankind and the criteria to receive is believe. It would require faith because Christ has challenged Nicodemus' tradition of belief in God only for salvation. God was the only entity offering salvation (Moses and the serpent of brass).

Believe [Greek – *pisteuó*] means *entrust, have faith in, trust in, pass, and I am entrusted with Christ.* After the Son of man is lifted up like the brass serpent of Moses in the Old Testament and after man takes the opportunity of believing, Christ gives the promise of not perishing and having an opportunity to live forever.

Jesus continues to say, "**Shall not perish but have everlasting life**". Christ makes a promise to Nicodemus and the world that believes. You will not perish! (1) **Perish** [Greek – *apollumi*] means *"away from", "to destroy" - properly, fully destroy, cutting off entirely.*

Christ makes a very bold promise of no separation from him for all eternity and you will not be destroyed like those that do not believe.

(2) *apóllymi* "violently/completely perish" implies *permanent (absolute) destruction, to cancel out (remove), "to die" with the implication of ruin and "destruction", cause to be lost (utterly perish) by experiencing a miserable end.*

MESSAGE CONTINUED...

In neither Gospel nor Epistle is 'eternal' (*aiōnios*) applied to anything but 'life'. *Eternal* [Greek – *aiōnios*] means *life operates simultaneously outside of time, inside of time, and beyond time*. Christ has promised the believer to live outside of time with him and ultimately evade destruction or a miserable end.

MESSAGE POINTS:

1. God loves the world. With this point, include verifiable examples of how God loves the world. These examples should be personal which helps bring validity to the message.
2. Christ is the only begotten Son of God. This point is essential for connecting Christ to God as Son. This point should not speak to the deity of Christ as God, but would help other religions (Muslim) that do not believe Christ is God's Son. It is important to insert biblical examples that speak to Christ as God's Son.
3. There is a belief system for eternal life. Clearly define the belief system for eternal life. A very good scripture reference would be the thief on the cross. This text speaks to belief in Christ and nothing more as essential to being with Christ after death.
4. If you fail to accept the required belief system, you will be cut off (perish). Insert examples of what self-destruction would look like.
5. No one is exempt from the belief system because it applies to the whole world that God loves.
6. How can Christ be lifted up? Here it is important to give illustrations of this fact.

PERSONAL MESSAGE NOTES:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 6.

PERSONAL MESSAGE ILLUSTRATIONS:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

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CONCLUDING THOUGHTS:

John 3:16 is a very familiar passage of scripture. It is a message of love and giving. John wanted the reader to understand how much God loves all mankind. God's love required Him to become proactive in helping mankind return unto Him.

John scribes the detailed conversation Christ had with Nicodemus. It would be important for other non-believers to witness change in someone that was well versed in the law and the prophets. Nicodemus could accept the law and die or accept Christ and live for all eternity. If Nicodemus had continued in his Pharisee tradition, there would not have been an acceptance of Christ whom the Pharisee's doubted to be the messiah.

John 3:16 is a beautiful story of love and giving from our heavenly Father. One can only hope that those being offered salvation today will accept this love and believe on Jesus Christ.



E V E T T E

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The scripture and above material has been taken from the King James Version of the Holy Bible and Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words. The opinions of this sermon are from Dr. Evette Hyder-Davis and should be researched further by the recipient. Rightly Dividing sermon series is a copyright of Dr. Evette Hyder-Davis with permission for use but not distribution.

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