

Dear Friend

John 3:16 KJV 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.

On the fourth of July 2025, there was a terrible flood in the hill country of Texas. The Guadalupe River rose 26 feet in only 45 minutes, sending a flash flood racing down the valley and sweeping away hundreds of campers who were there to celebrate the holiday. Sadly, many of those who died were children, including many young girls who were at the Camp Mystic Christian Campgrounds. I watched the news and saw hundreds of people scouring the riverbank looking through the vast debris, still hoping they might find more who might be alive.

Being the father of three daughters, my heart was aching for the parents of those children who perished, as well as for those whose child has not been found yet. With each passing day, hope diminished that their child might still be found alive. But each parent was hoping upon hope that, somehow, their child might be saved from this devastating death and destruction.

And that's when the Holy Spirit said, *"Now you know the heart of the Father, who continues to hope upon hope that many of His children can be saved from eternal death."* I knew He was not referring to just this tragedy in Texas. He was referring to all the seeds of His original family, the ones produced through Adam and Eve. God considers all of them as His children because His original intent and purpose was for Adam and Eve to produce a godly family on earth. The original plan was for them to produce a family of righteous children for the Father God. But a devastating flood of death came rushing through humanity because of sin, and all of those in His original family became spiritually dead. Spiritual death was passed down from parent to child in each generation.

I think of all the parents of those children who died in the Texas flood. What heartbreak. What agony for them. They would give anything if there was a way that their child could live again. And that is the heart of our Father God, who wanted a way for His original family to be "saved" from spiritual death. His great love for His lost children is why He "gave" His only begotten Son so that they who would believe on Him would not be lost for eternity but would be born again ... alive from the dead ... to be reunited with the Father God and live with Him forever. The Father wants His children back ... alive!

My understanding of John 3:16 took a quantum leap in understanding today. I have always considered the primary motive of God sending Jesus to save us was to prevent us from going to Hell. That is true. But it is more than that. God is saving us "for Himself." Like the parents of lost children along that devastated riverbank, searching frantically in hope of finding their child alive, God is doing all He can to help His lost children hear the gospel of Jesus Christ, so they can believe and be saved from the devastating flood of death that came through sin. He wants them saved ... "for Him" ... so He can love and cherish them in His presence for all eternity.

God is love. God is the original Father. He wants all of His children saved "for Him." I say again ... the Father wants His children back ... alive from the dead. The gospel is His plan for getting as many of His children back as possible, so they do not perish from His presence forever.

What if the parents of two dead children were asked, "One of your daughters was an obedient girl. The other one was rebellious and difficult. You only want the obedient one to be saved, right?" They would have said, "We love them both. We want both of our daughters back alive. Get them back to us alive. That's all we ask, and then we will double down on our efforts to raise them up to be godly women."

It is no wonder the gospel had to be all by grace. There is nothing those dead children can do to become alive again. If they were to live again, it would have to be all the doing of God working on their behalf. That's why Jesus had to do all the work. Our only job is to believe in His finished work.

John 6:29 KJV Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.

Salvation is all by grace. After we are born again with new life, growing up, maturing, becoming a disciple, does have a part for us to play. But not being born again. A dead person cannot save himself. Repentance will not bring a dead person back to life. Good works will not bring a dead person back to life. New life is a gift from God, based on faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 2:4-10 KJV But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, [5] Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) [6] And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: [7] That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. [8] For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: [9] Not of works, lest any man should boast. [10] For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

I keep seeing God standing on the devastated riverbank watching the countless bodies of His dead children floating down the river of spiritual death into eternity without Him ... perished forever from His presence. They are all dead. There is nothing they can do to save themselves. Not repentance, not good works, not anything they can do ... for they are dead, and they cannot give themselves life again no matter what they might try. (False religion is completely useless. It is the dead trying to save themselves through works.) The whole issue is ... life from the dead. Only God can give life, and only through His Son is that life available.

1 John 5:10-12 KJV He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God

gave of his Son. [11] And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. [12] He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.

John 14:6 KJV Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

Your fellow servant for Christ,

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