

"For God so loved..."

By Lyle VonSpreckelsen, Elder of Clay Center Christian Church

John 3:16

Many of us could quote this verse from memory since we were children. We see it in stadiums, on billboards and tattoos, and even face paint. This piece of Scripture is one of the most quoted Bible verses in our culture.

Yet, can we truly grasp the depth of God's love for us?

I thought I could, but continue to discover it is beyond my capacity. As Paul prayed for the Ephesians,

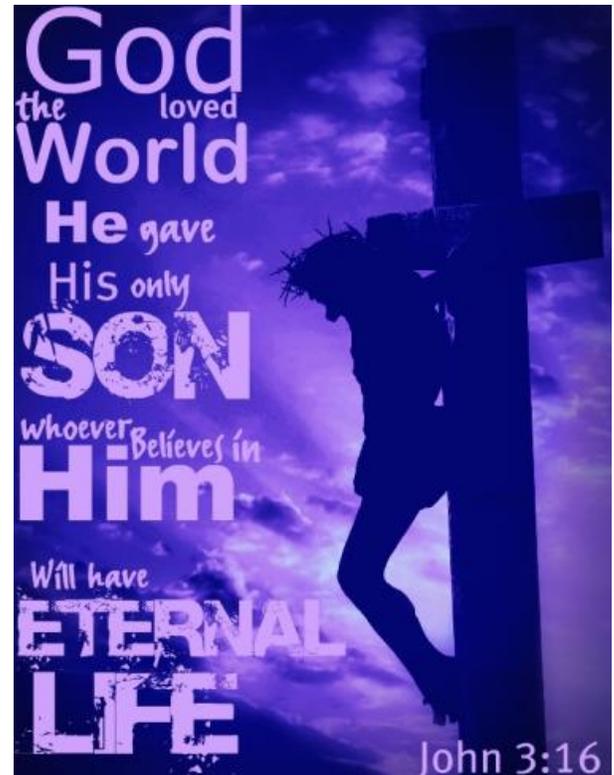
... And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

Ephesians 3:17-19 NIV

It is key for our faith that we "may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God" to understand how much God loves us.

That is what Easter is.

An illustration, key to my own greater understanding of the depth of God's love for me, is not a traditional Easter picture, but rather a Good Friday picture. Imagine the love you have as a father or a mother for your child, or the love that your own father or mother has for you. Now, imagine praying with all the faith you could muster for your child -- to heal, comfort, and protect him -- and yet God's answer was not what you asked for.



Even God's Son prayed,

*... He fell with His face to the ground and prayed,
'My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me.
Yet not as I will, but as You will.'*

Matthew 26-39 NIV

And God, in John 3:16, responded: **No, my one and only Son. This is how it must be.**

*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 NIV

How could a Father allow His Son to go through suffering, shame, and abuse even to the point of death? Why didn't He stop it? If you have ever known a parent's love for a child -- prayed with all that is within you for God to intercede on their behalf -- you have a glimpse of how much God, your Father, loves you.

You see, I could never say "no" to my own son, to save another from his sinfulness. But God did -- for all of us! Because He loves **all of us** that much.

A flyer for Easter events. At the top, it says "JOIN US THIS" in a simple font. Below that, the word "EASTER" is written in large, bold, black letters. Behind the letters, there is a colorful graphic of several overlapping circles in shades of red, orange, yellow, green, and blue. Below the word "EASTER", there is a list of five events in bold, black, uppercase letters. The first event is "4/8 - COMMUNITY EGG HUNT - 10:30 AM" with "AT THE CLAY COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS" in smaller text below it. The second is "4/9 - CHILDREN'S EASTER FESTIVAL - 1:00 PM". The third is "4/14 - GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE - 7:00 PM". The fourth is "4/16 - COMMUNITY SUNRISE SERVICE - 7:00 AM" with "AT THE CLAY COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS" in smaller text below it. The fifth is "4/16 - EASTER WORSHIP SERVICE - 10:30 AM".

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Celebrate Easter with a greater understanding of how much
God loves you!

Upcoming Events



Join us for our Good Friday Service this **Friday, April 14**, at 7 pm -- invite someone to this inspiring hour of worship



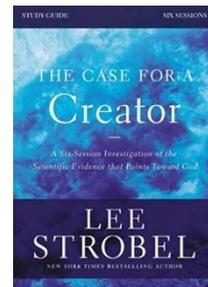
[Clay Center Christian Church](#) is having a Work Day this **Saturday, April 15, at 8:30 am** to do landscaping and lay rock on the west side of the building -- we'd so appreciate your help!



There will be no Bible Class **this Sunday, April 16** -- instead, join us for an [Easter Brunch](#) from 9-10 am -- invite your friends and family!



Help us minister to the residents of Harvard Rest Haven this **Sunday, April 16**, and the Sutton Community Home on **Sunday, April 30**



This new, 6-week [Bible Class](#) starts **Sunday, April 23**, at 9:30 am

Ministry Team Leaders

The next Ministry Team Leader meeting is **Sunday, April 23** -- lunch will be provided



We are taking up our 30 Pieces of Silver special offering this **Sunday, April 16**, during the Easter Worship Service at 10:30 am



[Pibel Bible Camp](#)'s Outdoor Work Day is **Saturday, April 22**, at the campgrounds near Ericson, NE -- transportation and lunch will be provided



Have questions about [Clay Center Christian Church](#)? Have lunch with the pastors on **Sunday, April 30**, to learn more about our church.



It's time to sign up for [Pibel Bible Camp](#):

May 31-June 3, grades 3-4, \$95 per camper

June 4-9, grades 9-12. \$153

June 11-15, grades 5-6. \$124

June 16-17, grades 1-2, \$38

June 18-23, grades 7-8, \$153

*Early bird registration due **Monday, May 15**, to get 10% discount -- the church pays half the camper fee

MISSION of the MONTH:

[Hands of Compassion](#) in Asia



All women (ages 12+) are invited to this ladies event - tickets are \$15 per person -- sponsored by the [Wellspring Pregnancy + Healthy Center](#) pro-life ministry in Hastings, a mission supported by Clay Center Christian Church



Get all the [latest updates](#) from missions supported by Clay Center Christian Church, including **Crossroads International Student Ministries**