

## REFLECTION ON GOD'S LOVE (John Chapter 3: verse 16 )

God loves us unconditionally and if we have faith (and we can ask him to help us have faith, if we don't already), and believe, we can enjoy eternal life!

God's assurance that: **'whoever believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life,'** part of the message of love contained in John's Gospel at Chapter 3: verse 16, can cushion our sadness when a loved one dies with hope, and light, and love. This message of love is for everybody.

The late Professor William Barclay writes in his commentary on John's Gospel that sometimes Christianity is presented:

- As if God had to be pacified - or persuaded to forgive.
- Sometimes the picture is drawn of an angry, unforgiving God.
- Sometimes the Christian message is presented in such a way that it sounds as if Jesus did something which changed the attitude of God to men and women from condemnation to forgiveness.

But, **"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) tells us that it was **God** who sent his Son, because **he loved the world** he had created, and that:

God acted, not for his own sake, but for ours:-

- Not to bring us to heel – but to satisfy his love
- God is the Father who cannot be happy until his wandering children have come home.

It also tells us how wide God's love is. It was **the world** that God so loved:

- not a nation
- not the good people
- not the people who loved him

**It was the world:**

- The unlovable and the unlovely.
- The lonely who have no one else to love them
- Those who love God - and those who never think about him
- Those who rest in the love of God - and those who reject his love.

Nobody is beyond the pale of God's love. All are included in this vast, inclusive, love of God.

In the words of St Augustine:-

**“God loves each one of us as if there was only one of us to love.”**