

"The Need for Christmas"

John 3:16

Introduction: This morning as we look at a Christmas message I want to consider one of, if not THE most popular, verses in the Bible. The verse which we will focus upon is John 3:16.

Notice John 3:16

This verse defines Christmas but in order to understand this verse and in order to understand the TRUE meaning of Christmas we must set JOHN 3:16 against a very dark background. You see this verse is a LIGHT and LIGHT is seen the best when it is revealed in the midst of darkness. So I want to borrow your mind while I paint with words a very dark picture.

The dark picture is the spiritual condition of man and the direction which man in that spiritual condition is headed.

I. The Darkness

A. We are all sinners.

Romans 3:23

²³ For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

There is not one of us here who has not sinned. We are all guilty for we were all born into sin.

Isaiah 53:6a

⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way;

Every one of us has followed after Adam. Adam sinned in the Garden in Genesis 3 and we LIKE SHEEP have followed him down the very same path.

We are born into sin and for that reason we all sin. No one needs to teach us how to sin for it comes naturally.

Romans 3:10-18

¹⁰ As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:

¹¹ There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.

12 They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

13 Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips:

14 Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness:

15 Their feet are swift to shed blood:

16 Destruction and misery are in their ways:

17 And the way of peace have they not known:

18 There is no fear of God before their eyes.

This describes every person who is born into this world. The picture becomes much darker.

B. Our sin separates us from God.

Isaiah 59:2-3

2 But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.

3 For your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken lies, your tongue hath muttered perverseness.

We are born into sin and because of sin there is a barrier between us and God. Every sin which we have ever committed stands between us and God and it separates us from Him. Man is so far separated from God that God will NOT EVEN HEAR HIS PRAYERS.

This separation from God is referred to as SPIRITUAL DEATH. In the Bible the word death means SEPARATION. We are born spiritually dead which means we are separated from God.

Ephesians 2:1

And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;

C. All sin MUST be paid for.

Romans 6:23a

23 For the wages of sin is death;

The word WAGES here means payment. Every sin that you have committed in your life MUST be paid for before you die. If it is not paid for before you die you will spend eternity in the Lake of Fire as the payment for your sin.

You see there is coming a day when you will be judged for every sin which you have ever committed.

Hebrews 9:27

²⁷ And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:

Romans 2:2-6, 16

² But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things.

³ And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?

⁴ Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?

⁵ But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God;

⁶ Who will render to every man according to his deeds:

¹⁶ In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.

This JUDGMENT will take place at the GREAT WHITE THRONE.

Revelation 20:11-15

¹¹ And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

¹² And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

¹³ And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

¹⁴ And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

¹⁵ And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

Let me paint one more point of darkness in this picture.

D. We cannot save ourselves from sin.

Isaiah 64:6-7

⁶ But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

⁷ And there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee: for thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed us, because of our iniquities.

Ephesians 2:8-9

⁸ For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

⁹ Not of works, lest any man should boast.

Titus 3:5

⁵ Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

There are NO GOOD WORKS which we can do that will save us from our sin!! Here is a list of works which people have come to believe will save them from their sin.

1. Church membership and attendance.
2. Keeping the Law.
3. Good outweighs the bad.
4. Praying.
5. Reading their Bibles.
6. Religion.

None of these will save us because ALL SIN MUST BE PAID FOR and the Bible reveals that sin can only be paid for by the shedding of blood.

Hebrews 9:22

²² *And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.*

So, all of this paints a very dark picture of the spiritual condition of mankind. If this was THE END then we would be doomed. BUT IT IS NOT THE END because there is CHRISTMAS.

II. The Good News

A. God's Love

John 3:16

¹⁶ *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

God has a love for ALL of mankind that is far greater than we can ever imagine. Let me show you one of God's desires for all of us.

Ephesians 3:17-19

¹⁷ *That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,*

¹⁸ *May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height;*

¹⁹ *And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.*

Paul prays that the Ephesians would know the:

- ✓ **Breadth of God's Love** - The love of God reaches across the globe.
- ✓ **Length of God's Love** - The love of God reaches the sinner who is the furthest from Him.
- ✓ **Depth of God's Love** - The love of God reaches down to the one who is the deepest in sin.
- ✓ **Height of God's Love** - The love of God lifts us to the highest position in Christ.

B. God's Gift

John 3:16

¹⁶ For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

This is Christmas right here. God sent His only BEGOTTEN SON into the world to die for our sins.

Luke 2:8-11

⁸ And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

⁹ And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

¹⁰ And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

¹¹ For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

The very first announcement was to the shepherds who were in the field in the dark of night. They are a picture of all of us. They were the outcasts of their society. The fact that they were in the dark is a picture of how we are all sinners living in spiritual darkness in need of a Savior.

Listen to the words of Morris:

"As a class shepherds had a bad reputation ... More regrettable was their habit of confusing 'mine' with 'thine' as they moved about the country. They were considered unreliable and were not allowed to give testimony in the law courts."

Jesus came into the world to die for all of us. The message to the shepherds was UNIVERSAL and PERSONAL. Jesus came to die for the sins of the world and to die for each of us individually.

1 Corinthians 15:3-4

³ For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;

⁴ And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:

C. God's Offer

John 3:16

¹⁶ For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

To believe in Jesus is NOT to just believe He exists.

James 2:19

¹⁹ Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.

The word "BELIEVE" in John 3:16 means "TO TRUST FOR SPIRITUAL WELL BEING". It means to accept Jesus Christ as your Savior.

This is the offer of salvation. To be saved we must REPENT of our sin and then BELIEVE that Jesus Christ was sent from God to be our Savior and TRUST in Him that He died in our place upon the cross. The word "BELIEVE" refers to "FAITH".

Ephesians 2:8-9

⁸ For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

⁹ Not of works, lest any man should boast.

John 1:10-12

¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

¹¹ He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

¹² But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

D. God's Promise

John 3:16

¹⁶ For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Conclusion:

This is what Christmas is all about.