



# The Gift

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As Jesus Christ prepared to send the disciples for the first time throughout Israel with His message, He included in their instructions this admonition: *“Freely you have received, freely give”* (Matthew 10:8). This six-word summary of grace explains the financial policy of the publications and audio ministries of Basic Training. All audio materials and publications are provided **without charge** to anyone who requests them. For a catalog of available materials write:



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*“Endure hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.”* (2 Timothy 2:3)

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# THE GIFT



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

John 3:16





John 3:16 is the most well-known Bible verse throughout the world. It is simple enough for a child to understand, yet so rich that theologians and pastors struggle to fully communicate the depths of God's love contained in this one small verse.

In 2 Corinthians 9:15, the Apostle Paul speaks of the gift of God's love and says, "*Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift.*" I love that word, "*indescribable,*" because when I think of the goodness of the Gospel, it is hard for me to describe the joy and purpose that my salvation brings to every day of my life. We cannot begin to describe the gift of God's grace because, as humans, we cannot fully comprehend all that God is and all that He has given to us in the Person of Jesus Christ.

This little book is written in an effort to describe something that is indescribable! We will look at this verse in six parts:

1. *“For God”*  
The Indescribable God
2. *“So loved the world”*  
His Indescribable Love
3. *“That He gave His only begotten Son”*  
His Indescribable Sacrifice
4. *“That whoever believes in Him”*  
The Simplest Invitation
5. *“Shall not perish”*  
The Indescribable Danger
6. *“But have eternal life”*  
His Indescribable Gift



## ***“For God”*** **The Indescribable God**

We try to comprehend and describe God with terms like goodness, righteousness, holiness, and love. But any words we use to describe the Almighty God and Creator of the Universe fall short of who He truly is.

Let's focus on two things: His immensity and His intimacy. These two words appear to be opposites—two attributes that surely could not be found in the same Person. But, in God, they are coexistent attributes. The Psalmist David said it like this:

*“When I consider the Heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars which You have ordained; What is man, that You would take thought of him? And the son of man that You would care for him?”* Psalm 8:3–4

David ponders on how God, whose fingers formed the Heavens, would find the time and reason to think of a mere man. That's a legitimate thing to ponder!



## **The Immensity of God**

*“Who has measured out the waters  
in the hollow of His Hand,  
and marked off the heavens by the span ...”*

Isaiah 40:12a



Have you ever been in a place where the air is so clear or the altitude so high that you can peer into the darkness of the night sky and behold the Milky Way Galaxy? The immensity and brightness of it is mind-boggling! Yet, the Milky Way—our galaxy—is only one of 2 trillion galaxies in the known Universe. And our planet, Planet Earth, is like a little speck of dust hanging around in the Milky Way. You and I are one of over seven billion souls alive on that speck of dust today. Yet, the immense God who measures out the Universe with the span of His Hand wants to have a personal relationship with you!

God planned and ordained our life before we were ever born. He created us in our mother's womb; He formed and weaved our inward parts; by His hands we are fearfully and wonderfully made (Psalm 139).

When we believe in Jesus Christ as our Savior, this immense and holy God comes to live inside of us, to indwell us, to call us His own. He knows our thoughts and our desires, our hopes, our dreams, and our fears. He knows the number of hairs on our head! Indeed, we are engraved on the palms of His hands (Luke 12:7; Isaiah 49:16).



**The Intimacy of God**

*“Behold, I have inscribed you on  
the palms of My Hands.”*

Isaiah 4



David says:

*“O Lord, you have searched me and known me. You know when I sit down and when I rise up; You understand my thoughts from afar. You scrutinize my path and my lying down, and are **intimately acquainted with all my ways**. Even before there is a word on my tongue, Behold, O Lord, You know it all. You have enclosed me behind and before, and laid Your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is too high, I cannot attain to it.”*

Psalm 139:1–6

The psalmist is describing the intimacy of God’s relationship with His creation yet admits he cannot comprehend how such an immense God would be so interested in the details of his life and, indeed, the life of every man, woman, and child on Planet Earth.

**The indescribable gift found in John 3:16  
comes to us from an immense God,  
an intimate God, an indescribable God!**

***“So loved the world”***  
**His Indescribable Love**

God is love and love gives. We understand this to some extent in the human realm. A wife gives herself to her husband and gives her life to the raising of her children. A husband gives his life to provide and protect his wife and family. One enlists into military service with a willingness to give their life for their country. We quite often, out of love, give gifts and devotion to those we love.

The amazing thing about God’s love is that He loves even His enemies. He loves you and me. He gives His very own Son out of love for us, while we were still lost—still separated from Him by our own sin.

*“For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die, But God demonstrates His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”* Romans 5:6–8



*“You can give  
without loving,  
but you  
cannot love  
without giving.”*  
–Amy Carmichael



God's love is an unconditional love, based not on who we are, but on who He is (1 John 4:8). It is a love that never changes and never diminishes (Hebrews 13:8). It is a love that can be trusted and embraced with our whole heart.

**This is indescribable love: that a holy and righteous God would be willing to send His only Son to die for sinful man.**

**Thanks be to God for His indescribable love!**





*“We know love by this,  
that He laid down His life for us ...”*

1 John 3:16



***“That He gave His only begotten Son”***  
**His Indescribable Sacrifice**

God isn't a talker; He is a doer. He doesn't just say He loves us; He proves He loves us. His love is proved to you and me by the sacrifice of His one and only Son on the cross. God sacrificed His Son; the Son sacrificed His life.

Consider with me the events leading up to the crucifixion:

1. Jesus was betrayed by Judas and denied by Peter (Matthew 26:20–25, 34, 69–75).
2. He was arrested, scourged, spit upon, and beaten in the face (John 8:12; Mark 14:65; 15:15).
3. He was stripped, mocked, and a crown of thorns shoved down on His skull (Matthew 27:28, 29).
4. Then, Jesus was made to carry his cross to Golgotha where they drove heavy nails into His hands and feet (John 19:16–18).
5. Through all this physical and emotional pain, Jesus never cried out (Acts 8:32).

The real sacrifice came when God gathered up the sins of the entire world and placed the penalty of those sins onto His beloved Son (Romans 3:24–25). The nails pierced the hands and feet of Jesus, but something greater pierced his heart—our sin pierced His heart. The perfect Son of God was pierced through for the transgressions of every man (Isaiah 53:5). This is when the Son of God cried out to the Father and the Spirit, “*My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?*” (Matthew 27:46; Mark 15:34).

We are the ones who deserve to die such a hideous death but, out of love, Jesus Christ died in our place. He became sin on our behalf. As Jesus hung on the cross, the perfect Son of God became the murderer, the rapist, the adulterer, the liar, the thief. He became the Adolf Hitler, the Judas Iscariot, the Nancy Cunningham; and you can put your name into that list. He became your sin and mine.

*“And He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.”* 1 Peter 2:24

*“Being found in appearance as a man,  
He humbled Himself by becoming obedient  
to the point of death, even death  
on a cross.”* Philippians 2:8

*“For God made Him who knew no sin  
to be sin on our behalf, that we might  
become the righteousness of God in Him.”*  
2 Corinthians 5:21

Can you and I comprehend such a sacrifice? Absolutely not! Even in eternity, when we are face to face with Him, when we see the nail-scarred hands and the nail-scarred feet, even then we will not totally comprehend His sacrifice because He totally delivered us from sin’s penalty (Romans 6:23).

**Thanks be to God for His indescribable  
sacrifice!**

***“That whoever believes in Him”***  
**The Simplest Invitation**

This is the only part of John 3:16 that we can fully comprehend, because it is so simple. It’s as simple as the faith of a little child, as simple as walking through a door, as simple as receiving a precious gift.

*“Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved.”* Acts 16:31

The book of John is the most evangelistic book in the Bible. John himself states the purpose for the writing of the book:

*“That you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing, you may have life in His name.”*  
John 20:31

The book of John uses the word *“believe”* approximately 100 times because simple faith in Jesus Christ is the key to receiving the indescribable gift (Acts 16:31, Ephesians 2:8, 9).

Just as God’s love is an unconditional love, the salvation invitation is an unconditional invitation—it goes out to all who were, all who are, and all who will be. It extends to male and female,

young and old, rich and poor—all people, languages, and nationalities (Revelation 7:9). It is an invitation to princes and prostitutes, and everyone in between.

*“This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires **all men** to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”*

1 Timothy 2:4

*“The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for **all to come** to repentance [faith in Jesus Christ].”* 2 Peter 3:9

The sacrificial death of Jesus Christ on the cross was sufficient to pay for every sin of every person who ever lived that ALL may come to Him in faith. Christ died for all because ALL souls matter (1 John 2:2).

**Thanks be to God for providing this simple,  
but sure way to eternal life!**



*“For all have sinned and fall short  
of the glory of God.”*  
Romans 3:23



***“Shall not perish”***  
**An Indescribable Danger**

The Lake of Fire, Hell, is a real place. We are born into this world spiritually dead, separated from a righteous and holy God by the imputed sin of Adam and by our own sin. Through faith in Jesus Christ, those sins are forgiven. But for those who reject Him, the wrath of God abides on them for all of eternity.

Jesus said, *“Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.”* Matthew 10:28

We use words to describe Hell: darkness, loneliness, fire, torment, and eternal separation from a holy God. Those who reject Jesus and His work on the cross will fully experience this eternal torment. Those who believe in Jesus Christ will never even come close to being able to describe Hell because they will never experience it!

*“He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on Him.”* John 3:36



*“For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ  
all will be made alive.”* 1 Corinthians  
15:22

**Thanks be to God for making a way for us to  
be delivered from this indescribable danger!**

***“But have eternal life”***  
**His Indescribable Gift**

Throughout the history of mankind, men have searched for the “fountain of youth,” or some secret to prolonging life and preventing death. Their efforts are in vain, for all men eventually die (Hebrews 9:27). Only through believing in Jesus Christ can we be assured of the forgiveness of sin and the promise of eternal life.

*“I am the resurrection and the life, He who believes in Me shall live even if he dies.”* John 11:25

*“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes in Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgement, but has passed out of death into life.”* John 5:24

*“The wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”* Romans 6:23

Receiving this gift of eternal life means that the moment we close our eyes in death, we open them in Heaven, in the presence of God, and

face to face with Jesus Christ. The gift of eternal life takes the fears and uncertainties of death and replaces them with the joy and anticipation of our new, eternal home.

Heaven! We know enough about this eternal destiny to long to be there—streets of gold, myriads of angels singing praises to God, reunion with loved ones, no more sickness, no more sorrow, no more pain, no more tears (Revelation 21:4). Blessings forever! But does this completely describe an eternal Heaven? We cannot yet describe it because we haven't yet experienced it; but someday, through faith in Jesus Christ, we will!



*“And He who sits on the throne said,  
‘Behold, I am making all things new.’”*

Revelation 21:5



Jesus said,

*“Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.”*

John 14:1–4

*“I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.”* John 14:6

***“Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!”***

**2 Corinthians 9:15**

**I encourage you to embrace this  
indescribable gift with all of your heart!**





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