

John 3:16-21: Jesus saves and explains why.

Understanding the context of vs.' 16-21:

- Believed to have been spoken by Jesus.
- Good possibility this is still part of His conversation with Nicodemus which appeared to be the case up until vs. 22 where it starts with “After this”.
- Based on who was speaking, remember the context of passage and who Jesus was speaking to in the previous verses.
- ***Keep in mind that the Bible was originally written without chapter and verses. There are programs that allow the chapter and verses to be removed to help understand the flow and context of Scripture.***
- Jesus explains how God would save sinful humanity, what it would take, and why a savior needed to come.
- Verses 16-21 sums up the entire gospel and the Bible for that matter. “*He sent His Son to save us from our sin because we are sick and need a Savior*”.
- Imagine Nicodemus' amazement when Jesus told him what he and the rest of the Jews had been doing thus far WAS NOT sufficient to be saved.

Vs.' 16-17: God's Ultimate Sacrifice and its' purpose:

- These verses debunk the notion that love is all about feeling and not action! **Romans 5:8.**
- God loved us so much that He sent His only begotten (unique and one of a kind).
- “Loved” means “*agapao*” in the Greek. God did what was in the best interest of mankind (regardless of how it felt). It was a **sacrificial** love. **Ephesians 5:25** (pertaining to men!).
- A biblical definition of love starts with God, never us. He is love **1 John 4:7-12.**
- “For God so loved the world” could be better translated: “For this is how God loved the world”.
- “World” means the sum-total of created things. Jesus' sacrifice was sufficient for the all of mankind.
- “Believes” means “confidence in” or “entrust”. No shallow faith like in **John 2:23-25.**
- “Perish” means “destroyed”, “ruin”, or “loss”. SIN DESTROYS US PHYSICALLY AND SPIRITUALLY!!!
- There is good news when we put our faith in Jesus **John 10:28.**
- (vs. 17) Jesus' 1st mission wasn't to condemn (judge) the world eternally, but to save it.

- “Saved” means “healed”, which means to be rescued from death (eternal separation from God).
- By God's grace (undeserved and unmerited favor) we have been saved. *Ephesians 2:1-5*.
- God doesn't take pleasure in the death of the wicked *Ezekiel 18:23 & 32*.
- He desires everyone to be saved *2 Peter 3:9; 1 Timothy 2:4*.

1. Do you, as a Christian, really grasp and appreciate the sacrifice God's perfect and INNOCENT Son made for you?

2. How do you show appreciation for His sacrifice on your behalf?

Vs.' 18: True belief is believing in “His Name”:

- True belief is more than just acknowledging the name of Jesus *James 2:19*.
- “Name” means “character”. The name stands for the person and if you believe (entrust) in His name, you believe in Him. *1 John 5:13 & Hebrews 7:23-25*.
- Our salvation and eternal well-being depend ONLY on believing in His finished work on the cross and in and out of the grave.
- If a man chooses not to believe on the Lord Jesus, God can do nothing else but to condemn him to eternal hell based on His perfect nature. If this were not so, He would be a hypocrite.
- Jesus' lack of judgment was related to our eternal state, not our physical (there still will be pain and suffering among Christian in this temporary life). Notice God's judgment (consequences) for sin on this earth in this life never stopped, even while Jesus was here.
- Condemnation (judgment) starts in this life when it says “already”. Example of this is found in *Numbers 21 (The bronze serpent)*.
- There are not only consequences to sin in the eternal life, but also in this temporary life. We can see this in how sin affects you and the others around you. God's judgment in this physical life is different than what the eternal judgment will be, which is what Jesus came to save us from.
- Having life in the Law of the Spirit, through the power of the name (character and His person) of Jesus allows us to be free from the law of sin and death (Old Law) *Romans 8:1-2*.
Condemnation in Romans means “punishment”, not judgment as in this passage. Punishment happens after you are judged.
- All mankind falls into one of two categories: believer or non-believer, no exceptions. *1 John 3:10*.

3. Does this change your thoughts on what believing in Jesus really means?

Vs. 19-21: Jesus exposes the real reason man needs a Savior from sin:

- Men love (not like) darkness rather than light.
- “Darkness” means sin.
- Men in darkness flee from the light. Wouldn't that mean these men have to be aware they are in darkness in order to run from the light, which is truth?
- There are examples in the Bible where people are aware of their sins (miserable in life, they hit rock bottom, not satisfied). The question isn't if they are aware of their sins, it is how do they free themselves from it?
- “Light” is Jesus. It is moral purity and righteousness. 1 John 1:5.
- God's judgment of the world is physical and eternal. *Repeated in vs. 18* God's physical judgment (consequences) never stopped, even while Jesus was on the earth.
- “Works” in vs. 19 means moral deeds/actions.
- “Evil” in vs. 19 means wicked and malicious (there is intent, no accident).
- 1 John 1:6-7.
- Man would rather worship the creation, rather than the Creator. Man loves idols. Romans 1:25.
- In vs. 20, Jesus addresses “everyone” who does or “practices” wicked things. There is intent and it isn't done by accident. It is repeated!
- “hates” means “hate”!
- Men that are in a sinful and dark place, without Christ, dread the day their evilness is exposed, which means to “show guilt”. ESPECIALLY THOSE THAT ARE ENJOYING THEIR SIN FOR THE SEASON THEY ARE IN.
- Usually sin is enjoyable until it catches up to you.
- Vs. 20 shows the alternative to living in darkness. When we come or “to go” (there is effort on our part), our works shine for God and shows we belong to Him. We carry out or “commit” our lives and works to God out of gratitude and love for Him.
- “Light” is Truth, which is God's Word, which is Jesus! John 1 & 3 John 4.

4. Is your secret sin keeping you from fully committing to Jesus and walking in the Truth?