

Address
13800 S. 4080 Rd on Hwy
169 South of Oologah
P.O. Box 527 Oologah, OK
74053 (918) 443-2025

www.oologahcofc.org
oologahcofc@oologahcofc.org

facebook.com/oologahchurchofchrist
facebook.com/biblewaymedia.org
Instagram.com/biblewaymedia
On iTunes, search “oologah church of Christ” in the podcast section

Service Times

Sunday

Bible Class: 9:30 A.M.
Worship: 10:30 A.M. & 5 P.M.
Sonshiners: 4:45pm

Wednesday

Bible Study: 7 P.M.

Preacher:

Russ Earl

AM Sermon:

Can you see Hope & the Cross
(Mt 27:20-24)

PM Sermon

Can you see a changed life?

Sunday AM Bible Class:

Mark - D. Jackson

Wednesday Bible Class:

Summer Series – Swearingen

The Gospel of Christ TV Program

on Saturday @ 7:30am on Channel 53

BibleWayMediaMedia.org

The Oologah church of Christ only uses the **KJV, NKJV or ASV** translation of the Bible in classes & sermons.

The Oologah Informer

July 26th, 2020

Thoughts from the Preacher

“Positive”

To be a positive person, one must decide to be one and work to refrain from negativity. This is no easy task for anyone! There is an abundance of negativity around us. However, Christians have more reasons to be positive than anyone else. By sharing the light of Christ, we share positivity.

Be positive and share it!

“Believing” in John 3:16

Part 1

By Eric Lyons

Several years ago I asked a gentleman if he would be interested in a personal Bible study. He responded to my question by asserting that he knew John 3:16 very well and that John 3:16 was all the Bible he needed. He seemed confident that he was saved by Jesus because he “believed” in Jesus. I have received this same basic response from various individuals through the years. They have read or heard the beautiful, awe-inspiring, truthful words of John 3:16, perhaps many times. And they seem convinced that, since they acknowledge (or mentally accept the factuality of) the existence of Jesus as the Son of God, then they are saved from their sins and will receive eternal life at the end of time. Enough said. Case closed. That’s it: “God is a loving God. And since I ‘believe’ in Jesus, I’m not going to perish, but will receive eternal life.”

AN AWE-INSPIRING VERSE...BUT GOD GAVE US MORE THAN ONE

John 3:16 has undoubtedly been a favorite verse of millions of Christians through the centuries—and rightly so! It is a tremendous statement from our omnibenevolent God. John 3:16 beautifully encapsulates the theme of the entire Bible: God loved humanity (His willfully wayward offspring) so much that He gave the greatest gift He could possibly give, and the only gift that has the power to save man from sin—the perfect sacrifice, the Son of God—and anyone who believes in Him will be saved from punishment and will receive eternal life.

I love John 3:16. It is from the mind of God. It is true. And it is a great summary of the Gospel of Christ. But it is not the only verse God gave to man. It is not the only verse the Holy Spirit inspired man to write. It is not the only soul-saving truth that Jesus ever uttered or that John ever wrote. The psalmist proclaimed: “The entirety of Your word is truth, and every one of your righteous judgments endures forever” (119:160). Paul wrote that “all Scripture is given by inspiration of God” (2 Timothy 3:16). Jesus said that the Spirit of truth would guide

the apostles “into all truth” (John 16:13), which they subsequently preached and penned (Ephesians 3:1-5). Paul declared “the whole counsel of God” (Acts 20:27). Both Moses and John warned about adding to or taking away from God’s Word (Deuteronomy 4:2; 12:32; 2 Revelation 22:18-19). When a person emphasizes only one sentence of Scripture to the exclusion of all others, he is, in essence, disrespecting and rejecting everything else that God revealed for man’s eternal benefit, including many truths that help to interpret other divine statements correctly.

What father is pleased with his son who listens only to 1% of what he says? What teacher will pass a student who completes only 1% of the assigned readings? What employer will tolerate workers content with knowing only 1% of what they need to know—even if that 1% included the most fundamental knowledge of the business?

If John 3:16 were “enough,” why did Jesus teach so much more? Why did John write so much more (in the Gospel of John, as well as 1, 2, and 3 John, and Revelation)? And if the Holy Spirit was content with man only knowing John 3:16, why did He inspire men to pen thousands of other eternally beneficial statements (2 Peter 1:20-21)? Both logic and the Bible demand more than a “one-verse Christian.”

THE FOLLY OF ONE-WORD AND ONE-VERSE INTERPRETATIONS

One Word...Without Context?

Whether you consult an English dictionary or a Greek lexicon, most words have more than one meaning, and some words have a plethora of meanings.³ In fact, according to Guinness World Records, “The word with the most meanings in English is the verb ‘set’, with 430 senses listed in the Second Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary... The word commands the longest entry in the dictionary at 60,000 words.”⁴ Some words can function as both a noun and a verb, depending on how they are used within a given context.⁵ Other words can be used as almost total opposites. For example, the word “overlook” can mean “to inspect,” or it can mean “to ignore.”⁶ The only way to understand words correctly is to understand them in their context.

This fundamental truth of interpretation certainly applies to Scripture. Even very basic words, which the Bible writers used hundreds or thousands of times, must be carefully considered. The English verb “know”⁷ (from the Hebrew *yada* and the Greek *ginosko*) is found well over 1,000 times in the New King James Version. Many times it is used in the sense of merely being aware of something or someone. At other times, it is used in the more intensified sense of being very informed about, and even experienced.⁸ Sometimes it is even used to refer to sexual relations (Genesis 4:17; Matthew 1:25). One simply cannot know what “know” means without context. “One-word interpretations”⁹ (with all due respect) are ignorant and dangerous.

One Verse...Without Context?

“Judge not, that you be not judged.” “I can do all things through Christ Who strengthens me.” “Ask, and it will be given to you.” What do these verses¹⁰ actually mean? Are we never to make judgments?¹¹ Can Christians expect to be so strong that we can lift 10 tons of weight if we so desired (for whatever reason)? Should we actually expect to receive anything that we desire from our “genie” in heaven?¹² The simple fact is, truly understanding one verse of Scripture to the exclusion of all others is as futile and perilous as thinking we can understand a single word without any context. This is certainly true of John 3:16.

Indeed, John wrote “that whoever believes in Him [Jesus] should not perish but have eternal life.” But what does it mean to “believe” in Jesus? That’s easy, right? Everyone knows what it means to “believe in” something or someone. And if not, a person can quickly consult a dictionary and discover that believing can mean merely “to consider to be true or honest,” or “to hold as an opinion,” or to “suppose” or “think.”¹³ These are some of the leading modern definitions and common usages of the English word “believe.” Thus, many conclude, without further knowledge of the Scriptures, or without giving further thought even to other definitions of the modern English term “believe,”¹⁴ that all a person must do to receive eternal life is simply to “consider,” “suppose,” or “think” that Jesus is the Son of God.