

HOW TO RECEIVE THE "LIGHT"

John 1:4-13, Internet JOHN01__05LIGHTser.wpd, April 16, 2001

(John 1:4-13), "In him was life; and the life was the light of men. {5} And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. {6} There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. {7} The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. {8} He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. {9} That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. {10} He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. {11} He came unto his own, and his own received him not. {12} 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: {13} Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."



"LIGHT" MUST BE AN IMPORTANT WORD because GOD USED IT TO DESCRIBE HIMSELF:

- **(1 John 1:5)**, "This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that **GOD IS LIGHT**, and in him is no darkness at all."
 - **JAMES CALLED GOD "THE FATHER OF LIGHTS"**
(James 1:17).
 - **PAUL SPOKE OF GOD AS "DWELLING IN THE LIGHT"**
(1 Tim 6:16)
- S **THE PURPOSE** of this message is to **EXAMINE TRUTHS** related to ***SPIRITUAL LIGHT***.
- I. THE **RECOGNITION** OF THE LIGHT
 - II. THE **REASON** FOR THE LIGHT
 - III. THE **REPORT** ON THE LIGHT
 - IV. THE **REINFORCEMENT** FOR THE LIGHT
 - V. THE **REJECTION** OF THE LIGHT
 - VI. THE **RECEPTION** OF THE LIGHT

I. THE RECOGNITION OF THE LIGHT

FOCUS ON FOUR WORDS FROM V. 4

#1. "HIM "

(V. 4), "In HIM . . ."

- S "HIM" is a reference to **JESUS CHRIST**. This passage IS ABOUT JESUS. If we handle this passage accurately, **THIS MESSAGE WILL BE ABOUT JESUS**.
- S (Col 1:18), "... THAT IN ALL THINGS HE MIGHT HAVE THE PREEMINENCE."

#2. "LIFE"

(V. 4), "In him WAS LIFE, . . ."

- S THE LORD JESUS WAS FULL OF LIFE
 - (John 11:25), "... 'I am the resurrection, and THE LIFE: . . .'"
 - (John 14:6), "... 'I am the way, the truth, and THE LIFE: . . .'"
 - (John 10:10), "I am come that they might have LIFE . . ."
- S GOD'S LIFE IS:
 - 1) **ETERNAL**
(John 10:28), "... I give unto them ETERNAL LIFE . . ."
 - 2) **ABUNDANT**:
(John 10:10), "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it MORE ABUNDANTLY."

#1. "HIM"

#2. "LIFE"

#3. "LIGHT"

(V. 4), "In him was life, and that life was THE LIGHT . . ."

- S GOD'S LIFE IS BOTH **ETERNAL and ABUNDANT**. A THIRD ATTRIBUTE OF GOD'S LIFE IS LIGHT. GOD'S LIFE IS LIGHT. The connection between God's *life* and God's *light* is **NOT INCIDENTAL**.
(John 8:12), "... He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have THE LIGHT OF LIFE."

- S THERE ARE DIFFERENT KINDS OF LIGHT (from DWIGHT M. PRATT,

- (1) **NATURAL LIGHT.** – Light from the **SUN, MOON** and **STARS** is natural light. All a person has to do to experience *natural light* is go outside during the day. The difference between night and day is *light* (Gen 1:3-4).

- (2) **ARTIFICIAL LIGHT.** – Our homes are lighted at night by artificial light. We just flip the switch and on comes the light. IN **ANCIENT DAYS** people used **LAMPS** and **CANDLES** as their source of artificial light for night.

- (3) **MIRACULOUS LIGHT.** – **LIGHT** often accompanied **GOD'S APPEARANCES** to man.
 - **BURNING BUSH** (Ex 3:2 - “**flame of fire,**” “**burned with fire**”)
 - **PILLAR OF FIRE** (Ex 13:21; Ps 178.14 - “**light of fire**”)
 - **MOUNT SINAI** (Ex 24:17 - “**glory,**” “**devouring fire**”)
 - **TRANSFIGURATION** (Mt 17:2 - “**shine as the sun**” “**white as the light**”)
 - **GOD'S THRONE** (Ezek. 1:4, 27 - “**fire,**” “**brightness**”)

- (4) **SPIRITUAL LIGHT.** – **SPIRITUAL LIGHT IS THE *LIFE* GOD GIVES** to a person when he is born again by trusting in Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Savior. *Spiritual light* is **THE PRODUCT OF GOD'S SALVATION.** *Spiritual light* originates with God and is not a product of man's ingenuity.
 - **(V. 4), “IN HIM** was life,”
 - **(John 8:12), “. . . I AM THE LIGHT** of the world: he that followeth **ME** shall not walk in darkness, but shall have **THE LIGHT OF LIFE.**”
 - **(Psa 27:1), “The LORD is MY LIGHT** and **MY SALVATION**”

FOUR IMPORTANT WORDS

#1. “HIM”

- #2. "LIFE"
- #3. "LIGHT"

#4. "MEN"

(V. 4), "In him was life, and that life was the light of **MEN**."

- S GOD'S GLORIOUS *LIGHT* IS **DIRECTED TOWARD ALL HUMANITY** ("anthropos"): **men, women, boys & girls.**

- S MANKIND'S **GREATEST NEED IS GOD'S LIFE** and **GOD'S LIGHT** offered through Jesus Christ. **WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS** is JESUS, THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.
 - **SATAN IS NOT THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD**, even though he presents **himself** to be (2 Cor. 11:14).

 - **EDUCATION IS NOT THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.** **MANY FOLKS ARE CONVINCED** that man's **greatest problem** is ignorance, therefore, man's **greatest need** is education. **AS IMPORTANT AS EDUCATION IS**, education is not man's greatest need. They have educated many criminals only to have them reenter society as a smarter criminal, rather than a reformed citizen.

- S MANKIND'S **GREATEST NEED IS GOD'S LIFE** and **GOD'S LIGHT** and THAT *LIGHT* IS **JESUS CHRIST.**

- S **JESUS IS THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD!**
(John 8:12), ". . . I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

I. THE RECOGNITION OF THE LIGHT

II. THE REASON FOR THE LIGHT

(V. 5), ". . . THE DARKNESS, . . ."

- S We need God's *Light* because we live in a world of ***DARKNESS.***

THERE ARE **TWO KINDS** OF DARKNESS:

#1. PHYSICAL DARKNESS

- S WHEN THE **SUN** GOES DOWN and THE **STARS** COME OUT

AT NIGHT, IT IS **DARK!**

(**Gen 1:5**), "And God called the light Day, and **THE DARKNESS HE CALLED NIGHT...**"

S All a person has to do to experience physical darkness is to **TURN THE LIGHTS OUT AT NIGHT.**

#2. SPIRITUAL DARKNESS

S **SPIRITUAL DARKNESS** DESCRIBES EVERY PERSON'S **CONDITION** who **EXISTS WITHOUT** Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior. **Every person** that has never experienced God's eternal life is in spiritual darkness.

1) **WE** were in *spiritual darkness* **BEFORE COMING TO CHRIST:**

- (**Eph. 5:8 nkjv**), "For you **WERE ONCE DARKNESS**, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light"

2) **THE WORLD** is in *spiritual darkness* apart from Christ:

- (**1 John 5:19**), "... **THE WHOLE WORLD lieth in wickedness.**"

S THAT **SPIRITUAL DARKNESS** IS THE EXPLANATION for all the spiritual **stumbling** and **tripping** in the world today. **WHEN WE** walk in darkness without a light, it is **inevitable** that we stumble.

S From **age 10 to 17**, I slept in **A BASEMENT** where there were no windows. It was so physically dark in that basement at night that it gave darkness a bad name. Visiting cousins who slept in the basement would occasionally wake up in the morning and not know the sun had come up.

Walking through that basement at night was particularly **PERILOUS** when the lights were off. It was very easy to crash into something because you could not see anything in that darkness.

S **LISTEN TO JESUS**

(**John 12:35**), "... Walk while you have the light, before darkness overtakes you. **THE MAN WHO WALKS IN THE DARK DOES NOT KNOW WHERE HE IS GOING.**"

S WE MUST HAVE LIGHT TO SEE CLEARLY. IN LIKE MANNER we must have the *Light of Life* to steer through this world of darkness.

- I. THE RECOGNITION OF THE LIGHT
- II. THE REASON FOR THE LIGHT

III. THE REPORT ON THE LIGHT

(V. 5), "And the light shineth in darkness; and THE DARKNESS COMPREHENDED IT NOT."

THE GREEK WORD FOR "COMPREHENDED" is "KATALAMBANO." "Lambano" means "to take," or "to receive." *Katalambano* appears 15X's in the N.T. As you study those different occurrences, it is evident *katalambano* has more than one meaning. In fact, IT HAS TWO MEANINGS. Those different meanings are reflected in the different translations.

#1. J. B. PHILLIPS TRANSLATION and NRSV

(V. 5, PHILLIPS), "The light still shines in the darkness, and the darkness HAS NEVER PUT IT OUT."

(V. 5 NRSV), "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness DID NOT OVERCOME IT."

- S JOHN 12:35 REFLECTS THAT MEANING:
(John 12:35), "Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness COME UPON you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth."
- S That verse gives THE IMPRESSION that *darkness* is always near by sitting in wait. DARKNESS IS ALWAYS LOOKING FOR AN OPPORTUNITY to POUNCE upon the *light* and *put it out*.
- S THE BAD NEWS IS that DARKNESS ALWAYS LOOKS FOR AN OPPORTUNITY TO EXTINGUISH THE LIGHT. THE GOOD NEWS IS that DARKNESS HAS ALWAYS FAILED.
 - IT IS AS IF JESUS WERE A CANDLE and *darkness* kept blowing on it in hope that it could extinguish the flame.

However, Jesus was like one of those **birthday candles** that can never be blown out. Once it is blown out, it just keeps relighting itself. They **killed** Him, placed Him in a **tomb** and **sealed** it, but He came out. They could not blow out the *light*.

- **THE INABILITY OF DARKNESS TO OVERCOME LIGHT** is **evident** even in the **physical realm**.
- DARKNESS CANNOT OVERCOME the light **even in the physical realm**. For sake of **illustration**, suppose you could collect enough darkness to fill all **THE COLISEUM**. If you were to take all that darkness and pour it upon one candle, that candle would overcome all that darkness.
- **READ THE FINAL CHAPTER** of the Bible and discover who is standing once God brings the conflict of the ages to a conclusion.

#1. "NOT OVERCOME IT"

#2. KJV — NIV

(V. 5 KJV), "And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not."

(NIV), "The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has **NOT UNDERSTOOD IT**."

S WE HAD **AN EXPRESSION** ON THE FARM that went like this: "He is acting like **A NEW CALF** looking at a **NEW GATE**." A new calf doesn't know what a gate is for. He just stands and stares at it. **WHEN THE LIGHT OF THE LORD JESUS** shines, **PEOPLE IN DARKNESS** do not understand Him.

S "**DARKNESS**" trying to understand "**LIGHT**" is **LIKE**:

- **A CHILD** trying to understand **PHYSICS**.
- A person who speaks **ENGLISH ONLY** trying to understand **SWAHILI**.

S **DARKNESS CANNOT UNDERSTAND THE LIGHT**

- **(1 Cor 2:14)**, "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

- **(2 Cor 4:3-4)**, “But if our gospel be **HID**, it is hid to them that are **LOST**: {4} In whom the god of this world hath **BLINDED THE MINDS** of them which believe not, lest the **LIGHT** of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should **SHINE** unto them.”

S **DARKNESS CANNOT UNDERSTAND THE LIGHT**. That is a fact of Scripture. It is **SUCH A REALITY** that *darkness* could never come to the *Light* apart from the help of God.

S **THE GOOD NEWS IS — GOD HAS SENT HELP!**

- I. **THE RECOGNITION OF THE LIGHT**
- II. **THE REASON FOR THE LIGHT**
- III. **THE REPORT ON THE LIGHT**

IV. THE REINFORCEMENT FOR THE LIGHT

S **GOD HAS DONE MANY THINGS TO HELP THE WORLD BELIEVE IN THE LIGHT**. HE HAS SENT **WITNESSES** for the express purpose of **HELPING PEOPLE COMPREHEND THE LIGHT**.

S **FOUR WITNESSES** bear testimony to the *Light*. One of the four witnesses is prominent in our text.

#1. GOD SENT THE HELP OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

(V. 6-9), “There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John. {7} **HE CAME AS A WITNESS TO TESTIFY CONCERNING THAT LIGHT**, so that through him all men might believe. {8} He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. {9} The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world.”

S **JOHN’S JOB** was to point people to the *Light*.

S God explained John’s **JOB DESCRIPTION** four hundred years before he came.

(Mal 3:1), “Behold, I will send my messenger, and **HE SHALL PREPARE THE WAY BEFORE ME**: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the **LORD** of hosts.” (read Isa 40:3)

#2. GOD SENT THE HELP OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

S THE HOLY SPIRIT POINTS TO JESUS!

- JESUS SAID, (John 15:26), "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even **THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH**, which proceedeth from the Father, **HE SHALL TESTIFY OF ME:**"
- (John 16:8-11), "...When he is come, **HE WILL REPROVE THE WORLD** of SIN, and of **RIGHTEOUSNESS**, and of JUDGMENT: {9} Of sin, because they believe not on me; {10} Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; {11} Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged."

S **WE WOULD NEVER HAVE COME** to the *Light* apart from the help of the Holy Spirit.

#3. GOD SENT THE HELP OF THE BIBLE

S Like *John the Baptist* and the *Holy Spirit*, **THE BIBLE POINTS TO JESUS!**

- (John 5:39), "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and **THEY ARE THEY WHICH TESTIFY OF ME.**"
- **THE BIBLE IS LIGHT** (Psa 119:105), "Thy word is **A LAMP** unto my feet, and **A LIGHT** unto my path."

S **GOD'S WORD** is designed to **help** us come to the *Light*.

#4. THE WITNESS OF OTHER BELIEVERS

S **JESUS CALLED CHRISTIANS "LIGHT"** (Mat 5:14), "Ye are **THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.** . . ."

S We are light in the sense that God dwells in a believer and His light shine through us.

S **OUR MINISTRY** is similar to that of John the Baptist. We are to point people in darkness to the *Light*. We are not the *Light*, we simply point people to the *Light*.

S **THAT IS WHY JESUS SAID** (Mat 5:16), “**LET YOUR LIGHT SO SHINE** before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”

- I. **THE RECOGNITION OF THE LIGHT**
- II. **THE REASON FOR THE LIGHT**
- III. **THE REPORT ON THE LIGHT**
- IV. **THE REINFORCEMENT FOR THE LIGHT**

V. THE REJECTION OF THE LIGHT

(V. 10-11), “He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. { 11 } He came unto his own, and his own received him not.”

S **IT IS A SAD COMMENTARY ON HUMANITY THE EXTENT THE WORLD WENT TO KEEP FROM HAVING TO ACCEPT THE LIGHT.**

S **DARKNESS KNOWS NO LIMITS TO ITS TREACHERY!**

#1. JOHN THE BAPTIST WAS BEHEADED

- John was twice called a “**WITNESS**” (VV 6-9). The Greek word for witness is “**MARTUREO**” (mar-too-reh'-o). We derive the English word **MARTYR** from *martureo*. *Witness* became a synonym with *martyr*. *Darkness* hates *Light* so much that it attempts to extinguish the *light* wherever it finds it.

#2. **HEROD** sought to extinguish the *Light* by killing the **BABY BOYS IN BETHLEHEM**.

#3. **THE PHARISEES** were relentless in their attempt to extinguish the *light* of the Lord Jesus.

#4. **THE RELIGIOUS PRIESTS** plotted with **JUDAS** for 30 pieces of silver to extinguish the *Light*.

#5. **ROME** nailed the *Light* to a **CROSS**.

THE GOOD NEWS IS *the darkness* never overcame the *Light*.
They tried with great fervor, but every time they ended in failure.

S **WHY? WHY DOES THE WORLD REJECT THE *LIGHT*** when there is such great need for Him? Why does *darkness* go to such an extent to get rid of the light?

S **TWO REASONS:**

1) **THE WORLD DID NOT KNOW THE LIGHT**
(V. 10), "THE WORLD KNEW HIM NOT."

S *Darkness* could **NOT COMPREHEND** the *Light*.

S *Light* came speaking **THE LANGUAGE** of love and hope and the world only understood the language of greed and despair.

2) **MEN LOVED DARKNESS**

(John 3:19), "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and **MEN LOVED DARKNESS** rather than light, because their deeds were evil."

S **PERHAPS YOU HAVE PICKED UP A BOARD** from off the ground that had been laying there for some months. **It is common to Find several different kinds of BUGS under that board.** Those bugs **do not appreciate** you turning the light on them. They **run as fast as** they can as they try to find some more darkness.

S **THAT IS A PICTURE OF SINFUL HUMANITY** when God turns the light on through the **LORD JESUS CHRIST**. The light of Jesus **EXPOSES SIN**. Many folks have had their sin hidden for years. The light **UNCOVERS** what they have tried so desperately to conceal. Their lifestyle suited them just fine until Jesus showed up with the light. As a **RESULT**, with all their energy, they seek to **EXTINGUISH** the *Light*.

S The extinguishing of God's *Light* **MANIFESTS ITSELF IN MANY WAYS. SOME TIMES** people run from the *Light*. Sometimes it is rejection of the **Bible**. Often people refuse to

listen to the Bible being taught. **OTHER TIMES** people attack the *Light*. They become belligerent toward the *Light*. As they **crucified** the Lord of glory, sometimes they **attack** God's witnesses.

R. C. SPROUL tells a true story in his book *THE HOLINESS OF GOD*. It is about A WELL-KNOWN PROFESSIONAL GOLFER who was playing in a tournament with PRESIDENT GERALD FORD, fellow pro JACK NICKLAUS, and BILLY GRAHAM. After the round was over, another pro on the tour asked, "HEY, WHAT WAS IT LIKE playing with the President and Billy Graham?" The pro said WITH DISGUST, "I DON'T NEED BILLY GRAHAM STUFFING RELIGION DOWN MY THROAT!" With that he headed for the practice tee. His friend followed, and after the golfer had taken out his anger on a bucket of golf balls, he asked, "Was Billy a little rough on you out there?" The pro finally answered with a little discomfort "No, he didn't even mention religion."

Billy Graham had said nothing about God, and yet the pro **RECOILED** against the light. **THE SLIGHTEST PROSPECT** of light **IS UPSETTING** to a person in darkness because *darkness* hates the *Light*.

- (**John 3:19-21**), "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and **MEN LOVED DARKNESS RATHER THAN LIGHT**, BECAUSE their deeds were evil. {20} For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. {21} But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God."
- (**2 Cor 2:15-16**), "For we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: {16} **TO THE ONE WE ARE THE SAVOR OF DEATH UNTO DEATH**; and to the other the savor of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things?"

- I. THE RECOGNITION OF THE LIGHT - *JESUS*
- II. THE REASON FOR THE LIGHT - *DARKNESS*
- III. THE REPORT ON THE LIGHT - *NOT COMPREHEND*
- IV. THE REINFORCEMENT FOR THE LIGHT - *WITNESSES*
- V. THE REJECTION OF THE LIGHT - *MEN LOVED DARKNESS*

VI. THE RECEPTION OF THE LIGHT

(V. 12), “But as many as **RECEIVED HIM**, . . . ”

S **A SHARP CONTRAST** is draw between those who **do not receive Jesus** and those who **do receive Jesus**. **THOUGH REJECTION OF THE LIGHT** was **RAMPANT**, **IT WAS NOT UNIVERSAL**. **SOME PEOPLE STILL RECEIVED THE LIGHT**.

S **WHEN A PERSON RECEIVED THE LIGHT A MIRACLE TOOK PLACE**. WE CAN CALL IT **THE MIRACLE OF FAMILY**.

- **HOW MANY PEOPLE** are there in the world today that **LONG FOR** a **loving** and **caring** family where they would be **appreciated** and **counted as dear**?
- **GOOD NEWS** — God **GRANTS LEGAL RIGHT** to ALL WHO RECEIVE HIS SON to become members of His family.

(V. 12), “But as many as received him, to them gave he **POWER TO BECOME** the sons of God, . . . ”

(NIV, V. 12), “. . . He **GAVE THE RIGHT** to become children of God--” (the word for “power,” or “right” is **“EXOUSIA”** (ex-oo-see'-ah) . It speaks of **authority**. The one to whom all authority belongs (Matt 28:18), grants the right to membership in God’s family when a person comes to the light of the Lord Jesus Christ.

THE TITLE of this message is **HOW TO RECEIVE THE “LIGHT”**

OUR TEXT EXPLAINS HOW A PERSON CAN BECOME A MEMBER OF GOD’S FAMILY. The answer is explained using **THREE NEGATIVES** and **TWO POSITIVES**.

- **FIRST, THIS TEXT REFUTES THREE MISTAKEN VIEWS PEOPLE THINK GETS THEM INTO GOD’S FAMILY**

NEGATIVE #1

#1. (V. 13), “WHICH WERE BORN, NOT OF BLOOD . . . ”

S **WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?**

S **SOME PEOPLE ARE CONVINCED** that **PROPER ANCESTRY ENTITLES THEM** to membership in God’s

FAMILY. THE PHARISEES were an example. They had gone to observe **JOHN THE BAPTIST**. John said to them:

- **(Mat 3:9)**, “And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able **OF THESE STONES** to raise up children unto Abraham.”
- **THE PHARISEES WERE CONVINCED** that since their great-great grandfather was **Abraham** that made them a member of God’s family.

S **GOD DOES NOT HAVE ANY GRANDCHILDREN, JUST CHILDREN.**

S **IT IS INTERESTING THE DIFFERENT WAYS PEOPLE REACT** once they discover they have been talking to a pastor unaware. Some nearly swallow their **tongue**. Some have a conversion in their **vocabulary**. You would be surprised how many begin talking about **some relative** they have that is a preacher or missionary. It is almost as if their relative’s relationship to God gave them a relationship to God.

S **LISTEN AGAIN TO JOHN (Mat 3:9)**, “And **THINK NOT TO SAY** within yourselves, ‘We have Abraham to our father:’ . . . ”

S **IT IS POSSIBLE** to be born in a family as committed as **BILLY GRAHAM’S** and **STILL NOT BE A MEMBER OF GOD’S FAMILY.**

#1. **NOT OF BLOOD**

NEGATIVE #2

#2. (V. 13), “NOR OF THE WILL OF THE FLESH”

(NIV), “. . . NOR OF HUMAN DECISION . . . ”

S **WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?**

S **I ONCE WORKED WITH A MAN** who stated plainly, that **HE INTENDED** to continue life **AS A BIG PARTY** until he became an old man. He told me he intended to pray on his death bed and accept Christ. **THAT MAN WAS CONVINCED** all one needed to be included in God’s family was a **HUMAN DECISION.**

- S **SEVERAL FLAWS** existed in his plan.
- 1) **First**, HE MIGHT **DIE** in a car wreck, or have a heart attack, and never have the opportunity to pray on his death bed.
 - 2) **Second**, he did not understand **John 6:44** where Jesus said:
"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: . . . "

S **HOW MANY PEOPLE THINK** that **ALL THEY HAVE TO DO** to enter God's family is to command their **FLESH** to get religious and they will be included? To them it is a matter of **the power of POSITIVE THINKING**. They are convinced that if they work up enough **religious emotion**, **endure enough church services** and **treat** their neighbor as they want to be treated, then **GOD WILL BE OBLIGATED** to include them in His family.

S **THE TRUTH IS**, a person can work up the flesh so much that he attends one thousand **WORSHIP SERVICES**, **SINGS** 10,000 religious **SONGS**, and cries a bucket of religious **TEARS**, and still not be a member of God's family.

- #1. NOT OF BLOOD
- #2. NOT BY WILL OF THE FLESH

NEGATIVE #3

#3. (V. 13), "NOR OF . . . THE WILL OF MAN"

(NIV), ". . . NOR OF . . . A HUSBAND'S WILL . . . "

- S WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?
- S **A HUSBAND SAYS** to his wife, "Let's have a child."
That is how human children come into the world. **HOWEVER, THAT IS NOT HOW SPIRITUAL CHILDREN COME INTO GOD'S FAMILY.**
- S **MANY PARENTS** are convinced that **all they have to do** is **MAKE A DECREE** for their children and their will be included in God's family.
- S **A MOTHER** came into the pastor's office to ask the pastor to baptize her twin daughters. Her reason for the request was her

daughters had just turned **12 YEARS OLD** and she felt like that was the time for baptism.

S LISTEN AGAIN TO THE VERSE

(V. 13), “Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, **NOR OF THE WILL OF MAN, . . .**”

S **PARENTS CANNOT MAKE THEIR CHILDREN’S DECISIONS FOR THEM.** No person can receive the *Light* for another person. There are **no proxy decisions** when it comes to salvation. Each individual must make their own decision.

THREE NEGATIVES

TWO POSITIVES

- How does a person receive the *Light*?
- A PERSON COMES TO THE LIGHT BY TAKING TWO POSITIVE ACTIONS:

POSITIVE #1

#1. “RECEIVE” THE LORD JESUS

(V. 12), “But as many as **RECEIVED HIM, . . .**”

S “**LAMBANO**” means to “**take,**” to “**receive.**” Rather than running from the *Light*, or attacking the *Light*, **COME TO THE LIGHT.**

S **RECEIVE JESUS** as your personal Lord and Savior.

S **RECEIVE JESUS INDIVIDUALLY** and **PERSONALLY.** SPIRITUAL BABIES are born one at a time just like physical babies. Coming to the *Light* is a **very PERSONAL THING.** You have to do it by yourself. It is between you and God. No one else can receive Jesus for you. Your **parents** cannot. Your **grandmother** cannot receive Christ for you. Your **pastor** cannot come to Christ for you. You have to make that decision yourself.

POSITIVE #2

#2. “BELIEVE” ON HIS NAME

(V. 12), “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:”

S **SOMEONE MAY BE THINKING**, “Are you telling me that **all I have to do** to be born into God’s family is believe in Jesus?”

The answer is, “**YES**, that is God’s requirement.”

They might reply, “I have **ALWAYS BELIEVED** in God. I have **ALWAYS** believed IN JESUS CHRIST. I cannot remember a moment that I did not believe there was a God. I can’t think of a time when I did not believe that Jesus Christ was the Son of God and that He died on a cross and that He rose again.”

MANY PEOPLE were right there in their thinking before they were born into God’s family

S THE WORD FOR **BELIEVE** is also translated as “**COMMIT**,” and “**TRUST**.” That word is **MORE THAN MENTAL ASSENT**. It means “to **trust** with commitment;” “To **put all of your weight upon**.” Belief with *commitment* is different from belief that simply *acknowledges* that something is true.

1) **A STUNTMAN** strung a cable high above **NIAGRA FALLS**. Walking the cable he pushed a wheel barrow loaded with weight across the cable above the water. All the spectators applauded loudly as he made the trip. Upon arriving back on land, he asked how many believed he could safely push a person in the wheel barrow across the cable. Everyone applauded loudly indicating their agreement. Finally he asked for volunteers. There were **NO TAKERS**. They believe it could be done, but no one was willing to make the commitment.

THAT IS A PICTURE of many who say they believe in God but who refuse to commit their lives to Christ. They do believe, but it is not a commitment (trust) kind of belief.

2) Do you remember **THE “A” TEAM? MR. “T”** believed an airplane could carry him, but he refused to get on one. The only way he would fly was for them to knock him out, or to sedate him. (You can get a person on a plane by doing that, but you can’t get a person in God’s family that way).

3) A person may believe **WATER** can quench their thirst, but it does no good until they actually pick up the glass and drink it.

- You will **NEVER FLY** unless you get on the airplane.

- Water will **NEVER QUENCH** your thirst until you drink water in.
- You will **NEVER BE BORN AGAIN** unless you receive and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.
(**V. 12**), "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:"

HOWEVER, IF YOU WILL RECEIVE and BELIEVE, you will be GRANTED THE *RIGHT* OF ENTRY INTO GOD'S FAMILY.

- **HAVE YOU RECEIVED CHRIST?**
- **IF YOU HAVE NOT, WILL YOU DO IT TODAY?**
- (**Rom 10:13**), "For **WHOSOEVER** shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be **SAVED.**"

A WORD OF WARNING TO ANY WHO ARE DETERMINED TO REJECT THE LIGHT.

S **FIRST**, your rejection is no different from **MILLIONS** of others who have determined to reject the *light*. There is **NOTHING UNIQUE** about your decision. You are following the road most people chose to follow. **JESUS SAID**

(**Mat 7:13**), "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and **MANY** there be which go in thereat:"

S **SECOND, IF YOU INSIST ON CONTINUING IN DARKNESS**, it is important that you understand **THERE IS A PLACE** where your desire will be ultimately fulfilled. There is no *light* in **HELL**. Jesus described hell as:

- (**Mat 25:30**), "And cast ye the unprofitable servant into **OUTER DARKNESS**: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."
- Hell is the place **RESERVED FOR ALL WHO INSIST** on not coming to the light. In hell a person will never have to be bothered with the *LIGHT* again.