

Trinity Sunday, May 26, 2024

Scripture Reading: John 3:1-17

Although my memory's fading, I remember two things very clearly: I am a great sinner and Christ is a great Savior. —John Newton (former slave trader and author of the hymn "Amazing Grace")

Our gospel reading for today includes verse 16.

John 3:16 has to be far-and-away the most well-known Bible verse ever. Luther, the Father of the Protestant Reformation, called it the gospel in miniature. If you had to explain the good news of the gospel in 25 words or less, this would be the verse to which one would turn.

It is so famous, that if you turn on the TV to a football or baseball game, you might see a sign reading: JOHN 3:16. The verse has become a symbol for God's love for the world, and by inference, for all of us individually.

Here's the verse: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life."

What is astonishing is the *scope* of God's love! God's love encompasses the world.

Some people argue that this does not mean that God loves each and every person in the world. They say that the Greek word should be translated "cosmos."

But highly educated translators do not prefer, "God so loved the cosmos." Or, "God so loved the universe." That's a long way from the simple, "God so loved the world." Most reasonable people understand this to mean that God loves the human inhabitants of the world, as well as the natural world in which they live.

Jesus is talking to Nicodemus. What is he trying to say? He could be saying that, although God loves us and forgives us, we have to actually reach out and take the offer, accept the helping hand, agree to sign on as a believer — in order for God's love to be actualized in your life.

This theme plays out in film and novels all the time. One character declares his or her love. But will the other reciprocate?

God loves you.

The rest is up to you.

—Timothy Merrill

Prayer: Loving God, I accept your love, kindness and grace. May my life give evidence of your presence in it. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Daily Bible Readings

- Sunday:** John 1-3
Monday: 1 Kings 1-4
Tuesday: 1 Kings 5-7
Wednesday: 1 Kings 8-10
Thursday: 1 Kings 11-13
Friday: 1 Kings 14-16
Saturday: Psalms 52-54

Verse to Remember

*“Fools say in their hearts,
 ‘There is no God.’”*

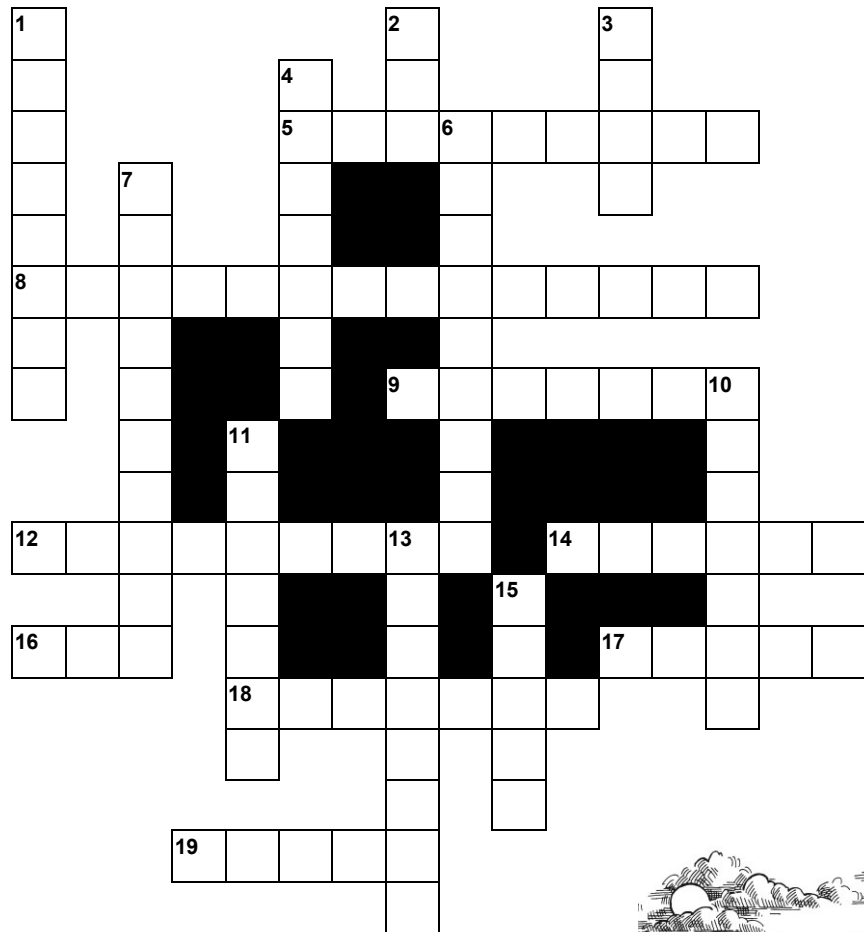
—Psalm 53:1

“The heavens are telling the
 glory of God.”

So declares the psalmist. Study the clues below and complete this crossword that emphasizes the natural phenomena of God’s created world.

Clues:

1. Violent wind and snow storm.
2. Thick, obscuring mist at or near the Earth’s surface.
3. Frozen rain that sometimes falls during rainstorms.
4. Normal weather conditions of a particular place.
5. A flash of light in the sky.
6. Violent tropical storm.
7. Shaking of the Earth’s crust.
8. Bands of light appearing in the night sky; northern lights.
9. A partial or full blockage of the sun or moon.
10. A wearing away of the soil.
11. A large mass of snow and ice.
12. A mass of snow, earth or rocks sliding down a mountain.
13. The degree of dampness or moisture in the air.
14. A spring from which boiling water and steam spew.
15. Condensed water vapor in the atmosphere.
16. Frozen water.
17. Deluge.
18. Time when the sun crosses the equator, making day and night of equal length.
19. Frozen dew or vapor.



Answers:

1. blizzard
2. fog
3. hail
4. climate
5. lightning
6. hurricane
7. earthquake
8. Aurora Borealis
9. eclipse
10. erosion
11. glacier
12. avalanche
13. humidity
14. geyser
15. cloud
16. ice
17. flood
18. equinox
19. frost

