

God Loves the World

John 3:13

Introduction

It's not hard to see why John 3:16 is one of the Bible's most famous, most often memorized, and cherished verses. The verse contains some very significant truths - Truths about God, love, the world, the Son of God, faith, and preserving or living forever. And it applies to Whoever — no one is excluded from God's love.

These are the great truths of life. What could be more important? What could be more relevant right now? Nothing is more urgent to know than where you stand concerning what God says to you in this verse.

Our theme for 2024 is God loves the world!

With all the chaos and confusion in our world today, the theme, "God loves the world," is a very needed message that could unify and remind us that God created us to get along and enjoy his blessings and creation.

John 3:16 is the message of good news that can transform any person's life. John 3:16 says, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."

God's love reaches out to everyone, even though not every person chooses Him. Still, God offers eternal life to anyone who chooses to accept His plan of salvation and redemption. John 3:16 contains several revelations about God's love.

I. Words That Reveal God's Love

The first word that jumps out at us is the word God.

1. God

"For God." There is no reason to think that Jesus meant any other God than the God of the Old Testament, the all-powerful Creator and Sustainer of the universe. God is a personal being and not a mere force. He thinks and wills and feels. He loves, and he hates. He is moral and has established the boundaries of right and wrong, and good and evil. He is unwaveringly in righteousness. He can only do what is right. God's infinite worth and value define what is right. Righteousness is to think, feel, and act in harmony with God's values.

God made us, so our first and highest duty is to honor and give him thanks. We all have failed at this. Romans 1:21 says, "because, although they knew God, they did not glorify *Him* as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened." ([Romans 1:21 NKJV](#))

That is what makes John 3:16 so needed. It describes the way God acts to rescue us from our sins and failures.

2. World

Secondly, this verse says, "God loves the world." The most common meaning for "world" in the gospel of John is the people's fallen and sinful state.

Jesus told the disciples in John 7:7, "The world cannot hate you, but it hates Me because I testify of it that its works are evil."
(John 7:7 NKJV)

In Chapter 14, He says, "the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you."
(John 14:17 NKJV)

That is the way John is using the *world* here. He's talking about the great many sinful people that need salvation. The world is the great sea of perishing sinners who refuse to believe in Christ and reject His sacrifice and salvation.

3. Gave

"For God so loved the world, that he *gave*." God is very generous!

Two things can be said about God's giving. One is that it is a heavenly gift. The other is that God's gift is very costly. Verse 17 replaces the word *give* with *send*. "For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." (John 3:17 NKJV)

God's love for the world caused Him to send His Son, Jesus Christ, into the world on a mission from heaven. In John 10:17, Jesus says, "Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father." (John 10:17-18 NKJV)

The reason the Father sent the Son was for the Son to give His life for the world.

4. Son

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only *Son*." Muslims and others struggle with the idea of God having a Son. It's important to know the Bible is clear that God did not have sexual relations with Mary to have a Son.

John Chapter 1 gives us the basics about Jesus as the Son of God. Jesus came to earth so we don't perish under the wrath of God because Jesus died in our place under the wrath of God." John 1:1 says, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All

things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men." (John 1:1-4 NKJV)

John introduces Jesus as the Word. And he tells us that Jesus is God. "The Word was God." He also says that Jesus has always been with God and is distinct from God. "The Word was with God." And thirdly, Jesus has always existed because "In the beginning was the Word."

In verse 14, John writes, "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1:14 NKJV)

John makes it clear that Jesus is fully God. And the Father is fully God. Along with God the Spirit, they are one God and one divine nature. They are one essence and three persons in an eternal, perfect, and joyous relationship.

5. Believe

"For God so loved the world, that whoever *believes*." Sadly, not everyone will benefit from what Jesus came to do. But "whoever *believes* in him should not perish but have eternal life." If you do not believe in Jesus, then you will perish — and you will miss out on having eternal life.

John also explains that to believe is to receive. Verse 13 says, "He (Jesus) came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:" (John 1:11-12 NKJV)

We receive and believe that Jesus is the Son of God sent on a mission to earth to die for the sins of the world and rescue whosoever chooses the forgiveness and cleansing Jesus offers us. That choice assures us of everlasting life.

6. Perish

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not *perish*." The alternative to everlasting life is to perish. To perish is to experience eternal separation from God. If you perish, you forfeit any hope of eternal life.

John 3:18 describes perishing as being *condemned*. "For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." (John 3:17-18 NKJV)

Verse 36 says, "He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him." (John 3:36 NKJV)

7. Life

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have *eternal life*." Eternal Life does not simply mean you exist forever. Everybody exists forever.

But not everybody has eternal life. Eternal life means that we are born again and have spiritual life. John 6:63 says, "It is the Spirit who gives life." And 1 John 5:11 says, "This life is in [God's] Son."

We have eternal life because Christ died in our place, and in him is life. As we believe in Jesus, the Holy Spirit unites us to Christ, and He becomes our life! That is what it means to be born again. We believe; we are united with the Son of God, and we have his life.

And because it is the life of the Son of God, it will last forever. Jesus said, "**I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?**" (John 11:25-26 NKJV)

The message of John 3:16 is Jesus Gives Life. We don't perish under the wrath of God because Jesus died in our place under the wrath of God. Jesus was "the Lamb of God." He was the sacrifice who took our place. He is the one who bore our sins and our punishment.

We have eternal life because Christ died in our place, and in him is life. He removes the great obstacle of God's wrath, and he supplies the everlasting life that we don't have in ourselves.

This leaves just one question: Do you live in the forgiveness and life and freedom of John 3:16? Answer these questions to yourself:

- Are you free from the fear of death?
- Do you feel that God really loves you?
- Do you know what it is to have the peace of Christ rule in your life?

God so loved you that He gave his only begotten Son that if you believe in Him, you will not perish but have everlasting life. Is this a verse you believe in? Do you live it? Does it guide your life?

II. How God Loves the World

There is no limit to how much you can accomplish for the glory of the Lord when you realize that God loves the world and He chooses to do this through you! We can say to every human being, 'God loves you. And this is how he loves you: 'He gave his Son to die for you.'

There are a few great things that seem obvious in this verse.

1. God loves the world — that is, he loves the great totality of fallen, sinful human beings.
2. God's love is of such intensity and magnitude that it moved Him to give his Son to die for the world. John 10:17-18.
3. The purpose and effect of giving the Son is that "whoever believes in him will not perish but have eternal life." Anyone who believes in the Son will receive eternal life.
4. God's love is indiscriminate. It can be promised and applied to everyone without exception.

John says you can receive eternal life if you believe in the Son. God can give us eternal life because Jesus has canceled the debts of all who believe in Him. When you believe in Jesus, God cancels your sins. Because God loves you, He gave His Son, Jesus Christ, to pay the debt of your sins so that by trusting in Him, you can live eternally.

Conclusion

The good news to every human being is that "God Loves you." How do you know he loves you? He gave his Son to die for your sins so that if you believe, your sins will be forgiven and you will have eternal life. That is what the love of God means and promises in John 3:16.

For centuries, God has amazingly blessed this verse in bringing people to Christ and salvation. It expresses what we love to call the free offer of the gospel.

This offer has no limits: It applies to every person of every ethnic group, age, socio-economic category, and, best of all, to every degree of sinner — from the bad to the worst.

"God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that *whoever* believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."