



The Story of Scripture

LIFEGROUP STUDY

SESSION THREE: THE STORY OF REDEMPTION (8/21/2022)

JOHN 1:12-13

MAIN POINT

It is through receiving that free and undeserved gift of grace in Christ that people are justified (found not guilty) and redeemed (set free) to live their true and eternal purpose to know, love, and glorify God.

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

Have you ever lost something that was very valuable or even irreplaceable to you?

How did you lose it? How did you feel once you knew that it was gone for good?

John's introduction to his Gospel was a birds-eye-view of the many details that he was about to recount. In these first few verses, he worked to give a sweeping overview that would serve us as a type of framework so that his readers might properly understand the story of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. John stated at the end of his work, "This is the disciple who testifies to these things and who wrote them down. We know that his testimony is true" (21:24). John's purpose in writing was to serve as an eyewitness of Jesus Christ's life and ministry. He desired to give a true testimony of the things that happened.

UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ JOHN 1:12.

What kinds of people were contrasted with those who did not recognize Christ? What two verbs did John use?

How would you describe the difference between believing and receiving?

Jesus Christ, God in flesh, was in the world, and the world was created through Him. This statement made by John in verse 10, is astounding, but the next is even more shocking: “yet the world did not recognize him...his own people did not receive him.” Jesus vividly illustrated this in His parable of the vineyard owner in Matthew 21: “Finally, he sent his son to them. ‘They will respect my son,’ he said” (Matthew 21:37). The picture was a bleak one. Jesus, God the Son, appeared on earth humbly but powerfully. He was rejected by men, but not all men.

How is God able to adopt His enemies and transgressors of His law into His own family?

Why was it necessary for Jesus to be fully God and fully man in order to redeem sinful man?

Why was the shedding of blood required? And, how did this sacrifice actually help us?

John confirmed that those who believed in his name and received him were given the right to become children of God. What an incredible change! A person moves from being a child of the devil (John 8:44) to being a child of God.

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ JOHN 1:13.

What do Christians contribute to their own salvation? Why is this important to continually remember?

Why do you think John used the language of birth here? In what sense have Christians been “reborn”?

How does this reality change the way you view salvation? How should God’s work on a person’s behalf affect the way they approach the Christian life? If you are a Christian, what are some ways you might be guilty of taking credit for your own salvation?

Scripture is clear about our spiritual state. “You were dead in your trespasses and sins,” and “you were dead in trespasses and in the uncircumcision of your flesh.” (Ephesians 2:1; Colossians 2:13) For this reason, Christians have to bow the knee before our great God and give Him all the glory for saving them. Followers of Jesus dare not take any of the credit for the wiping away of their sins or of the crediting of their account with Christ’s righteousness. John wrote, “who were born, not of natural descent, or of the will of the flesh, or of the will of man, but of God.”

APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

How does today's teaching challenge the way you have thought about salvation in the past? How should it impact the way you live in the future?

How should the reality that people can't take credit for their salvation impact the way we interact with others in the church? Those outside the church?

How does this reality give hope that anyone can come to know Christ? How does this make it clear that no one is "too far gone"? How should this give us boldness in sharing the gospel with others?

PRAYER

Pray for a deeper, richer understanding of the biblical gospel. Reflect on the depth of your own sin and the matchless mercy and grace of God in Christ toward all who believe. Give God all the glory and credit for salvation found in Jesus.

COMMENTARY

| JOHN 1:10-13

1:10-11. Immediately after describing the announcement, John tells us about apathy toward the message of regeneration. The world (kosmos) is another of John's theme words; he used it seventy-seven times. With the device of repetition, John taught incarnation, creation, and rejection all in one verse (v. 10). Depravity and blindness thwarted God's efforts to reach out to his own creation—and still do.

In verse 11, the first appearance of the word *own* appears in the neuter gender and the second is masculine. What significance could such a distinction have for interpretation? One possibility is that Jesus came to earth, the place he had created, and the second tells us that the people who lived there turned him away. He was not welcomed or accepted.

1:12-13. Early in his book, John established the heart of the gospel, still two chapters away from the famous John 3:16. From the announcement of regeneration followed by apathy the apostle introduces the acceptance of regeneration.

Like most things in life, there is a right way and a wrong way to respond to God. The right way (and the only meaningful way) is to believe the gospel, receive the Savior and accept new birth

as a result. The wrong way somehow links a relationship to God with human qualities such as physical birth, self-determination, or the choice of another person. In John's theological vocabulary, believed and received are synonymous when it comes to the gospel.