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#### 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:

Nightmare (Lk 16:19-26)

##### PM Sermon

Besides Me there is no Savior (Isa 43)

##### Sunday AM Bible Class:

Mark - D. Jackson

##### Wednesday Bible Class:

Summer Series – C. Northrop

##### 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

### August 9<sup>th</sup> , 2020

#### Thoughts from the Preacher

##### **“Never Lose Sight”**

Life moves very quickly. So many days are filled with tasks that must be completed. The Christian however would do well to never lose sight of the blessings around them. Such blessings include family, friends, Christian fellowship and of course a right relationship with God. Strive to never lose sight of such tremendous blessings!

#### **“Believing” in John 3:16**

##### **Part 3**

By Eric Lyons

#### **ALLOW JOHN CHAPTER 3 TO EXPLAIN “BELIEVING” IN JOHN 3:16**

If a man says “Shoot!” is he using the word as an imperative statement (a command) or as a frustrated exclamation? If we discover that it is a command, what does he mean? Does he mean to shoot a gun, or shoot heroin, or shoot a ball? And even if we discover that the command is more specific: “Shoot the ball!” does that mean to shoot a basketball, a soccer ball, or a billiard ball? If the statement is still more specific, “Shoot the ball toward the correct goal,” we still do not know if the instruction has to do with a basketball or a soccer ball. Without more information, without context, we simply cannot know.

Twentieth-century American author and children’s book illustrator John McCloskey once stated, “I know you believe you understand what you think I said, but I’m not sure you realize that **what you heard is not what I meant.**”<sup>20</sup> Many make the assumption that God always means what **they** think He means rather than what **He** said (and explained) He meant. In particular, it seems many people within Christendom consider the “believing” of John 3:16 that saves man from his sins is a mere acceptance of the fact that Jesus is the Son of God and “my personal Savior.” Yet, without more information than is provided in this one sentence, and especially without context, a person simply cannot know for sure.

The best place to begin to ensure we have a more thorough and proper understanding of the term “believe” in John 3:16 is John 3. The 36 verses in this chapter can be read in three minutes, and yet the deep, life-changing, soul-stirring truths found therein can be meditated upon for a lifetime.

#### **John 3:14-15**

In the immediate, previous statement to John 3:16, Jesus referred back to a moment in Israelite history when God punished the ungrateful, complaining Israelites with venomous snakes (Numbers 21). After many died from being bitten by the serpents, the people of Israel confessed their sins and asked Moses to pray to God and intercede on their behalf.

“Then the Lord said to Moses, ‘Make a fiery serpent, and set it on a pole; and it shall be that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it, shall live.’ So Moses made a bronze serpent, and put it on a pole; and so it was, if a serpent had bitten anyone, when he looked at the bronze serpent, he lived” (Numbers 21:8-9).

Jesus compared Moses lifting up the bronze serpent in Number 21 with the Son of Man being “lifted up,” adding that “whoever believes in Him may have eternal life” (John 3:14-15, ESV). Carefully consider that the afflicted Israelites in Number 21 could **learn** of the critically important, life-saving truth of the bronze serpent and yet still not be healed. They could even “**believe**” (in the sense of mentally assenting to the truth) that if they looked upon the bronze serpent they could be healed, and yet still **not be healed**. Unless they **believed in a deeper sense**, and (a) actually left the comfort of their tent dwelling, (b) walked (or were carried) through (at least a portion of) the vast camp (which was comprised of hundreds of thousands of Israelites—cf. Numbers 1:46), (c) opened their eyes, and (d) looked in the direction of and literally upon the bronze serpent, they would **not** be physically healed by the Great Healer of their deadly condition.

Similarly, anyone who is spiritually “dead in trespasses and sins” (Ephesians 2:1) and who is “without Christ” (2:12), must look upon the Son of Man and “believe” in Him. This “belief” is no more a mere mental acknowledgment of Jesus being the only answer to the sin problem, than it was for the Israelites to acknowledge and genuinely believe that the bronze serpent was the answer to their deadly physical disorder. God is the Healer, but He only heals those who faithfully follow His approved prescription.