

The Gospel of John


The Gospel of John

Lesson #25
The Journey
Jim Hoffman

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The Gospel of John

The emblem so many recognize and so few understand.



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The Gospel of John

- **John 3:16** “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.”
- “Only Son”, or “Only Begotten Son”?
- Monogenes – can be correctly translated as either “only begotten” or “only” – the Greek word carries the idea of uniqueness and has nothing to do with being created or procreated.

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- Romans 5:9 **much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. 10 For if while we were enemies** we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son.....
- On John 3:16 let's agree the verse points us to the Mt Everest of the gospel – that God gave his Son to save people who would otherwise have no interest in him.
- Take yourself for instance, before you were saved how much interest did you have in worshipping, serving, or knowing him?

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- **“God so loved the world”** – The word “so” means something akin to “to this extent”.
- Given what (Who) he gave, it seems to me that God could not have had a greater desire to redeem a people for himself than he had!
- To this extent God loved the world – to the extent that he would do something **so outlandish**, something **so unheard of**, and **something the world had never seen or imagined.**

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- It was foreshadowed for us in Genesis 22 where Abraham took Isaac up Mt. Moriah and actually raised his knife to take his **only** son's life.
- What God asked Abraham to do, but stopped him short of killing his son, God the Father completed with His only son.
- Now why would God even ask Abraham to do something that is actual sin if he never intended for him to execute his son, Isaac?

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- Think about 2 days in the past – 1) day #6 of creation and 2) the day in Genesis 3 when sin entered the world.
- On day #6 of creation God declares all that he had made, including mankind, to be very good – then an unknown number of days later His creation is not good.
- From a human perspective God would have been heartbroken so why didn't he move right to Calvary on that day? (why are we so sure that he didn't)

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Answer – God's redemption plan was so counterintuitive that it would take 4,000 years, millions of innocent lambs, the law and the prophets, and stories like Abraham and Isaac just to prepare the world for the incarnation of Christ.

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- Romans 4:5 And to the one who does not work but believes in him **who justifies the ungodly**, his faith is counted as righteousness.
- Ungodly does not mean morally neutral - According to Strong's "ungodly" means, "destitute of reverential awe towards God, even condemning of God".
- For the most part we fail to understand just how lost we were before we believed – we were damned!

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Maybe what God did with his son on Calvary should be considered as the most outrageous act of all time. Nothing seems so shocking as the King dying for those who hated him.

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Acts 2:22 "Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a Man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know— this Man, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death."

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- John 3:16 tells us "**whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life**".
- **Believe in Jesus** – John was not intending to be ambiguous by choosing the word, "in" – and the theme of his gospel makes his intentions crystal clear.
- John 20:31 But these are written so that you may **believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God**, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

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- John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that **whoever believes in him** should not perish but have eternal life.
- Acts 16:31 And they said, **Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ**, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.
- Romans 10:13 For whosoever **shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.**

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“believes in” – “believe on” – “call upon”

“When the plain sense of Scripture makes common sense, seek no other sense; therefore, take every word at its primary, ordinary, usual, literal meaning unless the facts of the immediate context, studied in the light of related passages and axiomatic and fundamental truths, indicate clearly otherwise.”

David L. Cooper

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- What does it mean to believe in or on Jesus?
- The original Greek word is “pisteuw” and it has a range of meanings - to have faith in, to be persuaded of, to credit, have confidence, to put in trust with, or place confidence in.
- As it turns out it is rather easy to know if you have saving faith (belief) by the effects of what believing in Jesus has on your soul and in your life.

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How would we know if we believe?

Do you love Jesus?
Do you want to obey Him?

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- John 3:16 is a very wide and inclusive message because the invitation is given to **whosoever will** believe in Jesus will be saved.
- The “world” comes from the Greek “cosmos” – no real mystery here, world means what you would expect.
- This concept, that God loves the whole world, is one that has led some to conclude that if God loves everyone, then everyone will be saved.

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- The idea that because God loves everyone, then everyone will be saved is not supported by the rest of scripture.
- God loves everyone – his intentions toward all are good and beneficent, but some would have us believe that whatever attitudes and behaviors we exhibit towards God will be tolerated by him.
- **Psalm 5:5 The boastful shall not stand before your eyes; you hate all evildoers. 6 You destroy those who speak lies; the Lord abhors the bloodthirsty and deceitful man.**

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So how can it be that the God who so loves the world that he gave his Son to redeem them, is also said to hate all evil doers and will destroy those who speak lies?

Because love is a verb and not an emotion - to allow evil without consequences is not love and benefits no one.

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- **“whoever believes in him”** – like all of the Words of God these words mean something and God’s intention here is exactly what you would think.
- The invitation of the gospel is to all – **no one is beyond redemption and the blood of Christ is sufficient to save all who believe.**
- If you like inclusiveness you should love the gospel – from Adolph Hitler to Billy Graham all are covered and all are included if they will believe on Jesus.

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- Rev 5:9 And they sang a new song, saying, “Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation.
- No one is excluded from the offer of salvation no matter their tribe, language, sexual preferences, their gender identity, etc, etc, etc
- If one can “believe in Jesus” that one can be saved.

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- But what about those who refuse to believe? Is the gospel invitation to them as well – yes, but it is still conditioned on belief.
- No one will ever be able to justly accuse God of being the cause of their lostness in eternity – remember the words of Jesus, “whosoever will”.
- **Romans 10:12** For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, 13 for, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved”.

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No one who wants to be saved will ever be lost.

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No one who wants to be saved, believes on Jesus, and repents, and is willing to make Jesus Christ Lord of their life, will ever be lost.

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