

Love's Priceless Gift

DONNA PYLE

WWW.ARTESIANMINISTRIES.ORG





Love's Priceless Gift

A Study of John 3:16

*"For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son,
that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life."*

Week 1 — Amazing Love

Week 2 — Priceless Gift

Week 3 — To Believe or Not to Believe

Week 4 — Life or Death



By: Donna Pyle
Artesian Ministries
www.artesianministries.org

A list of resources used in preparing this Bible study is included at the end.



Week I

“For God so loved the world.” John 3:16a

By: Donna Pyle, Artesian Ministries, www.artesianministries.org

If you’ve been a Christian any length of time, you know John 3:16 by heart. Concise enough to write on a sticky note or commit to memory swiftly, yet powerful enough to cause believers to risk their lives daily to spread its message. This verse begins with God, ends with life, and urges us to do the same. If you know nothing of the Bible, start here. If you know everything in the Bible, return here. We all need the reminder. The heart of the human problem is the heart of the human. And God’s treatment is prescribed in John 3:16.¹ These twenty-six words comprise the deepest, inexhaustible truth of our faith. When our circumstances threaten to drown us in hopelessness, these life-saving words from God remind us that His love *does* conquer all. His love embraces all. His love never forgets where we live. This verse is the undeniable address of eternal security and safety. It is the most important verse in all of Scripture. This works when life doesn’t. It bears hope for the hopeless, and invites us to be loved like we’ve *never* been loved before. This one proclamation of the Gospel has been on the lips of missionaries for centuries, has brought multitudes to the feet of Christ, and kindled self-sacrificing love to mankind. Luther called this verse “the Bible in miniature.” There is no sweeter verse in the whole Bible because it declares loud and clear that God is love. This verse is THE Hope Diamond. All we need is faith.

Take a moment to write out John 3:16.



Now read this amazing verse aloud. This life-changing verse is our memory verse for this month. I encourage you to write it on index cards and place them in various locations where you spend the most time.

In this first week, we are studying John 3:16a, which states, “*For God so loved the world.*” Webster’s defines love as “to have profoundly tender, passionate affection for.” We often put that in the context of people that we *choose* to love, but God applies it unilaterally across the board. God *chooses* to love all people, not just the “likeable.” The only question is will we love Him back? What do these passages say about God’s love for us?

Deuteronomy 7:6 _____

Romans 5:8 _____

Ephesians 2:4-5 _____

1 John 3:1a _____

1 John 4:9-10 _____

The word *loved* in John 3:16a is translated from the Greek word *agapeo*. *Agapeo* love is actually a two-fold process. *Agapeo* love expresses the deep and constant love of God towards His children, which produces and fosters a reverential love in us toward the Giver.² For love to flourish, it must work both ways. In other words, if we never accept God's love or we choose to ignore it, we will never benefit from that close, intimate relationship we need in our day-to-day walk. We behold God's love for intimacy toward His children in the very beginning of Scripture. We read in Genesis 3:8 that God walked in the garden in the cool of the day looking for Adam and Eve. He longs for that personal relationship with us to this day.

We see throughout Scripture the preeminence of love. Love is a vital ingredient in our walk with God and our witness to the world about Him. Love changes lives – God's love saves them. Read and record the following passages:

1 Corinthians 13:13 _____

Ephesians 3:17-19 _____

Ephesians 5:2 _____

Colossians 3:14 _____

What does 1 John 4:16 proclaim? God is _____. It goes on to say that “whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him.” Love is a choice and an action – **not** a feeling. We choose to love God and we choose to love our neighbors. Why? Because God first loved us. (1 John 4:19) In order to more fully comprehend the meaning of this verse, it is crucial that we understand that God's love is not based on us – it's based on His love. Just like an earthly father to his child, the father's love is not based on the child's love. The child can make a mess of the best of circumstances, but that doesn't change the father's love for that child. That child is still precious and loved because that love is based on the father's love – not the child's.

Love is priceless. It cannot be found on the shelves at the corner store. Love is more powerful than any drug on the market. Take a moment to recall things that you have done in the name of love:

Love can cause those who hate to be reconciled. What does Proverbs 10:12 tell us? _____

In our personal relationships with those closest to us, love matures over time by our choices and sacrifices toward each other. The choice to love or not. Forgive or not. To be kind or cruel. God's love for us is so much more than you and I can imagine! He could choose not to love us – then where would we be? He could choose to demand that we keep every law to the letter or else. He could choose to be cruel and bring down on each of us the wrath we most assuredly deserve. Instead, He chooses to love. His love forgives, His grace is sufficient, His mercy endures forever. Let the praises ring!

According to Jeremiah 31:3, God has loved us with an _____ love. I don't believe that we can comprehend the full meaning of that statement from this side of heaven. God's love is *everlasting* to the whole world, whether friend, foe, or alien – He doesn't just love "good" people. We see numerous times throughout Scripture that God's love "endures forever." See 1 Chronicles 16:34, 41; 2 Chronicles 5:13, 7:3, 7:6, 20:21; Psalm 100:5, 106:1, 107:1, 118:2-4, 118:29, 136:1-26, and Jeremiah 33:11. WOW!!

Jesus' announcement of God's universal love in John 3:16 was made to a representative (Nicodemus) of the narrowest and strictest sect in ancient Jerusalem, who taught that God's love was the special providence of Israel alone.³ But God was clear – He loved the world. The Greek word for *world* here is *kosmos* meaning the "human race, mankind."² Read and record these passages which carry the exact same *kosmos* rendering and once again demonstrate God's amazing love for us:

Matthew 5:14 _____

John 13:1b _____

1 Timothy 1:15 _____

Let's review our Bible memory verse for this month. Write out John 3:16 once more:



God's love is more than emotion and intention. God's love is demonstrated. The Bible is God's love letter to us – a love backed up with action. John 3:16 is not just a message in words. God demonstrated that love at *great* personal cost. Jesus did not die on a cross to compel God to love people, but because He *already* loved us.³ The cross was the result of God's love, not the cause of it. I'm amazed – are you?

Closing Prayer:

✠Father, Your love for me is everlasting. I just pause to let that sink in. Everlasting. Never ending. No matter my circumstances, choices or actions, You continue to have profoundly tender, passionate affection for me. I need that so badly, though some days I don't realize how much. Thank You for the cross, Lord. Thank You for the price You paid. Bearing all my sin and shame, in love You came and gave amazing grace. Thank You for Your love, Lord. Thank You for Your nail-pierced hands. Thank You for knowing my address. Teach me to love You with that same single-minded focus as You love me. Oh, let it be so! In Jesus' Name, Amen. ✠



We pray that you were led closer to the Lord as you studied about God's amazing love and sacrifice for you through Lesson 1 of "*Love's Priceless Gift*".

The complete four-lesson Bible study
is available on our website at:
www.artesianministries.org.

Simply click on the **STORE** tab.
You will receive the complete study via email
in PDF format within 24 hours to download for
your personal use or in a small group setting.

The complete study contains
four full lessons based on John 3:16.

Blessings to you as you draw closer
to God through His Word and prayer.
It is our great privilege to serve you.



** Donna Pyle is the Founder of Artesian Ministries. Artesian Ministries is committed to Biblical literacy and a passion to know Jesus through His Word. Artesian Ministries offers a variety of resources for spiritual growth and time with the Lord through prayer, worship, Bible study, Scripture memorization, and journaling. You can reach Donna at dpyle@artesianministries.org, and visit the website at www.artesianministries.org.**