

WHAT IS IT TO RECEIVE CHRIST

JOHN 1:10-13 • TV154A

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John 1:10-13

“He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”

I would like for you to open your Bible with me to the **Book of John**. I will be speaking today from **John chapter 1: verses 10 through 13**. I am going to read verses **10, 11, 12, and 13**.

Now, here is our subject: **“WHAT IS IT TO RECEIVE CHRIST?”**

My purpose this morning is not just to cry, “Believe, believe.” I want to tell you what it is to believe. My purpose today is not just to cry “receive Christ, receive Christ.” You have been told to receive Christ and you know to receive Christ.

But, let me ask you this; what is it to receive Christ? Just what does the Scripture mean when it says, *“to as many as received him, to them gave he the power (right or privilege) to become sons of God.”* **WHAT IS IT TO RECEIVE CHRIST?** That is our subject.

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Let's read the Scripture found in **John chapter 1 beginning with verse 10**: John writes; *"He was in the world and the world was made by him and the world knew him not."* We are talking about Jesus Christ our Lord.

He was in this world and this world was made by Him and the world didn't know Him. *"He was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief."* The world didn't know Him.

"He came unto his own," that is His own people, the Jews, His own things. *"He came unto his own and his own received him not,"* His own temple, His own sacrifices.

Notice this: *"As many as received him, to them gave he power; (that word is the right or the privilege, the glorious, blessed, privilege) to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name which were born not of blood, not of the will of the flesh, not of the will of man, but of God."*

Now, here is the question: "What is it to receive Christ?" But, before we take up that matter of our receiving Him, there is another very important matter to discuss. I think it is the most important matter of all, and it is this: It is not my receiving Christ, but Christ receiving me; it is not this sinner accepting Him, but Jesus the Lord accepting this sinner.

Now, this is Scriptural. All the way through the Book, through the Word of God, we are told that before sinners receive Christ, Christ receives sinners. Before sinners call on Christ, He calls on them. Before they seek Him, He seeks them. Before they call on Christ, He by His Spirit has called upon them. That is so!

Abraham, God found Abraham down among a people who were idol worshippers and He called Abraham and He said; *"Abraham; get thee out of thy father's house and go to a land that I will show thee."* Abraham heard God and followed God.

"Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord." Even Moses when he prayed, said; *"Lord, if I have found grace in thy sight, show me thy way."*

We do love Christ. Peter said, *"Lord; you know all things; you know that I love you."* John tells us, *"We love him because he first loved us."*

"Herein is love; (here is the definition of love, the description of love), not that we love God but that God loved us and gave his Son to be the sacrifice and mercy seat for our sins. We love him because he first loved us."

"A man can receive nothing except it be given him from heaven." So, that is the most important matter to discuss and to consider; it is Christ that receives sinful men.

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Sinners do receive Christ and that is what I am talking about. We do receive Him because He receives us! Who loved whom? He loved us first and then we love Him.

How does Christ receive sinners? We talk about sinners receiving Christ and in the song “**Christ Receiveth Sinful Men;**” just how does Christ receive sinners?

First of all: The Scripture tells us that He received them as a gift from His Father. He said, *“All that my Father giveth me shall come to me and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. I came down from heaven not to do mine own will but the will of him that sent me.”*

“This is the will of him that sent me that of all which the Father hath given me I will lose nothing but raise it up again at the last day.” Where did Christ receive His people? The Father gave them to Him.

Secondly: Another answer to that question is this: He purchased them; He bought them. That’s right! He paid for them; *“you are not your own; you are bought with a price.”*

Our Lord Jesus Christ bought His people. He said; *“I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and am known of mine and I lay down my life for the sheep.”*

He purchased us; He redeemed us with His own blood. We are His not only by God’s gift but by His purchase.

Thirdly: Where does Christ receive sinners?

He receives them from the Holy Spirit who calls them to Him. That’s right! The Holy Spirit calls us; we are called of Christ Jesus. *“You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sin.”*

He said, *“Whom he foreknew, he predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son. Whom he predestinated he called, and whom he called, he justified, and whom he justified he glorified.”*

So, when we are talking about receiving Christ, the first thing we must consider is that Christ receives us. He receives us before we receive Him. He seeks us before we seek Him. He loved us before we loved Him.

His love was the first. His seeking was the first. But now, here is what we are saying; His people do come to Him. He said, *“All that my Father giveth me shall come to me.”* He said, *“My sheep hear my voice and they follow me.”*

There are two marks of a sheep, He is branded on His ear and He is branded on His foot. He hears the voice of His shepherd. He hears the voice of the Master and He follows the Master. They will hear and they will come.

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“All that my father giveth me shall come to me and him that cometh, I will in no wise cast out.” God does seek them but they seek Him also. God does call them but they call Him also; *“Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”*

David wrote in the **Psalms, 110 verse 3**: *“Thy people shall be willing; (they are His people), but they shall be willing in the day of thy power.”*

Our Lord told His disciples in **Mark 16:15** to *“go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. He that believeth not shall be damned.”*

So, they do come, they do come to Christ. They do believe on Him and they do receive Him. That is what our text is saying; *“He was in the world; (He made this world), but the world didn’t know him.”*

“He came unto his own, (to His own temple, people, ceremonies and law, unto the things that were types of Him). They would not and did not receive Him, “but as many as received him, to them gave he the privilege, the right to become the sons of God.”

Here is the question and I want to deal with it as plainly as I can and as simply as I can. I think we need to simplify our message. Paul said, *“I tremble and I am greatly concerned about you, (talking about the church at Corinth), lest Satan through his subtlety as he deceived Eve should take your minds from the simplicity of Christ.”*

I am going to deal with this question as simply as I know how: “What is it to receive Christ?” What is it to come to Christ? I will give you four or five answers; listen carefully:

First of all: To receive Christ is to be convinced of the reality of Christ!

In **Hebrews 11:6**, the Scripture says; *“But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is.”* He that cometh to God, he that cometh to God and receiving Christ, (coming to Christ, and believing on Christ, and embracing Christ and laying hold of Christ), are the same things.

To come to Christ is to come to God, if any man comes to God, he must believe that God is. He must believe in the reality of Christ. Christ is not a myth, He is a person. Christ Jesus is not an influence or an idea, He is a person. He must believe that Christ is and that *“he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”*

Paul said in **Romans 10**; they can’t trust an unknown Christ; they cannot trust an unrevealed Christ. A man must have some information, some knowledge, and some understanding of who Christ is.

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Now, listen to Paul in **Romans 10**: He tells us; *“Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”* He says in the next verse: *“How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed, and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?”*

I am saying that all saving faith is founded upon knowledge and some understanding. In other words, who is Jesus Christ, who is Jesus Christ?

Well, they said *“He is the carpenter.”* Some said that he is an *“unlearned man,”* He didn’t go to school. They called him different names; *“He’s a winebibber, a gluttonous man,”* and so-forth.

Who is Jesus Christ? He asked his disciples; *“Who do men say that I the Son of man am?”* They said, *“Well, people are out there saying that you are John the Baptist or one of the prophets.”*

He said, *“Whom do you say that I am?”* Peter said, *“Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.”* Who do you say that Jesus Christ is? I say that He is “very God of very God.” I say, He’s very God; He is God in human flesh. He is God incarnate.

What did he do? Well, Paul said; *“He came into the world to save sinners of whom I am chief.”* He came into the world and was *“tempted and tried in all points as we are, yet without sin.”* By His obedience He made His people righteous.

Our Lord Jesus came into the world, obeyed the law of God, was crucified on a cross, was buried and rose again and ascended back to heaven. Why did He do that?

Well, the Scripture says, in order that, *“God may be just and justifier.”* In order that God may be reconciled to sinners, in order that our sins might be put away, in order that by His stripes we may be healed, in order that we might have a perfect righteousness before the law and have a perfect holiness before God’s justice. That’s why He did it.

Where is He now? Is He in the grave in Jerusalem? Where is He now? Is He in some mystic place between heaven and hell? Where is He now? The Scripture says, *“He’s at the right hand of God”* where He is our Great High Priest, where He is our only Mediator.

So, I am saying that in order for a man to come to Christ or to receive Christ, He must have some understanding of who Jesus Christ is and why He came into this world and what He did and where He is now.

You can’t trust an unrevealed Christ. Faith must have a fixed object. Coming to someone indicates that there’s someone to whom we can come. We must believe in the reality of Christ.

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Listen to **1 John 5:20**: *“And we know, we understand that the Son of God has come and hath given us an understanding that we may know him that is true and that we are in him, that is even in his Son Jesus Christ, and this is the true God and this is eternal life.”*

You see, my friends; conviction of sin is founded upon a knowledge of the law. Paul said, *“I would not have known sin, except the law said, thou shall not covet.”*

Paul is saying, I didn't understand sin. I didn't understand the nature of it; I didn't understand the depth of it; I didn't understand the exceeding sinfulness of it, until the law taught me what sin is. So, conviction has to be based upon understanding of the law.

Then, repentance is born of knowledge of my sin, not a general knowledge of everybody else's sin. David said, *“My sin is ever before me, against thee and thee only have I sinned.”* A man will not repent until he in his own eyes becomes an offender, until he becomes a sinner.

From knowledge is the basis; understanding is the basis of any act. We act on our understanding. We act on our knowledge and faith is born of knowledge of Christ.

In **2nd Timothy 1:12**, Paul says; *“I know whom I have believed and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day.”*

You see; faith is not just some mystic, unknown performance of an experience, or a feeling, or an emotion; faith is based on facts: who Christ is, what Christ did, why He did it, and where He is now.

Just like the woman with the issue of blood; she knew her need. She knew that no one else could meet that need. She spent everything that she had. She wasted her life's savings and was no better. She had no one to help her.

She found out about Christ. She said, *“If I can get to him and but touch his garment; I shall be made whole.”* She made her way to Christ based on her understanding of her need, her inability, the inability of anyone else to help her, and the ability of Christ to meet that need. She came to him and *“she was made whole.”*

I am saying this to you; what is it to receive Christ? It's not just some strange, religious, emotional, experience. It's not just some feeling that makes you feel strange or wonderfully good and so-forth; it is knowledge and understanding of the reality of the Lord Jesus Christ, the reality of my sin, and my need, and my inability, and His power to do all that He says; His power to perform all that He has promised.

Secondly: What is it to receive Christ?

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To receive Christ is to rest entirely upon the testimony of His Word, as infallible and unquestionable. You remember that; that is important; to receive Christ is to rest upon the testimony of His Word as infallible and unquestionable.

Now, let me ask you something and you think about this: what is our one source of information and revelation concerning Jesus Christ and salvation?

You think about that a moment! What is the one source about His deity? How do we know that He is God; His eternal existence? How do we know that He is always near?

His incarnation. You say, "God became a man." Who told you that? His life and obedience, His death on the cross, His resurrection, his ascension, His mediating work, His return, His coming again, where did you learn these things?

There's only one source and that is the Word of God. That's the only source of information. That's the only source of revelation. If you put a question mark on His Word then you have no foundation for your faith.

How do you know that God will forgive sin? Well, I just believe He will. Well, who told you that? Do you know how I know He will forgive sin? He said it in His Word.

How do I know that Christ is "*the way, the truth, and the life?*" He said it in his Word. That is the only way I can know it.

Listen to **1 John: 5: 10, and 11:** Now, in the preceding verses John says, "*If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater.*" God cannot lie. Man can lie and will lie and does lie. All men are liars but God cannot lie.

Listen to this: "*He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself. He that believeth not God hath made God a liar because he believeth not the record that God hath given of his Son.*"

What is the record? It is His Word; that is the record: "*Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God.*" That's the record; "*and this is the record that God hath given to us eternal life and that life is in his Son.*"

Isaiah said, "*If they speak not according to the word (according to the prophets), it is because there is no light in them.*"

Now, Satan's policy, always has been and is now and always will be, is to put a question mark on the Word of God. If he can make you doubt God's Word, he can shake your foundation because that is the foundation of your faith.

Satan's policy is to put a question mark on the Scriptures. He started that in the Garden of Eden. He said to Eve; "*Yea, hath God said, ye shall not eat of the fruit of the*

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Garden?” She said, “*We can eat any of it except one tree and if we eat that we will die.*” Satan said, “*You shall not surely die.*”

You see; all acts of faith, now listen to this; all acts of faith, all feelings of faith or religion, are just suppositions, suppositions, if they are not based upon Scripture. Now, that’s a fact! To receive Christ is to receive Christ as He is revealed in the Scriptures.

Paul said, upon the deck of that ship; the ship was about to go down and the crew was about to panic. He told them, “*now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of any man’s life among you, but of the ship. For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, Saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me.*”

Now, that is the foundation of faith. You can’t receive Christ or believe Christ or come to Christ except on the basis of one thing and that is the Word of God.

You better watch these preachers, and modernists, and liberals today, who put a question mark on the Word of God. If it’s not all true, none of it is true. “*All Scripture is given by the inspiration of God. All Scripture is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.*”

Now that is a fact! “*Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.*” Scripture is God breathed; it is infallible and it is unquestionable. I believe it because God says so.

Thirdly: To receive Christ is to be assured, to be confident, that all that I need, all that God requires of me, I will find in Christ.

Now, a man has to be assured of that. He’s not coming to Christ unless he assured that all he needs he will find in Christ.

When our Lord preached and fed the multitude of 5,000 they refuted His Words and they rebelled against what He said, and they finally walked off, our Lord turned to His disciples and said to them; “*will you also go away?*”

Peter said, “*Lord; to whom shall we go?*” That is my question: if salvation is not in Christ, where is it to be found? If eternal life is not in Christ, where is eternal life to be found?

It’s not in the law; it’s not in the church. It’s not in men. It’s not in reformation. “*Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life and we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.*”

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A man will not embrace Christ in true saving faith until he is persuaded beyond a shadow of a doubt, in his heart, that all he needs will be found in Christ, because, if I am lacking in any one thing, *“to offend in one point of the law is to be guilty of the whole law.”*

God must receive me as perfect or not at all. God must receive me as complete, or not at all. God must receive me as entirely righteous or not at all.

In **1 Corinthians 1:30** it says; *“Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God, is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.”* It is all in Christ, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.

In **Colossians 2: verses 9 and 10** it says: *“In Christ dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily and you are complete in him.”*

Abraham believed God, *“that he was able to perform all that he promised and it was counted to him for righteousness.”*

Paul said in **2nd Timothy 1:12**: *“He is able to keep that which I have committed to him.”* Again, in **Hebrews 7:25**: *“He is able to save them to the uttermost that come to God by him.”* The apostle Jude said: *“Now, unto him who is able to keep us from falling.”*

But, “I am hungry;” Christ is bread and meat indeed and all I need. “I am thirsty;” Christ is the living water. “I am weary,” and Christ is my only rest. “I am condemned by the law” and Christ is my righteousness. “I am unclean by nature, birth, and practice;” Christ is the fountain open for cleansing. “I am ignorant;” Christ is wisdom.

**“Jesus Christ is made to me
All I need, all I need
He alone is all my plea
He is all I need.**

**Wisdom, righteousness, and power
Holiness forever more
My redemption full and sure
He is all I need.”**

Now, a man who finds in Christ all he needs, he will come. If he finds that *“pearl of great price,”* he will sell all he has and buy that pearl.

That is what I am saying: to receive Christ is to be convinced, assured, beyond a shadow of a doubt, of the reality of Christ. It is to come to Him on the basis of his Word, believing His Word, trusting His Word, infallible and unquestionable, inerrant and verbally inspired. God said it and that’s sufficient.

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It is to find in Christ, all I need, I am perfect and complete in Him. I need nothing to be added by anything or by anyone.

Fourthly: To receive Christ is to receive Him entirely and undivided!

There are two words in our text that are very, very important. All of them are important but there are two specifically that are most important. Now read the text again: *“But as many as received him to them gave he power (the right, the privilege) to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.”*

Here are the two words: Him, Him. This is where so many people miss it; will you listen to me a moment? *“As many as received him,”* not His, not His things, not even His Word or His doctrine.

A man can be versed in the doctrine and miss the person, not as many as receive His ordinances, baptism, and the Lord’s Supper. There are a lot of people who have been baptized who have never received Christ.

It’s not to receive His church or His ministers or His law. It says, *“As many as received him”* Christ personally. I receive Him as my Prophet to reveal God to me. *“He that hath seen me, hath seen my father.”*

“Show us the father,” one of the disciples said. He said, *“If you have seen me you have seen the Father. Have I been so long time with you and you don’t know me?”*

He’s my Prophet; Christ is my Priest to atone for my sins. He’s my King to reign over me. *“To as many as received him”* Jesus Christ to be Prophet, Priest, and King, Lord and Saviour, Master, sovereign ruler, the indwelling Christ, Shepherd, Brother, Friend, and Husband. He is all that I need (Him, Him!).

Bow to a person, not to a doctrine, not a religious experience, not a theology or a denomination. It is to embrace a person.

Now, watch this: *“Even to them that believe on his name, whosoever shall call upon the name; there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.”*

What does a name tell you about a person? It tells you all about him; it tells you all about him. When you call a person’s name you think first of all of his appearance, his personality, his attributes, his characteristics, his reputation, his honesty or dishonesty.

The whole person is included in that name. That’s full of Christ; when we think of Christ you can’t separate Him from His name; His name indicates who He is, *“even to them that believe on his name.”*

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There are a lot of people who would like to have the benefits of Christ but not the person of Christ. To receive Christ is to receive Him.

Last of all: It is to receive Him freely as the gift of God. He is the gift of God.

As I come to Christ:

**“In my hands no price I bring
Simply to the cross of Christ I cling.**

**Could my tears forever flow?
Could my zeal no respite know,**

**These for sin could never atone
Christ must save and Christ alone.”**

I come to Him and I come to Him without offering, or giving, or bringing anything, with no merit of my own, it is all in Him, freely, the gift of God! *“The wages of sin is death, the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”*