

The Best Known Verse in the Bible John 3:16

INTRO: Of all the verses in all of the Bible, the best known, most familiar, and most often quoted is John 3:16.

John 3:16 has been called:

1. The golden text of the Bible.
2. The greatest verse in the Bible.
3. The greatest text in the Bible.
4. The Gospel in a nutshell. There is enough Gospel in John 3:16 to save the world if they would only believe.
5. The inexhaustible text. Arthur W. Pink said: "There are dimensions to the breadth, and the length, and depth, and height of His [God's] love, that none can measure" (137).
6. Everybody's text— young, old, rich, poor, ignorant, and scholar can be blessed by it.

Here are some things found in this verse:

1. The greatest being— God.
2. The greatest love— the love of God.
3. The greatest object loved— the world.
4. The greatest gift— God's only begotten Son.
5. The greatest invitation— whosoever.
6. The greatest simplicity— believeth.
7. The greatest promise— should not perish.
8. The greatest life— everlasting life.

I. THE GREATEST LOVE EVER— THE LOVE OF GOD

A. God's love is wonderful.

1. This love is *agape* love, divine love for all who will believe. Jerry Vines says that love is, "the load bearing word of this verse."
2. God's love is great because of the subject— the subject is God Himself.
 - a. God is love— I John 4:7 says: "love is of God."
 - b. God is love— I John 4:8 says: "God is love."
 - c. God is love— I John 4:9 says: "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world that we might live through him." John 3:17: "For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the

- world through him might be saved.”
- d. God is love— I John 4:10: “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”
 - e. God is love— I John 4:16: “God is love.”
 - f. God is love— a tramp once wandered into the Moody Church in Chicago. At the invitation, the tramp came forward professing faith in Christ. When asked what it was that brought him to Christ, was it the songs, or Moody’s sermon? He said no, and pointed to a gas light with the words, “God is love” on it. He said: “Sir, that’s what did it.”
 - g. Sinner friend, God is love.
- B. God’s love is enough and to spare— “God so loved the world...”
1. There has never been a time when God did not love me (Jere 31:3).
 - a. “Everlasting” in Jeremiah 31:3 means from vanishing point to vanishing point. Look as far back into eternity past or as far forward into eternity future as you can and the love of God will come out to meet you.
 - b. Pink says: “It is not that God loves, but He ‘loved.’ That He loves us now that we are His children, we can, in measure understand: but that He should have loved us before we became His children passes knowledge. But He did” (136).
 - c. Romans 5:8 tells us that God commended His love toward us while we were yet sinners. Wayne Barber says: “The word sinner is hamartolos, meaning devoted to sin, wicked, perverse. While we were devoted to sin, to everything God hates, and we were wicked and perverse, Christ died for us! Talk about love!!!”(6).
 2. There will never be a time when God will not love me!
 - a. When heaven rolls away, when the sun, moon, and stars fall, and time is no more. God will still love me.
 - b. The love of God is not a small stream; it is a great river overflowing its banks. It is not a leaking faucet. The love of God is a bubbling fountain. God’s love is not a flickering candle; it is a brilliant Son light.

- c. Nobody can define or measure the little word “so” as used in this verse. There are depths that cannot be fathomed, heights that cannot be measured.
 - 3. Things included in the little word “so.”
 - a. Paul spoke of the superabundant love of God in Ephesians 3:17-19.
 - b. God’s love:
 - 1- So wide it reaches all the world– every kindred, tongue, and people.
 - 2- So long it reaches the farthest sinner— “But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ” (Eph 2:13).
 - 3- So deep it reaches down to the lowest sinner.
 - 4- So high it carries a poor sinner all the way to heaven.
 - 5- So high you can’t get over it, so low you can’t get under it, so wide you can’t get around it.
- C. The object of God’s love— “God so loved the world.” The world without distinction.
 - 1. John Gill said: “I tell you, God so loved the Gentiles, as well as the Jews, that He gave His only begotten Son: to and for them as well as the Jews..... a gift which is sufficient evidence of His love to them” (Vol 5, 621).
 - 2. Pink concurs with Gill by saying of God’s love: “It was not limited to the narrow bounds of Palestine, but it flowed out to sinners of the Gentiles, too.”
 - 3. It is great that God loves the world, but the thing that thrills me most is that Jesus loved and loves me.
 - a. Galatians 2:20: “...who loved me and gave himself for me.”
 - b. “I am so glad that Jesus loves me, Jesus loves me...”

II. THE GREATEST GIFT– GOD’S GIFT OF HIS SON

- A. “God so loved.....that he gave his only begotten Son.” Yes, God loved His people so much that He gave His Son for them (Isa 53:6-8).
- B. God gave specifically.
 - 1. “Gave” is a definite verb, not reluctantly or casually but specifically and definitely.

2. The death of God's Son was not an accident; it was anticipated (Acts 2:23-24).
- C. God gave sacrificially.
1. God so loved His people that He sent His son to die (Rom 8:32-33).
 2. The cross speaks of God's love (Jn 3:14-18).
 - a. "The wonder of wonders, how can it be that God became flesh and was given for me, the Almighty came down and walked among men, the wonder of wonders, He died for my sins."
 - b. "Christ was God's love gift...Christ died because God did love men, and was determined to save them that believe. The death of Christ was the supreme demonstration of God's love" (Pink 136).

III. THE GREATEST INVITATION– WHOSOEVER

- A. "Whosoever" reaches out to young and old: the businessman, banker, farmer, rich, poor, educated and uneducated.
- B. Those who believe shall not perish. God purposed to have a people who "should not perish."
 1. If you believe in what Christ did for sinners, you will not perish (Jn 5:24-25).
 2. Those who believe are not condemned (Rom 8:1).
 3. Christ rejecters will spend eternity separated from God, in hell for eternity.
- C. All who believe have everlasting life (Jn 3:36).

CONCLUSION: "From sinking sand, He lifted me, with tender hand, He lifted me, from shades of night to plains of light, O praise His name, He lifted me."