

“Soul Survivor”

John 3:16

Introduction

Do you think of yourself as a survivor? Perhaps you endured a difficult childhood, or you might have suffered through a terrible disease like COVID, or maybe you sustained the devastation of a divorce. But one kind of survival surpasses them all, and that is the survival of the soul. There is only one way to survive: trusting in Jesus, who is the way, the truth and the life (John 14:6). We can be assured that our souls will survive and spend eternity with God when we believe He sent His Son to die for us, which is the gospel.

To grasp the gospel, we must start by understanding God’s intent for His creation. God’s intent is to have His perfect people in a perfect place with His perfect presence. That is how God started things, and it is how He will finish things (Rev 22:1-6). God’s intent is perfection. He never fails, but people do. Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden. This eliminated the perfection required to have the experience of God’s presence in His place as His people. Adam and Eve were no longer perfect once they sinned, so they no longer could enjoy God’s presence in His perfect location, and they could not be His people. Sin causes separation from God. Because God is righteous and the author of life, sin is the opposite of who He is. Therefore, He must judge sin with the opposite of life, which is death. The Bible tells us that God hates sin (Rom 5:10), so we should have a great appreciation when we read in John 3:16 that God so loved the world. His love for us is so much greater than His hatred for sin. God’s love for us flows out of His nature because He is love. Praise God!

The gospel is simple yet profound. It is explained so clearly in John 3:16, but we often let that verse become a cliché. We should never take God’s love for granted. We should never normalize God’s love to the point that we are not amazed by how gracious He is and how undeserving we are. God gave us His Son as a gift—a gift that we could never earn. Jesus satisfied God’s perfection by living a perfect life, and He took our punishment by dying on the cross (1 John 2:2). Then He was resurrected to conquer death and give us salvation. All we have to do is believe in Jesus and receive Him. Jesus is the ONLY way to eternal life. That is how we survive.

Getting Started

1. What things would you say you have survived in your life?
2. John 3:16 is many people’s favorite Bible verse. What is your favorite Bible verse and why?

Let’s Get Personal

1. What is required for your soul to survive to live eternally with God? When was the last time you shared this truth of the Gospel with someone?
2. How have you taken God’s love for granted lately? Why do you think it’s easy to do so?
3. Do you often feel near God’s presence or far from His presence? Why do you think that is?

Take the Next Step

1. What encouraged you the most in this week’s message? What challenged you the most? How will you incorporate the thing that challenged you into your week?
 2. What are ways that you can develop a greater appreciation for God’s love and grace? How can you make thanking and praising God a regular part of your life?
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3. Have you ever written down your testimony and shared it before? Take time this week to write down the story of how you were saved and how God has worked in your life. Make a commitment to share your testimony in the next few weeks with someone who is not saved.
4. Want to go deeper? Take time to look at the following passages: Genesis 2:17; 15:6; Numbers 4:15; Matthew 5:17, 20, 48; John 4:8; 11:25-26; 14:6; Acts 4:12; Romans 4:4-5; 5:10; Ephesians 2:8-9; Hebrews 2:14; 4:15; 1 Peter 1:3; 2:24; 1 John 2:2; Revelation 22:1-6.

Renew Your Mind

“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.”

John 3:16
