

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.

John 3:16

“For God so *loved* the world ...”

“For God so loved *the world*...”

“*He gave His one and only Son*”

“*whoever* believes in Him shall not perish...”

“whoever believes in Him shall not *perish*...”

Believes

These notes and today’s message are the product of numerous sources — the Bible, theological books, biblical commentaries, devotional materials, sermons, and illustrative material gathered or sent to me. This sermon series is from 3:16 — *The Numbers of Hope* by Max Lucado. All scriptures are from the New International Version (NIV) of the Bible unless otherwise noted.

The Great Thanksgiving

Father, it is right that we should always and everywhere give you thanks and praise.

Only you are God. You created all things and called them good. You made us in your own image. Even though we rebelled against your love, you did not desert us. You delivered us from captivity, made covenant to be our Sovereign God, and spoke to us through your prophets.

Therefore we join the entire company of heaven and all your people now on earth in worshiping and glorifying you:

Holy, holy, holy Lord. God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory, Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

We thank you, holy Lord God, that you loved the world so much you sent your only Son to be our Savior. The Lord of all life came to live among us. He healed and taught, ate with sinners, and won for you a new people by water and the Spirit. We saw His glory. Yet He humbled Himself in obedience to your will, freely accepting death on a cross. By dying He freed us from unending death; by rising from the dead, He gave us everlasting life.

On the night in which He gave Himself up for us, the Lord Jesus took bread. After giving you thanks, he broke the bread, gave it to His disciples and said: Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you. When the supper was over, He took the cup. Again He returned thanks to you, gave the cup to His disciples and said: Drink from this, all of you, this is the cup of the new covenant in my blood poured out for you and many, for the forgiveness of sins. When we eat this bread and drink this cup, we experience anew the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ and look forward to His coming in final victory.

Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

We experience anew, most merciful God, the suffering and death, the resurrection and ascension of your Son, asking you to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, which we offer in union with Christ’s offering for us, as a living and holy surrender of ourselves.

Send the power of your Holy Spirit on us, gathered here out of love for you, and on these gifts. May the Spirit help us know in the breaking of this bread and the drinking from the cup the presence of Christ who gave His body and blood for all. And may the Spirit make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in service to all the world.

Through your Son Jesus Christ with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church, all glory and honor is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. **AMEN.**