



A Study of the Gospel of John

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Wouldn't it be fascinating to meet someone who actually walked and talked with Jesus?

- **John the Apostle knew Jesus firsthand, and in his gospel he opens our hearts to the Master he loved and followed.**
- **John's Gospel reveals Jesus as the Son of God who existed before time began.**
- **As Jesus launched His public ministry and interacted with people, we can see ourselves in each person Jesus met—**
 - ✓ **The religious seeker Nicodemus,**
 - ✓ **The shunned woman at the well,**
 - ✓ **the lame man waiting his entire life for a healing touch from God.**

With each word Jesus spoke, we can feel His compassion and power.

As you read John's gospel, you're right there with the Master. That's why even a most hardened skeptic can find John's account of Jesus' invitation to believe in Him impossible to resist.

The Gospel of John is a theological account of the life of Jesus, emphasizing his divinity and his role as the Son of God. Here are some of the key themes in the Gospel of John:

1. **Believing:** *The purpose of John's Gospel is to encourage people to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing, they might have eternal life in his name .*
2. **Glory:** *In John's Gospel, glory refers to the revelation of divine power and presence. Jesus reveals divine glory through his works of power and by laying down his life, which reveals the glory of divine love .*
3. **Jesus as Messiah:** *John declares that Jesus is the one in whom God's promises are fulfilled. Jesus is the Messiah or "anointed one" who was expected to be a king and rule over God's people .*
4. **Jesus as Son of God:** *In John's Gospel, the expression "Son of God" points to Jesus' heavenly origin. He is the Son of God since he has come from God and embodies the power and presence of God .*

5. **Judgment:** People come under God's judgment by rejecting the Christ whom God has sent. By way of contrast, they find life by coming to faith, since faith is the way people relate rightly to God .
6. **Life and eternal life:** People have life in one sense as long as they are alive physically, yet true life is found only in relationship with God. Faith is the means to life because through faith people relate to the God who made them. This life is called eternal life because it is life in relationship with the eternal God .
7. **Love:** Love for the world is the reason God sent Jesus into the world. Jesus in turn shows love for others by washing his disciples' feet and ultimately by laying down his life. The love that Jesus gives to others is the source and norm for Christian life, which is shaped by the command to love one another as Jesus has loved them

The Book of John (the Gospel according to John) could be summed up in these famous words of Richard Chichester: "To enable men and women to know Jesus Christ more clearly, to love him more dearly, and to follow him more nearly."

Who wrote the book?

- **Not surprisingly, the gospel of John never provides the name of its author.**
- **Such identifications were not made in any of the other three biblical gospels either.**
- **Two significant factors point to the identification of John as the author.**
 1. **The book itself identifies the author as "the disciple whom Jesus loved." This description likely pointed to John for three (3) reasons:**
 - A.** The author had to be one of the twelve disciples because he was an eyewitness to the events in the gospel (John 21:24, "This is the disciple who testifies to these things and who wrote them down. We know that his testimony is true."
 - B.** He was probably one of the inner circle of three disciples (James, John, and Peter) because he was among the first Mary told of the resurrection (20:1-10).
 - C.** This disciple is distinguished from Peter in the book, while James died too soon after the resurrection to be the author.
 2. **John's authorship is the unanimous testimony of early Christians, among them the second-century Christian Irenaeus, who declared that John was the disciple who laid his head on Jesus—the disciple "whom Jesus loved" (13:23).**

When was the Book of John Written?

- ✓ Polycarp, a second-century Christian martyr who knew John personally, told Irenaeus that John had written the book during the apostle's time serving the church in Ephesus.
- ✓ ***This would place the time of writing around 85-95 A.D.***

The more noted historical Biblical scholars placed the time of writing to be right before John was exiled to Isle of Patmos.

Why is John's Gospel so Important?

- ✓ John did not include the nativity story in his gospel; instead, he introduced his book by going back even further into history.
- ✓ Invoking the "in the beginning" language of [Genesis 1:1](#), John made a direct link between the nature of God and the nature of the Word, Jesus Christ. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." John 1:1
- ✓ The emphasis on the deity of Christ is a striking quality of John's gospel. For instance, the "I AM" statement of John 8:58, "*Very truly I tell you, "Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, I AM!"*" Note: This statement ties the Old Testament (First Covenant) with the New Testament (New Covenant...the Best); Best because it makes a way for every person

For Christians and the Unsaved Alike...What significance is John's Particular Message? What's the Big Deal?

- ✓ *It was a revelation before the writing of book of Revelation (Truly a revealing of Jesus's purpose in coming to earth in the flesh...past, present and future).*
- ✓ *While the other three gospels portray Jesus as the King, the Servant, and the Son of Man, John portrays Jesus as the Son of God.*
- ✓ *John stated his theme more clearly than any of the other gospel writers. He wrote so that his readers might "believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God... so that they may have life in His name" ([John 20:31](#)).*
- ✓ *To accomplish that goal, John presented a distinctive and treasured picture of Jesus Christ as "God-man"...Still in complete with the agreement with the other three gospel writers*
- ✓ *John used a variety of techniques to communicate to his readers the nature of Jesus.*

These include:

- *the seven "I am" statements, in which Jesus spoke of Himself:*
- *"the Light of the world" (8:12),*
- *"the resurrection and the life" (11:25),*
- *"the way, and the truth, and the life" (14:6).*

Much of John's gospel (chapters 2–12) might be called the Book of Signs, as it recounts Jesus's performing of seven different miracles—i.e. turning water to wine at Cana and raising Lazarus from the dead at Bethany. These miracles illustrate His identity as the Son of God.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION TO OUR LIVES:

The gospel of John fulfills its purpose of evangelizing the lost.

- ✓ *John 3:16 is likely the best-known Bible verse and is often used in evangelistic Bible studies.*
- ✓ *The encounters between Jesus and Nicodemus and the woman at the well (chapters 3–4) gives us a learning discourse by Jesus' as a model of personal evangelism.*
- ✓ *Jesus' comforting and encouraging words to His disciples before His death (John 14:1–6, 16; 16:33) are still of great comfort in sorrowful times.*
- ✓ *Jesus' "high priestly prayer" for believers in chapter 17 is also a wonderful source of encouragement for believers.*
- ✓ *The teachings concerning the deity of Christ (John 1:1–3, 14; 5:22–23; 8:58; 14:8–9; 20:28) are helpful in providing a clear revelation of who Jesus is...**fully God and fully man.***

In the Gospel of John the ministry is timeless and Jesus is changeless.

The gospel of John shares much about the approaching ministry of the Holy Spirit after Jesus' ascension.

Question for Consideration:

Was the Holy Spirit at work in the hearts of the people prior to Jesus declaring that He will send "a comforter/advocate" to them?

"I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate (Comforter) to help you and be with you forever—the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you." (John 14:16-18)

"All this I have spoken while still with you.²⁶ But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. (John 14:25-27)

