

Series on John: "Believe"

C.R. 1-20-18

"Responding to Jesus"

Text: John 1: 6-13

Intro: Last week the Apostle John under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit unveiled the gift we have in Jesus. He taught us that Jesus existed before all things existed. He showed us clearly that Jesus was not only with God, but that He was God. We learned that he is life and he is light and all of that was packed into just a few verses. Today John will clue us in to how the witness was given ahead of Jesus and how people responded. The fact is Jesus demands a response. He always has, and He always will. Everyone in this room today will respond to the message of Jesus in one way or another. Let's take a close look at these verses today.

1) The Testimony of John (6-8)

- a. John the Baptist is one of the most polarizing figures in the New Testament.
- b. When he stepped out with the ministry and message that had been entrusted to him there had been 400 years of silence.
- c. John was a Nazarite. Only 3 lifelong Nazarites mentioned in the Bible. Samuel, Samson, and John the Baptist.
- d. A Nazarite had to keep from touching a dead body and could not drink wine. He also had to let his hair grow long. In doing all of this he was proclaiming his affections were on the altar. His love for God eclipsed all lesser loves. He kept his body in subjection. And with his long hair was a message that even my appearance is secondary to my devotion.
- e. Phillips: "In 1500 years of continuous Hebrew history we read only of three who were thus set apart for God. One of them, Samson, failed dismally. The other two, Samuel and John the Baptist were Hebrew Prophets. Samuel was the first of them and John the last.
- f. John was both prophet and priest. A prophet represents God to man; a priest represent man to God.
- g. John was a witness. A witness is called on to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Witnesses are called on to testify what they know.
- h. John was a witness to the light that was stepping into the darkness. He was preparing the way. **(v. 23)**
- i. He made it clear that he was not the light. Just a witness of that light.
- j. Think about sun and the moon. The moon is just a big massive chunk of lifeless rock. A big giant reflector in the sky. Its job is to pick up the light of the sun and relay that light to the Earth. It is not the light. It bears witness to the light.
- k. Our job is the same. Reflect the light. Bear witness to the light.

2) The Rejection of the Light (v. 10-11)

- a. John was astonished at how people so quickly rejected the light and life that had been sent to them.
- b. Think about what Jesus must have felt on a daily basis as people stood face to face with God in flesh and rejected.
- c. **Phillips:** " He walked a hedgerow and plucked a blade of grass. He had created it; he knew about its structure about photosynthesis, about the mystery of a plant's pollination, and germination, and all its complex chemistry. He walked beside the sea of Galilee; he knew the topography of that lake, every deep and shallow place, every pebble on the bottom, each and every fish darting through its waves. The world was made by him; he knew all about astronomy and chemistry, physics, and biology, mathematics and medicine. He knew every law not known to science not because he was the author of them all."
- d. Think about. He made us all. He created us with a purpose in mind. He died himself to redeem us, and yet many still reject Him.
- e. Some reject out of ignorance. Jesus choose and taught and trained 12 men to go into all the world and turn the light on.
- f. **(V.9).** John said that his coming was the light for every man.
- g. Pleading ignorance will not work.
- h. So nobody has a good excuse. What happened was this: People knew God perfectly well, but when they didn't treat him like God, refusing to worship him, they trivialized themselves into silliness and confusion so that there was neither sense nor direction left in their lives. They pretended to know it all, but were illiterate regarding life. They traded the glory of God who holds the whole world in his hands for cheap figurines you can buy at any roadside stand. The Message Romans 1: 20-21
- i. It would be especially hard to plead ignorance in America. With multitudes of Bibles available, the availability of churches, Christian television and radio etc.. we are without excuse.
- j. Even harder for John to believe was that his own received him not. This is Israel's rejection.
- k. The real reason that people reject Jesus is not ignorance it is intolerance.
- l. John MacArthur said it right when he said, "People refuse to come to the light of Jesus Christ because they love their sin and do not want it exposed, they are willfully blind.
- m. The Jews had all the history, all the miracles, all the prophets and prophecy, but they stiffened their necks and rejected the Messiah because he did not fit their mold and their tradition.
- n. Their King would never be born in a stable to someone like Mary and Joseph. Never break any of their traditions like the washing of hands and plucking grain on the sabbath, or heal on the sabbath.
- o. The Jews wanted someone who would raise their standard of living, give them something for nothing, rain down riches without work, grant them privileges without responsibility, restore them to power as in the days of David and Solomon. They

- wanted someone to meet their physical, material and emotional needs. They wanted someone to rid them of the Romans and make them the superpower.
- p. He came to die and to establish the Kingdom of God, not in the world, but in the hearts of men. And for this he was rejected.
 - q. Anne Graham Lotz tells of the time that she received a small pox vaccine before travelling to another country. She said they used a needle to scratch the vaccine into her skin. Not enough to give her smallpox, but so her body could build an immunity against it.
 - r. The Jews had just enough religion to keep them from catching the real thing. They had an immunity to Jesus.
 - s. (Anne Graham Lotz) Many people come to Jesus assuming that because He is able He will answer all their prayers and heal all their diseases and solve all their problems. They come to Him for what they want Him to do for them. When what they want is not His will and He doesn't come through, they reject Him. He's just not what they want.
 - t. Act 2:22 Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:
 - u. Act 2:23 Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:
 - v. Act 2:36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

3) The Reception of the Light. (v. 12-13)

- a. Note the word "but".
- b. Thank God many received the life and light as well.
- c. Note the key words. Believe, Receive, Become
- d. To believe on His name means we must be willing to commit our lives to all that He is as represented by His name. His name is Lord Jesus Christ.
- e. Just believing in his name is not enough. It is a great step for sure to believe, but you must receive him. Not enough to believe that Jesus is a Savior, not enough to believe that He is the Savior, but he must become MY Savior.
- f. The believing and receiving is our part. His part is make us his children. We are "Born again". This is the spiritual birth.
- g. This is God's part. Making us become the children of God. It is a supernatural work of God.
- h. Note V.13. "Not of Blood" not of Natural descent. You did not inherit as saved gene. Because your parents were saved, does not mean you are.
- i. "Not of the will of the flesh" No amount of wishful thinking makes me or you a child of God. I can wish I was a millionaire but then I go to the bank.
- j. "Not of the will of man". Someone else can't tell you are or will it to be so. Infant baptism was just another bath. A pastor can't take you through a class and tell you at

the end of it you are saved. Good work's, sizeable checks, religious duties, but none are enough.

- k. It is a birth. We are born of God. Born again.
- l. Believe, Receive, Become.
- m. Becoming a child of God is not by human will. It cannot be forced on you by anyone else.
- n. It is a personal, individual transaction that you make yourself with God by faith as you meet His conditions. Only then can you be "born of God" into His family, forever.

- o. Dear God,
- p. I want to be sure I am Your child. I bow before You stripped of everything—family heritage, religious affiliation, personal decisions, other people's opinions or desires, public reputation and private goals—everything except my need to be sure I am Your child. I open the screen door of my heart and invite the Lord Jesus Christ to come into the center of my life. I am willing to repent, to turn away from all my sin, and to trust in Jesus alone as the sacrifice substituted on the cross for me. By faith, I believe He makes You visible to me, and I claim Him as my Lord—my Master and Teacher; my Jesus—my Savior from sin and judgment; my Christ—my Ruler and King. Amen.