

P A S T O R ' S S E R M O N N O T E S · P U L P I T C O P Y

The Light of the World Rejected

The Gospel of John: Why Should I Believe? · Week 02 · September 20, 2026

Scripture:

John 1:6–13

MOTIVATION (WHY YOU NEED THIS)

Last week I said, “Everyone here likely has an opinion about who Jesus is.” But opinions about Jesus don’t make them true because a Jesus you create can never be bigger than you are.

This is why we looked at who John said Jesus was in the first 5 verses of his gospel.

- **He is ETERNAL** – He was before you (v.1a)
- **He is GOD** – He is above you (vv.1b–2)
- **He is CREATOR** – He made you (v.3)
- **He is LIGHT AND LIFE** – He is the way out of the darkness (vv.4–5)

So, here’s the question: if the light came into the world, why didn’t everyone see it?

The light came. Most people wanted nothing to do with Him. God didn’t hide. He gave the world every advantage, and the world still said “no”.

That should make us uncomfortable. We’re the ones with the advantages now. And **being near the light is not the same as walking in it.**

INFORMATION (WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW)

How did God prepare people for Jesus and how did they respond?

God sent a witness to prepare people for the light

- He was John the Baptist (not to be confused with the writer of this Gospel)

John 1:6 (ESV) There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

- He came as a witness to the soon-coming Jesus

John 1:7 (ESV) He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him.

“The terms witness or to bear witness receive special attention in this Gospel, reflecting the courtroom language of the OT where the truth of a matter was to be established on the basis of multiple witnesses. Not only did John the Baptist witness regarding Jesus as Messiah and Son of God, but there were other witnesses.” – MacArthur Study Bible

- John was sent to give testimony of the coming light

John 1:8 (ESV) He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.

- He was not the light – John is correcting people who’d made too much of John the Baptist
- Came to bear witness about the light

The Gospel of Mark gives a deeper understanding of why John was sent...

- To prepare people’s hearts (clear the way by people recognizing their sin)

Mark 1:2 (ESV) “Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way...”

- To call people to repent

Mark 1:4 (ESV) John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

John was calling people to turn from sin and show that turning publicly through baptism. So, the way was cleared and the witness was given. Then the light came.

The light came to everyone, and most would not receive Him

- The true light shines on everyone (no one is left in the dark about Him)

John 1:9 (ESV) The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world.

“...Christ as the Light shines on each person either in salvation or in illuminating him with regard to his sin and coming judgment.” – The Bible Knowledge Commentary

- Some people failed to recognize Jesus as the Savior sent from God

John 1:10 (ESV) He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him.

“The Logos came among people in the Incarnation, but mankind did not recognize its Maker. The failure to recognize Him was not because God’s nature was somehow ‘hidden’ in people, as some suggest. Rather, it is because of human ignorance and blindness, caused by sin.” – The Bible Knowledge Commentary

- Jesus’ own people (Israel) rejected Him

John 1:11 (ESV) He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him.

He came to His own home, and His own people wouldn’t take Him in. That’s the low point of this whole prologue. But John doesn’t leave it there.

Those who receive Him are born into God’s family

John 1:12 (ESV) But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, 13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

- **But to all who did receive him** – Receiving implies a gift and a giver. When we accept a gift we demonstrate our confidence in its reality and trustworthiness.
- **Who believed in his name** – This isn’t just believing Jesus existed. It’s trusting in His name, meaning everything that’s true about Him, all of who He is.
- **He gave the right to become children of God** – Nobody is born into this family and then believes. No one inherits it. You trust Jesus then God makes you part of His family. Trusting first; adoption into His family second.

John puts us at the center, so we don’t miss that it’s for us. But read it closely and God is the one doing the giving. We’re just the ones holding out our hands.

- **...who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man**

Three things that can’t make you God’s child (and one thing that CAN)...

- **Blood** – not your family line; your last name doesn’t make you God’s child
- **The will of the flesh** – no human being can will you into God’s family
- **The will of man** – you can’t earn your way in

– **But of God** – Only God can do this. It's a second birth, and He's the one who gives it.

APPLICATION (WHAT YOU NEED TO DO)

Answer the question you've maybe been avoiding: **Have you received Him?**

- Not...do you know about Jesus? Everyone in this room does.
- Not...did you walk an aisle, get baptized, grow up in this church?

Received means you're opening the door of your life and handing Jesus the keys. The people who missed Jesus weren't atheists. They were the religious ones who were certain they already had Him. Being near the light is not the same as walking in it.

Homework this week...

Settle whether you've received Jesus (or find someone who can help you settle it).

You didn't pick your first birth, and you can't pull off your second one either. Both are gifts, and yet He tells you to receive Him.