

Baptism 2023—the Gospel

(preached 8/6/23)

UFO's and aliens have been in the news lately, with whistleblowers claiming that off-world craft that defy physical laws and are light years ahead of us in tech are invading our air space. Not just any airspace either, but nuclear installations and what not. The same whistleblowers have claimed that we've recovered some of these ships AND alien bodies.

If there is an ET culture with vastly superior tech who could supposedly incinerate us any time they wanted, flying around in our skies, then shouldn't we be **asking who they are, what they want, and how they feel about us?**

So let's ask a bigger question: *If there really is a God Who is powerful enough to have created the universe and us, if He really exists, then don't we need to find out how He feels about us and what He wants—fast?*

People ask if the aliens are friendly or hostile and are hoping that they're friendly—we don't need an "Independence Day" scenario for sure!

If God created the vast universe, that makes Him far bigger and more powerful than even the most advanced ET's wouldn't you say? **So don't we need to find out if He's friendly or hostile?**

[Jhn 3:16-17 ESV] 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.

Everyone needs to know that someone cares about them.

We all long to have someone who loves us.

I know this is one of the most popular verses ever, so let's not **just be sprinkled but go for the full immersion** Baptism. *Here is what the verses are telling us:*

- God LOVES His prime creation, who is humanity.
- God loves us so much that He GAVE His only Son to us...but for what reason?
- There's a problem: we're destined to perish and this means more than just dying, but something far worse.

- The opposite of perishing is eternal life...so the reason God gave us Jesus is so that we can go from perishing to immortality.
- **Verse 17:** God isn't angry. He's not about to lose His temper and incinerate us.
- He didn't send His Son to spank us and condemn us to Hell.
- **Yet we clearly need to be SAVED from something.**
- We need to know WHAT we need to be Saved from and how Jesus will do it.

Back to the aliens! Some are afraid of the news of their possible existence and interest in our planet. They look at humanity and RIGHTFULLY see our sins and flaws. We go to war with each other, pollute, are greedy, starve each other out, lie, steal, cheat, grab for power, and so much more. They're worried that the ET's have been watching us and might just go all "War of the Worlds" on us.

In other words, they're afraid ET will judge and condemn the world for our sins, then take a wrecking ball to all of us.

I'M HERE TO REASSURE YOU THEY WON'T/CAN'T and no, I'm not a gov't whistleblower. So how do I know they won't wipe us out? Because the Lord is in charge and He decided to give us Jesus Who didn't condemn the world, but came here to save it.

Father God went so far as to allow the human race to betray, lie about, reject, and kill Jesus on the Cross and He didn't step in to stop it. He didn't send a bunch of angels—who are ET's BTW—to rescue Jesus from crucifixion and death. He let the whole thing happen to His own Son.

Hold on: *why would the Being Who is powerful enough to create the entire universe not stop the killing of His own Kid?*

WHY NOT DESTROY? Why didn't Father God look at all the sin, evil, and depravity of this world and just destroy us? Why not a second worldwide flood like in the days of Noah?

Let's make no mistake: God sees all and I mean all. **My own Salvation experience was the scariest thing I've ever been through.** The Lord knew all my thoughts and feelings that I hide from others...these things weren't hidden from Him. I was completely exposed to Him and my own sin and depravity was like an ocean!

Yet He didn't destroy me. He didn't just send me to Hell but He did something that caused to pass from perishing to eternal life.

GOD SEES SIN. God does look down upon us and see all the sin and evil of the humanity. He sees it with greater detail than even the most critical and cynical person. So why hasn't He destroyed us? Why hasn't He sent legions of angels to wipe us out? Why hasn't He sent fire from the sky to roast us like an overcooked hot dog?

John 3:16-17 answers our question: instead of destroying humanity He GAVE us His Son, Who is Jesus Christ.

He has every right to PUNISH us, *yet He chose to sacrifice His own Son instead.* It's not a stretch to know that He loves His Son, but we need to know how He feels about us.

Is He angry with us? Disappointed? About to give up? Already given up? **The answer is NO to all those questions.**

I'm a dad and have 3 sons. I love you all, but I'm not giving up one of them so that you will live. Sorry. If one of you was in the ocean surrounded by sharks, I wouldn't let one of my sons sacrifice himself to said sharks so that you could get away to safety. If he tried to dive in I would stop him!

BLACK PLAGUE. If one of you lived in a zone heavily infected by the Black Plague, and you had the BP, and I would not allow one of my sons to go into that area to help you. Even with a CDC suit to protect him. No way. If he said "I'm going because I want to help!" I would respond "too bad! You're not going!"

Why? *Because I'm selfish and want my sons to live.* I don't want you to perish, but I want my kid to live more.

So I'm blown away when I read that Jesus is God's Son and that He allowed His Son to come into this Black Plague infected world swimming with sharks. **Father God didn't just allow it, He GAVE His only begotten Son to us.**

The context of God giving us His Son isn't like a present on Christmas morning, but rather we were supposed to get the death penalty for our crimes and Jesus went in our place. Things went south 2000 years ago and Jesus was arrested, beaten, and then crucified, Father God didn't send the Cavalry to rescue Him, but instead allowed Christ die on Calvary.

[Rom 5:6-8 ESV] 6 For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 For one will scarcely die for a righteous person--though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die-- 8 but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Look at verse 8 to answer the question of how God feels about us:

despite our sins and the things we've done wrong in our lives, the Lord was willing to sacrifice His own Son on the Cross for us.

Remember the promise of John 3:16—Jesus will “do something” to free us from perishing and then give us eternal life instead.

THE SOMETHING HE DID WAS TO PERISH IN OUR PLACE.

- He took the judgment and condemnation we deserved. He took the punishment that we had coming.
- Then He gave us the righteousness that He earned. He gave us the eternal life that He had coming.

CREDIT CARDS. As a young man in my 20's I became addicted to credit cards. I maxed out 2 of them, both of which had 4 figure credit limits. I was being charged 20% interest on both cards and it would not only take years to pay them off, but I would end up paying way more than what I got.

My grandmother tried to warn me ahead of time, tried to explain interest to me, and told me to not take on the cards...I didn't listen. When I finally realized the pit I'd dug for myself it was too late. Even worse, grandma found out...she could always get a confession out of me! When I told her the total that I owed I expected her to go up one side of me and down the other.

I TOLD YOU SO. I was waiting for her to say “I told you so! I warned you this would happen! You got yourself into this mess, now you can get yourself out of it!” She would have been RIGHT to say those things to me. Not just factually correct, but morally right.

This is what she did instead—**she bought my debt**. She asked me to send her my 2 credit card statements and she sent them both a check for the full amount.

I didn't deserve that. I was not entitled. I had openly rejected her wise counsel that she tried to give me before it was too late. I refused to listen as she tried to explain how interest works and that it would come back to kick me in the head. I followed my own desire to spend despite her pleading with me not to.

What I deserved was her judgment and condemnation, but what I got was forgiveness.

- She didn't come to me to berate, but to redeem.
- She sacrificed her own money for my sake and never asked me to pay it back—it was a free gift.

Let me ask you parents and grandparents: **what motivated her to do this**, despite my blatant rebellion and stubbornness? LOVE.

So it is with God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ.

- If God had sent Jesus here to judge and condemn this world, we would have deserved it.
- If Jesus had come to bring fiery wrath to everyone on the world it would have been just.

He chose to save us instead. Just as my grandpa paid a high 4 figure sum to clear my debt, God paid our debt through the death of His Son, Christ Jesus. What motivated God to do this?

He's a father. We're His kids. And He loves us.

He loves us even when we're ignoring Him, rejecting His offer for salvation, and saying we don't need Him, or that He doesn't exist.

HE LOVES US EVEN WHEN WE'RE OPENLY INDULGING IN ANYTHING HE CALLS SIN.

- He loves us and offers His Son to us right here, right now.
- No matter how you've been living and what you've been doing: *He's offering to pay your debt and forgive everything right now.*

[Isa 44:22 CSB] 22 I have swept away your transgressions like a cloud, and your sins like a mist. Return to me, for I have redeemed you.

"...if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the Scripture says, 'Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame.' For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him. For 'whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.'" (Romans 10:9-13)