The Greatest Verse In The Bible
John 3:16 (NKJV)

Please open your Bibles to the GOSPEL OF JOHN, chapter three. And let’s read verse 16.

**JOHN 3:16 (NKJV)**  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.

**INTRODUCTION**

There are many great scripture verses in the Bible. And no doubt you have a favorite scripture or several favorite scriptures.

**But tonight I want to preach a message on what is considered by many to be “The Greatest Verse in The Bible.”**

Out of the thousands of verses in the Bible, what is it that makes **JOHN 3:16** so uniquely special?

…..Perhaps its because it is such a simple verse. Many Christians have a hard time memorizing scripture. But even those who have a difficult time with memorization can quote **JOHN 3:16**.
Martin Luther said, “John 3:16 is so simple a child can understand it; yet it condenses the deep and marvelous truths of redemption into these few pungent words:

- “God”...The greatest Lover
- “So loved”...The greatest degree
- “The world”...The greatest number
- “That He gave”..The greatest act
- “His only begotten Son”.The greatest gift
- “That whosoever”..The greatest invitation
- “Believeth”...The greatest simplicity
- “In Him”...The greatest Person
- “Should not perish”..The greatest deliverance
- “But”....The greatest difference
- “Have”....The greatest certainty
- “Everlasting Life”.The greatest possession

......Perhaps another attribute of this verse that makes it uniquely special is its universal appeal. “For God so loved the world.” I’m part of this world. You are part of this world. In fact every one is part of this world.

Anyone, be he saved or unsaved, be he American or Asian, black or white, old or young, rich or poor, educated or uneducated can read John 3:16 and know this verse is talking to them.

......Or perhaps this verse is uniquely special because it is the whole gospel in a “nutshell.” This verse gives all men the hope of eternal life through the death, burial and resurrection of God’s only begotten Son, Jesus Christ.

I think you can see that for these reasons and probably many more, a strong case can certainly be made that JOHN 3:16 is indeed “The Greatest Verse in The Bible.”
ILLUSTRATION

Many wonderful stories surround the life of the great evangelist, Dwight L. Moody, who ministered at the great Moody Memorial Church in Chicago, Illinois in the late 1800's.

Let me share just one of these wonderful stories with you.

One year, Brother Moody was in Birmingham, England holding a revival meeting. When the Revival was over, a young British man came up to him and introduced himself, and said......

"Brother Moody, I hope to go to America someday; and when I do I shall come to your Church in Chicago and preach for you."

Brother Moody responded, "Well young man, when you come to America, I shall be delighted to welcome you."

About six months later, Mr. Moody received a letter from that young English gentleman informing him he was in New York and he would be in Chicago on Wednesday night to preach in Mr. Moody’s Church.

Brother Moody presented the letter to his deacons and told them it just so happened he was going to be preaching out of town that Wednesday night and he would be needing someone to fill in for him. Brother Moody told his deacons, “I have never heard this young man preach, so be prepared to take over the service should he stammer or stutter.”

That Wednesday night, one of the deacons stood up to introduce HARRY MOREHOUSE, the young Englishman, to those gathered at the Moody Memorial Church.

Bro. Morehouse read his scripture text from JOHN 3:16 then began to pour his heart out to the congregation about the marvelous love of God.
In those days, rather than offering an invitation at the end of the service, they would close the service by saying, "All of you who are interested in the after-service are invited to stay and we will talk with you personally."

That night not one single person left the building. Twenty people made their decision to accept Jesus Christ that evening and were baptized for the remission of their sins.

After the service concluded, the deacon who had introduced Bro. Morehouse invited him to come back the following night and preach again. Bro. Morehouse accepted the invitation. On Thursday night he preached another message from JOHN 3:16 and that evening thirty more people gave their lives to Jesus Christ.

After the Thursday night service the same deacon asked Bro. Morehouse if he could preach again on Friday night. He agreed to do so. As he had done the previous two nights, Bro. Morehouse preached again from JOHN 3:16 on Friday night and many more people gave their lives to Christ.

As you might have guessed, Mr. Morehouse was invited to preach again on Saturday night. By this time Bro. Moody had returned to Chicago. When he heard through the grapevine that there was going to be a Church service at his Church that night, Bro. Moody called one of his deacons to inquire what was going on.

The deacon said, “Brother Moody, we’re having a Revival!” Brother Moody said, “A revival?” No one told me anything about a Revival.” The deacon said, “Brother Moody, that young British gentleman who spoke for you on Wednesday night is a God send!”
That Saturday night, Dwight L. Moody, went to listen to that young Englishman preach once again from JOHN 3:16 and he saw scores of people walk down the aisle to give their lives to Jesus Christ. Bro. Moody even made the remark to one of his deacons, "I have never felt so much like getting converted all over again as I have felt here tonight."

That "Revival" went on for six weeks, and Bro. Harry Morehouse preached 42 sermons from the same text........JOHN CHAPTER THREE, VERSE SIXTEEN......and by the end of that six weeks thousands of souls had been won to Christ.

Dwight L. Moody would later say, "That revival completely changed my preaching. Before then I had been preaching on the Sinai side of the cross, the judgment side of the cross, the wrath of God and damnation side of the cross, but after hearing Bro. Morehouse preach so eloquently on the love of God in John 3:16 I began to preach on the love and grace side of the cross.

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever would believeth on Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

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For our remaining time here this evening, let’s examine this wonderful verse of scripture in its beautiful simplicity.
First of all, notice Jesus says.....

I. For God........

1. The name “GOD” means different things to different people.

   - To the Muslims, GOD means “Allah.”
   - To the Hindus, GOD means “Vishnu.”
   - To the Ancient Philistines, GOD meant “Dagon.”
   - To the Ancient Greeks, GOD meant “Zeus” and “Apollo.”

Virtually since the dawn of creation, man has worshiped gods of every size, shape, image, and name. These “gods” were made of stone......or wood......or precious metals.

   But the one thing every one of these “gods” have in common is that they are all “impostors”........“false gods”.....“counterfeit gods.”

2. When Jesus says, “FOR GOD” He of course means, “THE TRIUNE GOD........GOD THE FATHER......GOD THE SON.....and GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT.

       ......Jesus means THE GOD OF THE BIBLE, JEHOVAH GOD, the ETERNAL GOD, the GOD who created every living thing!

3. Our GOD is THE REAL GOD!

   He is not made of STONE.

   He is not carved out of WOOD.

   He is not fashioned out of PRECIOUS METALS.
4. He is THE ALL-KNOWING.......ALL-SEEING.....ALL-POWERFUL GOD!

5. The GOD of JOHN 3:16 is the ONLY TRUE GOD!

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Jesus says........“For GOD..........”

II. So Loved the World......

1. Skeptics and mockers would have us to believe that the GOD of the Bible is a cold, detached, uncaring, unloving God who takes great delight in punishing mankind.

2. But the GOD OF THE BIBLE is not like that at all. He is NOT a GOD of “hate” but rather a GOD of LOVE. In fact, GOD is love defined.  I JOHN 4:8 (NKJV) says, “Whoever does not love does not know GOD, FOR GOD IS LOVE!

   God is not only the source of love, GOD IS THE GREATEST MODEL OF LOVE. Jesus says, “For GOD so loved the world.”

3. I think all of us at times have wondered, “Does God love me?” “Does God love me even when I fail?” “Does God love me when I fall so far short of His glory?” “Does God love me despite all my imperfections and short-comings?

4. Well let me ask you something. Did you stop loving your kids when they failed? Did you stop loving your kids when they fell far short of your expectations and desires? Did you stop loving your children because they had imperfections and short-comings? Of course you didn't!

5. Brothers and sisters, Jesus says, “For God so loved THE WORLD......” By “world” Jesus means all of humanity. By “world” Jesus means everyone in the world, believers and non-believers.......lost souls and saved souls.......those who love GOD and those who hate GOD.
6. Now if GOD LOVES THE WHOLE WORLD, does it make any sense at all that GOD wouldn't love you and me who are His children?

-When you CRY God sees your every tear.
-When you are LONELY God sees your broken heart.
-When you are DISCOURAGED and DEPRESSED God sees your crushed spirit.
-When you have FAILED God sees your human weakness.

7. There is nothing you did that made GOD start loving you......and there is nothing you can do that will make GOD ever stop loving you. And there isn't one thing you can do to make Him love you more or love you less.

For God .........So Loved the world

Next Jesus tells us.......“For God so loved the world.......”

III. That He Gave His Only Begotten Son

1. Over the course of a lifetime you and I receive lots of gifts. Christmas gifts.......birthday gifts.......wedding gifts......anniversary gifts.....

2. But no one has ever given you a GIFT so PRECIOUS.......and so PRICELESS as the gift God gave you and me when He gave us His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ.
Paul tells us in Romans 5:8 *But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

3. **ALL of us are SINNERS.**  
   **ALL of us have BROKEN GOD’S LAWS and COMMANDMENTS.** All of us are deserving of death and eternal punishment.

4. **But out of His great love GOD chose to save us when we could not save ourselves.** JESUS is God’s only begotten Son. We are all God’s adopted sons and daughters.......BUT JESUS IS GOD’S ONLY “BEGOTTEN SON.”

   That means Jesus is the only SON of GOD in whom the fullness of GOD HIMSELF dwells. Jesus said, “He who has seen Me has seen the Father.” Jesus is GOD! Everything that is true of GOD is true of JESUS! Jesus is God's only “begotten” Son.

5. **God didn’t give the world one of His best archangels like Gabriel or Michael.** God didn't give the world one of His best prophets like Elijah or Moses. GOD GAVE THE WORLD HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON! HE GAVE THE WORLD THE VERY BEST HE HAD TO OFFER!

   Jesus is the “Gift of God's grace.” By His willingness and His obedience to go to the cross of Calvary, JESUS paid a DEBT He did not OWE, because we OWED A DEBT we could not pay.

6. **When we read this wonderful SIXTEENTH VERSE of JOHN CHAPTER THREE, how could we ever doubt for one solitary second that “God doesn't love us?”**
For God.....So Loved the World.......That He Gave His Only Begotten Son.....

IV. That Whoever Believes In Him Should Not Perish

1. GOD'S offer of salvation is for anyone who would receive it, but the Bible teaches us there is a terrible price to pay if we REJECT God’s free gift of eternal life through His Son.

   Hebrews 2:3 NKJV “How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?”

2. The Bible teaches us to PERISH without Christ is to spend an eternity in a place called hell.

   -To PERISH without CHRIST means to dwell in a place of eternal fire.

   -To PERISH without CHRIST means to dwell in a place of eternal darkness.

   -To PERISH without CHRIST means to dwell in a place of eternal torment and punishment.

   -To PERISH without CHRIST means to dwell in a place of eternal sorrow.

3. Those who reject GOD'S free gift of eternal life through His Son will PERISH! Those who try to gain salvation any other way than through Jesus Christ will PERISH!
4. But those who believe in Jesus Christ and receive Him as their Lord and Savior WILL NOT PERISH! .......WILL NOT BE ETERNALLY SEPARATED FROM GOD!

For God.......So Loved the World.......That He Gave His Only Begotten Son.....That Whosoever Believeth on Him Should Not Perish.......

V. But Have Everlasting Life

Illustration: Several years ago an extremely wealthy man appeared one night on Bill O’Reilly’s TV show to tell all America and the whole world he had donated $6 Billion of his own money to the Cancer Research Institute to help them discover a cure for cancer within the next ten years. Can you imagine a world with no more cancer? What a wonderful life this man is trying to create with his unbelievable generosity.

1. But you know what? As great as a life without CANCER would be, it pales in comparison to A LIFE WITHOUT END!

2. JOHN 3:16 is God’s wonderful promise of EVERLASTING LIFE......ETERNAL LIFE.....A LIFE THAT WILL NEVER CEASE.....A LIFE THAT WILL NEVER BE PLAGUED WITH SICKNESS, DISEASE, PAIN, OR DEATH, OR SORROW EVER AGAIN!

For God.......So Loved the World......That He Gave His Only Begotten Son.....That Whoever Believes in Him shall not perish.......but Have Everlasting Life!
CONCLUSION

Fort Hancock is on the farthest tip of Sandy Hook, which reaches out into the Atlantic on the New Jersey coast. During World War II it was a military training center. A civilian of the area was eager to bring the good news of Christ to the thousands of young men stationed there; but the military authorities would not permit him to enter the base in person.

Not to be denied, he asked a firm that specialized in novelties to make several thousand mirrors about three inches in diameter. On the back of each mirror he had printed the words of John 3:16. And beneath this wonderful scripture were these instructions: “If you want to see who it is that God loves, look on the other side.” As each soldier looked at himself he saw the person whom God loved.

Brothers and sisters, if you want to see who GOD loves you can look in a mirror, or better yet, just read JOHN 3:16........

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