

FEBRUARY 2026

FIVE MINUTES

6 DAYS A WEEK

ONE VERSE

ONE MONTH

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2 <i>For</i> The Reason	3 <i>God</i> His Names	4 <i>so</i> The Extent	5 <i>loved</i> The Choice	6 <i>the</i> Specifics	7 <i>world,</i> Everyone
8	9 <i>that</i> The Bridge	10 <i>he</i> Initiator	11 <i>gave</i> Sacrifice	12 <i>his</i> Ownership	13 <i>only</i> Unique	14 <i>Son,</i> The Gift
15	16 <i>that</i> The Result	17 <i>whoever</i> Everyone	18 <i>believes</i> Trust	19 <i>in</i> Resting	20 <i>him</i> Focus	21 <i>should</i> Safety
22	23 <i>not</i> No Fear	24 <i>perish</i> Rescued	25 <i>but</i> The Flip	26 <i>have</i> Right Now	27 <i>eternal</i> Forever	28 <i>life</i> Celebrate!

✝ IDC KIDS

Because you are

so loved

“

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

”

JOHN 3:16
ESV

DAILY RHYTHM

Read: Recite the full verse.

Reflect: Do the 3-minute activity on the back.

Pray: Spend a minute thanking God for his gifts and truths.



FEBRUARY CHALLENGE

The Daily Rhythm (5 Minutes):

1. **Read:** Recite the full verse: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16
2. **Reflect:** Look at the "Word of the Day" on the calendar. Spend a few minutes doing the small reflection listed under the word.
3. **Pray:** Thank God that this specific word is true for your family.

Week 1: The Source of Love

- **Day 1 (For):** Discuss what "for" means—it's the reason. Why did God act? It was because of love. Name reasons you decide to act.
- **Day 2 (God):** List as many names or attributes of God as you can (Creator, King, Shepherd).
- **Day 3 (so):** "So" shows the extent. Compare something you love "so much" (like a pet) to how God loves you. How is your heart for people versus how God's heart is for you.
- **Day 4 (loved):** Share a way you felt loved by God or someone else this week. What does love mean?
- **Day 5 (the):** "The" makes it specific. God didn't love a vague idea; He loved a specific creation and it is you. What has God done that is personal to you? (Example: he created lilies which is my favorite flower. He healed my dad from cancer).
- **Day 6 (world,):** Think about the whole word. Name a country or person far away and remember God loves the people there just as much as He loves you here. This is a good day to pray for our missionaries.

Week 2: The Sacrifice of Love

- **Day 1 (that):** This is the bridge. Because He loved us, God chose to act. He had so much love for us that he chose to do something about our fallen state. Love wasn't just a feeling; it's a choice to save us from ourselves. What are things we do that show our love?
- **Day 2 (he):** He is God, the Father, and the initiator. He didn't wait for us to ask; he acted first. He chose to do something about the fact humanity was lost. What choices should we make because he loves us?
- **Day 3 (gave):** God gave Jesus up to the cross. What do we do to remember that Jesus died for us? Our actions should be different because of Jesus' death. What can we give to someone today as a reminder? (a smile, a gift, a kind word, a good attitude)
- **Day 4 (his):** We belong to God, the Father. God gave what belonged to Him personally to save us so we could be with him again. How does God show us that we are his?
- **Day 5 (only):** Talk about the word only, which means to be unique. There is no one else like Jesus. He is set apart. What can you think of that is unique?
- **Day 6 (Son,):** Since it's Valentine's Day, celebrate the ultimate "Valentine"—the Son of God sent for us. What gifts do people give to each other and how do they compare to gift of Jesus?

Week 3: The Invitation of Love

- **Day 1 (that):** Another bridge. This time defining what the gift of Jesus would do. He was given so that something could happen for us. What was the gift of Jesus? What did he do for us?
- **Day 2 (whoever):** This is the most inclusive word in the Bible. Who is included in "whoever"? Does it feel too specific (just for you) or too broad (for everyone) to you?
- **Day 3 (believes):** To believe in something is to trust. We put our trust in things (like my chair) to hold us up. What if you didn't trust it or if it failed to hold you up? How do we act when we trust something? Do you trust God?
- **Day 4 (in):** We can rest in our belief. Our belief isn't passive, but active. We actively believe and rest in the Lord. We don't just believe things about God; we put our lives in God. How do you trust in Jesus?
- **Day 5 (him):** Focus entirely on Jesus today. Read or retell your favorite miracle.
- **Day 6 (should):** This is a promise of safety. Some translations say "will". Because of Jesus, our ending changes. How does knowing the truth and feeling safe change your behavior?

Week 4: The Promise of Love

- **Day 1 (not):** A word of relief. Think of things you are afraid of and remember God says "not" to that fear.
- **Day 2 (perish):** Discuss how God saves us from being lost or broken. He is the ultimate Rescuer.
- **Day 3 (but):** The best "but" in history! It flips the story from death to life. Share a time that God changed something for you. (Example: I was scared to fly on planes, but I started praying when they took off and I was filled with peace.)
- **Day 4 (have):** We don't wait for the future; we "have" God's love and presence right now. What do you have that gives you joy?
- **Day 5 (eternal):** Try to imagine a circle (no beginning and no end). That is how long God's plan lasts. What something you think is in heaven for eternity?
- **Day 6 (life):** Celebrate! Have a "mini-party" for 5 minutes with a favorite snack to celebrate the new life Jesus gives.

Month Long Bonus Activity

Create a "Word Chain." Every day, have them write the next word in our memory verse on a strip of construction paper. Tape it into a loop and connect it to the previous day's word.

A Loving Heart 4-week Devotional

Thank you for joining me in exploring the gospel through John 3:16. While a word a day might seem like a lot, I've found deep value and God's loving heart by pausing to listen to each one. I hope these weekly reflections bless you and your children this February.

Week 1: The Source (For God so loved the world...)

As a parent, I'll confess my love sometimes leads with the "because." I love my children *because* they are mine, or I enjoyed class *because* the kids were sweet. But God's love begins with "for." "For" is the foundation of His motivation; it is the source that led to Christ's sacrifice and the promise of eternal life.

Sometimes I think of the cross as starting with my sin, but the sacrifice actually began with God's character and His deep love for the world. As I strive to mirror His heart to my children, I must remember that the Lord is my source—not myself. When I feel stressed, reactive, or distant, I pray for the grace to pause and remember He is bigger than any moment.

Let's turn our eyes upward so we and our children can see that God's "for" is always there. He loves us so deeply that He sits with us in the "so"—that small word that holds the infinite intensity of His affection. This week, before you start your endless task list, remember that you and your children are loved simply and deeply by a Father who doesn't measure you by a checklist, but looks at your heart.

Week 1: The Source of Love

- **For:** Before you explain "reasoning" to your kids, sit with the fact that God didn't have to act. His movement toward us wasn't a reaction to our goodness, but a result of His character.
- **God:** Refresh your awe. Remind yourself that the One who holds the galaxies is the same One interested in your family's breakfast conversation today.
- **so:** We often feel "so" tired or "so" overwhelmed. Replace those with "so loved." Let the magnitude of His affection settle your heart before you face the day's demands.
- **loved:** Reflection for you: When was the last time you let God love you without trying to "earn" it? Receive His love as a gift today, not a reward.
- **the:** God's love isn't a blanket statement; it's a laser focus. He knows the number of hairs on your head and the specific worries in your heart. You are "the" one He is thinking of.
- **world,:** It's easy to shrink our world down to our own zip code. Ask God to expand your heart today to see people the way He does—with a love that crosses every border.

Week 2: The Sacrifice (...that He gave His only Son...)

Sacrifice took on a whole new meaning for me, not just when it became necessary, but when I realized the weight of what I would give up for my children. I have a child who may be at home for the rest of my life, and I walked away from a career I loved to prepare him for the world. I did it because I want him to have the best possible chance. To me, the idea of "giving" a son while I am fighting so hard to help my own is an ultimate sacrifice I pray I am never called to make. We spend our lives protecting our children—preventing pain, keeping them safe, and helping them become who God called them to be. Yet, God the Father deliberately sent His Son into a world He knew would reject Him. He gave Jesus knowing He would die. It is a gift I may never fully comprehend, yet I will never find anything more to be grateful for.

As you lead your family this week, reflect on what it means to give something knowing you will never receive anything equivalent in return. That kind of giving is only possible through love. Unlike us, who often give from our excess, for convenience, or with an expectation of reciprocity, God gave in a way that was total, complete, and unconditional. He gave His one and "only." Jesus is unique, beloved, and like nothing else in all of creation. I would struggle. Let's be honest I have a scarcity mindset when it comes to unimportant things. So to part with something so precious would feel impossible, yet the Father still gave Jesus for us.

I pray that when we feel we have no more patience, energy, or time, that God will call to our memory that our Source gave everything. This doesn't necessarily mean we will suddenly find more hours in the day, but it does mean we don't have to pour from an empty cup. Though our own strength may fail, God's abundance is available to us. His grace is sufficient, and it has already been given.

Week 2: The Sacrifice of Love

- **that:** Love is a verb. As a parent, you sacrifice daily. Let your own "doing" for your children remind you of the ultimate "doing" God did for you.
- **he:** God took the initiative. While we were still sinners, He acted. Is there a relationship in your life where you need to be the one to "act first" in grace today?
- **gave:** Giving costs something. God didn't give from His excess; He gave from His heart. Reflect on the weight of the cross and the freedom it bought you.
- **his:** Think of your own child. Now consider the depth of a Father who would offer His own to save someone else. Let that sacrifice overwhelm your perspective today.
- **only:** Jesus is "one of a kind." In a world of many options, find rest in the truth that He is the only One who can truly satisfy the hunger of your soul.
- **Son,:** Today, focus on the relationship. The Father and the Son. You are invited into that family. You aren't just a servant; you are a child of the King.

Week 3: The Invitation (...that whoever believes in Him...)

I love to host and fill my home, a restaurant, or a park with people I love. I simply enjoy getting people together to have fun, and my husband often says I'll invite anyone who can make it. I truly love an "open door." To me, the word whoever is beautiful because it signifies that God's kingdom isn't a club reserved for the well-behaved or the spiritually "put-together." Instead, it is a door that God has blown wide open for the doubting, the messy, and the tired.

While this invitation is open to everyone, it is also exclusive in one way: it requires belief. This isn't just a casual agreement; it is an action. The Greek word used here, *pisteuōn*, means to lean into or to have total trust. You don't lean against a wall if you think it will fall, and you don't lean on a person unless you know they will hold you up. I've always been an exuberant person; one of my husband's first memories of me is of me jumping into his arms. Though I don't remember it, that moment showed I trusted him early and completely—I knew he would catch me, even if he didn't quite trust himself yet.

When our children are scared and tired, where do they lean? And what do we lean on when we are afraid? Real belief isn't a shallow sentiment; it is a deep, abiding choice to trust that God will hold us up. Are you leaning into Jesus today, or are you striving after the wind to support yourself? I've been there, and I know I'll likely be there again. But we don't have to carry that weight because the invitation of John 3:16 is always present. It doesn't demand perfection, only faith.

As we lead our families and teach our children about faith, we must first learn to rest in Him. My prayer is that our grip will release, our need for control will decrease, and our trust in Him will increase. He is enough to hold our families together and enough to delight our children's hearts. May we place our total belief in the One who will never fail us: Christ Jesus.

Week 3: The Invitation of Love

- **that:** This "that" is about purpose. Your life has a "so that." You weren't just saved *from* something; you were saved *for* something. Ask God to show you that purpose today.
- **whoever:** "Whoever" includes the person who cut you off in traffic and the person who is hardest to love. It also includes *you* on your worst parenting day.
- **believes:** Belief is leaning your full weight on something. What are you trying to carry on your own shoulders today? Lean that weight back onto Jesus.
- **in:** We are "in" Him. Like a ship in the ocean, you are surrounded by His grace. You don't have to find Him; you are already held by Him.
- **him:** Take a moment to simply gaze at Jesus. Not as a teacher or a figure, but as your Savior. Let His beauty quiet your mind.
- **should:** This is about divine security. In an uncertain world, your "should" is actually a "shall." Your future is secure in His hands.

Week 4: The Promise (...should not perish but have eternal life.)

The news is probably my least favorite thing to watch on TV. I'd truly rather watch anything else, yes, even the weather channel. The reason is simple: we live in a world that is "perishing," and that brokenness is the lead story every single night. Between the headlines and the physical reality of my own aging body, I see signs of brokenness everywhere. When I choose to dwell on those things in my free time, I notice a shift in my spirit. I begin to parent out of fear rather than faith. I find myself afraid of the future, terrified of making the wrong choice, or anxious about losing everything we've worked for.

But there is a profound hope that interrupts that fear. Our memory verse ends with what might be my favorite type of words in the entire Bible: pivots like "but". That one tiny word shifts our gaze away from the "perishing" and toward the "eternal." It invites us to look past the headlines and toward a clock that never stops and a hope that never runs out.

The phrase "but have eternal life" changes everything because it speaks in the present tense. "Eternal life" isn't just a distant destination in the "not yet"; it is a reality we possess right now. The "but have" in this verse signifies possession. We don't just hope for it; we have it.

This perspective completely reorients my heart as a mother. I realize I'm not just raising my children to have a successful career, a happy life, or even to eventually move out of the house (though I'll admit, I do pray for that day!). I am raising souls that are eternal. In the light of eternity, a spilled glass of water or a failing math grade loses its power to frustrate. These are just small moments in a much larger story.

Our lives are composed thousands of these tiny moments where we have the opportunity to show grace. Those moments of grace are what build an eternal legacy. This week, we can celebrate the certainty of God's kingdom. We aren't walking down a dead-end alley; we are guiding our children along a path of unending hope, led by a God who loved us first.

Week 4: The Promise of Love

- **not:** Think of the "nots" in your life—not enough time, not enough money. Now think of God's "not"—not perish. His "not" is stronger than your "not."
- **perish:** We see brokenness everywhere. But God is a restorer. What feels like it's "perishing" in your life? Give that broken piece to the Rescuer.
- **but:** This is the pivot point of the Gospel. No matter how dark a situation looks, God can always add a "but." Trust Him for a turnaround.
- **have:** You don't have to wait for heaven to experience God. You "have" Him now. Carry that presence into your kitchen, your car, and your workplace.
- **eternal:** Our problems are temporary; our home is eternal. Lift your eyes from the "right now" and look toward the "forever."
- **life:** Jesus didn't just come to get you to heaven; He came to bring heaven to you. Choose to live "fully alive" today in the joy of His finished work.



IMAGO DEI CHURCH

How to Make Your John 3:16 Chain

1. **Cut:** Carefully cut out each of the horizontal strips containing the words of the verse.
2. **Order:** Arrange the strips in the correct order to read John 3:16.
3. **Loop:** Take the starting strip (For), bring the ends together to form a circle, and secure them with tape or glue.
4. **Connect:** Thread the next strip the start of the verse through the first loop and secure its ends.
5. **Repeat:** Continue adding loops in each day until your memory chain is complete! Don't forget the extra loop with the verse reference on the last day.

Bonus: Mix up the strips and have your child arrange them in order before adding that days strip.

For

world,

only

in

but

God

that

Son,

him

have

so

he

that

should

eternal

loved

gave

whoever

not

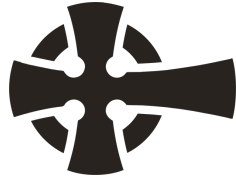
life.

the

his

believes

perish



John 3:16 ESV

