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NT 615: Biblical Exegesis

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Duvall Assignment 1-1

John 3:16

NIV

16 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.

NKJV

16 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.

ESV

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

NLT

16 “For this is how God loved the world: He gave[a] his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.

MSG

16 “This is how much God loved the world: He gave his Son, his one and only Son. And this is why: so that no one need be destroyed; by believing in him, anyone can have a whole and lasting life.”

It is interesting to see that NIV, NKJV, and ESV have very similar translations of John 3:16. The only difference in these three is how they describe Jesus as God's son. While NKJV and ESV mentions that Jesus is the "begotten/only son," NIV goes further to mention that Jesus is the "one and only son." Both NLT and MSG follow the phrasing of NIV here. In all honesty, besides these two differences, each translation's rendition of John 3:16 seems to carry the same message. It comprises 4 parts: 1) God's love for the world, 2) God's love expressed through his Son Jesus, 3) anyone that believe this message, 4) the result of believing is eternal life. The only major difference is that, while all other translations simply mention "eternal life," MSG mentions that it is a "whole and lasting life." It's interesting how MSG mentions a life that is whole (most likely meaning whole in the sense of complete/fulfilled) and "lasting." Clearly, "lasting" has a similar yet different meaning from "eternal." Because of it, MSG seems to give a different result of what happens when we believe in Jesus. It may be lasting, but does not give guarantee that it is everlasting ("eternal").