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Reading: John ch 1 v 10-13

“as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God”.

1. As many - circumference of the Gospel. It embraces all, “whosoever”, “ he that believeth”
2. As received - commandment of Gospel, not 10 commandments but 1; not what we do but what He has done
3. Him - centre of the Gospel
4. Become sons of God – Consequence of the Gospel

Scope of the Gospel - as many as received

It is not what we do that brings acceptance with God, it is what He has done. Everything is centred in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The message of the Gospel is that the moment someone turns from their own efforts and trusts in the Lord Jesus Christ they are then born into the family of God.; this is a bond that cannot be broken.

John's reason for writing was: “that ye might believe that Jesus is the Son of God” (John 20:31)

Who would be included in those who received Him?

In Chapter 3, we read of Nicodemus, a ruler who came to Jesus by night. He was told, “Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3) and “Marvel not that I say unto you ye must be born again” (John 3:7). He had to learn the lesson of David, “I was shapen in iniquity and in sin did my mother conceive me” (Psalm 51:5). God sees into the heart (1 Samuel 16:9). His verdict is, “All have sinned and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). Israel's confession will be, “we are all as an unclean *thing*, and all our righteousnesses *are* as filthy rags” (Isaiah 64:6).

A rag is not complete and teaches that we cannot satisfy God's demands; a filthy rag indicates that we are stained by sin. Paul learned this when he said, “(In my flesh) dwelleth no good thing” (Rom 7:18).

The Word of God is clear, “By one man sin entered into the world and death by sin” (Romans 5:12).

In John 4, the woman at the well was an outcast and a fornicator steeped in sin. The Lord dealt very gently with her and pointed out her blatant sin. She met one who knew her heart and went back from that well with joy (John 4:29) saying, “Is this not the Christ?”

The one who exposed the sin was the one who could help her. He comes as the revealer of secrets - knew every corruption in her life but could send her back as a sinner forgiven because of His death on the cross He could be the Saviour of the world.

In John 3, it is one of the best of men, in John 4, one of the worst of women and in John 5, a helpless beggar at the pool of Bethesda who took up his bed and walked. All these people took the Lord at His word and proved His power to save.

They all needed to realise that “the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked” (Jeremiah 17:5). It is only “the Grace of God which bringeth Salvation to all men” (Titus 2:11). This teaches that Salvation is available to all men “So that they are without excuse” (Rom 1:20; 2:1)

Men will be judged according to the revelation that they have received. Caiaphas unwittingly pronounced the final revelation of God's love, “one man die for the people” (John 11:50).

In that chapter, the Lord had performed a miracle which proved His power over everything that could

stand before man and God. The Lord went to the cross to die for the whole world not just for a nation. In 1 John 2:1,2, John writes, "We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous and He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for *the sins of* the whole world"

How can God deal with the question of sin?

It is not enough that the Lord could perform miracles or that He was the son of God. God had to deal with sin. Jesus Christ the righteous. His righteousness can be imputed to all who put their trust in Him.

"All we like sheep have gone astray" (Isaiah 53:6).

At Calvary the wholly God made to meet upon the Lord Jesus Christ His son all our iniquity. He took the punishment we deserved. Now we have a place to meet with God as sin has been dealt with.

The scope encompasses the whole world.

The Lord made provision for all those who put their trust in Him. There is access to the throne of God at all times because of Calvary, but only by through Him. Peter said, "Neither is there Salvation in any other" (Acts 4:12).

The commandment is simple, you must accept Him. All have sinned and need a Saviour, but He answers all needs

What does it mean to be in the family of God?

We become children or sons of God by birth, and this cannot be revoked any more than our natural relationship can be revoked. John writes, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God" (1 John 3:1). He then goes on to show that as children of God have the promise that He shall appear and we shall be like Him without sin inwardly or outwardly (1 John 3:2-5). Paul writes that we become "Heirs of God, joint heirs with Christ" (Romans 8:17). He goes on to tell that the whole creation groans and travails because of sin. All creation shall be delivered from the bondage of sin because of the work that the Lord accomplished at Calvary (Romans 8:19-23).

To enjoy this, we must turn from our own efforts and receive Him as Saviour and as Lord.