

John 3:16 – God so loved the world that he gave his Son

God's love for the world

The gospel tells us that God loves the world. The gospel is not about money, or power, or good health. It is about God's love for sinners which saves them from hell. This is good news for everyone. A professor in a university cannot tell us anything better than this. God loves this wicked world. This is amazing, because God is perfectly holy and he hates sin. Pigs love mud because they are dirty animals. But God loves sinners even though he hates everything sinful. This love of God is for people through the whole world. It was not just for Jews, like Nicodemus thought. It is for everyone – Jews, Indians, Africans, Europeans and everyone else. The good news is for us, whoever we are.

Where to find God's love : in Jesus Christ

People are looking for God's blessing in the wrong places. They are looking for money or other earthly blessings. But many wicked people have these things, and are going to hell. God's love is found in Jesus – God gave Jesus to die for sinners. Jesus is the one and only Son of God. There is no-one like him. If we want to find God's love, we must seek and find Jesus. The gospel is not “do good, go to church, read your Bible, pray a lot, and then God can love you!” The gospel is that God gave Jesus Christ for us, once and for all, as all that we will ever need. If we had ten sons, we would not give one of them to die even for our friends, much less for our enemies. God has one eternal Son, and he gave him for sinners. If we want to understand God's love, we must understand the cross of Jesus.

How to receive God's love : through believing

How do we receive God's love? By believing. John says “that whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life.” It is not by doing great works, but simply by trusting. John writes about the brass snake in the desert (v14-15). Those who were dying from snake bites looked at this brass snake, and lived. They had nothing to do, except to look and they were healed. In the same way, we have nothing to do except to look to Jesus Christ and trust him alone as our Saviour. God says that if we believe, we will have “eternal life”. Real life, true life, eternal life, is to know God, to be given God's Spirit to live in us and to be going to heaven to live with him forever. There is nothing we can do to earn such great blessings. They have to be given freely to us. They are given to all those who believe. John says “whosoever”. Even if we have committed huge sins, Jesus promises us that if we believe we will be forgiven and he will come to be with us. Those who will not believe will perish. Jesus is the only rescue boat to stop us from drowning in our guilt and sin and going to hell. So we must believe in Jesus – trust him today!