



SERIES: September 2022 – February 2023 Believe

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Saturday, September 24, 2022

Scripture: John 3:16-17

TITLE: Pass the Class

What would you do if you walked into your first college class only to find out from the professor you have an automatic F. You have an F and no matter how hard you study or work, you will still have an F. Oh, and by the way, you can't drop the class. You're in it and you get an automatic F. That is unless, you accept an A from the professor as a gift.

Would you reject such a gift when otherwise you don't pass the class. That would be crazy, wouldn't it. But that's exactly what people do each and every day of their lives with a gift from God.

Let's turn to the most familiar passage in all of the Bible. Let's look at John 3:16-17.

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.”

This verse is so familiar it's lost it's power and punch. But think about what Jesus just said. “For God so loved the world.” For the Jews, this was crazy. They were God's chosen people. They thought “For God so loved us and us only.” But Jesus continues to blow Nicodemus' mind. First, religion and works won't save anyone. Then, God's gift of salvation is not just for the jews. But instead it's for everyone.

But it's not universal salvation as some say. Jesus says, “whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.” To put it another way. If you don't believe, you fail class. You go to hell. You don't go to summer school. There is no extra credit. If you do not believe, you perish.

And Jesus goes on in verse 17. Jesus did not come into the world to condemn or judge the world. He doesn't have to condemn the world of their sin. They are already condemned.

There is this belief that is unbiblical that humans are born good. That we are born good or at the very least born as blank slates. But this is not true. David wrote in Psalm 51:5,

Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.

We are all born with a sin-stained soul. We start class with an F and the only hope of passing is with the help of the Professor – God.

It doesn't matter who you are or what you've done. We all need a Savior. No religion will work. No number of acts of kindness will rescue us. Those who believe in him will not perish but have eternal life.

So here's my challenge for you today: quit trying to earn or keep your salvation. Yes, as Christians, we do perform good works or actions from this gift. But it doesn't save us or provide us with insurance salvation. It's a gift of God. But you must turn from your sin and turn from your religion and legalism and turn to Jesus Christ as your only hope.

So today, stop trying to do it. You can't. Rest in God's grace. Receive it if you never have. Not only will you win the day but you'll pass the class with flying colors.