

When we began to think too highly of ourselves and too lowly of God, we lose the shock that God who is absolutely holy would love sinners like us enough to send His only Son to die to redeem us. [Romans. 5:8](#), [Galatians. 2:20](#); [1 Timothy. 1:15](#)

1. God’s love for this sinful world is shocking.

“For God so loved *the Jews*” would not have been shocking to a Jew. The Jews knew that they were God’s chosen people and that He had set His special love on them. [Deuteronomy. 7:6-8](#); [10:14-15](#); [Malachi. 1:2-3](#)).

“God so loved *the world*” was just plain shocking! John’s Jewish readers would have immediately thought, *Gentiles*.

John wants us to understand that God’s love goes beyond the Jews to Gentiles from “every tribe and tongue and people and nation” ([Rev. 5:9](#)).

And, His love extends even to those who are His committed enemies, [Matthew. 5:43-45](#)
[Romans. 5:6-8, 10](#), [2 Peter 3:9](#), [1 John 5:19](#)

1. There is the peculiar love of the Father for the Son, and of the Son for the Father ([John 3:35](#); [5:20](#); [14:31](#)).

2. There is God’s power to toward His fallen world ([John 3:16](#); [Ezek. 33:11](#)).

(4) There is God’s particular, effective, selecting love toward His elect ([Deut. 7:7-8](#); [10:14-15](#); [Malachi. 1:2-3](#); [Ephesians. 1:4-5](#); [5:25](#)).

(5) There is God’s conditional love toward His own people, based on their obedience ([John 14:21](#); [15:10](#); [Exodus. 20:6](#); [Psalm. 103:9-11, 13, 17-18](#)).

we can tell unbelievers that God loves them so much that He sent His only Son to die for their sins, *if they will repent and believe in Christ*.

At the same time, we should warn them that if they do not believe in Christ, they are under God’s righteous judgment and wrath which will be finalized for all eternity if they die in unbelief. ([John 3:18, 36](#)),

And, since we know that none are able to repent and believe in Christ unless God grants it we should be praying as we proclaim the gospel that He would be merciful in opening their blind eyes and imparting new life to them so that they can repent and believe. ([John 6:44, 65](#); [Acts 11:18](#)),

A. GOD SENT HIS ONLY SON TO DIE ON THE CROSS TO UPHOLD HIS HOLINESS AND JUSTICE.

“Why can’t God just forgive us apart from the death of Christ? When someone wrongs me, I just forgive him. Why can’t God do that, too?” The answer is, because God is absolutely holy and just. If He brushed away sin without demanding that the just penalty be paid, it would compromise God’s very nature. He would cease to be God! GOD’S LOVE FOR THE WORLD DOES NOT OVERRIDE OR NEGATE THE SINS OF EVERYONE: SOME WILL PERISH.

God doesn't save the world by His love. The text does not say, "God so loved the world that He overlooked our sin." Rather, He so loved the world that He sent His only Son to die for our sins. But His love does not eradicate the reality of hell. If Jesus' words are true, hell is real and it is awful ([Mark 9:47-48](#))

God's great love does not override or negate His perfect holiness and justice. So the message is both comforting for those who believe, but disturbing for those who do not want to come to the light because they love their sin ([John 3:19-20](#)).

A. GOD'S REASON FOR SENDING HIS ONLY SON INTO THE WORLD WAS NOT FOR JUDGMENT, BUT FOR SALVATION. [John 3:17](#)

In His first coming, He came to seek and to save the lost ([Luke 19:10](#)).

This purpose reflects God's shocking love. We could not fault Him if He had sent His Son to clean house on this wicked world. In fact, when He comes again, He will do just that ([Revelation. 19:11, 15](#)):