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Message Notes

April 20, 2025



Lifted Up

What about Israel

John 3:13-17 & Numbers 21:4-9

“¹³No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. ¹⁴And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. ¹⁶“For God so loved the world, that he **gave** his only Son, that whoever **believes** in him should not **perish** but have eternal life. ¹⁷For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be **saved** through him.” - John 3:13-17

⁴From Mount Hor they set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom. And the people became impatient on the way. ⁵And the people spoke against God and against Moses, “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we loathe this worthless food.” ⁶Then the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many people of Israel died. ⁷And the people came to Moses and said, “We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD and against you. Pray to the LORD, that he take away the serpents from us.” So Moses prayed for the people. ⁸And the LORD said to Moses, “Make a fiery serpent and set it on a pole, and everyone who is bitten, when he sees it, shall live.” ⁹So Moses made a bronze serpent and set it on a pole. And if a serpent bit anyone, he would look at the bronze serpent and live.” – Numbers 21:4-9

What is “*perishing*” like? _____

What is “*saving*” like? _____

What is “*giving*” like? _____

What is “*believing*” like? _____

Small Group Discussion
Lifted Up
John 3:13-17 & Numbers 21:4-9

Big Idea

Jesus connects John 3:16 to a strange and vivid image from Israel's history—not to confuse us, but to clarify the seriousness of sin, the wonder of God's love, and the only way to be saved: by looking to the One lifted up for us.

Icebreaker

What's the worst "bad bite" you've ever experienced—literal or metaphorical?

Discussion Questions

(Read John 3:14–17 and Numbers 21:4–9 together)

1. John 3:16–17 contains familiar words: love, perish, save, and believe. What are some common non-Christian definitions people might read into those words? How does the story in Numbers 21 challenge or redefine those meanings?

2. How does the snakebite imagery help you better understand what Jesus means by the word "perish"?

3. The sermon described sin as something that eats away at us from the inside. In what ways do you see sin being like "venom"?

4. What might be the spiritual significance of healing coming through something that resembles the very thing causing death?

5. What does the bronze serpent teach us about how God views sin—and how healing often comes through judgment?

