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# God Loved the World ... and Gave His Son

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Free media and discipleship resources for pastors, leaders, and growing disciples.

# God Loved the World ... and Gave His Son

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## Day 6

*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (John 3:16)*

God longs to be with us. His heart desires intimacy. He wants us to live in the wholeness and fulfillment that life with Him provides. But, we as human beings couldn't repair the broken relationship. We couldn't work our way back. God had to do it; He made a way to bring us back into the life of love for which we were created.

God the Father loves the world. He doesn't just love a perfect world; He loves the real world. He cherished the world as He created it. He cherished the world as it existed 2,000 years ago. And He cherishes the world today despite its pollution and disease, famines and wars, and all forms of hatred and denial of Him. The Father showed His passion for the world by planning a way for us—as real, messed-up people in a real, messed-up world—to enter into His life.

The Father didn't leave the working out of His plan to the human race to accomplish. He didn't lower a ladder into the pit we were in and shout down, "I want you with Me. Here are the steps to follow: Obey these commands. Pray these prayers. Climb the rungs. I'm waiting in heaven for you. Come on. You can do it." No. God didn't do that. We can't save ourselves. Climbing religious ladders doesn't work. (The Pharisees climbed the ladder they had built for themselves, but the top of that ladder ended in death-producing religious pride, not in life-giving relationship with God.)

God the Father loved the world so much that He gave His only Son; Jesus willingly stepped down into the sin and confusion of this world—into the mess of our humanity—to save us. God the Father gave God the Son in human form to accomplish for us what only God could accomplish. As a man, Jesus entered our world. He joined Himself to our blind, diseased, sinful human flesh.

God the Son left the absolute perfection of heaven and stepped down the ladder into our mess and confusion. As a man, Jesus took the sin of the world—the sin of every person who will ever live— your sin and mine—upon Himself. In the blindness of our fallen nature, God the Son became one with us. In unity with us, He carried our sins to the cross and died the death our sin deserved.

And God's goodness didn't stop there. As one with us, Jesus carried us up the ladder that we couldn't climb. He took us from the pit of our depravity, held us close and carried us up the ladder into the eternal life of God. In Christ, we enter into the relationship Jesus shares with His Father. Jesus is the only way we can live the life the Father planned for us from the beginning of creation.

Who can fathom the depths of humanity's sin and the price Jesus paid to rid us of it? Who can fathom the height to which Jesus lifted humanity in bringing us home to life in God's love?

Jesus is the way of salvation! He is the way of eternal life! Believing in Jesus and what He has accomplished sets us free from ceaseless striving to make ourselves acceptable. In Christ, we are free to live in the loving relationships with God and others that our soul craves.

Christianity was never meant to be a religion with traditions and laws to follow. Christianity is knowing Christ. It is believing in Him and being connected to the reality of what He has accomplished. Christianity is living in relationship with God—in everlasting life.

There are no pre-qualifying conditions for this life: nothing you have done or believed in the past excludes you. God longs to share Himself with you. With open arms, He welcomes all who come.

## **Ponder for a Moment**

What are the deepest desires of your heart?

What steps might you have attempted in order to satisfy those desires?

Sit for a while and reflect on the picture of Jesus carrying you up the ladder into eternal life in the love of God. Record your thoughts, images or feelings.