**Who is the believer of John 3:16?**

*John 3:16*

**Introduction**

1. **John 3:16** is perhaps the most well-known/famous verse in the Bible today. Many can quote it, and it is often portrayed through various mediums, like t-shirts, jewelry, etc.
2. However, most do not ask the important question: Who is the believer of John 3:16?
3. It is not enough to read John 3:16 and stop there. We must investigate about that one called a believer.
4. Salvation by Faith
5. Faith Saves
   1. **Hebrews 11:6** – impossible to please God without belief.
   2. **John 3:15-16** – not perish, but everlasting life.
   3. **John 6:28-29** – work of God is to believe in Jesus.
   4. **John 6:47** – everlasting life.
   5. **John 8:21-24** – NOT believe, die in your sin.
   6. **John 20:30-31** – recorded that you may believe, and have life.
   7. **Romans 1:16-17** – power of salvation to those who believe, live by faith.
   8. However, does the fact belief is essential to salvation imply that it is the only thing essential? No. (**cf. Romans 1:5; 16:26** – OBEDIENCE of faith, or to the faith).
6. Faith Only Saves?
   1. **James 2:18-26** – faith only does not justify, does not save.
      1. **(v. 18)** – Faith must be shown, and implied is that it cannot be shown without works.
      2. **(v. 19)** – Even demons believe – not saved. (**cf. Matthew 8:29** – demon knows Jesus but is expecting torment).
      3. **(vv. 20-26)** – Faith without works is dead – Abraham as an example, Rahab as an example.
   2. **Romans 10:9-13** – belief unto righteousness/salvation, but belief alone?
      1. **(vv. 9-10)** – confession and belief.
         1. One can believe, but not confess, thus not be saved – **cf. John 12:42-43**
         2. Without confessing Jesus – **cf. Matthew 10:32-33**
      2. **(vv. 12-13)** – ***“call upon Him”*** – involves belief, but it isn’t belief simply.
         1. Call upon – *epikaleō* – appeal to someone.
         2. The idea is appealing to Jesus for salvation based on His conditions.
         3. ONE WHO DOES NOT BELIEVE IN HIM WILL NOT APPEAL TO HIM, BUT THAT BELIEF IS NOT THE ONLY CONDITION HE REQUIRES – NOT SAVED AT BELIEF.
7. If salvation requires more than mere belief then the believer of John 3:16 is more than one who merely believes. Who is he? What did he do in addition to belief, if anything? 🡪
8. Who is the believer of John 3:16?
9. The One Born of God
   1. **John 1:10-13** – The believer of John 3:16 is the same of John 1:12.
      1. **(vv. 10-11)** – NOT RECEIVED.
      2. **(v. 12)** – RECEIVED, BELIEVE – RIGHT to be called children of God.
         1. Right – *exousia* – authority. (**cf. Matthew 28:18)**
         2. Only can be called a child by the authority of Jesus – HE AUTHORIZES THOSE TO BE CALLED CHILDREN.
         3. TO BECOME – not immediate upon belief.
      3. **(v. 13)** – born of God to be His child – this is logical.
         1. Not of blood – hereditary.
         2. Not of will of flesh – fleshly passions and nature.
         3. Not of will of man – man’s wisdom and volition.
         4. OF GOD – BUT HOW?
   2. **John 3:1-5** – Jesus to Nicodemus – BORN AGAIN.
      1. (**vv. 1-2)** – Nicodemus shows some degree of belief.
         1. **John 2:23-25** – Jesus knew his heart, and didn’t need to wait for him to ask a question.
         2. Jesus perhaps anticipated a question like that of the rich young ruler (**cf. Mark 10:17**).
         3. Instead of waiting for Nicodemus to ask (perhaps about gaining entrance into the kingdom), Jesus jumped right into His teaching about gaining everlasting life.
      2. **(vv. 3-5**) – Jesus told him you must be born again, i.e. of water and the Spirit.
         1. Again? – Before by blood, will of flesh, will of man? NOW “of water and the Spirit.”
         2. NEW BIRTH INTO KINGDOM = SALVATION **– cf. Matthew 19:16, 22-30.**
            1. **(vv. 16, 23, 25**) – Eternal life = enter kingdom = saved.
            2. **(v. 27)** – Peter wants such, and shows Jesus he is different than the rich young ruler.
            3. (**v. 28**) – REGENERATION – *paliggenesia*; (spiritual) rebirth (the state or the act), i.e. (figuratively) spiritual renovation.

Apostles will be there and will have a place of judgment – proclamation of God’s word through the HS. (**cf. Ephesians 2:19-20**)

Others will be there too 🡪

* + - * 1. **(vv. 29-30)** – Others who leave all to follow Christ, in the regeneration, will inherit eternal life – entrance into kingdom.
        2. THIS BIRTH TO GAIN ENTRANCE INTO THE KINGDOM IS OF UTMOST IMPORTANCE. THE BELIEVER OF JOHN 3:16 IS ONE WHO PARTICIPATES IN THIS BIRTH.
    1. Born again – of water and the Spirit? (**cf. John 3:3, 5**)
       1. **1 Peter 1:3-5** – BEGOTTEN AGAIN – same as born again.
          1. TO A LIVING HOPE.
          2. OF INHERITANCE – children have an inheritance (**cf. Romans 8:16-17).**
          3. **Cf. John 1:12-13** – children of God – I.E. BORN OF GOD.
       2. **1 Peter 1:22-25** – born again through the word.
          1. (**v. 22**) – connection of birth to SPIRIT.
          2. **Cf. 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14** – SPIRIT and THE TRUTH and THE GOSPEL.
          3. **(v. 25)** – word is the gospel.
          4. **Cf. John 16:13** – HS = Spirit of truth – work is to reveal truth through apostles and prophets. (**cf. 2 Peter 1:21** – moved by HS)
          5. BORN OF SPIRIT? – i.e. submission to the SPIRIT’S COMMAND/TEACHING.

**James 1:18** – BROUGHT FORTH = begotten, or born again – BY WORD OF TRUTH.

**1 John 3:9** – born of God – SEED = WORD (**cf. 1 Peter 1:23)** = God’s child.

* + - 1. Born of water IN CONNECTION TO TEACHING OF THE SPIRIT, I.E. WORD – to be God’s child?
         1. **Acts 10:47-48** – WATER BAPTISM COMMANDED.

What did that accomplish?

**Acts 15:8-9** – HEARTS PURIFIED BY FAITH. (**cf. 1 Peter 1:22-23** – purified souls, pure heart)

ONLY THE PURE ARE GOD’S CHILDREN – **1 John 2:29; 3:7-10**

* + - * 1. **Titus 3:5-7** – Saved, REGENERATION AND RENEWING (synonyms for new birth), JUSTIFIED, HEIRS, HOPE OF ETERNAL LIFE.

**Hebrews 9:13-14** – Jesus’ blood CLEANSES CONSCIENCE.

**Hebrews 10:22** – Sprinkling of Jesus’ blood to CLEANSE CONSCIENCE – CONNECTED TO BODIES WASHED WITH WATER.

**1 Peter 3:21** – good conscience received in baptism, which is an appeal to God for such. (Water baptism) (Washed with water)

* + - * 1. **Galatians 3:26-29** – Sons of God, faith, baptism.

***“FOR IN CHRIST JESUS YOU ARE ALL SONS OF GOD, THROUGH FAITH.”*** (ESV – better rendering)

**(v. 27)** – FOR you put on Christ in baptism.

For – *gar* – assigning a reason, i.e. BECAUSE.

IN CHRIST YOU ARE SONS THROUGH FAITH BECAUSE YOU PUT ON CHRIST IN BAPTISM.

(**v. 29)** – SO YOU ARE HEIRS.

If this is true – YOU ARE sons of God BECAUSE YOU WERE baptized THUS YOU HAVE put on Christ.

Then this is true – YOU ARE NOT sons of God BECAUSE YOU WERE NOT baptized THUS YOU HAVE NOT put on Christ.

* + 1. Why then does Jesus say “WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM” in John 3:16 if being “born of water and the Spirit” is necessary?
       1. **Cf. Mark 16:15-16** – one who does not believe will not be baptized, i.e. born of water and the Spirit.
       2. The believer of John 3:16 is the one who trusts/believes in Jesus for salvation, and does what He says to receive it!
       3. **Cf. John 3:14-15** – same as the Israelites bitten by the serpents – HAD TO DO MORE THAN BELIEVE, THEY HAD TO LOOK UP TO THE BRONZE SERPENT. (**cf. Numbers 21:8-9** – WHEN HE LOOKED)
       4. WE AREN’T TOLD TO LOOK ON A METAL SNAKE, BUT TO BE BAPTIZED FOR THE REMISSION OF OUR SINS.

1. The One Not Condemned
   1. **John 3:17-21** – Jesus didn’t come to condemn, but that doesn’t mean there won’t be condemnation.
      1. **(v. 18)** – Jesus doesn’t have to condemn because the one who doesn’t believe shows himself to be condemned.
      2. The believer of John 3:16 is the one who is not condemned.
      3. **(vv. 19-21)** – The condemnation is not coming to the light, i.e. the truth.
      4. The believer of John 3:16 is the one who comes to the truth, i.e. the light.
   2. **John 12:44-50** – The believer of John 3:16 is the one not condemned because he came to the light, i.e. the word of God, submitted, and was given life.
      1. (**vv. 44-46**) – belief in Jesus.
      2. **(vv. 47-48)** – belief that saves = receives Jesus words. **(cf. John 1:12** – receive Jesus, believe Jesus.)
         1. Came not to condemn/judge.
         2. However, condemnation and judgment come upon the one who rejects Jesus’ words.
      3. **(vv. 49-50)** – The command of God – from His word – is everlasting life. (**cf. Acts 10:47-48** – with the authority of Jesus Peter gave the command to be baptized.)

**Conclusion**

1. It is not enough for us to simply stop our inquiry concerning salvation with one verse.
2. Also, it is not enough for us to assume the belief of the one in John 3:16 is mere ascent to the facts.
3. We must take in the full context of John 3, as well as that of all scripture in order to truly understand the fullness of the belief of the one in John 3:16.
4. Have you believed? Have you been born of water and the Spirit? Have you come to the light/truth in obedience?