# John 3:14-21 Reclaimed

September 11, 2016 · AM · https://letgodbetrue.com/sermons/2016/restoring-john-3-14-21/

## Restoring John 3:14-21 Correcting Abuses and Perversions

### Introduction:

A. John 3:14-21 have long been abused by Arminians and freewill cousins for salvation heresy.
   1. They emphasize this verse more than all others to flagrantly reject any conflicting verses.
   2. It is now a reference number, a sound bite, or a mantra for manmade freewill salvation.
   3. Verses for the joy of God's elect children have been hijacked for their doctrinal nonsense.

B. God commands honest ministers to divide scripture for the right sense (II Tim 2:15; Ne 8:8).
   1. We do not care about sound bites, no matter how popular they might be with juveniles.
   2. We must determine the sense of God's words and verses for absolute truth in doctrine.

C. We follow a two-step hermeneutic rule: (a) what a verse cannot mean; (b) what it does mean.
   1. The first rule of Bible study is to make all verses reconcile with the Bible (II Pe 1:20-21).
   2. This process is started by using the rest of the Bible to bring individual verses into unity.
   3. After all impossibilities are eliminated, we then check possible meanings by other rules.

D. The flagrant corruption and evil consequences of verses below are truly hardly describable.
   1. The character of God is greatly altered and man becomes his own saviour by freewill.
   2. The purpose, work, and accomplishments of Jesus Christ's death are ruined for failure.
   3. Consequences are easy believism, evangelistic gimmicks, carnal Christianity, OSAS, etc.

E. Many Bible verses require the same laborious process to rightly understand them (John 6:53-61; Acts 2:17; 2:38; I Cor 11:24; 15:29; Gal 5:4; Heb 6:4-6; II Pet 2:1; Rev 3:5; 22:19; etc.).

F. Consider Revelation 3:20, which is used as a formula or mantra for a means to eternal life.
   1. There is not the least mention or intention of eternal life in this Bible verse whatsoever.
   2. The verse is about supping, not saving. It is a call for a local church to seek fellowship.
   3. The verse is addressed to a church … born again, saved, baptized, heaven-bound saints.
   4. We reject the heresy of dead, rebel sinners inviting a fairy Jesus into hearts to escape hell.
   5. For much more about this verse.
   6. For the positive use of this verse.

G. Context is way up there as a rule of hermeneutics, but the abusers of John 3:16 ignore it.
   1. John had written much already to correct false ideas (John 1:5; 1:13; 2:23-25; 3:3; 3:8).
   2. Those chasing sound bites do not care about context large or small that alters the sense.
   3. A text without its context is a pretext, if they are capable of understanding the judgment!

H. It is very frustrating we must spend much effort to undo the ignorance and malice of heretics.
    1. These verses are ours, and I want to reclaim them by the Spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ.
    2. Do you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ this morning? You have been and shall be saved.
    3. Do you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ this morning? We shall see about that shortly.

I. This sermon and study will be about as hard as can be about the doctrine of salvation.
    1. Jesus, Paul, Peter taught similar things without apology or compromise. Neither will we!
    2. Yet, at each point, let us seek to remember the positive truth to be embraced for our joy.

J. Another approach is to use John's writings exclusively to confound these Bible corrupters.
    1. They chose John 3:16, since nothing even close is elsewhere in the other three gospels.
    2. For John's unique condemnation.

## #1 ... 3:14 or following verses is assumed to be John's evangelism to save men.

A. John identified his audience and purpose for writing (I Jn 5:13 cp Jn 20:30-31).

B. Plural, first person pronouns like we and us are not all men (Ro 8:32; Gal 4:26).

C. He wrote to believers, as did all Scripture writers, by inspiration of the Spirit.

D. He wrote that believers might know they had eternal life – not in order to get it.

E. He wrote that believers might believe even more in order for greater assurance.

F. He did not write unregenerate with any goal to move them to make a decision.

G. He wrote nothing about offering life to the wicked, saving lost souls going to hell, or taking the Aboriginal Tasmanians of Australia for God, and he did not ask for you to send a postcard with the date of your decision for Jesus.

H. He did not offer material wealth, being slain in the Spirit, a problem-free life, a word of faith, a tongues fire baptism, or a laughing revival for trusting Jesus.

I. He ignored any decisions for Jesus and the mantra, "once saved, always saved."

J. This is also our purpose for preaching – the same two objectives as John – to confirm believers as having eternal life … and to exhort them to believe more.

K. John 3:14-21 and all the Bible is written to the elect as a believing child of God.

## #2 ... 3:14 is used to teach that dead sinners can look or believe and then live.

A. This occurs by not reading the very short account for the details (Num 21:4-9).

B. All the Israelites God had chosen to die by direct judgment were already dead!

C. No Israelites were brought back to life by looking at the brass serpent of Moses.

D. Arminians reject man's depravity, so they deny his death (Gen 2:17; Ep 2:1-3).

E. But only those Israelites with life, and repentant, were provided a brass serpent.

F. And only sinners with life, and repentant, can lay hold of eternal life by faith.

G. The reason for 3:14's comparison is Jesus lifted up, not a condition to get saved.

H. Jesus prophesied to Nicodemus He must die a Roman death, not a Jewish one.

## #3 ... 3:15 and "whosoever" is used to teach all men have freewill to be saved.

A. They ignore the truth of man's total depravity and natural enmity against God.

B. The pronoun whosoever does not mean more than whoever, any one that, etc.

C. John and Jesus already taught men do not have freewill (1:5,10-11,13; 3:3,6).
   1. Imagine the kingdom of God to be anything you wish, sinners cannot see it.
   2. If the wicked cannot see it, how will you persuade any to spiritually enter it?

D. Man is given to death and rebellion (Rom 3:9-18; 8:7-8; I Cor 2:14; Eph 2:1-3).

E. We chose death over life in Eden, including our bodies, but certainly our spirits.

F. No man can or will believe until regenerated first by God's sovereign power.
   1. Before regeneration a man is merely flesh and contrary to the Spirit (3:6).
   2. The condition before resurrection by Christ's voice is death (John 5:25).
   3. The devil's children among the Jews could not hear or understand (8:43,47).
   4. If a man is not a sheep of Christ, He cannot and will not believe (10:26-27).
   5. The world cannot receive the Spirit, for it does not see Him or know Him.

G. When discussing salvation with anyone, go first to the rebel depravity of man.

H. If you start out past this point, you will get in trouble without a true foundation.

I. Seven Proofs.

## #4 ... 3:15 and "whosoever" is used to teach God does not choose in salvation.

A. If being born again is without human choice, then it must be God's (John 1:13).

B. Jesus plainly stated the sovereignty of the wind and Spirit in regeneration (3:8).

C. Both the Father and Son regeneration according to their own wills (5:21,25-27).

D. It was God's will that Jesus would save the elect without losing any (6:37-40).

E. Jesus gave His life for the sheep God His Father gave Him (10:14-16,27-30).

F. The Father gave Christ power over all flesh to give life to the elect (17:1-3).

G. The Bible repeats God's choice (Ro 8:28-30; Eph 1:4; II Thes 2:12; II Tim 1:9).

H. Any compassion or mercy obtained from God is by His choice (Rom 9:15-16).

## #5 ... 3:15 and "whosoever" is used to teach man participates in regeneration.

A. But John had already written that man's will is entirely cut out of it (John 1:13).

B. The flesh and Spirit are incompatible enemies; the flesh cannot cooperate (3:6).

C. The Spirit regenerates like the wind blows, wherever the Spirit chooses (3:8).

D. Jesus resurrects dead sinners exactly as He will raise dead bodies (5:25-29).

E. Jesus told carnal unbelievers that only those drawn will truly believe (6:44-45).

F. How much participation was there by Lazarus in his resurrection (Eph 2:1-3)?

## #6 ... 3:15 and "whosoever" is used to teach Jesus died to offer salvation.

A. Jesus did not die to offer eternal life, but to secure eternal life for all the elect.
B. There is nothing in the verse that is conditional, propositional, probable, etc.
C. It is a statement of fact Jesus would die a crucifixion death to save believers.
D. There is not the slightest possibility of any elect perishing or reprobates living.
E. This is not an open-ended offer or deal – it is the certain produce of His death.

## #7 ... 3:15 and "whosoever" is used to teach many will perish for unbelief.

A. This heresy is by adding the possibility of salvation to man's inherent free will.
B. But Jesus plainly declared none He died for could perish (6:38-39; 10:28-29).
C. Paul knew no such thing as an interruption in God's plan of grace (Ro 8:28-33).
D. The elect believe more or less or not at all, but are still saved (Rom 11:28-29).
E. How can "whosoever" help infants or idiots? It cannot, but God can elect them.

## #8 ... 3:15 and "whosoever" is used to teach Jesus will lose many He died for.

A. The Father and Son regenerate all into eternal life that they choose (Jn 5:21,25).
B. God's will is for the Son to lose none but raise up all the elect soon (John 6:39).
C. Jesus had power over all flesh, but gave eternal life to all without fail (17:2).
D. Not a single soul will be in hell God loved and Jesus died for. None are lost.
E. The Lord knoweth them that are His and will save all (II Tim 2:19; Heb 2:13).

## #9 ... 3:15 and "whosoever" is abused for ... Great Commission is your duty.

A. If anyone can save themselves by hearing the gospel, then they are your burden.
B. They holler long and loud that sinners are dropping into hell with you as savior.
C. They ignore the many New Testament statements the commission was fulfilled.
D. You have never met honest Arminians that sacrifice anything to save the lost.
E. But they will take Jesus' command to His eleven apostles and apply it to you.
F. For much more.

## #10 ... 3:15 and "believeth" is used to make faith a condition, not an evidence.

A. Belief in Jesus Christ is the evidence of regeneration and eternal life (1:12-13).
B. If a man can see the kingdom of God, then he is already born again (3:3,5,8).
C. Those who hear and believe in the present have been passed already (5:24).
D. John in his epistle gave marks of evidence (5:1; 4:7; 3:14; 2:29; 4:15; 5:4-5).
E. Do not confuse facts of evidence with conditions (John 6:47; 3:36; 6:54).
F. Eternal life is a gift to know God and Jesus, not vice versa (Jn 17:3; I Jn 5:20).

G. Belief is not really enough, for there are other graces (John 13:35; 14:15; 15:2).
H. John's first epistle requires love, obedience, righteousness, and not sinning!

## #11 ... 3:15 is used to teach vague salvation confounding regeneration truth.

A. This point should be very important, for it is the immediately preceding context.
B. Since being born again is part of salvation, how does a man get born again?
C. Jesus had already declared it is the sovereign work of the Holy Spirit (John 3:8).
D. John had already summarized in his preamble against human will (John 1:13).
E. They assume this verse the simple step to be born again … contrary to context.
F. The only way a man can believe is to be born again first in order to believe.
G. Monergistic regeneration denies any human assistance or cooperation in it.

## #12 ... 3:15 and "believeth" is used to teach a moment of faith saves forever.

A. But nowhere in the Bible is a momentary decision ever considered real faith.
B. This has led to the most bizarre ideas about eternal life and the assurance of it.
    1. Men continue to shorten and simplify the sinner's prayer until it is bankrupt.
    2. The Lordship controversy is about Jesus being Lord or not in such prayers.
    3. They have reduced it to mimicking a rote prayer made by a "soul winner."
C. The Hall of Faith in Hebrews 11 is about huge life changes resulting from faith.
D. John declares faith is a commandment like others (Jn 6:28-29; I Jn 3:23,18-19).
E. Do you believe on Jesus today? You must continue to be His disciple (8:30-32).
F. Do you know Jesus today? If you know Him, keep His commands (I Jn 2:3-5).
G. Do you love Jesus today? If you love Him, then keep His commands (Jn 14:15).
H. Paul did not rest in initial faith on Damascus Road but much more (II Ti 4:7-8).
I. For real salvation.

## #13 ... 3:15 and "believeth" is used to teach faith without works saves forever.

A. James 2:14-26 is powerfully opposed to any such faith as evidence of anything.
B. What should we do with Hebrews 5:8-9? What obedience to get eternal life?
C. What should we do with Matthew 7:21? Calling on the Lord is quite irrelevant.
D. More works.

## #14 ... 3:15 and "believeth" leads to a sinner's form prayer to bring salvation.

A. There is no sinner's prayer in the Bible, so why does anyone even consider it?
B. Here we go again with the Lordship controversy about Jesus as Lord or not.
C. If you can say, "Lord," and mean it, you already have the Spirit (I Cor 12:3).

D. Why did Jesus not make any effort to get Nicodemus to pray such a prayer?
E. There are two problems – a short, rote prayer is not real evidence of anything.
F. There are two problems – it is a changed life and great deeds that prove faith.

## #15 … 3:15 and "believeth" is abused for you to invite Jesus into your heart.

A. Revelation 3:20 has absolutely nothing to do with eternal life and never did.
B. Considering this confusion and corruption is helpful to see the truth of 3:16.
C. Their vocabulary, methods, goals, and assurance are entirely based on an error!
D. They took a verse out of context for gross corruption of doctrine and practice.
E. More about Revelation 3:20.

## #16 … 3:15 and "believeth" is abused for a new and novel way to get saved.

A. This is the gospel in a nutshell, so how were any saved 4000 years until Christ?
B. What did Old Testament persons, Jews or Gentiles, do in order to be saved?
C. What did Abraham know about his Seed that would bless the Gentile nations?
D. Did Abraham clear his account in heaven by faith, or prove it clear by faith?
E. Since it was Abraham's works that truly justified him, think serious (Jas 2:24).

## #17 … 3:15 and "believeth" is abused for creating the age of accountability.

A. Since all mommies want their babies to go to heaven, what about before faith?
B. If original sin is true from Romans 5:12-14 (and it is), we need an age limit.
C. They invent the age of accountability to get all under 12 saved without 3:16!
D. About his heresy.

## #18 … 3:16 is used as a mantra or salvation sound bite condensing the gospel.

A. Think Tim Tebow's eyelids! Think placards in stadium end zones! And so on!
B. It is not a magical formula to get saved. Jesus passed right on with Nicodemus.
C. But the apostles never used the text or anything like it in Acts or any epistles.
D. There is no mention of God's love at all, anywhere, in the entire book of Acts.
E. There is no more grace or magic in this verse than there is in Acts 2:38 et al.
F. It is called the gospel in a nutshell … but no election, repentance, works, etc.

## #19 … 3:16 is used to identify when new names are written down in glory.

A. The problem is that all the names in the book of life are there from eternity.
B. Learn the word of God by comparing Revelation 13:8 and 17:8 for the timing.
C. The song, There's a New Name Written Down in Glory, is unscriptural.
D. For introduction to book of life.

E. For much more about the book of life.

## #20 ... 3:16 is used to teach inviting sinners to come forward to get saved.

A. If salvation is getting a man in the flesh to believe, then invite him with plants!
B. Finney invented and Moody, Graham, and Hyles popularized this silly idea.
C. Have you heard, "I want you to get up out of your seats by the hundreds …"?
D. You probably don't know Jack Hyles and 15k empty converts a few years ago.
E. For more about invitations.

## #21 ... 3:16 is used to teach that God has an overwhelming love for all men.

A. They assume this by loving themselves and by ignorance of the word "world."
B. If you think this too harsh, then ask them why no love of God for the devils?
C. Psalm 5:5 and 11:5 are far better for billboards than undefined "world" of 3:16.
D. If God loved the whole human race without exception so very, very much . . .
    1. Why couldn't or wouldn't He save very many? He is the Savior, isn't He?
    2. How do babies, idiots, or heathen get to heaven without a chance to believe?
    3. How did people get saved in the O.T. before they could believe on Him?
    4. Will those in hell sing as loud about His 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 going to hell? It isn't very meaningful love.
    8. What is the difference between saved and lost? Did they save themselves?
    9. Are those in hell separated from His love, which He said could not happen?
    10. Can any human ever go to hell, since Jesus promised He would lose not one?
    11. Is His love better than a whore, who offers it to strangers without loyalty?
    12. Why doesn't He chasten the whole race, since such are rejected bastards?
    13. How do we love wives as Christ? By loving all women equally and them?
    14. Why can't He love as well as evil men? They would not let a lover get away.
    15. Why doesn't Acts record even one of 13 forms of English "love" one time?
E. They do not understand "so," for it means in the way described, not very much!
F. The key is whether you love God or not, for it proves His love (I John 4:19).
G. For more about God's love.

## #22 ... 3:16 is used to teach the first of the four spiritual laws of Bill Bright.

A. The first law of heresy – God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life!
B. He has a sovereign plan for each life, but it is wonderful for Him (Prov 16:4)!

C. Explain His wonderful plan for vessels of dishonor and wrath (Rom 9:20-24).

D. Would Noah have used it? Joshua? Jesus (Mk 14:21)? Peter (I Pet 2:8)? Jude?

## #23 … 3:16 and "loved" is abused for … God loves the sinner, but hates the sin.

A. This nonsense was likely invented by a sentimental Sunday school teacher.

B. A very similar lie is that Jesus used parables to make His teaching easy for all!

C. The Bible says that God hates the sinner (Ps 5:5; 7:11; 10:3; 11:5; Matt 7:23).

D. The Bible expects God's children to hate the sinner (Ps 139:21-22; II Chr 19:2).

E. God does not send sin to hell … He angrily sends sinners to hell for their sins!

F. For a video clip of Robert Morey.

G. For more of the love of God.

## #24 … 3:16 is used to teach that "world" means every human ever conceived.

A. They will not study the word; they assume it to fit their man-glorifying heresy.

1. The common idea of Jn 1:29; 3:16; I Jn 2:2; 4:14 depends on world meaning all human souls without exception ever conceived world without end.
2. They make world to be the key to John 3:16 though it never means all men.
3. John's use of "world" is loose and requires us to ignore it as definitive itself.

B. Here are a few examples of John and others' use of the word world in scripture.

1. John's use of world … 12:19 (some men), 14:17 (except apostles), 15:19 (reprobate men), 16:20 (except apostles), 17:14 (except apostles), etc., etc.
2. Luke used all the world for a very small part of the Roman Empire, which is easily determined by only one factor – the obvious context (Luke 2:1).
3. Paul used world for the Gentiles as opposed to the Jews (Romans 11:12,15).
4. What does the whole world mean in both Romans 1:8 and in I John 5:19?
5. Why do they expand world in Mark 16:15 but shrink the world in Col 1:6?

C. Giving a sense to "world" is no different than giving a sense elsewhere (Heb 4:12; Gal 5:4; I Cor 9:22; 15:29; I Tim 2:4; Heb 6:4-6; Acts 22:16; etc., etc.).

D. Others … http://www.albatrus.org/english/universalistic/universalistic_words/meaning_of_world_kosmos_in_john3_16.htm.

## #25 … 3:16 is used to teach that Jesus died for every human ever conceived.

A. Jesus died for those God loved to equal extent, but not all are loved. See above.

B. If Jesus died for all, then how do any end up in hell paying again for their sins?

C. If God does not remember the sins of those Jesus died for, what about others?

D. Jesus said He laid down His life for sheep while stating some not sheep (10:26)!

E. Jesus died for the church (Ep 5:25; Ac 20:28) and predestinated (Ro 8:28-33).
F. Paul endured all things for the elect (II Ti 2:10). Did Jesus die for many more?
G. Jesus would save His people and finished it (Matt 1:21; John 19:30). Believe it.
H. Redemption accomplished proves too much (Heb 9:12; Rev 5:9). Overthrow it!
I. Jesus made us accepted in the beloved (Eph 1:3-6), but most are not accepted.
J. Even our bodies have been purchased (Eph 1:14), but not all are purchased.
K. Jesus intercedes for those He died for (Rom 5:10; 8:34; Heb 7:25), but not all.
L. For more about limited atonement.

## #26 ... 3:16 and the "only begotten son" is abused for eternal sonship of Jesus.

A. The Roman Catholic heresy of eternal sonship has Jesus as a begotten God.
B. The Jehovah's Witnesses love this diabolical heresy and use it consistently.
C. John had already cleared this matter completely in His preamble (John 1:1,14).
D. The only begotten Son of God is the Godman with a human nature (Luke 1:35).
E. For Jesus Christ's sonship.

## #27 ... 3:16 and "shall not perish" is abused for ... once saved, always saved.

A. If Arminians get a person to quote a prayer, they promise them eternal security.
B. This diabolical combination is decisional salvation attached to no matter what.
C. Evidence and exhortation of scripture for assurance is overcoming good works!
D. Of course we believe in eternal security – Jesus will not lose one single elect!
E. About OSAS.

## #28 ... 3:17 is used to teach God never wants to condemn any human sinners.

A. But the Bible asks, What if God, willing to show His wrath? Read Romans 9:22.
B. What happened in Noah's time? Did any get condemned, or is it an illusion?
C. What happened to Pharaoh's army and the Canaanites? Did God forgive them?
D. What happened in 70 A.D.? What did Jesus mean by grinding Israel to powder?
E. What will happen in the end of the world? Matthew 25:41 and II Thess 1:7-10!
F. Is there a burning hell?

## #29 ... 3:18 is used to teach belief is the only condition to avoid condemnation.

A. But the lifting of condemnation precedes the believing (check the verb tenses).
B. The condemnation is already in place before unbelief by those not believing.
C. This is a common argument against limited atonement – Jesus died for all the sins of all men, but men go to hell for the sin of unbelief.
D. Sorry, the Bible states those in hell are there for other sins (Rev 21:8; 22:15).

E. Even if they did not sin, they would go to the lake of fire for Adam's sin.

### #30 ... 3:19 used to teach all men are ready for heaven until they disbelieve.

A. Their unbelief is the evidence of condemnation – not the condemnation itself.
B. The previous verse stated that condemnation was in place before not believing.
C. Even if they did not sin, they would go to the lake of fire for Adam's sin.

### #31 ... 3:20 is used to teach men deserve hell if they are so evil to not believe.

A. But the verse states that they do not believe because they are already evil!
B. Man does not have a free will to come to believe on Jesus Christ and gain life.
C. We ruined any freedom of will in Eden when we chose total depravity of will.
D. Even if they did not sin, they would go to the lake of fire for Adam's sin.

### #32 ... 3:21 is used to teach men believing on Jesus show their love of God.

A. It is assumed that all men can freely choose to do truth and come to the light.
B. They presume this heresy in spite of John's earlier denial of this (1:5; 3:3,6).
C. Any man doing truth? … can you find any such a man in Romans 3:10-18?
D. Any man doing truth? … is born again and had it worked in him (Phil 2:13).

## Conclusion:

A. God commands honest ministers to divide scripture for the right sense (II Tim 2:15; Ne 8:8).
    1. We do not care about sound bites, no matter how popular they might be with juveniles.
    2. We must determine the sense of God's words and verses for absolute truth in doctrine.
B. It is very frustrating we must spend much effort to undo the ignorance and malice of heretics.
    1. These verses are ours, and I want to reclaim them by the Spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ.
    2. Do you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ this morning? You have been and shall be saved.
    3. Do you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ this morning? We shall see about that shortly.
C. Are we too harsh? Jesus, like Moses, was angry with hypocrites (Mark 3:5; Exodus 32:19).
D. Ministers confusing truth should be ashamed (II Ti 2:15), but they are too ignorant to know.
E. God promised to spread dung on the faces of ministers partial in His word (Malachi 2:1-9).
F. Sarcasm is appropriate whether Elijah or Jesus or Paul (I Kgs 18:27; Matt 12:1-7; Phil 3:2-3).
G. They turn the blessed God of the Bible into a begging, failing, foolish, jesting, cruel monster.
H. They turn His love into the promiscuous offer of a whore that has no substance whatsoever.
I. They turn Jesus Christ into a pathetic loser that did not finish anything or keep His word.
J. They turn salvation into a game of gimmicks as to who can make it easiest to get the most.
K. They add decisionalism to OSAS to justify the most lascivious lifestyles for saints possible.

L. Rather than sound doctrine, they love sound bites, like 3:16, which they abuse ad nauseum.

M. John 3:14-21 is 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 (Jeremiah 31:3; Rom 8:28-39; I John 4:19)!

N. We have a few questions for them.

O. For problem texts.