

“Love Found A Way”
John 3:16-21

Introduction:

1. In The Apostle Paul’s Letter:
 - To The Ephesian Church:
 - He Describes Himself As:
 - A “Prisoner Of Jesus Christ!” (3:1)
 - Paul Was Indeed:
 - A Prisoner - When He Wrote:
 - Ephesians - As Well As:
 - The Other The Prison Epistles:
 - Of Philippians, Colossians, And Philemon!
2. The Prison From Which:
 - Paul Wrote These Inspired Letters:
 - May Have Been - The Infamous:
 - Mamertine Prison In Rome!
 - As It Was the Only Prison:
 - Permitted Within The City Walls:
 - When He Was Alive!
 - And - It Was Nothing Like:
 - The Prisons That We Have Today!
 - It Was Originally A Water Cistern:
 - With A Hole In The Top:
 - Into Which Prisoners Were Usually Thrown:
 - Until Their Fate Was Decided!
 - It Was A Cold, Dark, Wet Dungeon:
 - Where Many Prisoners Died:
 - Before Ever Making Their Case:
 - Before A Judge!
4. When We Visited Rome A Couple Of Years Ago:
 - This Was One Place:
 - That We Wanted To Visit!
 - To Get A Feel For What:
 - Paul & Even Peter Faced:
 - For The Sake Of Christ & The Gospel!
 - It Is Still - A Cold & Dark & Damp Dungeon!
 - And - The Only Hope That Anyone Had:
 - To Escape That Hellish Dungeon:
 - Was If Someone Lifted Them Out! (We Had Stairs!)
5. And - As We Turn Back In Our Bibles This Morning:
 - To John 3 - I Can’t Help But Wonder:
 - If Nicodemus - As Jesus Was Speaking With Him:
 - Was Starting To Feel A Bit Like:
 - Paul & Peter - When They Were:
 - Stuck In The Dungeon Of The Mamertime Prison!
 - Because - Jesus Had Been Telling Nicodemus:
 - That He Could Never:
 - Know The Truth!
 - Receive The Truth! Or Even:
 - Believe The Truth!
 - Without Being Born Again:
 - By The Spirit Of God!
 - Which Is Something That:
 - Only God Can Do!
6. But - Into His Dungeon Of Hopelessness:
 - Jesus Let Down A Life-Line:
 - In 3:14-15 - When He Said:

- “And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: / That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life!”

- Nicodemus Didn't **Have** To:

- Stay In His Dungeon Of Spiritual Ignorance!

- All He Had To Do Was:

- Look Upon Jesus With The Eye Of Faith:

- And - Receive “Eternal Life!”

7. And Then - We Have Perhaps:

- One Of The Most Significant Verses:

- Of The Gospel Ever Given:

- Which Even Unbelievers Can Sometimes Quote:

- Word For Word!

- John 3:16 - Say It With Me!

- “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!” (IE: Gideon's New Testament)

- Now - We're Not Entirely Sure If:

- These Words Are Still:

- Part Of Jesus' Conversation With Nicodemus! Or:

- If These Words Are John's:

- Own Remarks About:

- What Jesus Just Said!

- But - Either Way:

- They Are Still God's Words Of Hope:

- To This World!

- *And* - To Every Person In This World:

- Who Is Living His / Her Life In:

- The Spiritual Dungeon:

- Of Their Own Sin!

8. And - Much Like:

- The Mamertime Prison In Rome:

- Their Dungeon Is A Dungeon Of:

- Despair & Death & Darkness!

- And - Like Many Of The Inmates:

- Of That Ancient Prison:

- There Is Little Hope!

- Its As If Someone:

- Blocked That Small, Solitary Entrance:

- So That Noone Can:

- Break Out - And Noone:

- Can Break In!

- But - As We Will See:

- From John 3:16 - And - The Other Verses:

- We Will Look At This Morning:

- The Good News Of The Gospel Is That:

- God Himself Broke Into Our Dungeon:

- With His Love, His Life, And His Light!

- So That - We Might Be Saved!

* And So - As We Just Said Together - From John 3:16:

1. God Broke Into Our Dungeon Of Despair:

- Through His Love!

- 3:16 - “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!”

- Our Dungeon Of Despair:

- Is Caused By Nothing But:

- Our Own Sin!

- And - According To God's Own Word:

- We Are Sinners:

- In Our Character - And:
 - In Our Conduct!
- In Who We Are - And:
 - In What We Do!
- So - From The Inside Out:
 - There “Dwelleth No Good Thing” In:
 - Any Of Us!
- And That Is Why - One Day - God Himself Would Have To:
 - Take Us Out Of Our “Holding Cells” - And:
 - Throw Us Into The Eternal Dungeon:
 - Of Hell!
 - And - When That Happens:
 - We Will “Perish!”
 - That Is The Punishment Of Our Sin! And:
 - It Is Well Deserved!
 - Because - “The Wages Of Sin Is Death!”
- But - As John Reflects Upon:
 - What Jesus Just Said To Nicodemus:
 - He Relishes In The Thought:
 - Of God’s Love!
 - God Himself!
 - Broke Into Our Dungeon Of Despair:
 - Through His Love!
- And - In This Amazing Verse:
 - We Discover Afresh:
- The Attribute Of God’s Love!
 - “For God **So Loved** The World!”
 - The Love That God Has:
 - For This World That He Created:
 - Is Truly A God-Kind Of Love!
 - It Is A Boundless Love!
 - Because - In Spite Of All That:
 - The *World* Has Done To Him!
 - In Spite Of All That:
 - *We* Have Done To Him!
 - *Because - We Are The World!*
 - It Did Not Change:
 - Who He Is!
 - Even As John Tells Us:
 - In His First Epistle:
 - “God Is Love!” (1 John 4:8 & 16)
- So - Into Our Dungeon Of Despair:
 - Of Sin - God Broke Through:
 - With His Boundless Love!
 - So That - “Whosoever Believeth” In His Son “Should Not Perish, But Have Everlasting Life!”
- We Also See:
- The Activity Of God’s Love!
 - “For God So Loved The World, That He **Gave** His Only Begotten Son!”
 - So - The Love That God Has:
 - For This World That He Created:
 - Is A Selfless, Giving Kind Of Love!
 - In That - He Gave **His Best** For Us!
 - His “Only Begotten Son” - Jesus Christ!
 - The One Who Has Been:
 - In The Bosom Of His Father:
 - From All Eternity:
 - In A Relationship:

- Of Unbroken Fellowship:
 - And Love!
- So - Into Our Dungeon Of Despair:
 - God Broke Through:
 - By Giving Us The Best Of His Love!
 - His One & Only Son:
 - Jesus Christ!
 - But Even More - We See:
- The Aim Of God's Love!
 - *Not - To Leave Us:*
 - In Our Dungeon Of Despair:
 - Only To Perish Because Of:
 - Our Sin!
 - *But - To Offer Us:*
 - The Greatest Blessing & Benefit Of All:
 - "Everlasting Life!"
 - A Life For The Ages To Come!
 - This Means That - God's Love:
 - Is A Gracious Kind Of Love!
 - So That - Into Our Dungeon Of Despair:
 - God Broke Through:
 - To Bless Us & Not To Curse Us!
- And This Is Why King David Could Say:
 - In Psalm 103:2-5 - "Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: / Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; / Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies; / Who satisfieth thy mouth with good [things; so that] thy youth is renewed like the eagle's!"
 - Praise God For John 3:16! Because:
 - Into Our Dungeon Of Despair:
 - God Broke Through:
 - With His Boundless Love!
 - And Gave Us His Son:
 - Jesus Christ!
 - So That "Whosoever Believeth In Him Should Not Perish, But Have Everlasting Life!"
 - Have You Believed? Are You Believing?
 - But Then - John Continues:
 - His Reflection On God's Great Love!
 - By Pointing Out That - Also:

2. ***God Broke Into Our Dungeon Of Death:***

- Through His Life!

- As We See In 3:17-18 - "For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. / He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God!"
 - Apart From Christ - Not Only Are We Living In:
 - A Dungeon Of Despair:
 - We Are Also Living In:
 - A Dungeon Of Death!
 - According To 3:18:
 - We Are "Condemned Already!"
 - Because Of Our Sin & Our Rejection Of God's Special Gift To Us – Jesus!
 - But - Not Only Did God:
 - Break Into Our Dungeon:
 - With His Love - He Also Did So:
 - Through His Life!
 - When Jesus Came:
 - Into This World The First Time:

- It Was So That - 3:17 - “The World Through Him Might Be Saved!”
- Jesus Came To Save You!
 - To Deliver You! Even To Liberate You:
 - From The Dungeon Of Despair & Death Because Of Your Sin!
- So - Now - When You Believe In Him:
 - He Delivers You:
- From The Spiritual Consequences:
 - Of Your Sin!
 - You Can Be “Saved!” (3:17)
 - Saved From *ALL* Of Your Sin!
 - Past, Present, And Future Sin!
 - As Well As - From The Penalty, Power, And Presence Of Sin!
 - God Broke Into Your Dungeon Of Death:
 - To Bring You Life & Liberty:
 - Through The Life Of Jesus Christ!
 - Also - If You Believe In Him:
 - He Will Deliver You:
- From The Judicial Consequences:
 - Of Your Sin!
 - Because - 3:18a - “He that believeth on him is not condemned!”
 - This Does Not Just Refer To:
 - Something In The Future!
 - This Refers To:
 - Something In The Present!
 - Right This Very Moment:
 - “He That Believeth” On Christ:
 - “Is Not Being Judged” By God!
 - This Is Why In Romans 8:1:
 - The Apostle Paul Can Say:
 - “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus!”
 - No Condemnation! No Judgment! Not Then - In The Future! Not Now - In The Present! Not Ever!
 - Because - Instead Of Condemnation:
 - You Are Now “Accepted” By God:
 - “In The Beloved!”
 - In Jesus Christ!
 - And Now - What Jesus Said To:
 - The Woman Caught In Adultery:
 - In John 8:11 - He Says To You!
 - “Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more!”
 - God Broke Into Your Dungeon:
 - Of Death - To Bring You Life & Liberty:
 - Through The Life Of Jesus Christ!
 - But Even More - When You Believe In Him:
 - He Will Deliver You:
- From The Natural Consequences:
 - Of Your Sin:
 - Which Happens To Everyone:
 - Who Does Not Trust In Christ!
 - They Will Remain:
 - In The Condition:
 - They Were Born In! (3:18)
 - “Condemned Already!”
 - And - Whenever You:
 - Turn Away From:
 - The Life-Line That God Has Thrown Down To You:
 - It Will Only Make Your Heart:
 - Harder!

- But - That's Not Why Jesus Came!
 - In 1 John 4:14 - John Reminds Us:
 - "That the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world!"
 - God Broke Into Your Dungeon:
 - Of Spiritual Death & Despair:
 - And Threw Down The Life-Line Of His Son!
 - And - The Moment You Grasp Onto Him:
 - By Faith - You Will Be Freed From:
 - *All* The Final Consequences Of Your Sin!
 - "No Condemnation!"
 - Because - Along With:
 - Your New Birth:
 - You Now Have:
 - A New Life!
 - Not Just - A New "Lease" On:
 - Your Old Life - But A:
 - "New Life" Altogether!
 - But - John Further Reflects On How:

3. **God Broke Into Our Dungeon Of Darkness:**

- Through His Light!

- As We Find In 3:19-21 - "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. / For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. / But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God!"
 - Apart From Christ - Not Only Are We Living In:
 - A Dungeon Of Despair & Death:
 - We Are Also Living In:
 - A Dungeon Of Darkness!
 - And This Darkness:
 - Is Even Described As:
 - Our Condemnation & Judgment!
 - You See - God Does Not Always Wait:
 - Till The End To Judge Sinners!
 - Many Times - He Judges Sinners:
 - By Just Leaving Them Alone:
 - In Their Dungeon Of Sin!
 - But - Why Do Sinners Stay In Darkness?
 - Because They *Love* The Darkness!
 - "Men Loved Darkness Rather Than Light!"
 - *We* Loved Darkness Rather Than Light!
 - And So - Before Telling Us About:
 - The Light - John Wants Us To See:
- Our Reason - For Loving Darkness!
 - The Reason Why:
 - We Love The Dark Dungeon Of Sin:
 - Is Because - Our "Deeds Were Evil!"
 - Sinful Conduct:
 - Will Always Reveal:
 - Sinful Character & Nature!
 - And Sin & Sinners Are Always Attracted To Darkness! **IE:** Bugs
 - John Also Wants Us To See:
- Our Rationale - For Loving Darkness!
 - Not Only - Because "Our Deeds Were Evil!"
 - But Also Because:
 - 3:20 - "Every One That Doeth Evil Hateth The Light, Neither Cometh To The Light, Lest His Deeds Should Be Reproved!"
 - Here's The Real Reason:

- Why Sinners Love Darkness - And:
 - Stay In Darkness:
 - No Matter How Much Light:
 - God Has Shined Into Their Lives!
- Its Because Sinners Love Their Sin!
 - And - They Do Not Want Those Sins:
 - To Be Exposed / Reproved:
 - By The Light Of Christ!
- This Really Is An Axiom:
 - For All Sin! Whenever You Sin:
 - It Is Because - At That Moment:
 - You Love The Darkness:
 - More Than You Love The Light!
 - You Love Your Own Will:
 - More Than You Love God's Will!
 - You Love Your Sin:
 - More Than You Love The Savior!
 - And - When The Opportunity Comes:
 - For You To Be Exposed To:
 - The Light Of Christ & His Word:
 - You Won't Go:
 - Because - You Don't Want To Be Reproved For Your Sinful Deeds!
 - The More People Hearts Are Exposed To The Light Of God's Truth About Life:
 - They More They Hate It!
 - But - Praise God:
 - He Did Not Refrain From:
 - Shining His Light Into Our Darkness:
 - Even Though He Knew What Our Natural Reaction:
 - Would Be!
 - So - In 3:21 - We See:
- Our Rescue - From Loving Darkness!
 - 3:21 - "But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God!"
 - This Is What It Looks Like:
 - When You Have Been:
 - Truly Born Again:
 - By The Spirit Of God!
 - This Is What It Looks Like:
 - When You Truly Believe In:
 - The Son Of God As Your Savior! And:
 - This Is What It Looks Like:
 - When You Truly Seek To Live For:
 - The Glory Of God, As Your Heavenly Father!
 - You Will Keep Coming To The Light:
 - More And More! (Present Tense)
 - You Will Not Be Repelled:
 - By The Light! Instead:
 - You Will Be Attracted:
 - By The Light!
 - But Why?
 - Because Now, You Love The Light!
 - You Love The Source:
 - Of The Light! God!
 - You Love The Rays:
 - Of His Light! Christ & His Word!
 - And Now - You **Want** His Light:
 - To Expose And Manifest:
 - Your Works!

- A True Believer:
 - Wants His Works To Be Exposed:
 - Not Because They Are Proud!
 - But Because They Are Pursuing Purity!
 - Because - Their Heart's Desire Is:
 - "Oh, I Want To Be Like Jesus!"
- And - If This Is Your Desire:
 - You Will Want To Know That:
 - All Your Works:
 - "Are Wrought In God!"
 - Or - Put Another Way:
 - You Want To Know That:
 - God Himself Is "Working In You Both To Will And To Do Of His Good Pleasure!"
- And - This Is Why:
 - God Broke Into Your Dungeon:
 - Of Spiritual Darkness & Death & Despair!
 - Through The Light Of His Son!
 - It Was So That - By Exposing Your Darkness:
 - He Might Bring You To:
 - The Light Of Jesus Christ:
 - As The Only Hope & The Only Help You Have!

Conclusion:

1. There Are Billions In This World:
 - Who Are Still In This Dungeon Of Sin!
 - And It Is A Deep Dungeon:
 - Full Of Despair & Death & Darkness!
 - And - This Is Really Bad News!
2. But - The Good News Of The Gospel:
 - Is That God Himself:
 - The One Who Created You & Formed You:
 - Broke Into Your Dungeon!
 - Through His Love! Through His Life! And - Through His Light!
 - And Sent Down To You:
 - His Life-Line:
 - In The Person And Work:
 - Of His Only Begotten Son - Jesus Christ!
3. And He Did This:
 - So That - John 3:16 Again:
 - "Whoever Believeth In Him Should Not Perish, But Have Everlasting Life!"
 - If You Are Still In Your Dungeon:
 - Of Despair, Death, And Darkness:
 - Won't You Believe In Jesus Today!
 - But - If You Have Been Rescued:
 - Never Forget To Live:
 - According To The Love & Life & Light Of Your Savior:
 - Jesus Christ!
 - And - Keep Coming To The Light!

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