

This Lectio Divina on John 3:16 explores God's intense, sacrificial love, focusing on the gift of Jesus Christ for universal salvation rather than condemnation.



Text: John 3:16 (NIV)

"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."

1. Lectio (Read/Listen)

Read the verse slowly several times.

- Focus on key phrases: "God so loved the world," "he gave his only Son," "whoever believes," "not perish but have eternal life".
- Context: These words are part of Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus or the Gospel writer's reflection, focusing on God's initiative to save humanity.
- Key Insight: God's love is not passive; it is a profound, giving, and sacrificial love.

2. Meditatio (Reflect/Meditate)

- "God so loved the world..." The "world" means all of humanity, not just a select few. Do I truly believe that God loves me personally, or do I find it hard to accept?
- "...that he gave his only Son." God did not send Jesus to judge, but to save. How do I respond to this gift? Do I live in fear of condemnation or in the freedom of being saved?
- "...whoever believes in him..." What does "believing" mean in my life? Is it just head knowledge, or trust that transforms my actions?

3. Oratio (Respond/Pray)

- Respond with gratitude: Thank God for loving you, even in your weaknesses.
- Offer up fears: Bring areas of your life where you feel lost or condemned to God, asking for his light.
- Ask for faith: Pray for a deeper trust in the promise of eternal life, which starts now.

4. Contemplatio (Rest/Contemplate)

- Let go of words and images. Simply rest in the profound truth: "I am loved by God."
- "In Jesus Christ, God spoke the definitive word about our life: you are not lost, you are loved".

5. Actio (Act)

- How can you share this love with someone else today?
- Consider how you can show God's love to those in your local community, living as a "child of light and truth".
- "We ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters," meaning, extending grace when wronged and sacrificing for others.