**Sermon John 3:14-21**

**Sermon Videolnk:** [**https://youtu.be/UHpD4-fEZBY**](https://youtu.be/UHpD4-fEZBY)

Nicodemus a member of the Jewish ruling council, has come to Jesus to find out more about him. While talking to him, Jesus says something that many Christians know off by heart. He says,

**“**For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.” (NIV).

Many of us have probably used the sentence, “I love you **so** much.” If we are talking to a child in our family, we may even spread our arms out wide when we are saying this. Well, God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son. He gave his only Son to humble himself and become a human being. God loved the world so much that God the Son chose to live among us. God loved the world so much that God the Son gave up his life for us by allowing his arms to be spread out and nailed to the wood of the cross.

Notice that God loves the world. God doesn’t merely love certain people, God loves every single human being who ever has and who ever will live. God loves people no matter their age, their gender, their race, their ethnicity, or their lifestyle. God loves the world. The word translated as world is the Greek word kosmon, a variation of kosmos, which means the created order or universe. God loves everything God has made. This includes the earth, and it includes all living things.

God did not send Jesus to condemn the world. Yet many people seem to think of think of Jesus this way. You notice it when people say jokingly that the church roof might cave in, when they haven’t been to church for a long time. Jesus did not come to condemn, but Jesus did come to shed a light on people’s deeds and expose those who do harm to others. He did not come to condemn but to change people’s hearts so that they would produce good deeds.

Jesus is speaking to Nicodemus and member of the ruling council, some of whom were corrupt and were treating those under their authority unjustly, placing undue burdens on them. Yet he is not condemning Nicodemus, instead he is inviting Nicodemus to believe in him, to come into the light of his presence and begin a new life. Jesus had come to save the world and he was offering Nicodemus salvation. It appears that Nicodemus did come to believe in Jesus because after Jesus’ death he brought spices and assisted Joseph of Arimathea to prepare Jesus body for burial.

Jesus invited Nicodemus and invites all people to take a good look at him. To listen to what he says, to watch what he does, how he deals with people and how he demonstrates God’s love for the world. Jesus’ claim is that if we believe in him, we will have eternal life.

Later in the gospel of John we learn this eternal life is not only about life after death. John wrote his account of the good news of Jesus Christ because when we believe in God’s only Son, our life will change now, and we will experience life in all its fulness.

How can this be?

Most people as they enter adulthood spend a significant amount of time trying to work out who they are and what kind of life they want to live. Some people look to their parents, believing that they have the answers to the good life. Other people get their ideas of how to live from their peers, from influential people in society, people whose character, ideas, or way of life they believe in. Some people look to philosophy or religion. Most people put together a mixed bag of ideas, beliefs, and examples to base their life on.

John begins his account of the good news of Jesus by telling us that, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God” (1:1, NIV), and that through the Word all things were made. This Word became flesh, the only Son who came from God the Father. Jesus claims he is not a mere human being but that he is the Word who has come from heaven, become flesh and is the only Son of God. If you are looking for someone to base your life on, who better than the one who knows how the universe is put together, and how life works, the creator of the universe.

Jesus tells Nicodemus and Jesus tells us, that believing in him and all that he is, all that he does and all that he says, will have life changing consequences.

As we look at Jesus hanging on the cross, we will be constantly reminded how much we are worth to God, that God the Son would give his life for us. We will also constantly be reminded how precious our fellow human beings are because Jesus also gave his life for them. We will constantly be remined how precious God’s creation is because Jesus gave his life for the whole world.

As a consequence of believing in Jesus our hearts and minds will be changed by the Holy Spirit, and we will begin to become more and more like him. We will come into the light where our loveless thoughts, words and deeds will be exposed. It can be very uncomfortable facing up to our faults but as we look upon the cross of Christ, we will be reminded that we are saved by God’s grace, our old self is daily being drowned in the waters of baptism and a new self is daily rising in its place.

As we turn to Jesus and believe in him, we will find our hearts and minds being renewed. We will begin to live the kind of fulfilling life that Jesus lived. A life of love for the whole of creation, including all of humanity. A life of compassion and mercy toward others.

A life where we, like God the Father, stand up for the oppressed, the disadvantaged, the orphaned, widowed, refugee and alien. A life where we demonstrate love for all people no matter what race, creed, gender, or lifestyle. A life that is both fulfilling and a life that enriches all those whom we come into contact with. A life that reflects the love of Jesus.

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