

Loyal Heart MINISTRIES

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Break it Down – John 3:16

A Devotion for Families by *Dr. Jim Smyrl*

Getting Your Mind and Heart in Gear:

How do you know what you look like? Obviously, the answer is because you look in the mirror every day.

Are you ever surprised at the person you see in the mirror? No, because you are familiar with what you look like.

What do you think is one of the most familiar verses in the Bible? You will probably say John 3:16, but if not, know that this is one verse with which most Christians are familiar.

Introducing the Text

Read John 3:1-16

Nicodemus was a ruler of the Jews, which meant that he was one of the most religiously educated men in the world. He would have had the reputation of being a man of high moral standards and good, clean living.

In verse 3 the word “see” means to understand. What does Jesus tell Nicodemus must happen in order for Nicodemus to understand the great works of God? Note: Nicodemus thought that he understood all religious matters, but he did not.

In verse 5 “water” refers to physical birth while “Spirit” refers to spiritual birth. What does Jesus tell Nicodemus must happen before he can enter heaven? Note: Nicodemus thought that because he was physically born as a Jew, he would enter heaven, but he could not.

Pray for Help

Pray for God to help you see John 3:16 in a way that is clear and life changing. Thank God for giving His one and only Son, so that all who believe could have eternal life.

Getting in the Text:

What did Jesus say in verse 14 must happen to Him in order for us to be saved from our sins?

Note: Nicodemus, being a Jew, would have thought that salvation was only for the Jews.

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John 3:16 tells us that salvation was not just for the chosen children of God. We will look at five word pairs in John 3:16 that will help us see this verse in a not so familiar way and to see God's great gift of love. The texts that are listed in **bold** are optional readings of these same truths.

Read John 3:16 one more time.

- I. God and Son: God is the Giver and Jesus is the Gift
 - a. **Romans 6:23**
 - b. What are two requirements in order for a gift to be exchanged? Note that there must be a giver and a gift.
 - c. Why, according to verse 16, do we call God the Giver?
 - d. Why, according to verse 16, do we call Jesus the gift?
- II. Loved and Gave: The prerequisite of the gift and the proof of love
 - a. **Romans 5:8**
 - b. What was the only condition of this gift being given?
 - c. What was the proof that God loved us?
- III. World and Whosoever: Without Distinction and Individuality
 - a. **John 3:7**
 - b. Ask: Why was Nicodemus wrong in assuming that salvation was only for the Jews?
 - c. According to verse 16 can people go to heaven just because they are Jewish, or a member of a church, or in a Christian family? Note that the "whosoever" puts the responsibility of repentance on each individual and that only those individuals with a personal relationship with Christ will go to heaven.
- IV. Believes and Have: The Trust and the Transfer
 - a. **Romans 10:9-13**
 - b. What does "believes in Him" mean? Note that it means we trust Jesus with all our forgiveness, for eternal life, and not our own works or efforts.
 - c. The very moment we confess we are a sinner, turn from our sin and put our trust in Christ, we will have a place assured us in Heaven.
- V. Perish and Life: Unending Lostness and Unending Life
 - a. **Ephesians 2:3-5**
 - b. What is the opposite of living?
 - c. Note the word "perish." It implies, not a final act that ends, but a never ending state of death. In other words, those who do not believe will forever die in Hell.
 - d. What is the great promise of God in verse 16?

Action for Today:

Share with someone today details of the time you placed your total trust in Christ and received the greatest gift of eternal life.