

# Further up, Further in

## Resources for Continued Study



LOOKOUT  
MOUNTAIN  
Presbyterian Church

### “WHEN THE WORD ENTERS HIS WORLD”

For individual study or group discussion

**When the Word enters his world**, the people fail to recognize him, revealing a spiritual blindness that affects all humanity. John explains that while some prefer to remain in the darkness, others enter the light and are reborn as children of God. Despite being unrecognized and unwanted, Christ remains undeterred in his offering of new birth to all who believe. In John 1:10–13, humanity’s rejection of the Light is set against the backdrop of God’s grace: sending his Son into the world and inviting people into his family.

#### **Unrecognized. We don’t see him. (v. 10)**

Verse 10 describes the tragic moment when the Word enters the world he created, “*yet the world did not know him.*” Though Christ made the world (v. 3), the world fails to recognize him. Dr. Michael Williams captures the tension when he writes, “*In this we recognize the blinding effects of sin (2 Cor. 4:4) and the mystery of God’s sovereign election. The gospel is not a secret truth given to some. Rather, the Holy Spirit removes the blindness of the fall. By the witness of the Holy Spirit, seeing produces knowing.*”<sup>1</sup> Sin obscures reality, and only the Spirit’s illumination enables us to truly see Christ for who he is.

- The Jews had been waiting for hundreds of years for the Messiah to come. Read Jesus’ high priestly prayer in John 17. Why did some not recognize Jesus? (John 17:25)

#### **Unwanted. We don’t desire him. (v. 11)**

Even “*his own people,*” the Jews who possessed God’s promises and prophecies, largely rejected him. The fact that we do not desire him exposes the depth of humanity’s estrangement from God, a reality echoed in John 3:19, where “*people loved darkness rather than light.*” Unbelief, as Scripture repeatedly shows, is rooted not in God’s failure but in human sin (Ephesians 2:1–3).

- Read Luke 20:9–18. How does the *Parable of the Wicked Tenants* illustrate John’s statement that Jesus was not received by his own people?
- Not all who encounter the truth about Jesus will accept him. How should this impact your evangelism? (cf. Matthew 13:3–9 and Titus 3:4–7)

#### **Undeterred. He still makes us his own. (vv. 12–13)**

John quickly moves from tragedy to triumph. In verse 12, he announces that those who do receive Christ are given the astonishing right to “*become children of God.*” NT theologian Herman Ridderbos explains the significance of this transformation, “*The special relation to God that was first applied to the totality of Israel, is now restricted (and extended) to those who respond to the preaching of the kingdom with faith and repentance and have been elected by God to this end.*”<sup>2</sup> Becoming God’s children is not the result of heritage, effort, or human decision (v. 13). Salvation is God’s sovereign act of grace. He gives faith, opens blind eyes, and brings people into his family.

- Discuss the three ways one *cannot* become a child of God. How does one become a member of God’s family (v. 12)?
- Read Hebrews 11:6. What is essential for drawing near to God?
- Share your testimony with your small group (or write it down in your journal). When did you realize your need for Jesus? How did he meet you in your brokenness? What is God doing in your life now?

DATE: December 14, 2025

SPEAKER: Aaron/Brian

SERIES: Advent 2025

PASSAGE: John 1:10–13

## Family Dinner Table

### **Becoming a Child of God**

James Boice tells a story about Napoleon during a military campaign. While reviewing documents on horseback, Napoleon let go of the reins, and the horse suddenly reared, nearly throwing him off. A young grenadier corporal saw what was happening, rushed forward, grabbed the bridle, and quickly steadied the horse.

Napoleon turned to him and said, “Thank you, Captain.”

The surprised soldier asked, “Captain of what company, Sir?”

“Of my guards,” Napoleon replied.

Immediately, the corporal walked to the officers’ headquarters, removing his corporal stripes as he went. When someone challenged him, asking by what right he was there, he answered, “I am a captain of the guards.”

“By whose authority?” they asked.

“By the authority of the emperor,” he said.

If a friend had called him “captain,” it would have meant nothing. If he’d claimed the title himself, it would have been a joke. What mattered was the authority of the one who granted the status.

Likewise, it doesn’t ultimately matter if we call ourselves “Christian.” The real question is whether God himself has placed his name on us, changing our status by conferring on us the right to become children of God.<sup>3</sup>

- Read John 3:1–8. How does Jesus’ midnight conversation with Nicodemus help you better understand John 1:10–13? Discuss how this encounter further clarifies the way a person becomes a child of God.

### **PRAY FOR HOME MISSIONS**

PCA Mission to North America,  
denominational partner ministry

### **PRAY FOR WORLD MISSIONS**

Norma A., supported missionary  
partner who serves in Spain

<sup>1</sup> Williams, Michael D. *Far As the Curse is Found: The Covenant Story of Redemption*. 2005, Phillipsburg, NJ. P&R Publishing. 17

<sup>2</sup> Ridderbos, Herman. *The Coming of the Kingdom*. 1962, Ontario. Paideia Press. 198

<sup>3</sup> Begg, Alistair. *To All Who Received Him*. TruthforLife.org. 12/12/04. Paraphrased.