

God So Loved the World

By Don Green

sermonaudio.com

Bible Verse: John 3:16
Preached on: Sunday, December 6, 2020

Truth Community Church
4183 Mt. Carmel Tobasco Road
Cincinnati, OH 45255

Website: truthcommunitychurch.org
Online Sermons: www.sermonaudio.com/tcomm

Well, Christmas, of course, is a time of gifts, and while it's not quite yet Christmas I want to remind you that the ultimate gift was rooted in the love of God. God gets a bad name from sinners, they have a way of imputing ill motives to him, they have a way of refusing to honor him, they have a way and even Christians fall into this, they have a way of thinking that he is a stingy, unwilling, difficult to please God, and none of that is true and none of that is accurate and it's necessary for us to remind ourselves and to take the opportunity through a fresh look at a familiar verse to dispel such unworthy thoughts from our mind, and to remember the point of gospel preaching.

I invite you to turn to the gospel of John 3:16 with me. This is really just kind of by way of an unrelated introduction to the message that I have, but with the opportunity with so many welcome guests with us here today because you've come to see your children, I just want your children or your grandchildren to sing, I welcome that, I'm glad that you're here, but I just want to state plainly and clearly just some aspects from this familiar verse from John 3:16.

16 For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

My friends, it's important for you to realize and to see three little aspects of this verse. I say little in a profoundly ridiculous understatement of the majesty of what we see in this verse. You see the love of God stated, you see the gift of God displayed, and you see the promise of God set forth in a way that has ramifications for every man, woman and child who has ever lived, who is now living, and who will ever live until the return of Christ.

Notice the disposition of God toward the world, the disposition of God toward sinners just like you. It says that God so loved the world. God is a God who is favorably disposed toward sinners and who is more than willing to show mercy and grace to those who do not deserve it. The idea of salvation was God's, not man's. The idea behind the coming of Christ was God's, and understand something that's going to sound maybe a little bit, I don't know, a little bit subtle, a little bit technical maybe but it's not, it's something that's profoundly important for us to recognize. God does not love the world because Jesus Christ came. God loved the world and therefore Jesus Christ came. Christ came as an

expression of the love and the goodwill of God toward sinful men. And Christ did not die so as to make God be loving, God was already loving and that's why Christ came.

Look over at the book of 1 John 4 and who knows, we may just stay with this train of thought and not even get to the text that I had in mind today. I've had a number of things that I've been reading and studying so let's just go with this, why not with the opportunity that we have here. 1 John 4:7. You know, we just really really need to let the word of God inform us about the character of God and not be shackled by the false religion perhaps that we were raised in and, you know, if you were in a ritualistic church that was all about external ritual and, you know, some guy in a fancy robe holding up a wafer and pretending that it was Jesus Christ, if that's what you grew up with, you know, welcome to the word of God and welcome to the truth. You know, if you grew up in maybe a more Protestant environment but it was external, it was ritual, it was, you know, there was a lot of hypocrisy around, well, let's put that aside too. Let's not attribute to God the sinfulness and false teaching and the hypocrisy of men, let's just go to his word and let his word speak to us about who he is and what he's like and what the love of God really means. Isn't that fair? Wouldn't you want to be evaluated on the course of your own words, not by the manner of people falsely representing you? Well, why not, why don't we just give God that same benefit, you know, and let God speak from his word about what he's really like and put away the distorted spectacles from which we've perhaps viewed him in the past.

Look at 1 John 4:7,

7 Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. 8 The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love. 9 By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him. 10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

And look at 1 John 4:19, just drop down there a little bit where it says,

19 We love, because He first loved us.

Beloved, when God sent Christ into the world to offer himself as a sacrifice for sin, he was doing so because he has a love for humanity, he has a love for sinners that shows that he is a God of goodwill toward men. He is a God of goodwill toward people, and though we are all rightly under the wrath of his justice because we have sinned so greatly against him in our repeated violations of his law, God, as it were, passing over sin, not executing what he was entitled to do, sent Christ into the world, God became a man as an expression of the love of God, of the grace of God, of the patience of God, of the mercy of God, of the goodness of God. And so we see simply by the sending of Christ, we see something of the love of God put on display that love motivated the sending of Christ, God was already loving even before Christ died on the cross.

Now look, speaking of false religion and speaking of a monstrously bad way that people try to evaluate the love of God, people want to interpret the love of God according to the circumstances in which they live, you know, and many of you, if not all of you at one time or another have fallen into this. Adversity comes, you lose a loved one, you fall into profound sickness and there's not much hope of a recovery, all of the doctors' reports are bad, financial reversal comes, difficulty comes in life, your preferred candidate doesn't win the election, and you start to wonder, "Well, what did I do to deserve this? Why is God like this? Is God angry with me? Is God upset with me? You know, why does God hate me?" Those thoughts are so ridiculously blasphemous for us to think. They are a product of our fallen heart rather than an indication of the truth of God. And in some manner of sympathy because I've fallen into that kind of thinking in the past myself in days gone by, part of the reason is that we haven't come to Scripture and understood what the true measure of the love of God is.

You're in 1 John 4, look at it with me here. 1 John 4:10, "In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." Friends, we don't start measuring the love of God by what's happening in anything in our lives. The love of God is not measured by such temporary, passing, transient and changeable metrics. That's a gross mistake to make and it's no wonder that people that are trained to think that way have such an unstable concept of who God is and an experience of the love of God in their lives. We don't measure God by any of those metrics of common grace. No, we start with the reality that God loved the world and sent his Son into the world to do a particular act of redemption. God sent Christ into the world to save sinners from the wrath of God that they rightfully deserved, and God did this himself. Christ, the eternal Son of God, the second person of the blessed holy Trinity himself came from heaven to earth to take on a human body in order to live a perfect life and to offer that perfect unblemished life as a sacrifice to God on the cross for the sins of his people, and as Christ bore your wrath on the cross, as Christ paid the penalty for your sins on the cross, in mercy and in undeserved grace bearing a weight of shame and punishment in satisfaction of the justice of God all being poured down upon his sinless head, doing that as a gift, doing that as a manner of sacrifice, beloved, you see something of a measure of the love of God not measured by your circumstances that are temporary and passing, measured by God himself taking on flesh, taking on your sin, and doing for you, doing an act of sacrifice for your benefit that you never could have earned on your own, that you had no right to, that you had no call upon. This is the love of God and, friends, especially those of you that are believers, that claim to be believers that have struggled with discouragement and uncertainty about the purposes of God in your life, you must understand this.

You and I need to go back in our mind's eye, as it were, 2,000 years ago to Calvary. We need in our mind, in our mental picture, we need to go back and recognize the theological and the salvific significance of what was happening there. It is an immensely powerful mental thing to do, to go back 2,000 years ago and picture yourself at the cross. Christ hung exposed to all of humanity, Christ, and knowing what he is doing and why he is doing it. Out of love he is laying his life down for you. Out of love he is bearing the total

darkness of the wrath of God, somehow the wrath of God coming and he's bearing a sense of separation in a magnificent way that we can't begin to explain, suffering physically but far more infinitely more, suffering spiritually as that innocent one takes on the guilt of sin and is punished by God on your behalf. And friend, friend, picture yourself or picture anyone else standing at the foot of the cross, looking up at that sinless suffering face, "I don't think You love me. Look at the circumstantial problems I have. I don't think that You really love me." Can you imagine doing that? Can you imagine making an accusation against Christ like that at the cross when he's spilling his blood on your behalf? Can you imagine making an accusation like that, "There is no love in You. Look at the problem I have here today. Look at the loss that I have experienced. You don't love me."

Well, you know, from that perspective you realize how wicked and how wrong it is for someone to think that way. No, we don't measure the love of God by our circumstances, we go back to the cross and we say instead, we look with our mind's eye at the cross and we say, "This is love. Not only do I repent of my false accusations against God, I recognize and embrace the fact that this cross is the perfect manifestation of the highest form of love that there has ever been and there ever will be." And if you are in Christ, you are on the receiving end of an eternal gift that you did not deserve. The God that you had violated, the God whose law you had broken, the God whose character and name you had spurned, did this on your behalf while you were still dead in your trespasses and sins.

Look over at Romans 5. It is of most vital significance for every Christian to understand this point that we're making today. I say that without fear of contradiction. This is how we know the love of God. Chapter 5, verse 6,

6 For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. 8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

It was when you were unworthy, it was when you were guilty, it was when you were separated from God, it was when you were in chains to Satan, it was when you were kissing your sins and loving them that Christ did that. You in utter blackness, Christ in holy whiteness, so to speak, laying it down so that one day you could be draped with his righteousness and forgiven and reconciled to a holy God. Beloved, that's love. That's what love looks like. Not this emotional sentiment that we're used to with Hallmark movies and all of that stuff, and all of the weepy sentimentalism that's gone by morning. No, this is an enduring and eternal love that has eternal consequences, that God was under no obligation to do and he poured it all out for us in Christ. God so loved the world. This is the love of God, my friends, and we start with Christ, we start with the cross, and we understand it from that perspective.

Well, I've kind of blended two points together here. Go back to John 3:16. God so loved the world, Jew and Gentile, there is no nationality that is excluded from the love of God,

there is no nationality that is excluded from the free gospel offer of free forgiveness in Christ, and his love was found not in the way that he felt about us but point number 2, it's found in the gift of God. The gift of God. His love meant that he gave and he gave his only begotten Son, as we've been saying here this morning. He gave his only begotten Son. Love expressed itself in action, you know, and it does us no good to try to think about God having feelings and emotions for us and trying to think about love in those categories as our encouragement, as our strength, as our hope, as our foundation. No, beloved. No, the love of God is found in what he did, in what he gave and he gave us his one and only Son. He gave us the Lord Jesus Christ.

And you look at it in verse 17 and you see the context and the purpose of what God was doing. God did not send the Son into the world in his first coming, he did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, Christ did not come with a sword in his first coming, he came in order to give his life as a ransom for many. And so Christ did not come to judge the world in his first coming, but rather came in a way that provided deliverance for judgment for those who would believe in him. A gift of God.

Now look, I realize that, you know, there's probably some of you, if not many of you, you know, and part of the way that we can isolate and diagnose the way that we think about these things, is to deal with the simple question that's often been asked. When you die and you stand before God in judgment and he asks you, "Why should I let you into My heaven?" Your answer, what you think your answer should be to that exposes the heart and the understanding and what's really in your heart. Many of you, I'm sad to think and say and I fear, many of you deep in your heart would say something like, "Well, you know, I've been a pretty good person. The good outweighs the bad. You know, 51/49. You know, I'm not like Hitler. I wasn't a Democrat." And in all of these ways showing a self-reliance and an assertion that, "I'm good enough. I belong here. You need to let me in because I satisfy the standard, the standard of my own making." Well, beloved, this is grossly perverse thinking and it's not true. It is not true to think that way.

Look over at Romans 3. Romans 3. God has already delivered the verdict against your self-righteousness and he has said it is unacceptable. It does not meet the standard that he requires. You are not good enough to go to heaven, you are bad enough to go to hell. Every one of you, this is true. You are all bad enough and sinful enough to go immediately to hell. This is the way that we must understand things in light of the word of God rather than this false view that, "I'm good enough to go to heaven." It's not true. We need to not only repent of sins that we've committed, we need to repent of that self-righteous way of thinking that you can just waltz in as you are into the presence of the thrice holy God. This is insanity and God's word convicts us all.

Chapter 3, verse 10 of Romans,

10 ... "There is none righteous, not even one: 11 ...none who understands, ...none who seeks for God; 12 all have turned aside, together they have become useless; there is none who does good, there is not even one."

Let's not pretend that we're an exception to what God has said about 6 or 7 times in the span of three verses. None. None. None. Not even one. All have turned aside. We're all condemned by the holiness of God. We're all condemned by the law of God and we have no hope in ourselves, we have no righteousness of our own. You have no righteousness of your own. And look, I'm just showing you Scripture and I want to tell you for the sake of your own good and for the sake of your own soul and in honor of Christ and to the glory of God, it doesn't matter how many preachers or other people have told you something different, that said you can get to heaven apart from Christ. I was just watching a little video two nights ago where a Catholic priest was telling a Jewish man that he was good enough to go to heaven. What a travesty. What a condemnable lie. Knowing that some of you have heard those things and men in order to curry your favor and to curry gifts from you have flattered you by telling you that you were good enough for God, you're not. This is what Scripture says, "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God," and your sin demands justice and you cannot pay that justice in yourself. You cannot pay and you as a sinful finite creature cannot pay the penalty that a holy, infinite, uncreated, holy God requires for the violation of his law. You're lost. You're utterly and completely lost.

And so, my friends, that's the background of what is being said to us here in John 3:16. When it says "God so loved the world," understand he loved a sinful world, he loved a world that hated him, and out of that love he provided a gift, the gift of God, the gift of Christ, the gift of one who could satisfy the demands of his justice on behalf of sinful people. What a gift. What a gift. And so the love of God motivated God to give a gift of God on behalf of sinners just like you, just like me, and you see, as men and women under the judgment of God, the judgment of God humbles us, it silences us, and when we picture ourselves at the judgment seat of God and he asks us, as it were, "Why should I let you into heaven?" One of the first things that one with understanding says, "God, if you're to let me into heaven, it obviously can't be anything in me because I don't deserve it." The last thing that you want to do in the presence of a holy God is to say that he owes you something based on your righteousness. There's no such thing.

So if we are to be saved at all, it's going to have to be from something outside of us, it's going to have to be something that is given to us because we can't earn it on our own. And in these precious familiar words of John 3:16, we see that God loved a sinful humanity and he gave a gift to them that they didn't deserve found in the Lord Jesus Christ. And that gift, we've already explained, it was found and fulfilled in the sacrifice of Christ at the cross. He came with a mission. He came to be a sin-bearing sacrifice. He didn't come simply to be an example to us. He didn't come to show us the way so that we could live up to that example as if we could save ourselves by our own works. He came to die. The purpose of the coming of God to earth was so that he would die on behalf of sinful men.

Well, you see the love of God, you see the gift of God, and thirdly, you see the promise of God here in John 3:16. The promise of God. God loved the world, he gave his only begotten Son unto this purpose, this promise that is given, "that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life." It's kind of a two-sided promise. It's kind of a two-

sided promise and it's really clear and simple, in one sense. The one who does not believe in Christ perishes. The one who believes in Christ has eternal life. In other words, all of humanity is brought to this crossroads in the presentation of Jesus Christ, all of humanity is brought to a point of separation when Christ is presented to them. You either receive Christ and humbly bow before him as Lord, you believe in him and what we mean by this, what we mean by this faith is that you receive Christ and you rest in him. You receive Christ as Savior and you rest in his righteousness, you rest in his death on the cross as your only hope of reconciliation with God. You forsake utterly everything about your own righteousness and you rest and believe in Christ completely, entirely, and exclusively for your righteousness and reconciliation with God. That's what it means to believe in him.

My friend, the text is so plain and simple, isn't it? The one who believes in him shall not perish. There is this promise of God that if you would believe in Christ as we've spoken about here today, you will not die, you will not perish in hell, you will not be sent away at the final judgment, but by contrast you will have eternal life, you will receive life of a quality that comes from God, forgiveness and new life and new birth given to those in Christ.

Now look, I know it's more fashionable to pass over these kinds of things but you can look at me and see I don't care much about fashion, right? Revelation 20:11. What does it mean to perish? What does it mean to perish and what are those of you facing who are rejecting Christ today? Revelation 20:11. What does it mean to perish? Let's let Scripture tell us.

11 ... I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. 12 And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. [Those deeds of which Scripture has already condemned as we've seen.] 13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. 14 Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. 15 And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

An eternal death of unending punishment. As we've taught in the past, Jesus himself taught about the reality of hell. He taught that hell is real, hell is painful, and hell is eternal, and hell is the destination for all sinners who do not repent of sin and receive Christ. There is one and only one way. So, my friends, I've felt a particular compulsion today to emphasize these things to you.

Go back to John 3:16 with me. We see the significance of it. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish."

While you have breath and while you are under the sound of the gospel there is opportunity for you to be reconciled to a holy God. It is found and presented to you in Christ. There's nothing that I can offer you, there's nothing this church can do for you, there is nothing that we have to give you that can help you. We can only present Christ to you and plead with you to repent of sin and to come to Christ for your eternal salvation. And the promise of God that we see here is that the one who receives Christ like that doesn't experience that eternal death, does not perish eternally as Scripture speaks, but is given a gift instead, the gift of eternal life, the gift of salvation, the gift of forgiveness of sin and reconciliation to a holy God.

Go back again to 1 John. 1 John helps us understand some of the statements in the gospel of John. 1 John 1:9, "If we confess our sins," my dear unsaved friend, if you would go to Christ confessing your sins, go to him in repentance, forsaking your sin, calling upon him for mercy,

9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

The promise of eternal life, the promise of forgiveness is incalculable. You coming to God with a burden of immeasurable guilt and violations against his holy law, God promising you that he'll wipe the slate clean, that he will not hold those sins against you for the sake of his Son, that he will forgive you and receive you and accept you as though you were as righteous as Christ himself if you will simply put your faith in Christ and Christ alone for your eternal salvation, that you would acknowledge Christ as Lord and submit to him and rely on him as the one person, the one thing, for lack of a better term, that can reconcile you to God and bring forgiveness of your sins, if you receive Christ like that, the promise of God is eternal life, that the Spirit of God will come and indwell you, that you will be given a quality of life that is joy and peace inside and with unending blessing in heaven for you forever and ever without end, amen. The promise of God.

So let's kind of reverse engineer this and think about the majesty of forgiveness, of a gift of righteousness that leads into eternal life in heaven laid upon you, given to you who were sinful, guilty and a rebel against God and had nothing of your own that you could do to reconcile yourself to him. How does that gift, how could we ever get a gift like that? Well, it's provided in the gift of Christ specifically secured for us at the cross of Calvary. Well, why would God do that? Why, why, why would an offended God be good to sinners whom he could righteously judge, wipe off the entire earth, bring it all to an end in vindication of his justice and holiness? Why would he do that? Because God so loved the world that God was gracious to sinners and sent Christ to secure that gift for untold numbers who would one day believe in him.

So here we are. It's not that everyone receives this gift, it's not that everyone gets saved, the fact of the matter is that Jesus said comparatively speaking there's not many that do. Comparatively speaking, I mean, in the context of billions and billions of people who are on the world now, if millions and millions get saved that's comparatively few but it's still an awful lot of undeserved grace coming down. But let me remind you, turn with me to

Matthew 7 here, and while there is this promise of God for eternal life, it's incumbent upon a preacher of the gospel to encourage you, to warn you not to trifle with it, not to walk away from the presentation of Christ and shrug it off as though you had simply heard something on equal value with a commercial for detergent soap. No, we're talking about matters of great eternal consequence and many many people blind in their sin, dead in trespasses, will walk away as though I had been speaking foolish things not worthy of the time that it took to hear them. Well, my friend, I trust that that's not you. I trust that that's not you. I trust that the Spirit of God would have mercy on many of you in this hour to help you see Christ and to draw you to faith in him, but with the help of the Spirit of God I want you to see that this opportunity that is before you to receive Christ, to be saved, is not something to be treated lightly. You say, "Well, it just sounds, when you say it's only Christ, you're saying every other religion is wrong and is condemned." That's right. That's exactly what I'm saying but it's not just me in some kind of proud moment saying that, this is the teaching of Scripture and the warning of Scripture is this, is that not many find the gift.

Matthew 7:13. Look at it there with me, and if the things that I'm saying are burning in your heart even now, let these words jump off the page and show you the urgency of coming to Christ today. Matthew 7:13,

13 Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. 14 For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it.

If I were not a Christian today, in light of the things that I've heard, if I was sitting in the audience not a Christian and hearing these things from God's word, there's one thing that I would be wanting to do and there's one thing that I would be pleading with you and calling upon you to do, it's to say, "God, have mercy on me a sinner. I'm so lost I haven't even known the gospel. I'm so lost that I thought I was righteous. I'm so lost that I can't even find my way to You unless You help me. I've heard of Your love, I've heard of the gift, I've heard of the promise and, God, I just ask You, have mercy on me. I can't save myself. If You don't have mercy on me, I will be eternally lost. I can't be born again if You don't come to me and so, God, have mercy on me." And I want you to understand that the exclusivity of the message that we're talking about here, this is what Christ said himself. You know the verse in John 14 when Jesus said,

6 "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me."

Peter said in Acts 4:12,

12 ... there is no other name given under heaven by which we must be saved.

The name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And so, in one sense, we feel the significance of the things that we've heard, in the other sense, as we sang earlier, there's joy to the world. This is why we sing "Joy to the world." Joy to the world, there is a way of forgiveness given to you. Christ has come. Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will receive you if you come to him. He said, "The one who comes to Me, I'll never cast him out." And so all of this great love, this great mercy, this great gift, this great promise, I want you to see something and never forget it, my friends, that God in the Lord Jesus Christ has come and he has given the most magnanimous offer of grace and mercy to sinners that could ever be heard, and that there is nothing in God that prevents you from coming to Christ and receiving eternal life, there is nothing in God that keeps you from the forgiveness of your sins, there is nothing in God that keeps you from heaven. He has flung the doors open. He said, "You simply must come through My Son." That's an offer of grace and forgiveness that is made in love, that is made in full sincerity, and those who walk away from this have no complaint against God. There's no complaint against a God like this, a God who gave a gift like this.

There's no complaint against him for those who refuse to believe, but for those of you who would receive him, there's a promise of eternal life, and for those of you that do know him, those of you that are in Christ, I just want to encourage you to bring this to bear on every circumstance that you're facing in life. This year has been difficult not just generally, socially for all the reasons that we know and understand, this year has been difficult for many of you in particular. Life has been difficult for you in particular, I get that, and there may not be any hope of change in those circumstances, but what I want you to see, beloved, is that if you have Christ, you have everything. If you have Christ and God has made you an object of his saving love and mercy and grace and you will one day enter into heaven with him, you must understand, you must embrace the reality that the passing momentary things of this transient life are not worthy to be compared to the love of God and the grace of God that has been given to us in Christ, and that these momentary afflictions are producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison and that's your hope. It's a hope not tied to this life, it's a hope tied to Christ and the truth and the utter reliability of his word.

So, sinner, I call you and invite you to Christ here today. My brother and sister in Christ, I invite you to see afresh the glory of Christ and to dwell in it, to honor him, to thank him, and to find the full satisfaction that everything your soul desires is found in Christ and in Christ alone. Jesus said in John 14:27, he said,

27 "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful."

Christ and Christ alone, my friends.

Let's pray together.

Father, we thank You for the love of God. We vindicate You, we exonerate You from all of our past complaints and grumblings against You and we affirm that You are utterly

worthy of our highest praise. We thank You for the gift of Christ, the gift of the cross, the gift of the resurrection, the gift of the gospel, the gift of eternal life. O God, we thank You for giving Christ to the world, to be the Savior of the world. And Father, we pray therefore in keeping with John 3:16, that all who have heard of these things this morning, Father, that all would be found among that number who believes in Christ, receives Him, rests in Him, honors Him, submits to Him, forsaking the world and coming to Christ alone, Father, that they might have eternal life. Father, we understand, we understand the proclamation of Christ often engenders rejection and rebellion and resentment and we're told that our righteousness cannot avail us of heaven; we hear that and we rebel against it in our pride and in our self-righteousness. O God, grant grace to those who are in that condition now that Your Spirit might turn their hearts away from that path of death and come humbly to Christ who loved His people and gave Himself up for them. Lead us all, Father, to the cross, sinners for entry into salvation, believers to the cross freshly reminded of the wonders of Your grace upon us and finding all that we need for peace and joy in our blessed Lord. We pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen.

Thanks for listening to Pastor Don Green from Truth Community Church in Cincinnati, Ohio. You can find church information, Don's complete sermon library and other helpful materials at thetruthpulpit.com. This message is copyrighted by Don Green. All rights reserved.