



John: The Great "I AM" Gospel
John 3:16
From Sermon 4.23.23

Read *John 3:16*

Overview from Sunday's sermon: After much preparation and review of context, we arrive at the famous, all-time verse—John 3:16. Pretty much everyone knows this verse. It is easily the most familiar passage in the New Testament—and maybe even the entire Bible—with Psalm 23 a close 2nd. Jesus' words here have been historically used in evangelism, and rightly so. But, we also need to keep the context of chapter 3 and the issues of Nicodemus in mind. The passage is not a complete doctrine, but a beautiful truth statement.

1. What is John 3:16 (Jesus) NOT stating? 1) That all people are saved because of His life, death, and resurrection = universalism. 2) That Calvinism is correct or that Arminianism is correct.

[Note: Historical Misnomer— It is not true to say that *historical* Arminians don't believe in election and predestination. They do. Any faithful Bible student must. There may be (are) many who choose to *dismiss* this doctrine today. But, pretty much every mainline, historical founder and denomination believed in these and included election in their confessions. Historically, the debate has been: On what basis does God elect and predestine? Arminianism: based on the person's future decision. Calvinism: God's sovereign choice.]

2. Discuss the use of "world" and "whoever". Yet, again back to context. Nicodemus is unlearning while learning. Jesus already covered "how" anyone is saved = By faith thru grace in Christ. Not thru Abraham. Not by Moses. This passage addresses "who" will be saved. Not just Israel, Jews, pious Law keepers. Jesus' Church will include the nations, the Gentiles, people from every tribe, language, & tongue.

See *Acts 10:45 & Revelation 5:9*

3. John 3:16 proves access to salvation to all. The ultimate act of God's Grace. The one requirement: belief in Jesus, as He is revealed in Scripture. However, it does not support "conditional election". Discussion Point from Sunday: Review "Can" vs. "May"/Ability vs Permission = Reformed (Calvinism) vs Arminianism.

See also *John 6:44, Romans 8:7-9, & 1 Corinthians 2:14*

4. The sermon also touched on the tricky, sticky subject of God's love and grace. What is Common Grace and what is Saving Grace? Common Grace of God is His love and benevolence granted to all mankind (elect and non-elect) Saving Grace is shown only to God's elect = choosing them for salvation and completing the work to secure it. See *Acts 13:46-48*

5. When Jesus says shall not perish, does He mean the elect will never die? Be sick? Be poor? Have problems and trials? Not at all. All die, because all sin. These sinful, mortal bodies will all die. Elect and non-elect. Everyone will be resurrected and live forever...saved and unsaved. The issue is location. Perish: forever perishing outside the presence of God in hell. Forever living inside the presence of God in heaven.

6. In the end, does John 3:16 stand alone as a truth? Yes. Absolutely.

6a. Is it the full truth/doctrine on salvation? No. just one pivotal part. "If/then" statement.

6b. Can both Calvinists and Arminians love and use John 3:16? Yes.