

A bible study on John 3:16:

For God so greatly loved and dearly prized the world that He [even] gave up His only begotten (unique) Son, so that whoever believes in (trusts in, clings to, relies on) Him shall not perish (come to destruction, be lost) but have eternal (everlasting) life. (John 3:16 Amplified Bible)

No verse in the bible is more known than John 3:16 and the most Christians would agree that it captures the gospel the best, in a nutshell. It says it all.

1. It tells us that God loves us.
2. It tells us that we are lost by nature and that we need a saviour, since God had to send His Son. Should no saviour be needed, God wouldn't have had to send His Son.
3. It tells us that God became a human being (the incarnation).
4. The fact that God gave up His Son tells us that the destiny of Jesus was known even before the incarnation; God knew that evil was going to kill His Son after a humanly unbearable Via Dolorosa (Way of Suffering).
5. It tells us that there is an eternal life available and that things don't stop at the grave.
6. The greatest of it all, it tells us what we need to do to obtain this eternal life; we only need to believe. Faith, leads to the presence of God, while biblical death is alienation from God. Biblically we are spiritually stillborn, alienated from the direct presence of God, but faith can resuscitate us. Hell (also a form of an eternal life) is the destination of those that choose to stay spiritually dead.

Do you know John 3:16 by heart? If not, do that this very moment. Look for a comfortable translation online, or in a bible at home. If you don't have a bible at home, get one asap. It's worth it.

John 3:16 is for those that know that they are in spiritual need, just as Nicodemus that came to Jesus in this chapter. Nicodemus needed the gospel. He knew that he wasn't going to heaven, although he was a religious leader of his day. Are you in spiritual need, needing a saviour, or do you still think that you can get yourself to heaven with your good deeds and pious lifestyle? If you haven't been lost yet, crying out to God for a new life, you haven't understood John 3:16 yet. If you still think your own effort pleases God, or you have always been a child of God, you miss the point of John 3:16. You first have to get lost, to get saved.

Something more than natural birth is needed to be with God:

"I assure you, unless you are born again, you can never see the Kingdom of God." "What do you mean?" exclaimed Nicodemus. "How can an old man go back into his mother's womb and be born again?" Jesus replied, "The truth is, no one can enter the Kingdom of God without being born of water [first birth] and the Spirit [second birth]. Humans can reproduce only human life [first birth], but the Holy Spirit gives new life from heaven [second birth].
(John 3:3-6 The New Living Translation)

If this happens through faith, what is faith then? Faith is the conviction, of the accomplished atonement/salvation of Jesus, that precedes the crying out to God for this new life from above. In short, faith is the surrender to Jesus that takes us with Him into the restored presence of God – the peace that calms the storm of being lost. This faith is to turn you back on the world, the world of evil. The same evil that crucified Jesus. The evil and atheist construction of meaning that rejects God, in the rationalistic tower of Babel trying to solve all this-worldly problems. To turn our backs on the world is to turn our backs on sin – that which hampers or breaks our relationship with God.

Driving it home:

1. Are you spiritually a life with a living relationship with Jesus?
2. Can other people see and experience that?
3. Do you know John 3:16 by heart?
4. What is the extend of this atheist construction of meaning that rejects God, trying to solve all this-worldly problems?
5. What is sin?