

I. Introduction – The goal of this message – to set John 3:16 free from our tradition.

A reminder of context – John 3:1-15

Nicodemus' understanding the new-birth applying to Gentiles

The type: the brass serpent (Numbers 21) – *The destroyer, destroyed and judged!*

The parallel to the anti-type: the cross

Do you find this difficult to believe?

II. John 3:16a – a word by word analysis – *God so loved the world He gave His only begotten Son*

Οὕτως γὰρ ἠγάπησεν ὁ Θεὸς τὸν κόσμον ὥστε τὸν υἱὸν τὸν μονογενῆ ἔδωκεν

An expanded translation from the modern evangelical tradition

For God loved everyone in the world soooo much, that He gave the gift of His one and only Son, as a provision for salvation, calling upon every single person in the world to believe in Him, so they will not die and go to hell, but live eternally in heaven

“So loved” οὕτως (*hoo-tose*) “in this manner”

“the world” κόσμον (*kos-mon*) many different meanings:

“every person in the whole world” Matt 13:38, John 8:12, Rom 3:19, I Tim 1:15, I Jn 4:9

not “every person in the world” Jn 16:33, Jn 12:19, Jn 7:7,

a select group of people – Gentiles - Rom 11:12;

Believers – Jn 1:29, Jn 6:33, I Jn 2:2, 2Cor 5:19

The **nine meanings** of κόσμος

kos'-mos; **1.** an ornament or decoration, i.e. the arrangement of the stars; **2.** an harmonious arrangement; **3.** the universe; **4.** the planet earth; **5.** metonymically, the inhabitants of the earth, man, humanity in general; **6.** the ungodly multitude, men alienated from God, and hostile to the cause of Christ; **7.** the worldly affairs or system, earthly things, riches, pleasures, etc.; **8.** figuratively, a large group of people; **9.** a group of people out of a general collection (ie. Gentiles, unsaved people, believers).

The meaning of κόσμος in context ... solve for X

16. "For God so loved X, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life."

17. For God did not send the Son into X to judge X, but that X should be saved through Him.

We know:

- God loved X
- God sent His Son not to judge X
- God sent His Son so that X should be saved

X is **not judged** and **should be saved** ...

18. He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

X is **not judged** and verse 18 says, **He who believes in Him is not judged**

Then X is solved!

It is the believers, from all over the world.

He who does not believe has been judged already

He gave - The death of Christ was the supreme demonstration of God's love!

His only begotten Son – μονογενῆς (*mono-genesis*) the unique one, the only one of its kind, *God's personal revelation of Himself*

III. John 3:16b – a word by word analysis – *that whoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life*

ἵνα πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων εἰς αὐτὸν μὴ ἀπόληται ἀλλ' ἔξῃ ζωὴν αἰώνιον.

hina is **that** – it is a **word of purpose**, not of question

The finished work of the cross accomplished EVERYTHING it was ordained for!
It is more than simply a *provision* for atonement, **it is THE ATONEMENT.**

And **that purpose** is to *save all who believe*.

Pas means “**all**” and *ho pisteuown* is “**the believing ones**”

No specific word for “**whosoever**” in the Greek text

All the ones who are believing are those who have eternal life.

common phraseology in John’s writings:

1 John 2:29, 1 John 4:7

In each case we see the construction

pas + a participle meaning “*all the ones, in particular, doing the action of the participle, i.e., whosoever is doing the action of the participle.*”

The action of the participle defines the group that is acting.

Whoever loves (action) ***is born of God*** (the group doing the action)

Whoever practices righteousness (action) ***is born of Him*** (the group doing the action)

Whoever believes (action) ***will have eternal life*** (the group doing the action)

The “ whosoever ” does not expand the horizon of the action beyond the limitation of the classification introduced by the <i>participle</i> .
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***perish* - What is perishing?**

1. ***to perish*** means being presently under the wrath of God.
if we do not perish it is because *the love of God has rescued us from the wrath of God.*
2. ***to perish*** means to be separate from the presence of God - 2 *Thessalonians 1:9*
3. ***to perish*** means the fiery torment of hell - *Revelation 14:10*
4. ***perishing*** is everlasting and irreversible - *Matthew 25:46*
Is it really helpful to hear this threatening news?
The testimony of John Newton

IV. John 3:16 - A composite translation

For in this manner did God love the world: He gave His Son, the unique one, that everyone who is believing (continually trusting) in Him, shall not be eternally destroyed, but may be having eternal life.

The implications for evangelism – is it proper to say, “*God loves you*” to an unsaved person?

Not that God does not have a love for the world (Titus 3)

Not that the atonement is without universal benefit – it certainly is,

But it cannot be denied that ...

V. God has a special redemptive love for those who are His children – and it works!

1 John 4:7-10 (see additional sheet for detail)

Because of His love for us ... *He predestined us to adoption as sons* (Eph 1:4-5); *we are children of God* (1 Jn 3:1), *we are heirs with Christ* (Rom 8:15-17), *He disciplines us* (Heb 12:5-6), *we are His sheep* (Jn 10:11-15), *He makes intercession for us and not the world* (Heb 7:25, Jn 17:9), *we are His friends* (Jn 15:12-19), *we love God and others* (1 Jn 4:7-11,19), *we no longer live for ourselves* (2 Cor 5:14-16), *we are sanctified* (Eph 5:24-28), and ... ***we are guaranteed eternal life*** – Jer 31:3, Rom 8:35, Rom 8:28-30, Jn 10:26-30, Jn 6:54, 1 Peter 1:5, Jude 24,25, 1 Cor 1:8-9.

GOD LOVES YOU! CHERISH THAT FACT!