



# the Source

*Let anyone who is thirsty come to me...*

Last Sunday, Dr. Will Cotton began a three-part series on the Methodist approach to grace. As an appetizer for this series, go to YouTube and search for blues singer Eddy Mann's rendition of "Grace is Not a Blue Eyed Blond."

The first sermon dealt with John Wesley's term prevenient grace or the grace God bestows on us before we are Christian believers which moves us toward belief. This week he will address justifying grace which God bestows on us as believers to rectify our sin and bring us into a right relationship with him.

When someone does something important for me, good or bad, I instinctively ask why. Motivation is important to me. Our text says love is God's motivation for rectifying our sin. "For God so loved the world." Love is a word bandied about in our culture almost to the point of meaninglessness.

For love, the meaning must come from any action it produces. If it produces no action, it has little to no meaning. If it produces significant action, it has meaning. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son." This sacrificial nature on God's part gives depth to his love.

But love not only involves giving, it involves reciprocating. It takes two to complete the emotion. And so we are told, "that whosoever believes in him might ... have eternal life." And even as love gains its meaning from action, so does belief; "Thy [God's] will be done."

Through grace, God seduces us and then, by grace, he pays the price necessary for inclusion in his family. That price is the sacrifice of his "only begotten son." And so believers are justified.

Those of us who grew up in Sunday School memorized John 3:16 as children. We also should have been encouraged to memorize verse 17: "Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him."

—Joe Grove, First Church member

## Consider the Source John 3:14-17

### A Family Affair

Read John 3:16. God loved the world so much he gave us the gift of his son, Jesus. What do you do with special gifts from others? You may shout with joy and take really good care of the gift. It's more fun to share gifts with excitement, telling friends about the wonderful present. We can share God's love the same way!

John 3:16 is a popular Bible verse people use to share God's love. What are some active ways you can share God's love? Could you put away the dishes without being asked? Donate toys and books? What about leaving crayons and coloring books in an emergency room for other children? With your family, take turns answering the question, "How do you think we can share God's love?"

We are God's hands and feet to share the gift of love with all the people we see. Think about your coach, bus driver, dentist, or the neighbor you always see walking a dog! God's love knows no bounds and there are opportunities in your community and beyond to share God's love.

We are reaching out to our community this summer by sharing God's love at Vacation Bible School in June! Tell your friends all about VBS and get signed up now. We hope you will come and shout with excitement with us as we thank God for the gift of his son!

*Dear Lord, we rejoice in your love. It is a marvelous gift. Help us make time to share the love with others. Amen.*

—Tammy Parks, Elementary Coordinator

### Monday: John 3:14

John 3:14 looks back to an Old Testament event. Read about it in Numbers 21:4-9.

- What connection do you make between this event and Jesus?
- Does this imply any behavior on our part today? If so, what?

### Tuesday: John 3:15

- What does it mean to believe?
- What is the difference between belief and mental assent?
- What is your understanding of eternal life?

### Wednesday: John 3:16

Scripture tells us there is no greater love than a person would give their life for another.

- What does this verse tell you about the love of God?
- Can you think of any circumstances where you would give your life for another?
- Would you consider living your life for another?

### Thursday: John 3:17

- What is your understanding of the word saved as used here?
- Do you ever feel justified in condemning someone?
- If Christ does not condemn others, how should you deal with these feelings?

### Friday: John 3:17

God sent Jesus so we might be saved through him.

- How do you understand and explain this sacrificial nature of Christ?
- Does believing what is said here about Christ say anything about the way we live our lives? What difference should it make?

