

For God So Loved

(for the week of March 14, 2021)

This Week's Scripture: John 3:14-21

Key Idea from Sermon

From all eternity God freely wills the good of others and gives of himself to them. This is most beautifully expressed in our Lord Jesus Christ being "lifted up." We call this self-giving the "love of God" and we receive it as we believe (or, trust) in Jesus.

- Read John 3:14-21 and answer the following questions.
1. What are some ways our culture defines *love*? (Think about how your family, friends, television shows and movies, songs, greeting cards, etc., express it.)
 2. Which of those definitions do you think is *closer* to a biblical understanding of love? Which of those definitions is *further away* from a biblical understanding of love? Explain why you think that.
 3. Based on this week's Scripture, how would you describe the "love of God" to a friend? What are the key characteristics of God's love? Give examples of your understanding from this week's Scripture. (Also, read Romans 5:6-8 and 1 John 4:7-12 for further guidance.)
 4. What does it mean that the Son of Man (Jesus) will be lifted up (v. 15)? (Learn more about the reference to "Moses and the snake" by reading Numbers 21:4-9.)
 5. What does it mean to "believe" in Jesus (see verses 15, 16, 18)?
 6. Does "believing in Jesus" mean more than intellectual acknowledgement? Explain your answer. (To help you, think about the difference between "knowing someone" and "knowing *about* someone." How are they the similar? How are they different?)

7. According to verses 15 and 16, “eternal life” is the result of believing in Jesus? What do you think that means? Is that a comfort to you?

8. Based on this week’s Scripture (as well as the other Scripture in question 3), why was it necessary for God to express his self-giving love through Jesus in this way? What was the state of “the world” prior to the sending of Jesus? Do people still need Jesus today? If so, why?

9. As you reflect upon God’s initiating, self-giving love for you, what feelings and emotions do you experience? Why do you think that is?

10. In what ways should your love for God and others be tweaked (or completely overhauled) by a richer understanding of God’s love for you?

11. What are some ways you continue to experience the love of God daily in your life?

12. Share prayer requests and spend a few minutes praying for one another if you feel comfortable doing so.

May you richly experience the love of God this week!!!