

REJECTION OR RECEPTION?

John 1:6-13

Pastor Keith E. Gephart

INTRODUCTION

What A profound beginning we had to John's Gospel in 1:1-5—"The Word" is God, eternal, separate from the Father, Creator of every thing, Life, and Light. Is it even possible to imagine a more impressive introduction to the Lord Jesus Christ?

Surely, the world must have been anxiously awaiting the revelation of such a magnificent God as their Savior. Certainly, God's special people, Israel must have been prepared for Him and would receive him with open arms. How foolish it would be not to accept Him!

Today, surely, no one would dare to refuse loyal devotion to such a magnificent Son of God.

Such is the hypothetical situation. But what is the reality? How did people respond then, and how do people respond today?

There is an even bigger question. **How have you responded to Him?**

In the words of the Psalmist, "Today, if you hear His voice, harden not your hearts."

We see **three** relationships to the Light of the World in this passage: The Witness to the Light, the Refusal of the Light, and the Welcome of the Light.

I. THE WITNESS TO THE LIGHT (1:6-8)

A. His Person—John

We know from the other gospels that John was the greatest and last of the OT prophets. Yet, he must not be unduly exalted.

1. "Came" (into being—compare "was" in v. 1 of Christ)
2. "Man"—compare "Word" in v. 1
3. Commissioned by God—but not "God"—v. 1.
4. Testified of the light—but not the Light (v. 8)
5. Agent of belief in the Son—but not the Son

B. His Work

1. **Witness**—"Bear witness of the Light" (7, 8)

John speaks of seven witnesses to Christ: John, the Father, Himself, the Spirit, His works, the Scriptures, and various persons such as disciples, multitude, and Samaritan woman. Such elaborate testimony abundantly **substantiates the truth** about Christ. John's word is **reliable!**

2. Call to **belief** in Him (7)

II THE REFUSAL OF THE LIGHT (9-11)

A. The **true** light—genuine and true (not merely faint glimpses etc.)

1. "Coming into the world"—In OT times (prophecy, types, acts of judgment, etc.) and **at incarnation**.
Continuous shining as the Word.

2. Enlightens **every** man—two main ideas here:

- a. General enlightenment given to the entire race—holds all men accountable—see Rom. 1:19-20.
- b. Context esp. focuses on the light given in the **gospel** message
All get some degree of understanding—many reject.
Some respond by the grace of God.

c. Does not mean that all will be saved! John never says that all will be saved!

3. Deserved a **favorable** Response

- a. In the world
- b. Creator of the world.
- c. Came to His own home. (Cf. Jn. 19:27—took Mary to his house)
- d. Came especially to His own special people—Israel.

B. Response to the Light

1. Did not “know Him.” This expression shows *indifference* by the world.
2. Did not “receive Him.”—welcome him, take Him into “intimate fellowship.

III. THE WELCOME OF THE LIGHT (12-13)

A. The Number—“as many as”—no limit in number or nationality, or location!

B. The Nature

1. “**Received**”—**same basic meaning as verse 11; this group did welcome, take to themselves, accept favorably.**
2. “**Believed**”—exercised faith, entrusted themselves
On—“Loving, self-abandoning faith and trust”
His name—Son of God as He has revealed Himself—His whole person.

C. The Person—Him

D. The Result

1. He gave authority to them—shows Grace of acceptance.
2. He begat them—caused them to be born again (from death into life).
3. He made them “children of God” (sharing the divine nature)

E. The Source of Birth—*three negative statements; one positive statement (v. 13)*

1. Negative:
 - a. Not of “bloods”—i.e. normal procreation via man and woman.
 - b. Not of “the will of the flesh.”
 - c. Not of “the will of man”—esp. of the “male”—covers **any human volition.**

It is impossible for man to bring about spiritual birth. Such is a severe blow to Jewish pride of race—and pride of all other humans.

2. Positive—“**BUT OF GOD.**” It is by a sheer MIRACLE.

CONCLUSION

We have *the witness*. We have observed *the refusals*. We have evidence of *the welcome* all around us in this church and the world.

NOW WHAT WILL YOU DO?

Will you RECEIVE HIM? Will you “BELIEVE ON HIS NAME”?