

John's Gospel @ CF!

John 3:16-21

Sermon notes – BK

April 21, 2024

GOOD MORNING!

Meant to pray for this in service last week... MADE SURE to do it this week!

PRAY with me for Israel:

- For their **protection**
- For their **surrender to Jesus as Messiah**
- For the **release of the hostages** that have been captive for **more than 6 ½ months**
- For the **world to see what is really going on here**
- For the **church to be about the Father's business**, knowing the **return of Jesus is coming soon.**

ALSO...

PRAY for Ukraine –

- **Religious persecution by the Russians destroying churches, and religious sites...**
- **For Putin and this invasion to stop.**
- **For God's people to be strengthened and be encouraged, even in the midst of all the chaos.**

These have been on my heart for sure.
I know Israel has been especially on the heart of all those going through the Revelation class with Tom on Tuesdays as well

Some of you are crazy about all the prophecies

- Talking about **Russia being Magog**
- **“Peace, Peace... where there is no peace”**
- **“...wars and rumors of wars...”**
- **Etc...**

There is **MUCH** we do not know...

It IS ALL fascinating however...

...I believe what it says in Revelation 1...

Revelation 1:3

Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written in it, for the time is near.

I am **not convinced** however, that **this refers only to the revelation that follows** (the **book** of Revelation)...

The **prophecy throughout the Bible** that **points to the coming of Jesus and the salvation He brings** is **critical!**

The Prophecies of Jesus:

- **Some** - have been **miraculously fulfilled**

- **Some** - many of us have **personally encountered**
- **Some** – we wait with eager anticipation...

THE biggest blessing however is to **see all this unfold**, knowing that **those who believe in Jesus** have a **secure future!**

- **Jesus is our blessed hope!**
- **Is there a better time to be a Christian?**

I am **reminded of this** every **Sunday** we go through the **book of John**.

I know... **Quite an introduction to John**, huh?

We are in week 3 of CHAPTER 3 today for real!

This chapter is a wonderful chapter

- It **begins** with the **conversation Jesus has with Nicodemus**
 - **A leader of the Pharisees**
 - The group that **specialized in the letter of the Law of Moses**.
- **Jesus tells Nick** that **salvation is NOT through observing the Law of Moses**

- We must **come to God on His terms** for **His salvation**
- **Salvation comes** as we **believe in Jesus as Messiah** and as the **fulfilment of all Nicodemus knows** about the Law.

This leads us into the only verse we covered last week

–

John 3:16

I hit on this verse, from many angles – understanding that there are **many ways people can read this verse** and **miss** what it is **saying**... so that it can **fit their world view**.

We also talked about **the truth** –

“How we read John 3:16 tells us a lot about what we believe about God.”

God is the center of it all –

- **He** is the **one who loved**
- **He** is the **one who gave**
- **He** is the **one we believe in**
- **He** is the **source of the eternal life** promised

WE are the amazingly blessed recipients of His love.

THIS would have been completely new for Nicodemus!

- God loving THE WORLD?
- **All that is needed is believing?**

“...whoever believes in Him...”

No one is outside of the reach of the love of God.

Today – as we read the rest of (what most believe to be) this passage between Nicodemus and Jesus, we see Jesus give a broader picture.

Here’s what Jesus says...

John 3:16-21

16 “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. 18 Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. 19 And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather

than the light because their works were evil. ²⁰ For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed. ²¹ But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God.”

It would have been easy to assume Jesus was sent into the world to **clean things up...** to ***“kick tunic and take names!”***

This is what the Jews of Jesus’ day were expecting!

This was **NOT** God’s plan.

Jesus made it clear –

God sent Jesus because He loves the world

And whoever believes will have eternal life...

Then Jesus clarifies –

God’s mission was salvation, NOT condemnation

Think about this for a moment –

- **Jesus – *still talking to Nicodemus***
 - This may ***seem like a long conversation***; this is **our THIRD WEEK after all!**
 - **This was one flowing thought...**
 - Nicodemus was well acquainted with:
 - The **holiness** of God
 - The **justice** of God
 - The **RULES** God gave (and **they perfected it!**)
- Jesus was helping Nicodemus to understand:
 - The **LOVE** of God
 - The **PLAN** of God
 - The **WAY** of God

In speaking these truths to Nicodemus, NONE of this violates the CHARACTER of God.

How is this worked out?

John 3:17

17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

God's intention was *not to condemn* (Krino - adverse judgment) – but that the world might be saved (Sozo – saved FROM wrath – TO Jesus)

As we have talked about before – THIS has been God's plan all along.

Jesus says later in John..

John 5:24

"Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life."

John writes later in His first letter –

1 John 5:13

"I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life."

THIS is the *heart and plan of God*.

THESE VERSES – all by *THEMSELVES* – **bring an answer** the question-

"If there is a loving God, then why would He send anyone to hell?"

Answer... He doesn't!

Then ***HOW*** ***do people end up separated from God*** for all eternity?

It all comes down to believing in Jesus...

- ***Whoever believes – NOT condemned***
- ***Whoever does NOT believe.... Is already condemned.***

Here in John 3...

To be clear, Jesus is saying – ***God is not the one bringing condemnation***

People bring the condemnation onto THEMSELVES.

This is ***NOT*** ***"innocent until proven guilty"***

It is ***"already decided -- No belief in Jesus – Guilty."***

This does ***not sit well*** with people.

Our nature is to want to BE GOD

It is interesting *how Jesus is so loved by so many who think He is “all love”*

- **But do not understand/acknowledge that God’s love is not real love without holiness.**

If God’s love was not holy, then it would not be (real) love.

This is why Jesus says here in John 3...

John 3:19-20

19 And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. 20 For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed.

It is hard to believe these words were written so long ago, isn’t it?

“...and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil.’

These words could have been written today!

We are more aware of this truth now than Nicodemus had any scope for.

- We have **worldwide news** at our fingertips,
- **Social media** to give us close-up.
- Play-by-play, we have a **myriad of different streaming services** that deliver entertainment that underscore this like never before

“For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed.”

This is the theme of SO MANY movies today –

- It ***Glorifies*** evil and darkness!
- It ***Glamorizes*** infidelity and violence

John says it a little differently in his first letter

1 John 2:15-17

15 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world. 17 And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.

These verses are very plain in what they say –

- But if you struggle with this message and would like to talk more about it, please let me/us know here at church
- We ARE HERE to walk with you.

The way Jesus ends his talk with Nicodemus here are words I want to close with today...

“But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God.”

- Does what is true (walking the talk)
- Comes to the light (no fear of being exposed)
- Clearly seen (desire to show off what Jesus does)
- His works (we do have things to obey and carry out)
- Carried out in God (it is only by His power and work in us/through us)