

THE SONS OF GOD

JOHN 1:12-13 • TV197B

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John 1:12-13

“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.”

Here is our text today; we are turning to **John the 1st chapter verses 12 and 13**. Let me read the text and then we will talk about the subject:

In **John 1 verse 12-13**, the apostle writes; *“But as many as received him, to them gave he the power, (He gave them the right or the privilege) to become sons of God, even to them that believe on His name; which were born, not of blood, (that is not of inheritance, not a family inheritance) nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but they were born of God.”*

My subject today is this: **“THE SONS OF GOD.”** *“Beloved, now are we the sons of God.”*

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John begins this great book written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. This is where it ought to begin, where all preaching ought to begin, where all writing ought to begin, where all witnessing ought to begin, where all testimonies ought to begin.

He begins this great book written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit with words of praise and glory and adoration for Christ. That is where everything ought to begin. We ought to talk about, not ourselves, but Christ, not our works, but Christ.

You know, it says in **John 12:41**; *“When Isaiah saw his glory he spake of him.”* If we ever see the glory of Christ, the true redemptive glory of Christ, we will sing of Him, we will preach of Him, and we will witness about Christ. We will think on Christ when we see His glory.

So, he begins by praising and glorifying the Lord Jesus Christ. Look at **verse 1**: He says, *“In the beginning.”* He is starting his book, his message, he says, *“In the beginning was the Word.”*

Now, Christ is called the **“Word of God,”** capital W-o-r-d, the Word of God that is the communication. What are words? Words are vehicles of thought. In order for us to understand what is in the heart of a man, he has to speak to us, he has to express himself.

Christ is the expression of God. Christ is the communication of God. Christ is that prophet; He is that prophet from everlasting to everlasting. It says, *“In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God.”* He said, *“Glorify me with the glory which I had with Thee, Father, before the world was.”*

Jesus of Nazareth was with God and He was God. He said, *“I and My Father are one.”* The Father, speaking of the Son, said; *“Thy throne O God is forever.”* Again, He said to His disciples; *“he that hath seen me hath seen the Father.”* Again, Paul wrote in **Philippians 2:6**; *“He thought it not robbery to be equal with God.”*

So, this is what we are saying when John starts this book off about the sons of God, he takes us to where we ought to start everything, he takes us to the source of life, to the fountain of all mercies, he takes us to Christ.

You see, he doesn't start with man, he starts with Christ. He says, *“In the beginning was the Word,”* (that is the communication of God, the expression of God, the exact image of God). *“In the beginning was the Word and he was with God and he was God.”*

And then he goes on and says, *“all things were made by him and without him was not anything made that was made.”*

Jesus Christ our crucified, buried, risen, seated, Redeemer and Mediator, is the creator of all things. We have one God, (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit). But, every expression of

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God, every revelation of God, every manifestation of God has always been and always will be Jesus Christ.

If you see Him, you see the Father. If you know Him, you know the Father. If you don't know Him, you can't know the Father. *"No man has seen God at any time. No man knows the Father but the Son and he to whom the Son will reveal him."*

Listen to **Colossians 1:14**: *"In Him, (that is in Christ) we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins."*

He identifies who we are talking about. He says, *"Who is the express image of the invisible God."* Do you see that? You need to look at that. We have just been saying, "Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, all our lives; believe in Jesus, accept Jesus." We don't even know who He is.

He said; listen again, *"In Him, (that is Jesus Christ) we have redemption,"* forgiveness, pardon, and eternal life. Redemption is not through His example but it is through His blood. It's not through His birth in the manger; the baby in Bethlehem's manger can't save anybody; it is Christ on the cross that saves.

It is Christ in the tomb; Christ raised and ascended as the priest, at the right hand of God through His blood, *"even the forgiveness of sin, who is the express image of the invisible God."* He is the *"first born of every creature, for by Him were all things that are made, whether in heaven or earth, or under the earth, whether they are visible or invisible, whether they are principalities or powers; they were all made by Him."*

That is the way that John starts this great Book. Somebody said, "Read the **book of John**." Yes; start with the first verse and read it but don't read any further until you find out who He is because who you are makes no difference; it is who Christ is.

"In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God and all things were made by Him and without Him was not anything made that was made." In Him was life, l-i-f-e. He is the source of life and the light of all men.

Now, look down at **verse 10**; but here is a sad note; He, of whom all of this has been said, who was in the beginning, by whom all things were made, who is life, who is the creator of all things and the upholder of all things, *"in Him we live and move and have our being. By Him all things consist."*

Everything has been turned over to Christ. The Father has put everything in the hands of Christ. He said, *"All things are delivered unto me of my Father."*

And He was in this world; He actually took up residence in this world. He actually came to this planet. He actually was born of a woman and *"was made in the likeness of sinful flesh and was born under the Law."* He was actually in this world, He was in this world.

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The world was made by Him; do you see **verse 10**? The world fell at His feet and honored Him and crowned Him. No sir! The world didn't know Him. Isn't that astounding? *"He was in this world and the world knew Him not."*

Light has come into the world but *"men love darkness."* Life was manifested but death is preferred. He said, *"You will not come to me that you might have life."* You just won't do it.

In **1 Corinthians 2:8**, Paul said *"None of the princes of this world this world knew (that is, none of the religious or government leaders knew), for had they known it, they wouldn't have nailed Him to a cross."*

"But, eye hath not seen, and ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered the heart of men, the things that God has prepared for them that love Him."

This is a sad note; **verse 10** says, *"He, (of whom all of this is spoken), was in this world and the world didn't know Him."* Now; look at **verse 11**: Here is even a sadder note; *"He came to His own and His own received Him not."*

What is that saying? That is saying that He came to His own people, Israel. He was born of the race of Abraham. He was born of the tribe of Judah. He was born of the family of Jesse. He was born of the household of David. He was the rightful heir to the throne of Israel.

He came down here, born in Bethlehem, as the prophet said He would, to the throne as the rightful heir of through Mary and Joseph. He came unto His own and they didn't receive Him, even His own people. They said, *"We will not have this man reign over us. We have but one king and that is Caesar. We have no king but Caesar; crucify this imposter."*

He came unto His own city Jerusalem; they wouldn't even let Him die in His own city. They took Him outside the walls and nailed Him to a cross.

He came to His own synagogue and stood, and they cast Him out and would have thrown Him off of a cliff. They were going to murder Him.

He came unto His own prophecies. He is that Prophet. He is the Branch; He is the Lord our Righteousness.

He came to His own promises, the seed of woman. He came to His own types; *"to Him give all the prophets witness."* They all turned thumbs-down on Him. *"He came unto His own and His own received Him not."*

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“There was no room in the inn.” You can apply that to everything else from that day forth, *“no room in the inn,”* no room in the temple, no room in the government, no room on the streets, no room in the city, no room in the hearts of men, for the King of Kings and Lord of Lords; *“He was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief.”*

“We hid as it were our faces from Him. There is no beauty that we should desire Him. He hath no form or comeliness.” Yet; *“He was wounded for our transgressions.”*

But, in the midst of all this darkness; (now listen), in the midst of all this, John takes you back, He said, *“In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God and all things were made by Him. Without Him was not anything made that was made.”*

He was in this world and the world didn’t know Him. *“He came unto His own (people, city, things, tabernacles, temple, and prophecies), and they received Him not.”* They wouldn’t receive Him.

But, watch it, in the midst of this darkness, there is a ray of light, a beautiful, splendid, ray of light. In the valley of dry bones there is a promise of life, there is a rustling in the valley of dry bones.

But, *“The world knew him not. His own received Him not.”* But, in **verse 12**; *“as many as received him, to them gave he the right, (the glorious privilege) to become sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.”*

This is the promise of God. *“To them gave he the privilege to become sons of God.”* That is God’s gift. *“This is the record; God hath given us eternal life. The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life.”* This is the highest calling, the power, the right, the privilege, to become sons of God.

The world; they are not sons of God, oh no, no. The world didn’t know Him. Even His own nation, they are not sons of God. Paul said, *“Because you are a son of Abraham, that doesn’t mean that you are a son of God.”*

Our Lord said to many of those sons of Abraham, *“you are of your father the devil.”* That is what He said; *“you are of your father the devil and his works you will do.”* He is a liar from the beginning and so are you.

But, those who receive Him, those who believe Him, those who are born of God, are sons of God. There is no need for that to be misinterpreted. There is no need for that to be misunderstood. There is no need for that to be taken into this view of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man.

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There is a sense in which we are all brothers because our daddy is Adam, it's not because our father is God. We are all brothers and we ought to act like brothers, black, white, red, yellow, or whatever; it is because we have the same daddy, but it is not God, it is Adam. We are from Adam and he is our father and we are all brothers in that sense.

But, all men are not sons of God, according to the Scripture and that is what we are going by. He said, *"He came into the world and the world didn't know Him. He came to His own and they wouldn't receive Him."*

But, *"As many as received him and to them that believe on Him, to them gave He the right and the privilege and the power to become sons of God."*

Then, over here in **1 John chapter 3**, this same apostle said; *"behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called sons of God. It does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear, we will be like him, (because beloved), now are we the sons of God."*

Now, here is the question, are you listening; who are these people, who are these men and women who have such a glorious privilege, such a glorious right to become sons of God, who are they?

Well, there is no need; there is no need for us to be in the dark. Like Paul says all the time; *"I would not brethren that you would be ignorant."* I would not have you to be ignorant, there is no need to be ignorant, to be rebellious, yes, but not ignorant.

Being rebellious and ignorant are two different things. Most of us are pretty rebellious but we don't have to be ignorant. He tells us, now listen to it; *"as many as received him, (to them that believe on Him, to them who are born of God), He gave them the right to become sons of God."*

Those are the characteristics. There are three things there clearly stated; now listen to it again: He came into the world and the world didn't know Him. His own wouldn't receive Him, *"but as many as received Him, to them, (and to them only), gave He the right, (the privilege), to become sons of God, even to them that believe on his name, who were born."*

It's not because their daddies were sons of God are they sons of God. It's *"not of the will of the flesh, not of the will of man,"* but they were born sons of God, born of God.

I am a son of my father in the flesh because I was born to him by my mother. I am a son of God because I received, and believed on Him, and was born of God.

Let's take them one at a time and look at them; do you care to? All right, let's look at the first one:

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First of all: *“But, as many as received Him.”*

Now, there is a whole lot; now listen to me; there is a whole lot more involved in receiving Christ than this business of raising your hand, a whole lot more.

There’s a whole lot more to this business of receiving Christ than walking down an aisle and shaking a preacher’s hand, a whole lot more.

There’s a whole lot more to this business of receiving Christ than this thing of “I accepted Jesus as my personal Saviour.”

Among other things; (are you interested), among other things our Lord occupies a three-fold office. If you will read the Old Testament there is a three-fold office which promises, prophesies, typifies and pictures Christ.

It is the office of Prophet, Priest, and King. Those who receive Him receive Him as He is; they receive Him in His person, in His character, and in His office.

You can’t receive a third of a Christ or two-thirds of a Christ; you must receive the whole Christ, for who He is. Now, that is true, that is so! We receive Him as Prophet, Priest, and King, in His character, and in His office.

First of all: He is that Prophet.

Every prophet of the Old Testament typified that Prophet. Moses said, *“The Lord Himself shall raise up from among you that prophet and Him you shall hear.”*

When the Lord Jesus came, they kept asking Him; *“are you that prophet?”* The Father gave the answer when the Lord Jesus was on the Mount of Transfiguration, He said; *“this is my Son; hear ye him,”* listen to Him.

He said, *“Verily, verily, I say unto you; he that heareth my Word and believeth on him that sent me hath everlasting life and shall not come into condemnation.”* You have to hear from Him; He is the Prophet.

The prophet does what? He reveals; *“God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake to our fathers by the prophets; hath in these last days spoken to us by His Son.”* If you hear Him, you hear God; He’s the Prophet. You can’t receive Christ as your personal Saviour and not receive Him as that Prophet, the one who reveals the Father.

Secondly: He’s the Priest.

“He is a Priest forever after the order of Melchisedek.” David started talking about that in **Psalm 110**. He starts talking about the Priest who would come, would be a Priest not

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like Aaron or Levi; he was from the tribe of Judah. *“He was a Priest forever after the order of Melchisedek.”*

Who was Melchisedek? He had no beginning of days or end of days. He had no mother, no father, and no pedigree. He came out of almost nowhere and went right back to the same place. Nobody knew him. *“Christ is that great, high Priest, after the order of Melchisedek.”*

He is the tabernacle where God meets men and men meet God. He is the Priesthood. He is the altar; He is the mercy-seat. He is the sacrifice and He is the atonement. *“By one sacrifice he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified, and sat down at the right hand of God.”*

He is our mediator; *“There is one mediator between God and men and that is the man Christ Jesus.”* If you receive Christ, you receive Him in His Priestly office, my friend, or you don't receive Him at all.

Thirdly: He is King.

This is what the Jews said; *“We don't mind you feeding us.”* This is what the Israelites said; *“We don't mind you healing our sick. We don't mind you feeding us. You are not going to reign over us. We are not going to bow to you as King.”*

You can't have Him as Saviour and not bow to Him as a Lord. You can't have Him as your Saviour and not bow to Him as your King. Christ is no man's Saviour if He is not that man's King.

“If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus to be Lord and believe in thine heart God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.” He said, *“If any man come after me, (now listen, this is the Master talking) let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.”*

“He that forsaketh not all that he hath cannot be my disciple.” Boy; that is a lot more than raising your hand isn't it? That is a whole lot more than walking down an aisle and shaking somebody's hand. That is receiving Christ, *“to as many as received Him.”*

Who is He? He is God's Prophet, God's Priest and God's King. He is King by design. He is King by decree; and He is King by death. *“He died that He might be Lord of the dead and the living.”*

If a man comes to Christ he will come forsaking all others. That's right, mother, father, brother, sister, husband, wife, *“yea, his own life also,”* receiving Christ; *“to them who receive Christ, to them gave He the right to become sons of God.”*

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The next time somebody tells you that all there is to salvation is raising your hand, walking an aisle, or shaking a hand and getting baptized, or accepting Jesus as your personal Saviour; you just tell him, “that is not what Christ said, that is not what Christ said.”

It is receiving Him as Prophet. That means that His Word is the last Word. Priest, (that is His sacrifice) is all that I need for justification, sanctification, redemption, righteousness, holiness, and everything else. I am complete in Christ and He is my King. I bow to no man; I bow only to Christ.

Now, the second mark of the sons of God is that they believe on His name, they receive Him in His person and work and they believe on His name:

How would you define saving faith or believing on Christ? *“He that believeth on the Son hath life. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.”* Let me give you a few answers:

First of all: *“He that cometh to God must believe that he is, that he is, and he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”*

You can’t come to a myth. You can’t come just to a historical character. You can’t come to somebody in whom you don’t believe, you have to believe that He is the reality of God, the existence of God, and the power of God. *“God is the rewarder of them that diligently (or earnestly) seek Him.”*

Listen to this: It is to *“believe the record that God hath given concerning His Son,”* that is, the Word of God; *“faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God.”*

You believe what is written. *“These things are written that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ and that believing you might have life through His name.”* That is why they are written.

He said, *“You search the Scriptures; in them you think you have life; they are they which testify of me.”* So; faith believes the record.

Thirdly: It is to repent toward God; it is to change your attitude.

It is to come before God *“with a contrite spirit and a broken heart.”* It is to repent toward God and it is to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, it is to confess Him in baptism.

That’s what Peter said to that crowd at Pentecost; *“repent and be baptized.”* That is something done inwardly and something done outwardly or publicly. Repent toward God, believe on Christ and confess Christ publicly.

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It is to follow Him in obedience. It is to follow Him in righteousness of life. It is to follow Him as a new creature. If any man is in Christ *“he is a new creature.”*

Now, those are all definitions of faith. Here is a clear-cut, to-the-point, three-fold, definition of faith, found in **2 Timothy 1:12**; listen to Paul, he said; *“nevertheless, I am not ashamed for 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 of judgment.”*

There; you have three things. Faith is based on knowledge; *“I know whom I have believed.”*

Paul wasn't arguing about doctrine, he wasn't saying; “I know what I believe, I know what I believe, I don't believe in that, I do believe in that.” That is not what he said, he said; *“I know whom.”* There is a lot of difference in a what and a whom.

He's not saying, “I know when I believed.” He's not taking you back to some little country church or some crack in the floor or some hayloft where he prayed or to some other experience; he is taking you to a person.

He did not say, “I know what I believe and when I believed”, he said; *“I know whom.”* Salvation is in a person, it is the work of a person. It is a vital union with a person. It is a living relationship with a person. It is confidence in a person. *“I know whom I have believed.”*

It's not only knowledge. You can't trust an unrevealed Christ. *“How shall they call on him of whom they have not heard?”* I know who He is; that is what Paul is saying; “I know who He is.” *“I know whom I have believed.”*

I know who He is and I know what He did. He came to this earth born of a virgin, obeyed the Law, died on the cross, and went to glory as my Mediator and Fore-runner. I know who He is and I know what He did. I know why He did it.

He tells you in **Romans 3:26**: *“that God may be just and justify the ungodly.”* Paul said, “I know where He is now, that is no secret, He is on the right hand of God.”

Secondly, faith is confidence. He said, *“I know whom I have believed and I am persuaded.”*

Abraham was persuaded, persuaded that God could do what He said. Paul said, *“I am persuaded; (I am confident, fully confident), that He is able to keep.”*

Not only that, *“He is able to save to the uttermost them that come to God by Him. He is able to keep us from falling. He is able to present us faultless before His glory, His presence with exceeding glory. He is able to raise our vile bodies and make them like His own.”*

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He is able, nothing in regard to God for you, that Christ doesn't supply. Nothing or anything is required that Christ doesn't fulfill; *"He is able,"* by the riches of His grace, abundantly able.

Then, faith involves a committal:

"I know whom I have believed. I am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed." He will keep that which I have committed, privately, personally, and publicly.

I will tell you, I have committed my soul to Christ, my body, my family, my possessions, my past to pardon, my present to provide, and my future to assure. It is all in His hands.

Sons of God receive Christ in His character, person and office. They receive Christ for whoever or whatever He is, whatever He says. Eli said, *"It's the Lord; let Him do what He will."* Job said, *"The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away; praise the Lord."* They received Him and they believed Him.

"Abraham believed God." Noah believed God and built an Ark. Abel believed God and brought a suitable sacrifice. Moses believed God and walked away from a throne out into a desert. Rahab believed God and turned her back on her nation. They believed God.

They commit themselves. Moses committed himself. Abraham committed himself. Noah committed himself. Paul committed himself.

Now, watch this next line in **John 1:13**; It says, *"They were born."* This is the second birth. My first birth was of the flesh, I was born a sinner. This is the new birth, this is the Holy Spirit who is the author of this birth and the Word of God is the seed.

Listen to **James 1:18**: *"Of His own will begat He us."* That is what He says here about the sons of God, they are born but they are not born of blood, that is, of family inheritance. It is not a bloodline. Salvation is not a bloodline back to Germany, England, or wherever your folks came from.

Salvation is a bloodline that goes back to Calvary, all the way back to the Garden of Eden when the first animal blood was shed; that is the bloodline.

We were born not of human blood, not of fleshly inheritance, not of ancestry, not even of the will of man, not even of the will of the flesh. I cannot by willing get anybody saved. *"It is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth but of God that showeth mercy."*

We are born of God:

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**“It took a miracle to put the stars in space
It took a miracle to hang the world in space
But when He saved my soul
Cleansed and made me whole
It took a miracle of love and grace.”**

Who are the sons of God? It is those who receive Him, those who believe Him, and those who are born of God!