



The Gospel of John—Life in Jesus' Name

Brad Barrett brad@stonebrook.org

Relevance of this Gospel to Today

Whether we are seekers and skeptics or we have been believers in Jesus Christ for many years, this Gospel can impact us. Throughout this book, we are confronted with the reality and uniqueness of Jesus, and we are called on to look to him for the answers to life. For Christianity is far more than another religion with good rules for living. Fundamentally, it is about a person, and his name is Jesus.

The book is simple yet profound. One author described it "like a pool in which a child may wade and an elephant can swim."

What are the Gospels

The New Testament includes four books called, *The Gospels*. "Gospel" simply means "good news," and specifically it refers to the good news proclaimed about Jesus Christ: who he is and what he accomplished for God and for our sake.

The four gospels are unique literature that defy typical categories such as biography or history (though they are that, too). They are more like portraits, portraits of Jesus, the promised Messiah (i.e., Christ).

Comparing John to the Other Gospels

All four gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) have some similarities and differences.

All four, of course, present the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. They each seem to emphasize an aspect of the Lord's role:

Matthew presents him as King.

Mark as Servant.

Luke as a Man.

John as God.

So together the four present a fourfold portrait of Jesus. The first three, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, are similar to each other and are often called "The Synoptics," which means "blended view," since they blend together.

Overall, John's Gospel has some unique features compared to the Synoptics. For example, Jesus makes seven "I am" statements, declaring who he is. No parables are recorded in John. Only seven miracles (signs) are recorded. More is written about the Holy Spirit. Many of Jesus' teachings are unique to John (like the Upper Room discourse), and many teachings in the Synoptics are not included in John (like the Sermon on the Mount and parables).

Purpose

John clearly spells out his reason for writing in John 20:30-31:

"Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name."

Over and over again in virtually every chapter, John presents us with Jesus the Christ, the Son of God, and we are called on to believe in him to find life, eternal life, and all that God has for us.

Background and Setting

Though this Gospel does not specifically state that John the Apostle is the author, it has been widely assumed over the centuries that he is. The date, location, and recipients of John's writing is not precisely known, but it is possible it was written from Ephesus in the 80's A.D. to churches in Asia Minor (modern-day Turkey).

Interestingly, the oldest manuscript from any portion of the New Testament is from the Gospel of John, dated ca. 135 A.D.

Some Key Themes and Words

1. Believe in him.
2. Life is in Jesus, and in him alone.
3. Light and darkness.
4. Bear witness of Jesus (seven specific witnesses).
5. Love (especially in the Upper Room discourse of John 13-17).
6. Deity of Christ
7. Seven "I am" statements by Jesus, e.g., "I am the resurrection."
8. Seven signs (miracles) to testify as to who he is.
9. The relationship between Father and Son.
10. Jesus is the dividing line. People must choose what they will do with him.
11. The Holy Spirit: his role and witness.
12. Obedience.

(over)

Key Passages

Here are some example passages that reflect key themes of the Gospel of John.

John 1:1 ESV In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John 3:16 ESV "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."

John 5:24 ESV Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.

John 6:35 ESV Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst."

John 8:12 ESV Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

John 9:32 ESV Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a man born blind.

John 11:25-26 ESV Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?"

John 13:34-35 ESV A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.

³⁵ By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

John 15:4 ESV Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me.

John 20:17 ESV Jesus said to her, "Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brothers and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'"

Basic Outline

- I. Prologue (1:1-18)
- II. Jesus reveals himself to Israel and the nations (1:19-12:50)
- III. Jesus prepares his disciples (13-17)
- IV. Jesus' death and resurrection (18-20)
- V. Epilogue (21)

Summer & Fall Teaching Schedule

(subject to change)

3-Jun-18	John 1:1-18
10-Jun-18	John 1:19-2:22
17-Jun-18	John 2:23-3:36
24-Jun-18	John 4:1-54
1-Jul-18	John 5:1-47
8-Jul-18	John 6:1-71
15-Jul-18	John 7:1-8:59
22-Jul-18	Stonebrook Vision, Part I
29-Jul-18	Stonebrook Vision, Part II
5-Aug-18	Mike Anderson's Life Story
12-Aug-18	John 9:1-41
19-Aug-18	John 10:1-42
26-Aug-18	John 11:1-57
2-Sep-18	John 12:1-19
9-Sep-18	John 12:20-50
16-Sep-18	John 13:1-30
23-Sep-18	John 13:31-14:31
30-Sep-18	John 15:1-26
7-Oct-18	John 16:1-33
14-Oct-18	John 17:1-26
21-Oct-18	John 18:1-27
28-Oct-18	John 18:28-19:16a
4-Nov-18	John 19:16b-42
11-Nov-18	John 20:1-29
18-Nov-18	John 20:30-21:25 & wrap up