

**Prayer List of the Sick and Afflicted:**

Liz Sturgill is doing better and continues to receive dialysis treatments.  
Jeff Sturgill has a sore on his foot but is now doing better.  
Bob and Elena's son Kirill has been suffering from a respiratory infection.  
Jesse Riddle is experiencing weakness but is able to attend Sunday AM services.  
Delores Hendrickson has been unable to attend services but is doing better. She has been experiencing some side effects from medication for her bone strength.  
Ken Roosa's cousin, Al Hurt, had emergency colon surgery.  
Charlie Henard's aunt has lung cancer.  
Virginia McKinney's sister in St. Louis is critical condition with colon problems.  
John Richardson is recovering from gall bladder surgery.  
Shirley Cook's nephew in Illinois, Dale Pflum, is suffering from cancer.  
Karen Sproles is doing better will have a nerve block injection in her knee soon.  
Nan Coons, wife of Darian and daughter-in-law of Eldon and Glenda Coons had colon surgery and is now recovering at home

**Pray For Our Shut-ins:**

Gloria Hale, Karen Sproles, Iris Hash, John & Terry Richardson

**Pray For The Mission Works We Are Supporting:**

John Grubb (Mission work in Asia), Daniel Goshorn and family (Mission work in Peru). See latest mission reports on the bulletin board in the back of the auditorium.

**Deepest Sympathy:**

Our thoughts and prayers go out to Floyd and Judy Coley at the passing of Judy's cousin.

Our sympathy also goes out to Tim and Liz Burdsall at the death of Liz's aunt.

**2024 Men and Women's Planning Sessions:**

On Saturday, January 20th the men and women will meet for breakfast at 8:00 AM at the building. Following breakfast, the men and women will have separate planning sessions to determine the works that we will pursue for 2024.

**Monthly Pitch-in Dinner:**

Our next pitch-in dinner will be Sunday, February 4th, following the AM services.

**Men's Business Meeting:**

The next men's monthly business meeting will be Wednesday, Jan. 3rd at 5:00.

**Radio Program:**

Please remember to tune in every Sunday morning at 8:00 AM to WCBK 102.3 FM to hear our radio program which is entitled: "Preparing For Eternity".

**God's Plan For Our Salvation**

Hearing the word of God (Romans 10:17; Acts 16:32).

Believing what is taught (Mark 16:16; Hebrews 11:6).

Repentance (Acts 2:38; Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30).

Confession (Romans 10:9, 10; Acts 8:37).

Baptism (Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16; I Peter 3:21; Romans 6:3, 4).

Faithful Christian Living, after the above five steps (I Peter 2:11, 12; Rev. 2:10)

December 17, 2023

***MORGAN STREET CHURCH OF CHRIST***

**540 E. Morgan Street  
Martinsville, IN 46151  
(765) 342-6027**



**Schedule of Services:**

**Sunday**

Bible Study – 9:30 AM

Worship – 10:30 AM

Evening Service - 6:00

**Wednesday**

Bible Study – 6:00 PM

**Thursday**

Ladies' Bible Study – 11:00 AM (March through October)

**Radio Program:**

"Preparing For Eternity"

Sunday Mornings 8:00 AM, WCBK 102.3 FM

**Website:**

[www.morganstreetchurchofchrist.org](http://www.morganstreetchurchofchrist.org)

Gospel Preacher – Bob Hawkins

# THE PROPER EXPLANATION OF JOHN 3:16

Carl O. Cooper

The fact is, [John 3:16](#), when taken in its proper context, teaches that salvation is by works of obedience when accompanied by proper faith.

It's true! This verse, read in its proper context does not teach "saved by faith alone". In reality, the context of this verse teaches just the opposite. It teaches we are saved by faith, when accompanied by proper works. Now if you are associated with one of the denominational churches, just how many times have you heard that said? Never, right! Almost all of the people in the various denominational churches read [John 3:16](#) and when they interpret the meaning of this verse, based on their own "world view" of salvation, they conclude that salvation is obtained by "faith alone." They almost always include another doctrine and they say that "works have nothing to do with being saved." This is common teaching by most of the denominational churches around us. But the fact is, [John 3:16](#), when taken in its proper context, teaches that salvation is by works of obedience when accompanied by proper faith. Let's take a closer look at these verses and you can see, without doubt, the proper meaning for yourself.

[John 3:14-16](#). "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. 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."

What in the world does Moses lifting up the serpent in the wilderness have to do with being saved by faith in God's only Begotten Son? Be careful here because this sets the context of what these Scriptures are trying to get us to see. Moses lifting up the serpent is very important if you really do want to understand what is being taught here.

Do you remember the story of Moses lifting up the serpent in the wilderness? It's found in [Numbers 21:8-9](#). Let's look at these verses and see how they apply to [John 3:14-16](#). "Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD, and against thee; pray unto the LORD, that he take away the serpents from us. And Moses prayed for the people. And the LORD said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived."

The story goes like this: The Israelites had been released from slavery in Egypt. They sinned against God in the wilderness and God sent poisonous snakes among them in order to teach them to repent. If they were bitten by one of the "fiery serpents" they died. But God made a way for these people to be saved. It required two things. The first thing that was required was a faith in God that would cause them to obey God's instructions and do what He required them to do. If they followed God's instructions as He required them to do, they would be saved. The second thing they had to do was obey God and look at the serpent that Moses had placed on a pole. If they did this, God said they would not die from the bite of the snake. Sounds easy,

right?

But let's put this into proper perspective. Here is a part of the picture that we seldom even think about or consider. Let's look at [Exodus 12:37-38](#): "And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot that were men, beside children. And a mixed multitude went up also with them; and flocks, and herds, even very much cattle."

Wow! What a crowd of people. The Bible tells us it was six hundred thousand men, plus women and children. Most scholars number this nation of people to be from 1.5 million to 2 million people. Have you ever considered this? They lived in tents. There were no permanent houses available for them in the wilderness. If we were to consider four people to a tent, that would be about 500,000 tents. What a city of tents and people. According to the internet, the population of Forsyth County where I live (which includes the cities of Winston Salem, Kernersville, Clemmons, King, Lewisville and others) was 260,202 in 2021. The population of the people of Israel was 7.5 times more people that we have today in the entire county where I live in North Carolina. What does this information have to do with looking at the serpent Moses placed on a pole? Well, just suppose you were in my county of Forsyth and you were bitten by a poisonous snake. If you could be saved from this snake bite by looking at a serpent on a pole located somewhere over in downtown Winston Salem, would you find some way to get there so you could see it? Or would you be stubborn and rebellious and refuse to look at the snake on the pole? Would you claim that looking at the serpent was not necessary because we are saved by "faith only" and works have nothing to do with our salvation? Somehow, I just don't think you would refuse to do the work of obedience God has required you to do.

The same is true with the context of [John 3:16](#). You can see now how the statement in [John 3:14](#) about Moses lifting up the serpent applies to our salvation today. Yes, it's clear. Faith is required, alright. But so are works of obedience that God has commanded. Look at these verses in [James 2:19-24](#). With this new information, these verses should now become Chrystal clear. "Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only."