**FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD**

**JOHN 3:16**

*16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*

**There are many passages in the Bible that have been chosen by some great people as their favorite text**

* John Wesley (Founder of Methodism)
  + **Zechariah 3:2 *—*** *2 And the Lord said to Satan, “The Lord rebuke you, O Satan! The Lord who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is not this a brand plucked from the fire?”*
* David Livingstone (Missionary to Africa)
  + **Matthew 28:20 *—****And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”*
* John Newton (Writer of Amazing Grace)
  + **Romans 5:20 *—****but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more,*
* Martin Luther (Leader of Reformation)
  + **Romans 1:17 *—*** *17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, “The righteous shall live by faith.”*

**But Everyone knows the text we are looking at today...**

* It has been translated into 1000’s of languages (usually the first verse translators with translate)
* Billions of People have been **taught to memorize it.**
* It is inscribed on **books** & **buildings**.
  + I had a friend back home who **had it on his work trailer**.
* There have been countless...
  + **Songs** sung about it
  + **Sermons** preached about it
  + **Studies** taught about it
  + *16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*

**Karl Barth – a Swiss theologian was once asked...(**Don’t Read His Stuff)

* *What is the greatest thought has ever passed through your mind?*
  + **Jesus loves me! This I know, For the Bible tells me so**
    - Though I would disagree with just about everything Barth wrote.
    - I would have to agree with him here.

**There are plenty of places in the Scripture where we find the Love of God...**

* But none are more profound than here in John 3:16.
* Today – We consider just a phrase of the famous verse
* *For God So Loved The World*
* **What does it mean that God Loves the World?**

**GOD’S LOVE IS NOT LIMITED**

* John is describing the magnitude of God’s love toward the world.
  + God’s love is not like the we hold to a lot.
    - I think back to when Leanna and I first meet
    - What attracted me to was all the good qualities in her
    - Mostly, it was because she was fine piece of work
  + God’s love isn’t like that
    - God doesn’t decide to love the world because of its loveliness.
    - Scripture shows there is no loveliness in the world
      * John describes this way in v.19...
      * *19 And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil.*
* With all that is bad in the world, God still chose to the love the world...
  + He could’ve easily condemned the world.
    - But John says in the next verse...
    - *17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.*
  + **It Kinda like a marriage...**
    - Sure – Everything looks nice in the beginning
    - But then after a while you start noticing all the bad stuff.
    - I’ll never forget our first fight...
      * I had ritual (Mt. Dew on my nightstand)
      * She broke me pretty quick
    - **MARRIAGE IS A CHOICE** to love each other despite all the bad stuff.
    - **God chose to love the world despite all the bad stuff**
* **See, God’s love is not limited....**
  + Not limited based on Your Race
    - People of **Israel** thought they were special people.
    - They thought **God only loved them and no one else.**
    - But the point of God putting together his people was for the nations...
      * **Genesis 22:18 *—*** *18 and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice.”*
    - Jesus can save you – no matter the color your skin
      * Jesus can save an **American** just easily as he can save an **African**.
      * Jesus can save a **Mexican** just easily as He can save a **Muslim**
    - God’s doesn’t
  + Not Limited based on Your Record
    - There is something about this text a lot people don’t catch.
    - Ch. 3 - Jesus talks to **Nicodemus**
      * A Religious Insider.
      * He thought He knew God – But He was spiritually blind
    - Chapter 4 – Jesus talks to a **Samaritan Woman**
      * A Social Outcast
      * She was living in open unrepentant sin
    - **Jesus can save you – No matter the record of your past.**
      * It doesn’t matter where you have been – Jesus can save you!
      * He can save the **Religious Church Member** blinded by their self-righteousness
      * He can save the **Homosexual** consumed by their sin of same-sex attraction.
      * **No record is too marked up that Jesus cannot erased their past – and give them a bright future.**

*God’s love is not limited, but he also see...*

**GOD’S LOVE WILL TRANSFORM YOU**

* God’s love toward the world doesn’t leave the world unchanged.
  + That was the problem with Israel in the OT.
    - God showed his love toward them
    - But they remained the same
    - They went through all the sacrifices
    - But Their hearts were never changed
  + Heart Change was what God has come to give the world
    - **Ezekiel 36:26 *—*** *26 And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.*
  + *Through the Gospel of Jesus – God transforms your heart...*
* God’s Love gives you power to fight sin
  + The joy you once found in your sin is nothing there.
  + God gives you a new joy in knowing him.
  + He places his Spirit within you – enables you to forsake sin.
  + **Galatians 5:16–17 *—*** *16 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.*
* God’s Love fuels you for obedience
  + See for Israel – Their lives were all about **RITUAL OBEDIENCE**
    - They had become weary in their Worship
      * God is NOT saying they were NOT worshiping Him.
      * He was saying their worship wasn’t about **HIM**.
      * Their worship had become about **THEM**.
    - The true purpose of worship
      * **To unburden sinners**
    - The purpose of worship for Israel
      * **To control God.**
        + If they sacrificed, they thought God would bless them
        + **Sound Familiar!!!** (Word/Seed Faith Theology)
        + Eventually, they became bored with God.
  + When you and I treat God like a means to end – We will get bored with God pretty quick...
    - God is NOT a means to an end – He is the end.
    - The Love God showed toward in Jesus is the only thing that will fuel your obedience to him.
* God’s Love gives you confidence when the Devil attacks you
  + We don’t talk about this much these days.
    - **But you and I are a spiritual battle everyday.**
  + The Devil wants nothing more than we to feel defeated or inadequate....
    - We wants to sow seeds of doubt in your mind:
      * If you are a Christian, **you wouldn’t struggle with this.**
      * If you really were a son or daughter of God, **your life wouldn’t be so hard**
      * If God really exists, **things would be different.**
  + The Gospel is only thing that protect from the devil
    - Charles Spurgeon – *The preaching of Christ is the whip that flogs the devil.*
* Friend – When the Devil comes attacking you...
  + **Remind Him of You’re Identity in Christ.**
  + Because of Jesus in my life – I know...
    - **Ephesians 6:12 *—*** *12* ***we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers****, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness,* ***against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.***
  + Because of Jesus in my life – I know...
    - **Isaiah 54:17 —** *17* ***No weapon formed against you shall prosper, And every tongue which rises against you in judgment You shall condemn.*** *This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, And their righteousness is from Me,” Says the Lord.*
  + Because of Jesus in my life – I know...
    - **2 Corinthians 1:20 *—*** *20 For* ***all the promises of God find their Yes in him (Jesus).*** *That is why it is through him that we utter our Amen to God for his glory.*
  + Because of Jesus in my life – I know...
    - **1 John 4:4 —** *4* ***He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.***
  + Because of Jesus in my life – I know...
    - **Romans 8:38–39 *—*** *38* ***that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, 39 nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.***
  + **Friend –** If you are following Jesus...
    - **Know that You have infinitely loved by God!**

**FOR GOD SO THE LOVED THE WORLD – & SO SHOULD YOU!**

You say – *Well, didn’t you say the world is filled with evil.*

* Yes – That is right
  + John says it this way...
  + **1 John 2:15 *—*** *15 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.*
* But at the same time – we should love the world like God does.
  + God is not pleased with the deeds of the world.
    - But God seeks out sinners to save in the world.
  + You and I should be pleased with/by the world
    - But You should love the world enough to engage it with the love God showed through sending Christ to die for it

**Friend – Have you experienced God’s love?**

**Have you given your life to Jesus?**

**Call to Worship**

**Ephesians 3:14–21 *—*** *14 For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, 15 from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, 16 that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, 17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, 19 and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. 20 Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, 21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.*