



God's Great Love

John 3:16-18
December 21, 2025

The Big Idea: Our tradition of gift-giving is rooted in the very **nature** and practice of God. There are many differences between our giving and the Father's giving but we can learn much by comparing our gift-giving to His. God gives the greatest and most **needed** Gift ever!

John 3:16–18 (ESV)

¹⁶ "For God so **loved** the world, that **he gave** his **only Son**, that whoever **believes** in him should **not perish** but have **eternal life**. ¹⁷ 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**. ¹⁸ 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.

v. 16 tells us that God gave his only Son

v. 17 tells us **why**

v. 18 tell us the **result**

The Perfect **Giver** ...

- Gifts are given for a host of reasons. God gives because He **loves** us.
- This simple statement that we take for granted would shocked the world of Jesus. The man he was talking to (Nicodemus) believed God loved him, but he believed God's love was because he was a child of **Israel**.
- Love is never **passive**. It isn't merely an emotion. Love is expressed in giving.

Gave the Perfect **Gift** ...

- "His only Son" – the emphasis is the **uniqueness**; "one of a kind"
- "eternal life" – speaks to both length and the **quality** or kind of living we do.

- "perish" – the opposite of "**eternal** life."
- v. 18 – "condemned already" means that the ones who do not believe in Jesus are the true "**walking dead**."
- God gave what we could not give and **paid** a price that we could not pay.
- God **saw** our need, had the resources to meet that need, and the **desire** to do what was necessary to provide for our need.

To Imperfect **Recipients** ...

- Notice that Jesus never said that the Father will **begin** to love you if first clean up your life or even if you first believe in Him!
- God gave and sent His Son, knowing that some of us would believe and some would not believe. What are we like?
¹⁹ 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. ²⁰ For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed. John 3:19–20 (ESV)
- Whoever you are, whatever your spiritual state, you are **loved** by God, your Creator.

Who must each choose whether to **receive** and **believe** in the Gift.

- The only **basis** upon which anyone can move from a state of condemnation to a state of eternal life is that you have believed in God's Son.
- One missionary, struggling to communicate to people who spoke an entirely different language stumble across this way of defining it: Believing is "stretching yourself out to **rest** when you're tired."
- God the Father reaches toward you with the greatest gift ever given, His Son, Jesus. The way your life goes, now and forever, is determined by your **response** to the Gift.

Will you, this Christmas season, receive God's Son,
believe in him as the only one who can remove your condemnation
and give you eternal life?
Or will you leave Him standing there?
