

John 1:10-13

He came into the very world he created, but the world didn't recognize him. ¹¹ He came to his own people, and even they rejected him. ¹² But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God. ¹³ They are reborn—not with a physical birth resulting from human passion or plan, but a birth that comes from God.

Background

Referring to verse 10, the word “world” is used in three different ways in the New Testament:

- **The created world** – the physical universe, as in Acts 17:24. This meaning fits the phrase “the very world he created.”
- **The world of people** – as in John 3:16, referring to humanity. This fits “the world didn't recognize him.”
- **The evil world system** – opposed to God, as in 1 John 2:15-16 and John 15:18-19.

So, when John 3:16 says “*God loved the world,*” but then 1 John 2:15 says “*Do not love this world,*” it's not a contradiction in the Bible. There are different uses of “world.” And sometimes, more than one meaning is present in one verse. Understanding these distinctions helps prevent confusion when interpreting Scripture.

Teaching Points

1. Mankind has rejected both general revelation and special revelation.

General revelation is God revealing Himself through nature, providence, and human conscience. **Special revelation** refers to Jesus Christ and the Bible—the special ways God revealed Himself.

John 1:10 shows rejection of general revelation: Christ was in the world He made, yet the world didn't recognize Him. Verse 11 reflects the rejection of special revelation: Jesus came to His own people, but they rejected Him. This rejection, seen then and now, shows humanity's resistance to both forms of God's revelation.

2. Life in the family of God does not come naturally.

Life in God's family doesn't come naturally. It's a gift from God. John 1:12-13 explains that becoming a child of God is not by bloodline, human effort, or another's will. You don't enter God's family by being born into a Christian home, doing good works, or through someone else's influence. Spiritual life comes only through trusting Jesus as your Savior and believing in His name. When you do, God gives you the right to become His child. Salvation is a gift of grace, not earned by works.

Application

1. Have you really become a Christian?

In any church, some may think they're Christians, but they haven't truly become one. If asked why God should let you into Heaven, responses like "I did my best," "I went to church," or "I was involved in good works" reflect reliance on human effort. This is what verse 13 calls "human passion or plan." The only right answer is: "Jesus died for my sins, and I received Him as my Savior. I believe He is God and gave me eternal life." That's true faith.