

## God's Love

### John 3:16-21

The word love is one we use a lot. It's something we often say when we really appreciate something, like "I love pizza." The Greek language conveys different levels of love, brotherly love- philo love, unconditional love- agape love, and attractional love- eros love. What is love? This question has been something that Hollywood, music, poets, and philosophers have been trying to answer since the beginning of time. An artist known as Haddaway wrote a song about this in the 90s "What is love? Oh baby, don't hurt me Don't hurt me No more Baby, don't hurt me, don't hurt me No more, What is love? When this song came on the radio you automatically tilted your head sideways moving it side to side. It was a silly song, but a question that everyone wondered about.

With all joking aside, mankind will always search for the answer to this question of what is love apart from God. They'll look for love in relationships with others, this is partially correct, but not fully. They'll look for love in fame and desire, and will still be longing for real love! It's a question that can only be answered through finding Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior! The answer that God shows us as real love in John 3:16-21.

**The Real Love of God (John 3:16)** The form of love here in this context in the Greek is a first aorist active indicative of *agapaō*, the noble word so common in the Gospels for the highest form of love that God has for mankind. Look at this illustration. Who loves us? Who is the Giver here? "For God so loved..." God is the Giver showing gratitude towards man. What gift did He give? His only Son. Who receives this gift? The getter, those who believe, "should not perish but have eternal life." It doesn't get any more real, than for God to empty His throne in order to come down to be with mankind, to die for mankind, to overcome death for us. Romans 5:8 shares this real love: "but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

**The Reason for God's Love (John 3:17)** God loved us so very much that He wanted to provide a way of escape from His justifiable wrath that we as sinners rightly deserve. Those who come to Christ will not be condemned. Condemnation is the reality for all who never come to Jesus. That is the reason for God's love, that you and I don't have to spend an eternity in Hell. Our friends, family, and co-workers may not believe in Hell, but it's real! Hell is a lake of fire that burns forever. It is a place of eternal conscious torment. Jesus refers to Hell in Matthew 13:42; 25:41; Mark 9:48; Luke 16:19-31, and John records his vision of Hell in Revelation 14:11. The reason God sent His son is so we could enjoy Him for eternity. So that we would not have to suffer for eternity, but have joy, peace, and eternal life in Jesus Christ.

**The Result of Belief in God's Love (John 3:18)** Those who trust in Christ will not be condemned. Those who do not trust in Christ will be condemned. We see a basic reaffirmation

of verse 18 in John 3:36 *“Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.”* The result of belief is life! This isn't just intellectual belief, but it's putting all your weight upon the nail scarred hands of Jesus Christ for salvation, life, finances, daily living, health, and everything! James 2:19 is makes it crystal clear that the demons believed in Jesus, yet didn't follow Him, trust Him, and surrender everything to Him like we are required to do for salvation! Listen to the result of unbelief that Jesus speaks about in Matthew 7:21-23 *“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. 22 On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ 23 And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’”* Just because one may profess Jesus doesn't mean that they possess Jesus. The ones who believe you can come to Christ and not deny yourself, not repent, and not be transforming to His likeness, they do not know Him as Savior!

**The Two Responses by Mankind to God's Love (John 3:19-21)** John puts these two choices plainly for us to see. Darkness= The absence of Christ. Light= The adoration of Christ. Verse 19 uses the word judgement. We all will stand before God and either our names will be written in the Lambs book of life if we have made Christ our Savior, or it will not be written in the Lambs Book of Life. Hebrews 9:27 states, ***“And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment,”*** What are the only two possible responses that we can have?

- a. Continue to deny His love and remain in darkness (vv. 19-20) Darkness equals Death!
- b. Commit to being devoted to His love and be renewed by His light (v. 21) Light equals Life!

John 3:16 is probably the first verse that I can remember that I memorized. That may be true of you. May this be the most comforting verse that you read, trust in, because everything we do in life and in eternal life hinges on this verses truth!