



**Scripture(s):**

<sup>16</sup> “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. <sup>17</sup> 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. <sup>18</sup> Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. <sup>19</sup> 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. <sup>20</sup> For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed. <sup>21</sup> But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God.”

~John 3:16–21 (ESV)

**Lesson Idea:**

*God lovingly gave His Son so that all who believe in Him may have eternal life, while those who reject Him remain under condemnation because they love darkness rather than light.*

**Lesson Outline:**

*Introduction*

John 3:16–21 stands at the heart of the gospel message. Spoken in the context of Jesus’ conversation with Nicodemus, these verses reveal the depth of God’s love, the purpose of Christ’s coming, the necessity of faith, and the moral reason many reject the Savior. This passage does more than tell us what God has done; it presses every hearer to respond to the Light.

**I. God’s Love Is Revealed in the Gift of His Son (v. 16)**

- A. John 3:16 is arguably the most \_\_\_\_\_ verse in the Bible.
- B. The source of salvation is God’s \_\_\_\_\_ love (*Gk agapáō*).
- C. Salvation begins not with human initiative, but with \_\_\_\_\_ love.
- D. The scope of that love is for the \_\_\_\_\_.
- E. God’s saving purpose reaches beyond one class or people group to \_\_\_\_\_ humanity.
- F. The \_\_\_\_\_ of that love is that God gave (*Gk didōmi* gave meaning *sacrificed*) of His Son.
- G. The word translated “\_\_\_\_\_” (*Gk monogenēs*) should be understood as *one-of-a-kind, unique*.
- H. God has \_\_\_\_\_ sons, but only one like Jesus.
- I. God’s saving activity is founded on the giving of His Son which means that our salvation hinges on the \_\_\_\_\_ sacrifice of the Son.



- J. God’s love is not \_\_\_\_\_; it is sacrificial and costly.
- K. The promise attached to that \_\_\_\_\_ is eternal life for all who believe.
- L. Faith in Christ is the appointed \_\_\_\_\_ by which sinners receive life instead of perishing.

**Life Lesson(s):**

- We must never reduce the gospel to \_\_\_\_\_ improvement.
- The gospel begins with God’s initiative, \_\_\_\_\_ on Christ’s gift, and calls for personal faith.
- Jesus Christ’s sacrifice is the \_\_\_\_\_ condition for our redemption.

**II. God’s Mission in Sending the Son Is Salvation, Not Condemnation (v. 17)**

- A. Christ’s first coming was \_\_\_\_\_ in purpose.
- B. Jesus came into the world to save, rescue, and \_\_\_\_\_ sinners to God.
- C. This verse reveals the heart of God toward the \_\_\_\_\_.
- D. God is not reluctant to save; He sent His Son precisely so the world might be saved \_\_\_\_\_ Him.
- E. The saving work is centered in Christ \_\_\_\_\_. Salvation is not found through religion, heritage, or human effort, but through the Son whom the Father sent.

**Life Lesson(s):**

- The church must proclaim Christ with \_\_\_\_\_ and hope.
- The message of the \_\_\_\_\_ is not merely what people must do for God, but rather what God has done in Christ to save sinners.

**III. Humanity Is Divided by Its Response to the Son (v. 18)**

- A. The one who believes is not condemned. There is real justification and freedom from judgment for those who \_\_\_\_\_ in Christ.
- B. The one who does not believe is condemned \_\_\_\_\_.
- C. \_\_\_\_\_ leaves a person in the condition in which sin has already placed the whole human race.
- D. The issue is not lack of information alone, but the \_\_\_\_\_ of God’s Son.
- E. The crisis (*Gk krisis*) of the passage is \_\_\_\_\_ on belief or unbelief in the name of the only Son of God.



**Life Lesson(s):**

- No one stands in a \_\_\_\_\_ position before Jesus.
- Every hearer is either resting in Christ by faith or remaining under \_\_\_\_\_.

**IV. Condemnation Is Explained by the Love of Darkness (vv. 19–20)**

- A. The very presence of Jesus in the world is a judgment that creates a \_\_\_\_\_ that provokes people to judge themselves by deciding either for Jesus or against him.
- B. The Light has come into the world. In Christ, \_\_\_\_\_ has made Himself known clearly and savingly.
- C. People loved (*Gk agapáō*—same word as in 3:16) darkness rather than light; the problem is moral and spiritual, not merely \_\_\_\_\_.
- D. Evil deeds drive people away from \_\_\_\_\_.
- E. Sinners resist the Light because they do not want their works revealed for what they are and they wish to \_\_\_\_\_ living in darkness.
- F. Unbelief is tied to the heart’s affections. What people love \_\_\_\_\_ who and what they embrace or avoid.

**Life Lesson(s):**

- We should not be surprised that the gospel \_\_\_\_\_ as well as comforts.
- The Light not only saves; it \_\_\_\_\_.
- Genuine repentance brings \_\_\_\_\_ into the light of Christ.

**V. Those Who Practice the Truth Come to the Light (v. 21)**

- A. Saving faith produces \_\_\_\_\_ before God. The one who comes to the Light no longer hides behind self-justification.
- B. Coming to the Light reveals that God is \_\_\_\_\_. A transformed life displays that obedience and truth are the fruit of the light.
- C. The aim is God’s \_\_\_\_\_. What is done in God shows that salvation from beginning to end is rooted in His work.

**Life Lesson(s):**

- The evidence of grace is not sinless perfection, but a new willingness to walk **honestly** in the light, confess sin, and live for the glory of God.

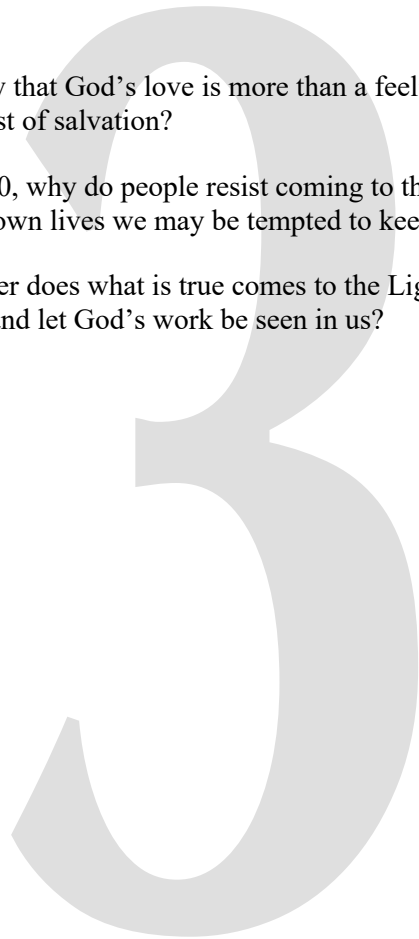


*Conclusion*

John 3:16–21 presents both comfort and confrontation. God has loved the world by giving His Son. Christ has come to save, and all who believe in Him have eternal life and no condemnation. Yet the same passage warns that rejecting Christ is not a small matter; it leaves one in darkness and under judgment. The call of the text is clear: come to the Light, believe in the Son, and receive the life God freely gives. Because God has lovingly given His Son, every person must respond to Jesus: believe and live in the light, or reject Him and remain under condemnation.

**Discussion/Reflection Questions:**

1. How does John 3:16 show that God’s love is more than a feeling, and what does the giving of His Son teach us about the cost of salvation?
2. According to verses 18–20, why do people resist coming to the Light, and how can this help us examine the areas of our own lives we may be tempted to keep hidden?
3. Verse 21 says that whoever does what is true comes to the Light. What does it look like in everyday life to come to the Light and let God’s work be seen in us?



## DAILY DEVOTIONAL

### GREATER ST. MATTHEW BAPTIST CHURCH: VBS 2026

#### Jesus the Light of the World—SESSION 3: “The Love of the Light”

Instructor: Kenneth Basile



*Theme for the day: God’s love has come near in Jesus Christ. Today is an invitation to believe, receive His saving grace, and walk honestly in His light.*

#### *Early Morning Manna: Receiving the Love of God*

**Reading:** “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son...” — John 3:16, KJV

**Reflection:** Begin the day by letting the first word be love. Before your responsibilities, worries, and plans speak, hear what God has already declared: He loved, He gave, and He invites you to believe. The gospel begins not with your striving, but with God’s generous heart. Sit quietly for two minutes reflecting on the statement, “God loved, God gave, I receive.” Ask the Lord to help you live today from his love and acceptance, not anxiety.

**Prayer:** Father, thank You for loving the world and for loving me through Christ. Help me receive Your gift with faith and gratitude. Let my day begin in the security of your grace. Amen.

#### *Mid-Morning: Trust the Savior, Not Self-Condensation*

**Reading:** “For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.” — John 3:17, KJV

**Reflection:** By mid-morning, the day may already reveal unfinished tasks, mistakes, or inner pressure. John 3:17 reminds you that Jesus did not come as a condemning voice over your life, but as the saving and transforming presence of God. Conviction leads you toward Him; condemnation pushes you away. Learn the difference and run toward the Savior who is God’s favor and support toward you.

Name one area where you feel accused or weighed down. Bring it honestly to Jesus, and ask, “What would trust look like right now?”

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, thank You that Your mission is salvation. When shame tries to define me, teach me to trust Your mercy and respond to Your voice. Remind me that your saving love redefines me to live for your glory and my growth in your Messiah. Amen.

#### *Midday: Step Into the Light*

**Reading:** “And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light...” — John 3:19, KJV

At midday, pause and ask what you are hiding from God, from others, or from yourself. The light of Christ is not cruel; it is healing. Darkness promises safety but keeps the soul confined. Light may expose what is broken, but it also reveals the way to freedom.

**Reflection:** Choose one honest confession before God. If appropriate, take one humble step toward truth with another person: apologize, clarify, ask for help, or stop pretending.

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### GREATER ST. MATTHEW BAPTIST CHURCH: VBS 2026

#### Jesus the Light of the World—SESSION 3: “The Love of the Light”

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**Prayer:** God of light, search me with mercy. Give me courage to leave darkness and shadowy areas of thought and behavior behind and walk in truth. Let Your light continuously bring healing, not fear. Amen.

#### *Evening: Rest in What God Is Doing*

**Reading:** “But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.” — John 3:21, KJV

**Reflection:** As the day closes, do not measure your life only by what you accomplished. Ask where God was at work in you. Every honest step toward truth, every act of faith, every surrender to the light is evidence of grace. The good that is truly good is “wrought in God. Review the day with three questions: Where did I receive God’s love? Where did I resist the light? Where did I see God working in or through me?

**Prayer:** Father, thank You for carrying me through this day. I rest in the love You revealed through Your Son. Keep drawing me into the light until my life plainly shows Your work. Amen.