

Date: 17.05.2020

Time: 11am

Service taken by: Rev Gavino Fioretti

Scripture: John 3:1-21

Outline:

- a) Introduction
 - 1. The world's problem
 - 2. The world's hope
 - 3. The world's responsibility

- **Introduction**

John 3:16 is very well known. For many, they know it by heart from an early age. There are many sermons on it. With familiarity we can be in danger of missing the point.

John 3:16 is rightly described as “the gospel in a nutshell”. In this verse, we see aspects of the trinity – we see the Father, who loves the world and God the Son sent into the world by the Father. We have one God but there is plurality seen in this verse.

This passage is rich. We see the origin, grounds and requirements for our salvation. There are so many sermons that could be preached, but we are going to focus on the world.

1) The world's problem

Its nature: In the world's very nature is its problem. The world represents all that stands against God. The word 'world' is not used in John 3:16 to highlight the extent, or number of people, but the nature of the people. God loves people who by nature are opposed to God. By nature, people are in the darkness, hiding from the light for fear of being exposed. But though by nature we are unlovable, we are loved by God.

Its destiny: People are sinners who are by nature against God and at war with Him and so destined to be destroyed by Him. The salary, the wages of sin is death. Sin brings God's judgement and punishment. The world is perishing because of sin – this doesn't mean just physical death, because each of us is perishing physically, but this is eternal punishment. Without Jesus, we will be united to the world and so perish with the world.

2) The world's hope

The love of God: This world which by its nature is against God is the object of God's love. God loves sinners. We are the object of God's love. Our hope for eternity is that God loves us – that is the only thing that will allow us to stand before Him. The unlovable is loved. God does not love the world because He is attracted to it – it is full of sin and so against Him. But God creates something in it that makes it loveable. He creates something lovable in us by His creative love.

The gift of God: It is the gift of God that brings salvation. He sent His Son. Sometimes we wrongly think that Jesus had to try to persuade the Father to save sinners, but we see in John 3:16 that the Father gave His Son for sinners. He gave His Son on behalf of sinners. God gives His Son for the world and He gives His Son to the world, but they rejected Him.

God didn't just give His Son 2000 years ago; He gives His Son today in the preaching of the gospel. He offers His Son to a world that deserves death. There is hope for sinners because the precious Son was given to a perishing world so that people could live. He is our only hope.

The life of God: We deserve death eternally but are given eternal life. There is hope for a world that deserves Hell – God. We deserve Hell, but God is loving, and in His love for sinners gave His Son to suffer and die on behalf of the world. There is hope for us because of the love of God in giving the Son of God to give us the life of God. The grace of God in Jesus is our hope. People about us are dying in their sin, but we've a message of hope we must share.

3) The world's responsibility

Christ-centred faith: A Christ-centred faith is the only way to be saved. It's not church, or religion, or obeying rules that saves us. Being reformed didn't save a soul. Faith in Christ is all that's required of the world. Why should I get to Heaven? Jesus is the only reason. I deserve Hell, but I have Jesus. My only hope to be saved is Jesus. A Christ-centred faith is what God demands.

Enduring faith: An enduring faith is required. "Believing" is to be continuous. So often, Christians put emphasis on the moment they were saved, but we should be looking at if we're still believing today. It's not if I believed in Him 20 years ago that matters, what matters is if you can say Jesus is my hope of salvation today. Faith is not a one-time action. It lasts. Saving faith doesn't last for just a time, it keeps lasting. And so it doesn't matter when you were converted or what you experienced when you were converted. What matters is if He is your hope today.

Cast yourself into His care. Sinner, stop trying to save yourself. Instead, put yourself into Jesus' hands, trusting that He's done it all. God in His love sent Jesus. Take Him and receive Him. He doesn't want you to perish, but to believe in Him, to turn to Him and to live.