

Exegetical Analysis – John 1:12

12 – 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 (12. ὅσοι δὲ ἤλαβον αὐτὸν, ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς ἔξουσίαν τέκνα θεού γενέσθαι, τοῖς πιστεύουσιν εἰς τὸ ὄνομα αυτοῦ)

In order to understand what is being said in John 1:12, we need to first evaluate John 1:11. This will help us understand the context of the passage.

John 1:11 NASB

He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him.

We see in John 1:11 that Jesus "came to his own" [his own are the Jews, his covenant people] and "his own did not receive him" [the Jews rejected their Messiah and his claims about being the Son of God]. We can now understand how παρέλαβον is being used in the next passage.

So, we have the Jews who did not receive [παρέλαβον] the Lord Jesus, but verse 12 will identify that there were some who did receive [ἔλαβον] the Lord Jesus amongst the Jews. These are the believing Israelites [Romans 9:6] & Gentiles who are fellow heirs to the promises [Ephesians 2:12-16].

"To as many as received him - The great mass; the people; the scribes and Pharisees rejected him. A few in his lifetime received him, and many more after his death. "To receive him," here, means to "believe" on him. This is expressed at the end of the verse."

— Albert Barnes, Albert Barnes' Notes on the Whole Bible, Commentary on John 1:12.

"As many as received him ... and "them that believe on his name" refer to the same persons, namely, to those who accepted the claims of Jesus Christ as the Son of God and believed the message that he delivered to mankind."

— James Coffman, Coffman's Commentaries on the Bible, Commentary on John 1:12.

We know that those who believed on the Lord, are those enabled by God to believe.

Philippians 1:29 NASB

For to you it has been granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake,

So, we can see here that there were those who rejected the Messiah and those who believed on the Messiah. The ones who believed were enabled to believe by the monergistic work of the Lord. John reiterates the lack of man's involvement in the very next verse.

John 1:13 NASB

who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

As you can see, the process of regeneration or being born-again has absolutely nothing to do with the flesh, or the will of man. It has to do with God's Work.