

The Gospel Of

JOHN

AUTHOR:

Although all the Gospels do not explicitly say who the author is, through scholarly research the majority believe it is the Apostle John. This letter makes that more clear when the author shares himself as "the one Jesus loved."

PURPOSE:

The purpose of the Gospel of John, stated in 20:31, was to record Jesus' "signs" so that readers would come to believe in Him. Some think John wrote to supplement the other Gospels. John's Gospel has a clear evangelistic purpose (as do the other Gospels), so it is no accident that it has been greatly used in the history of the church for that purpose. One clear purpose and accomplishment one will discover is that The Gospel of John clearly identifies Jesus as God.

DATE:

Although there is still scholarly debate it is most realistically supported to have been written between A.D. 60-95

CRITICAL CONCEPTS:

The Gospel of John is different than the other three Gospels (Synoptic Gospels). John includes a fair amount of material that the Synoptics make no mention of. Only in John is Jesus explicitly identified with God. Some have concern over The Gospel of John because this letter shares Jesus as Divine over historical while the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke) share Jesus more historically before Divinity. But Many would argue John supplements the other Gospels to provide a more full and enriched view of Jesus.

SCHEDULE YOUR READING

Set aside a time and a place to meditate on God's word. Create a distraction free environment to dive deeper into the scripture.

PRAY BEFORE YOU READ

Ask God to reveal his truths as you read. Pray for consistency and clarity.

READ WITH THIS JOURNAL/COMMENTARY

A Bible commentary is a scholarly response to the text to provide historical and cultural information to the text. Don't have a commentary? That is okay this journal will provide some commentary information.

READ WITH A FRIEND

Read with someone that will hold you accountable to your daily reading.

SHARE WHAT YOU ARE LEARNING

Don't just read it! Share how God's word is speaking to you!

SAMPLE OF EACH WEEK

READ: Read the chapter (section of Scripture). Try and read the same text multiple times a week to begin to notice things that were once overlooked. Also, try the underline and circle method (Pastor Scott does this on in his sermons). Sometimes underlining points that relate to the main (circle) helps us see the truths more clearly.

OBSERVATION: What are you noticing? What questions arise from the text? What main points are you recognizing? Write this down in this section and come back and add to it throughout the week.

APPLICATION: The Scripture has no power if you don't apply it. What can you take from this chapter and how should you respond to it? Is there something that you need to understand and allow to change your ideas/actions around?

PRAYER: Spend the week focusing on what you observed, applied, and now begin to pray over what you are learning.

John

The Prologue 1:1-18

Context:

All four Gospels begin by placing Jesus in a historical context, but the Gospel of John is unique. The Gospel of John does not start at the birth or family line of Jesus but at the beginning, the very beginning. The Gospel of John explains that Jesus is God manifest in the flesh, and His words and deeds are those of God.

The prologue contains many major themes of the Gospel that will later be introduced and developed. Key terms like, "life" (v. 4), "light" (v. 4), "darkness" (v. 5), "witness" (v. 7), "true" (v. 9), "world" (v. 9), "Son" (v. 14), "Father" (v. 14), "glory" (v. 14), "truth" (v. 14). Two other key theological terms are "the Word" (v. 1) and "grace" (v. 14), but these important words are used in John only in this theological introduction. "Word" (Logos) does occur elsewhere in the Gospel but not as a Christological title.

These verses of Scripture are perhaps some of the most significant words penned. The prologue to John's Gospel is packed with affirmations about Jesus Christ, God's relation to the world, and the character of humanity. These three points have vital information for you today and how you live. These three themes will continue to unfold throughout the rest of the Gospel.

OBSERVATION:

APPLICATION:

PRAYER:

John

1:19-51

Context:

Within verse 19 a change comes; the author now enters us into the narrative world of this Gospel. But it is important to keep in mind we have already been introduced to John the Baptist in the prologue (1:6). The author of John gives minimal attention to the identity and ministry of John the Baptist compared to the Synoptics (Matthew, Mark, Luke) and instead focuses on the role the Baptist plays identifying and exalting Jesus.

It can be easy with this section to become overwhelmed. There are numerous details of history and theology within these passages. The interrogation of John the Baptist and the many questions about formal Jewish titles. There is the baptism of Jesus and its theological significance. There are also the four men—Andrew and Peter, Philip and Nathanael—and the key that their stories hold as we unlock the meaning of the passage.

John 1:19-51 is a theological model for what it means to follow Christ. As a model, it urges that personal piety (loving God) must be wed to theological understanding (knowing God). Christian faith is not merely commitment but content as well. When John the Baptist is pressed on his identity he can stand confident with theological clarity in his response. The understanding of these passages is to clearly love God and Know God, the two go hand in hand and cannot be separated without losing proper intellectual and physical pursuit.

OBSERVATION:

APPLICATION:

PRAYER:

John

2

Context:

John 2 shares two main events in which Jesus shows up at and displays theological and doctrinal significance. Through a wedding in which Jesus performs his first miracle and then an apparent scuffle in the temple as Jesus prophesies the death and resurrection.

The story of Jesus turning water into wine carries a few exegetical questions. What was the relationship of Mary (Jesus' mother) to the wedding? Why does she feel responsible for the lack of wine? Why does Jesus seem to treat his mother so abruptly? Many scholars begin to search for meaning in the wine, proof that it is acceptable. Others discover meaning in the wedding, that the institution of marriage is important. And those may be, but there is even more to see through this event. In this culture weddings were important events, announced well in advance and recognized by the entire village. In some respects, they were the chief celebrations enjoyed in the year and thus provided the imagery for messianic celebration. When Jews reflected on what heaven or the arrival of the Messiah would be like, they thought about banquets, and the wedding banquet was the foremost model that came to mind.

It is vital to keep the wedding in Cana in mind when we turn to Jesus's cleansing the temple in 2:13-22. Jesus arrives in Jerusalem for a major festival in the city. He enters the temple (a place of sacrificial purification) and likewise provides a symbolic work demonstrating replacement and fulfillment. Just like the stone water vessels in Cana were filled with new wine Jesus explains the temple will be destroyed and reconstructed in three days. A foretelling of Jesus' actions on the cross.

OBSERVATION:

APPLICATION:

PRAYER:

John

3

Context:

Nicodemus steps forward in chapter 3 not as some random observer of Jesus, but as a representative of those in Jerusalem who had witnessed the work of Jesus in chapter 2. He represents the institution; rabbis or teachers of the law. Through the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke) there are many reports of tension and struggles with these people and this is Jesus' first encounter with the religious leaders in the Gospel of John. The story of Nicodemus shows the incompleteness of the religious institutions in light of the arrival of Jesus Christ.

Also, notice how Nicodemus provides three different inquiries (3:1, 4, 9) and each of these questions permits Jesus a fuller explanation. Nicodemus appears twice more in the Fourth Gospel as a defender of Jesus' interests: first at the feast of Tabernacles (7:50-52) and later at Jesus' burial with Joseph of Arimathea (19:39). In each case he blends a mix of curiosity, courage, and fear.

The story of John the Baptist in this chapter is one of the least celebrated sections of this Gospel, overshadowed no doubt by the dramatic and well-known dialogue with Nicodemus. Historically it provides some information we do not find elsewhere in the New Testament. For instance, we learn that John the Baptist had a committed circle of disciples and some struggled with the decision to shift their commitment from John to Jesus. We also learn that Jesus and John were in ministry simultaneously in Judea.

OBSERVATION:

APPLICATION:

PRAYER:

John

4

Context:

Chapter 4 contains multiple stories with valuable information... First, Jesus meets a Samaritan woman. This would be an astounding situation on multiple levels, a Samaritan and a Jew talking would already be a rare occurrence, it was highly irregular for a man with Jesus' profile to speak with anyone possessing such features. He is male, single, religious, and Jewish, and clearly defined social boundaries ought to keep him from speaking with a woman in such a private setting.

Jesus arrives at the well and sits on the edge because of his fatigue, his fatigue is an interesting note. Throughout this Gospel, John emphasizes the divinity of Jesus in the strongest terms. But here he easily and comfortably shows an incidental human feature: Jesus is tired. John's explanation of Christ does not emphasize one dimension of Jesus at the expense of the other. Here we also see that Jesus reveals his Lordship when he states "I am the Messiah" (4:26). Because of this encounter we then discover that the Samaritan woman was so transformed that she shared her testimony with other Samaritans and they also recognize Jesus as the "Savior of the world" (4:42).

Through the next story of Jesus healing an official's son we see that Jesus has now began to travel leaving Samaria. On his journey a government official in a nearby city meets Jesus pleading that he will heal his ill son. For many verse 53 appears to be the main focus of this story, that the entire family accepted Jesus as Lord because of this miraculous sign. But verse 48 has much more focus for readers as well; "Will you never believe in me unless you see miraculous signs and wonders?"

OBSERVATION:

APPLICATION:

PRAYER:

John

5

Context:

Chapter 5 is a full picture of Jesus committing "crimes" (5:1-15) according to the religious leaders and then the leaders decide to "prosecute" (5:16-18) and finally his "trial" (5:19-47). Therefore, the Gospel of John chapter 5 is a trial—perhaps it is "the trial" of Jesus played out for us, showing us the kind of accusation and rejection Jesus experienced, his defense, and above all, the genuine spiritual jeopardy his opponents are in.

Because of Jesus working on the Sabbath (5:1-15) three verses come up that are pivotal for us to see. Verses 16-18 display the Jewish leadership locating two crimes that are major offenses deserving of death. That Jesus would work on the Sabbath, miracles notwithstanding and also then claiming to be equals with God. For these reasons the Jewish leaders begin the work of sentencing Jesus.

What's next is we see Jesus continue explaining the exact issues the Jewish leaders are holding. This explanation from Jesus is the third in the Gospel and presents us with claims unlike anything we have heard so far. Jesus makes explicit claims to his divinity in as much as he associates himself directly with God. His defense here has three distinct elements: (1) Jesus describes his work as within the same as when God "works" on the Sabbath. (2) Since Jesus is on trial, he brings forward witnesses who can verify the divinity claims. (3) Jesus turns the table on his opponents and moves from defense to prosecution, explaining that Jesus is accomplishing the work of God.

OBSERVATION:

APPLICATION:

PRAYER:

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