

# To All Who Receive Him

## John 1:9-13

As we have already seen in this remarkable prologue, John teaches us some things that we might miss if we only read the three synoptic accounts, namely that Jesus Christ is the eternal, preexistent, second person of the Trinity, “the Word.” John has described Jesus as one Who eternally lives outside of time, Who created time, and Who graciously entered time. The greatest man who ever lived up until the time of Christ, John the Baptist, John says is not the Light, but the true luminary of the world is Jesus, the incarnate Word. In the verses we studied today, John describes how the world and the church reacted to his appearance when He came.

9 The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. 10 He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. 11 He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. 12 But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, the gave the right to become children of God, 13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

### I. The world ignored Him (vv. 9-10)

In John’s gospel and epistles, normally the word “world” means the fallen, dark order of things. (See John 14:17, 22, 27, 30; 15:18-19; 16:8, 20, 33; 17:6,9,14).

John says the world’s rejection of Jesus is reprehensible because:

1. Jesus has enlightened the world (who does not recognize Him), both in nature and in grace. Jesus is the One by Whom we know everything, and He is also the only One through Whom we receive salvation.
2. Jesus has visited the world (who has ignored Him). We may say that we weren’t here when He came, but the fact is that there are hundreds of reliable witnesses who have left their testimony. We believe what we read about Julius Caesar and Alexander the Great, but we actively suppress the supernatural stories that we read about Jesus Christ, because of our fleshly hidden agenda.
3. Jesus has created the world. Paul says in Romans 1:19-20 that we have no excuse because God’s eternity and power are revealed in creation, but the greatest physical evidence of God’s existence is our own existence!

### II. The church rejected Him (vs. 11).

When John says, “he came to his own and his own people did not receive him,” he is referring to the Jewish people, not because of their ethnicity but because of their intimacy with God. They were His people.

Their rejection of Messiah is especially reprehensible because:

1. Jesus came especially to them. Jesus presented Himself to them by signs and wonders; He fulfilled the words of the prophets; He taught them and healed them and loved them and their children. He lived among them. Yet they still rejected Him.
2. Jesus possessed them. Literally John says he came to “his own things,” making clear that His people are His own special treasure. How could His own special people reject Him?

### III. Jesus neither ignores nor rejects us, but makes us children of God (vv. 12-13).

This is the most amazing truth of our verses today. Even after Jesus had been rejected by the world and by His own covenant people, He graciously receives those who will come to Him and makes them God’s children. Notice how amazing this is, for two reasons:

1. We possess extraordinary privileges. To be God's child means that we are intimately loved, securely protected and provided for, sharing His "DNA," and guaranteed a glorious inheritance.
2. We are made His children by extravagant grace. It is not enough for God that He forgives all of our sins and receives us when we turn back to Him, but He is the one who turns us in the first place! John says that we are children by virtue of a miraculous birth, and John uses the analogy of birth that we might understand that we had nothing to do with it but the sin that made it necessary! We are born into God's family not ultimately because we chose to do so, but because God chose us and gave us birth. Some might wonder how it can be true that God sovereignly gives us birth and we also are responsible for committing ourselves to Him. One need only look at the gracious invitation that Jesus gives in Matthew 11:27-30 to see that both of these things are true: Jesus invites us to come to Him (vv. 28-29), and Jesus also is the only one Who can reveal the Father to us (vs. 27). What seems contradictory to the rationalist is consistent to the biblical believer. Praise be to the Lord for His amazing grace!

### Discussion Questions

1. Why did the world neither recognize nor acknowledge Jesus as Lord when He came?
2. Why did the church not receive Him when He came?
3. How does the church today at times not welcome Christ into our lives?
4. What is most amazing to you about verses 12 and 13?
5. What does it mean that we are "born of God?"

### Going Deeper

1. Has your life been fundamentally changed by receiving Jesus Christ? How so?
2. In what ways do you still need to appropriate in your life the privileges of being God's child?