

John 1:12

TO RECEIVE JESUS

- I. The fact.
 - A. The Belgic Conf. speaks of receiving Jesus in Art. 29 and 35.
 - B. To receive Him is to embrace Him by a living faith in His name (Self-revelation in the sphere of redemption).
 - C. It is to have Jesus.
 - 1. The heavenly Father, through the work of the Spirit, gives you to Jesus and gives Jesus to you.
 - 2. This is true for the newest and weakest as well as the most mature Christian: we are fully, finally, irreversibly justified.
- II. Those who receive Him experience the wonder of God's gift that they have the right actually to be children of God.
 - A. This word emphasizes the spiritual, ethical side of our sonship, implying our being born of God.
 - 1. It speaks of a relationship of likeness: the son is like his father, bears the image of his father, to be like Him (cf. I John 3:1,2).
 - 2. This great honor is ours over against whatever man (including ourselves) think of us.
 - B. When we are given the ability to receive Him and believe in Him, instead of rejecting Him, we experience this great "power."
 - 1. To receive Christ, therefore, is to receive the right to sonship.
 - 2. That this is our right ("power") is found in God's gracious works.
- III. The experience.
 - A. We constantly need to receive this right because we sin. We need to be assured of forgiveness.
 - B. From the Old Dispensation perspective, their right to be children of God had not yet been established.
 - 1. We grow in the consciousness of sonship.
 - 2. In this sense we long to be fully His children, to be completely like Him.