

John 3:16 Revisited

- I. You should be sick and tired of the ignorant and arrogant abusing of the words of our brother John.
 - A. They place “John 3:16” signs in professional sports venues as if it were a magical formula.
 - B. They call this verse “the gospel in a nutshell” and claim it is all the Bible they want or need.
 - C. They cry long about believing on Jesus to be born again – creating decisional regeneration.
 - D. Their decisional regeneration, gospel means of eternal life, and easy believism are sickening.
 - E. Have you heard, “I want you to get up out of your seats by the hundreds and come down”?
 - F. You probably don’t know about Jack Hyles and his 15,000 empty converts a few years ago.
 - G. These verses are ours, and I want to reclaim them by the Spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ.
 - H. Do you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ this morning? You have been and shall be saved.
 - I. Do you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ this morning? We shall see about that shortly.
 - J. I have searched John, I John, II John, III John, and Revelation. And I have not found . . .
 - 1. An offering of regeneration or eternal life to anyone.
 - 2. A sinner’s form prayer for Jesus to become a Saviour.
 - 3. Sinners inviting Jesus into their hearts through a door.
 - 4. New names being written down in glory.
 - 5. A set of rules or steps for being born again.
 - 6. An invitation for sinners to come forward and get saved.
 - 7. Four Spiritual Laws (Law #1: God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life.)
 - K. Let us look at **John’s writings alone** to see what he truly taught about believing on Jesus.

- II. John stated his audience and purpose for writing very clearly (I John 5:13 cp John 20:30-31).
 - A. He wrote to believers, as did all Scripture writers through inspiration of the Holy Spirit.
 - B. He wrote that believers might know they have eternal life – not that they might get it.
 - C. He wrote that believers might believe even more.
 - D. He does not write the unregenerate with any intention of moving them to make a decision.
 - E. He says nothing about offering life to the wicked, saving lost souls going to hell, or taking Africa for God. And he didn’t ask for you to send a postcard with the date of your decision.
 - F. He does not offer material wealth, being slain in the Spirit, a problem-free life, a word of faith, a tongues baptism of fire, or a laughing revival for believing on Christ.
 - G. He is silent about decisions for Jesus and the oft-abused adjunct “once saved, always saved.”
 - H. This is also our purpose for preaching the gospel – the same two objectives as John.

- III. John recorded plainly that all men before being born again [regenerated] have no life toward God.
 - A. By nature the whole world is in darkness and cannot comprehend Christ’s light (1:5).
 - B. Except and until a man is born again, he cannot even see the kingdom of God (3:3).
 - 1. Imagine the kingdom of God to be anything you wish, the unregenerate cannot see it.
 - 2. But it is truly the whole set of words, deeds, and events surrounding Jesus Christ.
 - 3. If the wicked cannot see it, then how will you persuade them to see it and enter it?
 - C. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; it is not spirit, and it is contrary to the Spirit (3:6).
 - D. The prior condition of those resurrected [regenerated] by Jesus Christ’s voice is dead (5:25).
 - E. The flesh has potential for nothing; unless the Spirit quickens, there is no life or faith (6:63).
 - F. Those identified by Jesus Christ as the devil’s children [the lost] cannot even hear (8:37-47).
 - G. If a man is not a sheep of the Lord Jesus Christ, he cannot and will not believe (10:26-27).
 - H. The world cannot receive the Spirit of truth, for it neither sees Him or knows Him (14:17).

- IV. John recorded plainly that God made sovereign choice [elected] of those He would save by Christ.
- A. If every one born again is so by God without other wills, then only the elect obtain it (1:13).
 - B. Every one who is ever born again is regenerated by the sovereign work of the Spirit (3:8).
 - C. Both the Father and Son regenerate men according to their own absolute wills (5:21,25-27).
 - D. It was the will of God that Jesus Christ save those the Father had given Him (6:37-40).
 - E. Our Lord Jesus gave His life for the sheep the Father had given Him (10:14-16,27-30).
 - F. The Father gave Christ power over all flesh to give life to those He had given Him (17:1-3).
 - G. Jesus told the Jews they were neither Abraham's children nor God's children (8:37-47).
- V. John records plainly that in regeneration [rebirth] of sinners God is sovereign and man is passive.
- A. Becoming a son of God is without blood, the will of the flesh, and the will of man (1:13).
 1. The Jews were confident in their blood ties to Abraham, but John condemns this.
 2. Decisional regenerationists depend on the will of the flesh, but he condemns this.
 3. Baptismal regenerationists depend on the will of man, but he condemns their heresy.
 - B. It is impossible (and unscriptural) for the flesh to do anything to cause a spiritual birth (3:6).
 - C. The Spirit regenerates dead sinners in the same sovereign way the wind blows (3:8).
 - D. Jesus Christ regenerates dead sinners just as He will resurrect dead bodies (5:25-29).
 - E. Jesus told carnal unbelievers only those drawn by the Father will ever believe (6:44-45).
- VI. John records plainly that belief in Jesus Christ is the evidence of regeneration and eternal life.
- A. Those that receive Christ by believing on His name were already born of God (1:12-13).
 1. John is writing history [past tense] but shifts with the adverbial "believe" [present].
 2. Those that believe [present tense] were born [past] by a prior operation of God.
 - B. If a man can see the kingdom of God [Jesus as Son of God], he is already born again (3:3).
 - C. Those who hear [present] and believe [present] are already passed unto life [perfect] (5:24).
 - D. For the internal proof from God of this verb tense, compare I John 4:7 with I John 3:14.
 - E. Then read I John 5:1 and understand the perfect tense further in light of I John 2:29.
 - F. How about I John 4:15? Whosoever shall confess [future], God dwelleth [present] in him.
 - G. John declares our faith itself is born of God (I John 5:4-5). Does faith precede regeneration?
 - H. Do not confuse facts with conditions. What do you see in John 6:47 now? 3:36? 6:54?
- VII. John records plainly that Jesus Christ will save every single person that God gave Him to save.
- A. The Father and the Son regenerate [quicken, or make alive] all whom they will (5:21,25).
 - B. God's will is for the Son to lose none of the elect but to raise them up at the last day (6:39).
 - C. Though Jesus had power [authority] over all flesh, He gave eternal life to every one the Father had given Him (17:2).
 - D. Not a single soul will be in hell whom God loved and Christ sought to save. None are lost.
- VIII. John records plainly that eternal life is given that we might believe and know Jesus Christ.
- A. Life eternal is that we might know God and Jesus Christ Whom He has sent (17:3).
 - B. Jesus Christ has come and given us an understanding that we might know God (I John 5:20).
- IX. John records plainly that belief in Jesus Christ is nothing without accompanying works.
- A. The first work we are called upon to do is believe on the Lord Jesus Christ (6:28-29).
 - B. Believing on Jesus and loving the brethren are both commandments (I John 3:23,18-19).
 - C. Do you believe on Jesus today? If you continue in His word, then are you His (8:30-32).
 - D. Do you know Jesus this morning? If you know Him, keep His commandments (I Jn 2:3-5).
 - E. Do you love Him this morning? If you love Him, keep His commandments (14:15).

- X. John's use of the word "world" is very loose and requires us rightly dividing the word of truth.
- A. The common notion of John 1:29; 3:16 and I John 2:2; 4:14 depends on "world" meaning every single human soul without exception ever conceived world without end.
 - B. **World.** III. The inhabitants of the earth, or a section of them. (Oxford English Dictionary.)
 - C. The Pharisees said the world had gone after Him, though less than 1% of the nation (12:19).
 - D. Jesus said the world could not receive the Spirit, though His disciples surely would (14:17).
 - E. The disciples were not of the world (15:19). If He died for the world, His disciples are lost.
 - F. The world would rejoice when he died (16:20). If He died for this world, his mother is lost.
 - G. The disciples were not of the world (17:14). If He died for the world, His disciples are lost.
 - H. How many worlds can we find in John 17? The common notion is ridiculous (17:21,23).
 - I. Did Jesus propitiate the sins of the whole world (I Jn 2:2)? Or is it yet in wickedness (5:19)?
 - J. Is Jesus the Saviour of the world (I Jn 4:14)? Or is the world deceived by Satan (Rev 12:9)?
 - K. We read the statement and understand the "world" to fit its context as a section of mankind.
 - L. Is there any place in the Bible (287 occurrences) where "world" means every human soul?
 - M. Is giving a sense to "world" any different than giving a sense to key words in Heb 4:12? Gal 5:4? I Cor 15:29? I Cor 9:22? Acts 22:16? Luke 2:1? And a host of others?
- XI. John records clearly that God loved the elect and sent His Son to secure eternal life for believers.
- A. Because of what John has said elsewhere, we may know the sense of these verses easily.
 1. No man would or could ever believe on Jesus without regeneration occurring first.
 2. No man assists, cooperates, or acts in regeneration – it is a powerful act of creation.
 3. God only gave some of mankind to Christ to save, and He only came to save them.
 4. Faith in Jesus Christ is only and always an evidence of eternal life, not a condition.
 5. Jesus is not trying to "save" Nicodemus by getting his flesh to make a decision.
 - B. **Verses 14-15.** Jesus informed Nicodemus that the Messiah (the Son of man) must die.
 1. Jesus just laid some deep truth on Nicodemus to show him his ignorance (3:1-13).
 2. The idea of the Jewish Messiah dying rather than throwing off Rome was a new one.
 3. Even the disciples missed His role to be crucified and die (Matt 16:21-23; Acts 1:6).
 4. Jesus would be lifted up as the brass serpent: on a pole (Nu 21:6-9; Jn 12:32; 18:32).
 - a. The analogy is entirely the way in which Jesus would be lifted up – on a pole.
 - b. Looking at the brass serpent did not give life - the dead were not helped at all.
 5. This sacrificial death was to secure eternal life for those who believed on Him.
 - a. The primary point being made is the Messiah's death to secure eternal life.
 - b. The secondary point – John's purpose in writing – is the evidence of life.
 - C. **Verse 16.** Jesus further explains that this death was by design of God the Father in love.
 1. **So.** An adverb that describes the manner or way something is done. See 3:8.
 2. **That.** A conjunction introducing a clause expressing the intent and result of His love.
 3. This dependent clause limits those God loves to those for whom Christ died.
 4. God loved His elect and therefore gave His Son to secure eternal life for them.
 5. And the evidence of election is faith in Christ Jesus with righteousness following.
 6. The text does not say more than I John 4:9-10 in light of I John 4:4-8. God loved us!
 7. The text is not structured conditionally with a future conditional (If . . . then).
 8. The verse primarily states the Son of Man's death to secure eternal life for the elect.
 9. And it secondarily states that the evidence – John's purpose in writing – is faith.
 10. Jesus is not working the crowd at a Billy Graham crusade getting fleshly decisions.

- D. If God loved the whole human race without exception so very, very, very much . . .
1. Why couldn't or wouldn't He save very many of them? He is the Savior, isn't He?
 2. How do babies, idiots, and the heathen get to heaven without a chance to believe?
 3. How did people get saved in the Old Testament before they could believe on Him?
 4. Will those in hell sing just as loud about His great love for them as those in heaven?
 5. Why will He profess He never knew most men in any affectionate way?
 6. Why has He kept the gospel from most men in the history of the world?
 7. What good is His love with most men going to hell? It isn't a very meaningful love.
 8. What is the difference between the saved and the lost? Did they save themselves?
 9. Are those in hell separated from His love, which He promised could never happen?
 10. Can any human ever go to hell, since Jesus promised He would lose not one?
 11. Is His love better than that of a whore, who offers it to strangers without any loyalty?
 12. Why doesn't He chasten the whole human race, since such are rejected bastards?
 13. How do we love our wives as Christ? By loving all women equally including them?
 14. Why can't He love as well as evil men love? They would not let a woman get away.
 15. Why doesn't Acts record even one of the 13 forms of English "love" even one time?
- E. **Verse 17.** God sent Jesus into the world for the purpose of salvation, not condemnation.
1. God sent His Son into the "world" of the earthly sphere of human existence.
 2. He did not come to condemn the reprobate "world"; Adam and sin already did that.
 3. Christ's explanation is certainly not necessary for the world God loves (3:16).
 4. He came to save the elect "world"; and He will surely save them without losing one.
 5. When we read "might," let us not ignorantly assume "maybe possibly" (10:17; 11:4).
- F. **Verse 18.** Men are under condemnation from Adam and their sins, not because of unbelief.
1. The text does not read that condemnation is conditionally dependent on believing.
 2. Evidence is the issue. One who believeth [present] is not condemned [perfect].
 3. One who believeth not [present tense] is condemned [perfect tense] already (8:21).
 4. Believing on the Son of God is the evidence that one is not condemned (John 5:24).
- G. **Verses 19-21.** The remaining verses show the evidences of life and truth.
1. The evidence of being evil is shown by not coming to the light (7:7).
 2. The evidence of being of the truth is shown by coming to the light (I Jn 3:18-19).
 3. We don't come to the light to become of God, but because we are of God.

Conclusion:

1. I tell you about a love that saves, never quits, keeps its promises, wins its object, never changes, guarantees every good thing, does whatever is necessary, and overcomes your foolish rebellion!
2. He is a glorious Saviour worthy of your affection, devotion, service, and praise. Hallelujah! Amen!