***The Glory of the Son: Full of Grace and Truth, John 1:1-18***

**As Many As Received Him, John 1:12-13**

**John 1:12-13 “ But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.”**

**I. “As many as received Him…”**

* **A universal appeal to any and all of us to come into a relationship with God**
* **By receiving the Word as we receive a gift**

**II. “Even to those who believe in His name”**

* **Receiving Him is linked to believing in Him**
* **Compare with John 3:16, God gives and we believe**

**III. “He gave the right to become children of God”**

* **The authority to change our status or standing with God**
* **By receiving Jesus Christ, in other words by believing in Him, God adopts us into His family**

**IV. “Who were born of God”**

* **This change is too great for us to do for ourselves**
* **Therefore it must be a miraculous work that only God can perform**

***The Glory of the Son: Full of Grace and Truth, John 1:1-18***

**As Many As Received Him, John 1:12-13**

**Scripture Reading and Prayer**

* Welcome to Friend Day, a special time in our church year where we want to make coming to church as painless as possible
* I acknowledge that going to church can be a very intimidating experience, especially if you just show up on your own
* I recently attended a church by myself when I was out of town
* I showed up too early, hang around the lobby for 30 min. prior to service start
* I was underdressed, this was a very formal church and I was dressed in jeans and a open collar shirt and all the men were in suits and the women in dresses
* I thought at the time, is this how uncomfortable it feels to visit Matthew Road?
* I want you to know today, if you are our guest, that you can relax
* No one will ask you to pray out loud or to give any money or to give your analysis of a passage from the Bible
* Just relax and hang out with friends and listen in a bit to our normal, weekly services, just to see what it is Matthew Road does week in and week out
* One of the things we do each week is to read from a section of the Bible
* Today, I want us to read a handful of verses, I will read them out loud and you can follow along, the words will be on the screens to my left and right
* **Read John 1:9-13 (Slides)**

**Introduction (Header – Slide 1)**

* This is Friend Day and if you are our guest today, I want you to know what we do during this time of studying the bible
* Each week we try to look carefully at a few sentences of the Bible
* Sometimes this involves studying for several weeks a set of verses
* For instance, we started a study of the first 18 verses of John’s Gospel a few months back and we are now on verses 12 and 13 for today
* Today, you are stepping into the discussion, as if you parachuted into the conversation
* However, I think we can do just enough background to get all of us to a place of understanding the context of the verses and all of us to be able to comprehend the two verses that I primarily wish to discuss today
* For background, just quickly, last week we discussed three verses, John 1:9-11
* **Read John 1:10-11 (Slide 2)**
* What we do here at Matthew Road is we try and study the Bible verse by verse so as to get the meaning as best as we possibly can of each sentence and paragraph
* We try to be careful to not put too much emphasis on our opinions about life, but try to listen carefully to the Bible as if God were speaking to us through its pages
* This is difficult in a world of talk show radio and reality TV, where everyone, regardless of competency, can hold a microphone
* God holds individuals as equally valuable, He does not hold opinions as equally valid
* This seems to be the opposite of the direction of our culture where all opinions are considered equally valid, but not necessarily that all people are equally valuable
* From these verses we see that God has sent His Son, Jesus Christ, into the world
* We should have recognized Him as the writer here seems to note the irony that He came to His own and yet they rejected Him
* There were many Jewish people during the time of Christ looking for Messiah, there were many people all over the world looking for salvation from life’s troubles
* And into this world, a world He had been instrumental in putting into place, comes the Son of God, sent by His Father into the world
* The Father is motivated by His love for the world, the Son comes reflecting the grace of God for a troubled world and yet we don’t see this, we do not recognize this gift
* We were too busy with little league games and school work and getting the lawn to look nice and trying to keep our bosses or teachers happy to recognize Him
* So this is a somewhat disappointing assessment of the human condition, God comes in the form of a man, Jesus Christ, and we don’t see it
* However, not everyone is in this situation

**I. “As many as received Him…”**

* There are four things I want to point out in these two verses
* **Read John 1:12 (Slide 3)**
* **A universal appeal to any and all of us to come into a relationship with God**
* **By receiving the Word as we receive a gift**
* Two volunteers (one boy and one girl)
* How will we know if he/she truly “received” the gift
* Ever get a gift that you didn’t want
* You know, one of those wedding gifts that you are not sure what to do with
* Just to be sure this is not that type of receiving
* I will receive this gift but I don’t really want it and I am not sure what to do with it
* When get home from this wedding shower we’re checking the EBay asking price
* Don Richardson and his wife Carol and their seven-month-old baby went to work among the [Sawi](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sawi) tribe of Papua New Guinea The Sawi were known to be [cannibalistic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cannibal) [headhunters](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Headhunting). Living with them in virtual isolation from the modern world involved exposure to [malaria](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Malaria), [dysentery](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dysentery), as well as the threat of violence.
* Richardson labored to show the villagers a way that they could comprehend Jesus from the Bible, but the cultural barriers to understanding and accepting this teaching seemed impossible until an unlikely event brought the concept of the [substitutionary atonement](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Substitutionary_atonement) of [Christ](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christ) into immediate relevance for the Sawi.
* As he learned the language and lived with the people, he became more aware of the gulf that separated his Christian worldview from the worldview of the Sawi: "In their eyes, Judas, not Jesus, was the hero of the Gospels, Jesus was just the dupe to be laughed at."
* Eventually Richardson discovered what he referred to as a Redemptive Analogy that pointed to the Incarnate Christ far more clearly than any biblical passage alone could have done. What he discovered was the Sawi concept of the Peace Child
* Three tribal villages were in constant battle at this time. The Richardsons were considering leaving the area, so to keep them there, the Sawi people in the embattled villages came together and decided that they would make peace with their hated enemies. Ceremonies commenced that saw young children being exchanged between opposing villages.
* One man in particular ran toward his enemy's camp and literally gave his son to his hated foe. Observing this, Richardson wrote: "if a man would actually give his own son to his enemies, that man could be trusted!" From this rare picture came the analogy of God's sacrifice of his own Son. The Sawi began to understand the teaching of the incarnation of Christ in the Gospel after Richardson explained God to them in this way.
* Following this event many villagers converted to Christianity, a translation of the [New Testament](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Testament) in Sawi was published

**II. “Even to those who believe in His name”**

* **Receiving Him is linked to believing in Him**
* Consider a parallel passage, John 3:16, you know the verse behind the goalpost at televised football games
* **Read John 3:16 (Slide 4)**
* **Compare with John 3:16, God gives and we believe**
* In the case of John 1:12, we receive and we believe
* **Now back to John 1:12 (Slide 5)**

**III. “He gave the right to become children of God”**

* **The authority to change our status or standing with God**
* **By receiving Jesus Christ, in other words by believing in Him, God adopts us into His family**

**IV. “Who were born of God”**

* How is it that we could receive such an incredible status change?
* **Read John 1:13 (Slide 6)**
* **This change is too great for us to do for ourselves**
* **Therefore it must be a miraculous work that only God can perform**

**Blank Slide**