



## John 3:16-21, 36 Small Group Questions

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- John 3:16 is one of the most famous verses in the Bible; why do you think it's so famous? What makes it so meaningful to so many people?
- Wesley said, however, that many read John 3:16 and stop there, not seeing that God's wrath is the backdrop for His love in 3:16. What is wrath? How do you differentiate wrath from anger?
  - Read verses 18-21. Wesley said that we cannot separate God's love from His wrath; he said that the two form an "intricate dance." Why do Christians shy away from talking about God's wrath? Why does His wrath make us uncomfortable?
  - When is a time that you were really angry? What did it feel like? How do you distinguish between righteous anger and sinful anger?
  - What makes God's anger different than normal, human anger?
  - The passage describes why God is angry in verses 19-20. For what reasons is God angry? What is the basis of God's judgment on humans?
  - If the basis of God's judgment is humanity's rejection of the light which they all have access to, what does this say about the nature of God's wrath?
  - What does verse 20 say about those who hate the light? Why do they hate it? What makes all of our works apart from the grace of God so wicked?

- Verse 21 says that those who are in the light have works that are carried out by God. What do you think this means? What does it look like to have works carried out by God?
- In light of verses 18-21, then, how does God's wrath relate to God's love?
- Wesley showed that even though wrath is the backdrop of this passage, love is still the main idea. How would you define love? What is the difference between "loving" something and merely "liking" something?
  - What does it say about God that He "loved the world"?
  - What does it say about God that He loved us even though we were shot through with evil and sin?
  - What is the role of Jesus in verses 16-17? Why is it important that we see Jesus as the focal point of salvation?
- What does it mean to "believe" in Jesus? How is belief similar to or different than intellectual assent? How is it similar to or different than emotional conviction?
  - Wesley said that the passage, literally translated, would say "that whoever believes *into* him..." What is the significance of the word "into"? How does this change how we think about belief?
  - In what ways do we make belief intellectual or emotional only, instead of experiencing it as a whole-being union with Christ?
  - What does it look like to practice our union with Christ? How can we experience our union with Him tomorrow as we go about our day?