

NBC Devotional
June 15, 2022
“For God so...”

John 3:16-17 is probably, without a doubt, the most quoted, most memorized verse in all the Bible. Everyone from the smallest child to the oldest person, from sinner to saint, can quote, at the drop of a hat, John 3:16. I think it is important that we revisit this verse with fresh and new eyes, so that we can see what God is saying.

John 3:16 and 17: *“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.”*

Of all the words in all the books of the Bible, these are probably some of the most well-known, most quoted, words. It seems that you only have to hold up a sign with the words “John 3:16” and most people will know what you mean. You cannot do that with hardly any other Bible text. A sign that says “Isaiah 3:16” about the naughty daughters of Zion or “II Timothy 3:16” about all scripture being God breathed, although true, would not have the same effect, because people would not know what the sign means.

We see it sprayed on highway overpasses, held up on signs at football games, and printed on the bottom of cups of fast food restaurants. Jesus' words are so familiar that we run the risk of forgetting their significance. We are wise to look at the verses as if we have never seen them before.

John 3:16 is the very heart of the Gospel...

- It is the heart of divine revelation.
- All the truth of the Old Testament points toward it.
- All the great doctrines of the New Testament emerge from it.

Just as Venus, Mercury, Earth and all the other planets revolve and circle around the sun to receive illumination from it, so do the Books, chapters and verses of the Bible talking about redemption, salvation, purification, justification, and glorification revolve around the supreme statement of God's redeeming love. The Bible is the greatest book on earth.

- It has 66 books.
- It has 1189 chapters.
- It has 31,102 verses.

And of all the truths contained in the Bible, John 3:16 is still the whole Gospel story.

The statement is shocking. We have literally nothing to offer God, no bargaining chips to twist His arm or virtue to win His acceptance, but God didn't wait for a better deal. Because He loved, He took the initiative to give, and His gift brought the cleansing of forgiveness and the promise of being with Him forever.

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life.”

- God loves.
- God gives.
- God saves.

God's love is unique and unusual.

- The mathematician cannot figure it out.

- The historian cannot tell you where His love started.
- Geography cannot locate the depths of His love, the heights of His love, or the width of His love.
- Architects cannot lay the foundations of His love.
- Electricians cannot match the power of His love.
- Water can't drown His love.
- Fire cannot burn up His love.
- Snow cannot cover up His love.
- Ice can't freeze His love.
- Storms can't blow away His love.
- Death can't kill His love.

God is love.

- With His eyes, God sees love.
- With His hand, God feels love.
- With His voice, God speaks love.
- With God's heart, God expresses love.

The beginning of this verse states "*for God so loved the world...*" The author of this text is presupposing that God exist, that God is real, that God is in control and that God is the cause for what is done. The very first two words, "*For God...*" tells us that the Gospel begins in the heart of God who loves the world and the people He made in His image. For God... "*For*" is a coordinating conjunction. Here in the sentence, "for" is being used as a conjunction that means because.

For God...

Because God...

For this reason, God...

There is intense purposefulness. There is incredible intentionality in these two words... When God sets His thoughts to do something, it is done with purity and certainty which makes His faithfulness rock-steady and foundational that it cannot be moved or altered. This can be easily translated and interpreted as to say, it is God's will...for God. God's will for our lives has reason and purpose. It is through scripture that we can find meaning and principles for discerning God's will.

So many people argue and deny God...but I can stand here today and say and know "...for God so loved the world."

Because of "for God" I am living today.

Because of "for God" I have breath in my lungs.

Because of "for God" I have strength to walk and knowledge to talk.

Because of "for God" I have salvation for my soul.

Because of "for God" I have food on the table, a roof over my head, and a bed to sleep in.

Just as confident that Jesus said, "*For God...*" in this verse, I too know there is a God. How do I know?

For God...sees our every care.

For God...hears every cry.

For God...feels all our pain.

For God...is there when I don't know where to turn.

For God...has taken me through the dry valleys.

For God...has moved the unmovable for me.

For God...has cleared the way in the desert for me.

Where would I be today if it was not "for God?" "For God so loved the world..." You cannot measure "so."

You cannot go over so.

You cannot go around so.

You cannot go under so.

You cannot wrap your arms around so.

You cannot see past so.

Where does so start and where does so end? So is too vast, so is too large, and so is too un-containable.

We can measure love by how much the lover gives and end this one verse of scripture. We find that God gave everything. Jesus had spent all eternity and heaven being worshiped and served by hosts of angels, but He stepped out of heaven to earth for one purpose, not to live, but to die. And because He died for us, we don't have to experience the excruciating separation from Him for eternity that the Bible calls hell.

Why would God love so? For God is the master artist...and creation is His masterpiece. God spoke everything into existence. "*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*"

Then God said, *let there be*... He loves His creation but even more than that, He so loves you.

With His hands, He created you in His image.

With His breathe, He give us life and made you a living soul.

For God so loved the world.

For God so loved you.

For God so loved all of us, that He gave His only begotten Son.

Look at the words of this verse as if it is the first time you ever saw them. He loved, He gave, He forgives, and He rescues. That is the Gospel in a nutshell.

How does it affect you to read this verse as if it is the first time you ever saw it? Have you accepted His promise? Who else needs to hear His promise? You can take away the whole Bible, but if you know John 3:16, then you know enough to save the whole world.

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