**MC900300900[1]St. Joseph Missionary Baptist Church**

**Wed Night Bible Study**

**JOHN 3:16-21**

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**GREATEST GIFT OF ALL**

**John 3:16-21 (KJV)**   
***16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. 17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. 18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. 19 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. 20 For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. 21 But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.***

[**3:16**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Jn+3%3A16)**.** God's motivation toward people is love. God's love is not limited to a few or to one group of people but His gift is for **the** whole **world.** God's love was expressed in the giving of His most priceless gift—**His** one and only **Son** (cf. [Rom. 8:3](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ro+8%3A3), [32](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ro+8%3A32)). The Greek word translated **one and only,** referring to the Son, is *monogenē*, which means "only begotten," or "only born-one." It is also used in [John 1:14](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Jn+1%3A14), [18](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Jn+1%3A18); [3:18](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Jn+3%3A18); and [1 John 4:9](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Jn+4%3A9). On man's side, the gift is simply to be received, not earned ([John 1:12-13](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Jn+1%3A12-13)). A person is saved by believing, by trusting in Christ. **Perish** means not annihilation but rather a final destiny of "ruin" in hell apart from God who is life, truth, and joy. **Eternal life** is a new quality of life, which a believer has now as a present possession and will possess forever (cf. [10:28](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Jn+10%3A28); [17:3](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Jn+17%3A3)).

[**3:17**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Jn+3%3A17)**.** Though light casts shadows, its purpose is to illuminate. Though those who do not believe are condemned, God's purpose in sending **His Son** is salvation (**to save**), not damnation (**to condemn**). **God** does **not** delight in the death of the wicked ([Ezek. 18:23](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Eze+18%3A23), [32](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Eze+18%3A32)). He desires that everyone be saved ([1 Tim. 2:4](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Ti+2%3A4); [2 Peter 3:9](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=2Pe+3%3A9)).

[**3:18**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Jn+3%3A18)**.** The instrumental means of salvation is believing in the finished work of Jesus on the cross. But people who reject the light of the *Logos* are in the dark ([1:5](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Jn+1%3A5); [8:12](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Jn+8%3A12)) and are therefore **already** under God's judgment.

[**3:19**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Jn+3%3A19)**. Men** love **darkness** not for its own sake but because of what it hides. They want to continue undisturbed in their **evil** (*ponēra*, "wicked"; cf. [v. 20](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Jn+3%3A20) which has a different word for evil) **deeds.** A believer is also a sinner (though a redeemed one), but he confesses his sin and responds to God (cf. [1 John 1:6-7](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Jn+1%3A6-7)). In the ultimate sense, man's love of darkness rather than God the **Light** ([John 1:5](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Jn+1%3A5), [10-11](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Jn+1%3A10-11); [1 John 1:5](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Jn+1%3A5)) is his love for idols. He worships and serves "created things rather than the Creator" ([Rom. 1:25](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ro+1%3A25)).

[**3:20**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Jn+3%3A20)**.** Just as natural light shows up what is otherwise unseen, so Christ **the Light** exposes people's deeds as "evil." (The word "evil" here is *phaula* ["worthless"], also used by John in [5:29](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Jn+5%3A29).) Unbelievers have no ultimate meaning of life, no worthy motivation, no adequate goal, and a destiny of doom. Yet everyone who does evil hates the light (as well as loves darkness, [3:19](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Jn+3%3A19)). He fears that if he comes to the light **his deeds will be** seen as worthless, and he would need to turn from them.

[**3:21**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Jn+3%3A21)**.** Jesus is like a magnet. His people are drawn to Him and welcome His revelation. Though **the light** rebukes their sin, they respond in repentance and faith. They live **by the truth** (cf. [2 John 1-2](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=2Jn+1%3A1-2), [4](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=2Jn+1%3A4); [3 John 1](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=3Jn+1%3A1), [4](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=3Jn+1%3A4)).

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