



Morningside Church

Sermon Discussion Guide

Title: The Greatest Love

Date: March 16, 2025

Scripture Text: John 3:1-16

Series: Believe - The Study of the Book of John

Notes:

Today is March 16th (3/16). You may see many people at church wearing a shirt with “316” on the front. As part of our study of the book of John, our focus today is [John 3:16](#). “Is there a verse anywhere in the Bible more well-known and loved than this one? How poignantly it states that eternal life comes not because of anything we do. Salvation comes as a free gift when we believe what God has said. For almost two thousand years people have been adding to the gospel, but the truth still rings clear today—whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. The gospel begins with God’s love, penetrates through the cross and the empty tomb, and results in eternal life for those who believe.” (Gangel)

I. [The Mission of the Savior \(John 3:16-17\)](#)

God, out of His love for us, gave His only Son to pay the penalty for sin so we would not have to. Jesus Christ willingly obeyed His heavenly Father and laid down His life. As a result of Jesus’ willing sacrifice, anyone who believes in His redemptive work will have eternal life in heaven. For someone to enjoy the blessings of being a follower of Christ, and the eternal rewards that accompany it, they must believe. This free gift is available to all, but you must, by faith, accept it.

- Why was there a need for Jesus to lay down His life so that those who believe will live?
- How did God demonstrate His love for you?
- How can remembering what Christ did for you be a motivator to share about Him with others?
- Who is someone you know that doesn’t know Jesus?

II. [The Method of Salvation \(John 3:1-15\)](#)

The events leading up to Jesus sharing [John 3:16](#) was a meeting He had with an influential religious leader, Nicodemus. Nicodemus respected Jesus and had a respect for the authoritative word of God. He recognized Jesus would not be able to do the miracles He performed unless God was with Him. Jesus knew what Nicodemus needed, so He shares with him that no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born again. This created great confusion for Nicodemus. “How can a man be born again when he is old?”



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- What do we know about Nicodemus based on his description in [vs. 1](#)?
- How do we know he respected Jesus, and that God was with Him?
- In [vs. 2](#), Nicodemus never asked a question, yet Jesus answered a question in [vs. 3](#). What question was Jesus answering?
- How would you describe what it means to be *born again*?

Jesus continues to explain what it means to be born again. He states in [vs. 5](#) that unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. The reference to *water* is NOT a reference to water baptism. Baptism is not a condition for salvation. The term water can be a reference to the cleaning power of God's word ([Eph. 5:26](#), [1 Pet. 1:23](#)). In [vs. 6](#) Jesus says what is born of flesh is flesh, so the term water could also be describing physical birth. So, Jesus is saying the second birth is a Spiritual birth, not a physical birth.

- Is Nicodemus understanding Jesus?
- How does Jesus respond to him still not understanding?
- Are there times you don't understand Jesus (either through His word or your circumstances)?
- What are you to do, even if you don't understand?
- Is understanding a prerequisite for obeying?

- How did Jesus' redemptive work on the cross demonstrate His love for us?
- How can experiencing the love of Jesus, by His saving grace and mercy, motivate you to love others?

In [John 14:15](#) Jesus states: If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.

In [John 13:34-35](#) Jesus states: A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.

We know how Jesus showed His love for us. Based on these two passages, how do we demonstrate our love for Him?