

EXPOSITION OF JOHN

Message #6

John 1:9-13

The Gospel of John is an amazing account of who Jesus Christ really is. We saw in the first five verses that John clearly presents to us the fact that Jesus Christ is God. We saw in verses 6-8 that Jesus Christ was announced by a forerunner, a man whose name was John. So the announcement of God coming into the world was fully made. Not only did the Scriptures testify that this event would happen, but John went throughout the promised land and proclaimed that the Kingdom was at hand and that God had arrived on planet earth.

Now the question comes - what went wrong? If God truly did come into this world, why is this world in the shape it is in? If God came to this world, why do we read of brutal murders and crimes? Why are innocent people gunned down, babies aborted and children molested? Why do we see a flaunting of sexual immorality, most of which is an abomination to God? Why do we see so many people who are caught up in religions that actually mock who Jesus Christ really is? If God came to this world in the Person of Jesus Christ what in the world has gone wrong?

As I view it, these verses are designed to answer this question. Jesus Christ did come to this world as God. Jesus Christ was announced as being the King of Kings, but from all worldly assessment, He didn't really become a success story. He didn't appear to make it too big in this world. In fact, even to this day some wonder how could He have been really God and seemingly been such a loser? These verses are very important for what they teach us is this truth:

JESUS CHRIST WAS GOD AND HE DID COME INTO THIS WORLD AND EVEN THOUGH THE MAJORITY OF PEOPLE REJECTED HIM THOSE WHO ARE DESTINED BY GOD TO RECEIVE HIM WILL BELIEVE ON HIM.

John gets into deep doctrine right off the bat. **First**, he plunges into the fact that Jesus Christ is God, in one of the weightier sections of the Bible. **Second**, he presents us with the idea that there are those who are becoming children of God who are doing so because of the sovereign elective decree of God. Don't think for one moment that just because the masses of people are not responding to Jesus Christ that God's program has been thwarted. Nothing could be further from the truth. It is still operative and it is still working.

Now there are a series of eight profound theological realities that John makes in these verses which we want to see concerning Jesus Christ:

THEOLOGICAL REALITY #1 – Jesus Christ was the true light. 1:9a

Jesus Christ actually said the same thing about Himself in John 8:12. **What this actually means is Jesus Christ was and is the true revelation of God to man.** Now the imperfect tense of the verb “was” refers to continual action in the past, present and future time. Jesus Christ did not become the true light when He came into this world; He has always been and already was the true revelatory light. The word “true” is one that means Jesus Christ is the real and genuine light as opposed to what is false and phony. The adjective “true” and the noun “light” each have an

article preceding them, which means Jesus Christ needs to be identified and pointed out as being the only, exclusive, true light. As John Calvin said, this distinguishes Christ “from all others” (*John*, Vol. 17, p. 37). There are so many false lights or false religions that claim they can lead you to God, but Jesus Christ is the only true light who really can. Jesus Christ is the real and genuine way out of your dark sin. He is the only way out of your sin problem. The only way for a sinful mind and heart and life to be cleaned is to get this light into your life. This is why our religion or works cannot ever remove our sin. We aren’t the light, Jesus Christ is the light. Jesus Christ is the real and genuine way for you to have meaning and purpose in life, no matter how dark your past. Listen, no matter how dark or depressing your world is right now, there can be light in your life if you will invite Jesus Christ into your life. He is the only true, exclusive light of God.

THEOLOGICAL REALITY #2 – Jesus Christ came into this world. 1:9b

The coming of Jesus Christ into this world is a fact that every human must face and will face. There is no getting around this - Jesus Christ did come into this world and you can face it now or face Him later.

We believe the phrase "coming into the world" refers to Jesus Christ and not to every man. The KJV connects the phrase to "every man" and the NASV connects the phrase to Jesus Christ. The problem is with the relative pronoun "which" or "that." It may refer to either Jesus Christ who came into this world, or to every man who came into this world. We believe that it refers to Jesus Christ for the following reasons: 1) John uses this often in referring to Christ - 11:27; 12:46; 16:28; 18:37; 2) Context - the very next verse, 10, makes it clear it is referring to Jesus Christ; 3) Logical Sense - it doesn't make sense to refer to every man who comes into this world because there are no other types who come into this world.

The noun “world” “cosmos” (κοσμος) is used some 78 times in this gospel. Most of the time it is used in a very negative way to refer to that sphere of creation that lives in rebellion against God, including its goals, values, education and philosophies which are against God (1:10; 7:7; 14:17, 22, 27, 30; 15:18-19; 16:8, 20, 33; 17:6, 9, 14, 25).

The participle "coming" is a middle voice indicating that Jesus Christ in and of Himself came into this world. In other words, He, Himself made a decision to come to this world that He knew was in rebellion against Him. He was not forced to leave His exalted position in Glory; He did this in and of Himself. He was involved in the action of coming and in the **results** of the action which initially appear to be so negative.

THEOLOGICAL REALITY #3 – Jesus Christ enlightens every man. 1:9c

As John was writing this gospel at the end of the first century, the message of Jesus Christ was reaching out to all nationalities of men. The message of His appearance on earth was spreading out all over the world. Jesus Christ's coming into this world has given some form of enlightenment to every human being. Just Christ's presence on earth brought new light and life here. Every human being is dependent on Jesus Christ and has an innate perception that He is the Light.

When we look through all of history with all of its dark spots, there is one bright shining light. There was one unique Person who did actually live for awhile on this planet. His name is known worldwide. His teachings are recognized worldwide. His miracles are discussed worldwide. His name is Jesus and His coming into this world has brought a light to the minds of the world that He is the only way to be right with God. There is in this verse the truth that every person has some intuitive knowledge of God, but there is also the truth that Jesus Christ brought God's Truth to this world in Person to enlighten every man of every background and nation.

This true light will show every man to be a sinner. When light shines, it brings darkness to light. That is precisely what Jesus Christ does. His righteousness shines on a sinner and shows the sinner what he truly is - one who needs a Savior.

There are many ways God reveals Himself. God reveals Himself in creation (Romans 1:20). God reveals Himself in conscience (Romans 2:15). God reveals Himself in the Person of Christ. There is a supernatural enlightenment that God has accomplished in the whole world so that all men everywhere are without excuse. One of the big enlightenment realities is the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Why don't our relatives or religious leaders come out of their graves? Because they cannot give life to anyone. Only Jesus Christ can give life and if you let His righteous light shine on you, it will show you that you are in need of Him.

THEOLOGICAL REALITY #4 – Jesus Christ was in the world. 1:10a

Deism says that God just created the world and then just left it to run by itself. This verse says God was in the world. It is the most known historical fact in all of history, Jesus Christ was in this world. This world celebrates His birthday and His resurrection. Think of it, God was actually living and walking in this world. Jesus Christ did literally come to this earth. He came in the form of a real person, but He was not your normal person - He was God in the world.

THEOLOGICAL REALITY #5 – Jesus Christ made the world. 1:10b

This point is stressed time and time again in the Bible: John 1:3; Colossians 1:16; I Corinthians 8:6. John had already written Revelation and He had seen and worshipped Jesus Christ as the Creator (i.e. Revelation 4-5). In this verse, John wants to stress the Creator of the world actually came into the world.

Jesus Christ was involved in the creation of everything. God the Father and God the Son in conjunction with God the Spirit created this world. When Jesus Christ came into this world, the Creator was in the world He, Himself, created. You may choose to believe any thing you want about Jesus Christ, but I am telling you this on the authority of Scriptures - the Bible says He is God and He is the Creator of all things.

THEOLOGICAL REALITY #6 – Jesus Christ was not known by the world. 1:10c

This is the ultimate of tragedies - the world did not recognize its own creator. My dogs know me - I didn't make them. My horses know me - I didn't make them. But when God who made the world came to the world - men didn't have a clue. In fact, one time Jesus threatened to have rocks

cry out who He was. Not only did the world not know Him, it didn't want Him. That innkeeper wouldn't house Him; Bethlehem eventually got rid of Him; Nazareth tried to kill Him. That is how dark this world was. The majority of people in this world had no idea who He was. In fact, the majority of people in this world still have no idea who He really is. In spite of the announcement of John the Baptist, in spite of His miracles, people failed to recognize Him as the creator. The one who said "Let there be light" was rejected when He personally brought His light to this world.

For example, John Miles founded GRSBM. He was the school. He designed its courses and was responsible for its campus. A couple of years after he retired, he went back to a graduation service. He sat out in the audience and hardly anyone noticed who he was. He was the one who made that school, but most did not know him. He was the reason for the school's existence and most didn't even acknowledge his existence.

That is what happened to Jesus Christ. He was in the world. The world was made by Him and most people didn't know who He was. Most still don't know. Most don't realize the thing they are looking for and longing for in life is found in Jesus Christ.

THEOLOGICAL REALITY #7 – Jesus Christ was not known or received by His own. 1:11

This is one very depressing verse and there was no excuse for it. 1) Jesus fulfilled very prophecy of lineage, birth, life, death and resurrection; 2) Jesus did all of the signs and wonders miracles consistent with what was predicted; 3) Jesus taught with a power people recognized that was something they had never heard before; 4) Jesus fulfilled every regulation of the O.T. law; 5) Jesus had a forerunner, John, who specifically pointed Him out. Yet they would not receive Him.

There is a difference in pronouns "His own" in this verse, which makes this even more depressing. **The first pronoun translated "His own" is in the neuter gender and the second pronoun "His own" is in the masculine gender. The first pronoun refers to His places and the second His people. The first to His residency and the second His relatives.** The first refers to everything that was His when He came, including land, fields, cities, etc. He came to His own world, His own city Jerusalem and His own Temple and was rejected. The second pronoun refers to the specific people who were His when He came - His own family, and the nation Israel. This should have been a wonderful homecoming. The homecoming King was finally coming home. But when He got here, hardly any body knew Him or wanted Him.

Jesus Christ was God, the Creator, and when He came to the world and land He created and to the people whom were declared to be His in the O.T., they did not receive Him. Of all of the people on earth, the ones who should have received Him should have been Israel. However, they did not receive Him they flat out rejected Him. They were looking for some political deliverer who could free them from the Roman Empire. When Jesus shined His light on their soul, they refused to acknowledge they were poor, wretched, miserable sinners in need of His cleansing. They were hard-hearted, stiff-necked people who would not receive Him.

THEOLOGICAL REALITY #8 – Jesus Christ does make children of God out of those who believe in Him. 1:12-13

In the opening of this chapter we have the Glory of God revealed by Christ coming into this world, but we also have the depravity of man revealed by their rejection of Him. This is why these verses are so critical. Not only was Christ revealed and rejected and resisted, but he was also received.

You will notice that verse 12 begins with a sharp contrasting adversative conjunction “but” (δε not καί). In sharp contrast to those who didn’t receive Him, there are those who do and who will. John is writing this last gospel as an old man and he literally had personally known of thousands who had believed on Jesus Christ. The Greek “as many as” opens the door to all individuals - Jew/Gentile; male/female; adult/child.

Now carefully notice this very important **verse 12 - receiving Christ and believing on Christ are seen as being synonymous**. In other words, to receive Jesus Christ is to believe in Jesus Christ and to believe in Jesus Christ is to receive Jesus Christ. **All you must do to be saved is believe in the name of Jesus Christ to save you**. In fact, Joseph and Mary were specifically ordered to name Him Jesus because “it is He who will save people from their sins” (Matthew 1:21).

In the concept of “believe” there is always a preposition - believe “in” “into” “on” or “upon” something. The thing you must believe in or upon to save you from sin is the name of Jesus Christ. **It is not enough to believe Jesus is “a” Savior, you must believe He is “your” Savior**. You must believe in His name. That name of Jesus is precious and powerful. That name of Jesus has saving power (John 1:12; 2:23; 3:18). You may receive life in His name (20:31). You may pray in His name (John 14:13-14). There is only one person, one name that can save you from your sins and that name is Jesus.

Dr. McGee says to “believe in something” is to place all of your faith in it. He uses the illustration of a chair. He said if he were standing by a chair mentally thinking that chair can hold me, but not really trusting it to, that is not faith. He said faith is when he would believe the chair could hold him and would sit down on it placing all of his weight on it (J. Vernon McGee, *John*, Vol. 4, pp. 373-374). That is exactly what saving faith is - placing all of the weight of your faith in Jesus Christ to save you.

Now Jesus Christ is the only One with the authority to make you a true child of God. That word “right” or “power” is not the word for physical power such as dynamite but it **is the Greek word (εξουσιαν) that refers to authorized legal power or authority** (G. Abbott-Smith, *Greek Lexicon*, p. 161-162). **What this means is that Jesus is the only Person with legal authority to save you and make you a child of God**. You are not a child of God by your works, or religion or church. **You may only become a legal child of God by believing on Jesus Christ, because He is the only One authorized by God to make you God’s legal child**. If you will invite Jesus Christ into your life to be your Savior, He will give you everlasting life because He is authorized to give you eternal Sonship.

Now in order to believe in Jesus Christ there are three beliefs that must be torn down:

- 1) Belief that you are saved automatically because you were born into the proper bloodline.
Just because your parents are authorized children of God by faith, doesn't mean you are.
- 2) Belief that you are saved because of your works or will of your flesh.
Just because a person wishes something or tries to work for something doesn't make it real.
For example, you could wish and work as if you were the child of a millionaire, but that does not make it true. It is delusional thinking.
- 3) Belief that you are saved because you will yourself to be saved.
You may perform all acts of religion - baptism, catechism, tithing, benevolence.
That will not make you an authorized child of God.

Now carefully notice verse 13. People who are born into God's family are not born of natural birth. They are not even born into God's family by their own fleshly works or will. **They are born into the family of God by the will of God.**

To become a child of God is to be the product of a real supernatural intervention of God. You must toss away everything people believe in except the name of Jesus Christ. You are not saved by your obedience, or your attempt to keep the Law, or your works or your promises of repentance; you are saved by faith in the name of Jesus.

And even though the majority of people in the world do not recognize Jesus Christ and even though the majority of people in John's day, when he wrote this gospel, were drifting into bizarre religious thinking, the truth is, the plan of God was still succeeding and does to this very hour.

Jesus Christ came into this world and did accomplish His objective. He is still calling out people for His name. God's elective sovereign hand is still grabbing hold of dirty sinners and bringing them into the family of God. To believe in something is to put your trust and weight in it to hold you up. Will you right now Only Trust Him?