

## **Weekly Study of Sunday's Message.**

**March 19, 2023 "What was important to Jesus. Eternal life."**

### **I Intro.**

We're well into 2023 now. This year will bring some new and innovative ideas in all areas of our church life. We have seen an increased activity in our children's ministry, and we're working on new ideas for both our children and our students. We have many ways you can plug into life at NCC. You can find all those through our website, app, and social media sites. Our app is the best way to livestream our services, but you can also livestream on FaceBook and YouTube. You can revisit past services, sign up for events and even give. We're encouraged by your presence when you gather with us. New and familiar faces join us every Sunday. If you join us online, we appreciate your presence. We are 100% committed to our virtual attenders. We are your church family, and if there is anything you need, prayer, or anything else, please let us know. This is our weekly devotional that gives you some specific things to work through from Sunday's message. Whether you were able to participate in this service or not, this devotion is free-standing. You can use it to help you dig deeper into your own spiritual walk. We hope you find this tool helpful on your spiritual journey.

### **II Recap.**

This is our third Sunday in this series. We're in the season of Lent, and in our journey towards crucifixion Friday and resurrection Sunday, we're taking a deep dive looking at what was important to Jesus. If Jesus spent a lot of time teaching about certain specific things, then it must be something we need to take seriously. This series is also to address the creep of politics into the church, and refocus our hearts on the teachings of Jesus. This is not to say that Christians shouldn't be involved in politics. This is saying we should be wise in how we engage politics, making sure it aligns with the teachings of Jesus. And these topics will help address the struggles we face in life, and give us some tools to use to guide us. So, we're looking at what was important to Jesus.

The first Sunday we talked about Jesus caring about things that are 'lost'. We discovered that 'lost things' are people, and we are to do all we can to reach out to them. With this truth...we are ALL lost. The second Sunday Kristen led us on a look into who Jesus considered "the least of these", and what our relationship should be with them. As usual with a guest preacher, we didn't have a devotional last week. Just check out the service. This week we talk about eternal life and ALL that entails.

### **III Sunday.**

I need to go ahead and give you a couple of heads up. One, this study will be extra nerdy. We're going to dive into some deep study. Two, there will be A LOT of scripture in this particular topic also. I hope you take the time, even if it has to be over a couple of days, to read all of the scripture.

So, let's talk about eternal life.

**What do you think of when you hear the term eternal life?**

**Why would eternal life be important to the people in the time of Jesus?**

**To get us thinking. How do we talk about eternal life now in a way that connects with others?**

Eternal life is a topic that is way bigger than we can hit in this one devotional. However...as with any belief we hold, the idea of eternal life has morphed and transformed into thousands of different views held by Christians. We know we won't land on the ultimate perfect understanding of eternal life. But we hope to form some kind of idea based on the teachings of Jesus that can help guide us.

So, here we go. Lots of scripture and discussion. Read each passage and then we'll talk about them.

### **John 3:16-18.**

This is the super famous passage we've made the core of our belief. It is one of the first mentions of "*eternal life*", that we've turned into a very specific meaning. But it does need some initial context.

First, some questions. And then we'll weave this passage into other teachings by Jesus.

**What does this passage mean to you?**

**What can you pull from this passage specifically about what 'eternal life' is?**

### **John 3:1-5.**

This is the lead-in conversation that gives us a really good insight to the John 3:16-18 passage.

**What jumped out to you about this passage?**

**What term did Jesus use to describe this thing he was doing?**

This passage ties the conversation around eternal life, being saved, to this thing Jesus was actively building he called The Kingdom of God. So, when we look at the ideas of eternal life, being saved, and The Kingdom of God we discover they are basically the same thing. This is an important truth.

### **John 10:6-10.**

There are additional words and phrases Jesus uses that connect what we've already talked about.

**What jumped out to you about this passage?**

**How do you tie; "saved" with "abundant life" with "eternal life" and "Kingdom of God"?**

This adds to a growing understanding that eternal life, being saved, and the Kingdom of God, is the abundant life Jesus was talking about. All of these seem to be connected to something bigger and more current than just saving a spot in the 'good place'.

### **John 5:24.**

This teaching seems to be pretty clear.

**How do you understand that belief already passes us from death into life?**

Jesus seems to be driving home the point that all of these ways to describe what he offers us is something we can enter into and fully experience now and eventually later.

### **Luke 17:20-21.**

Here is the final passage. And helps us know we will struggle to see, understand, how all of this works, but we are to just trust what is happening now.

**If the Kingdom of God is already among us...what does that mean?**

We can find comfort in knowing all of this is tough, and difficult to grasp now. But Jesus said God is at work now, and it's all around us if we can move beyond focusing on what we want to happen.

### **IV Challenge.**

Let me say this in closing. All of this is just the tip of the iceberg in understanding this thing we call 'eternal life'. All of these phrases Jesus used; Kingdom of God, born again, saved, abundant life, all seem to be tied together in some way of the work God is doing now. They may not all be exactly saying the same thing, but there is a connection that is bigger than we can see or comprehend. The bottom line is that Jesus is saying all of that is happening now and it's important for us to live into it.

**So, knowing that to be true. That eternal life begins now. How can your life reflect that?**