



Walking Thru The Bible

Gospel of John

Introduction:

The book of John is unique among the Gospels. There is no mention of the birth and early years of Jesus. A great amount of attention is focused on Jesus' final instructions to the apostles.

Most of the events related in John are found nowhere else in Scripture--the first miracle at Cana, the first cleansing of the temple, Nicodemus' visit with the Lord, Lazarus' resurrection, etc.

Author: The book refers to its author calling himself "*the disciple whom Jesus loved...who has written these things*," John 21:20, 24. The writer obviously was a Palestinian Jew who was an eyewitness of the events of Christ's life, for he displays knowledge of Jewish customs (7:37-39; 18:28) and of the land of Palestine (1:44, 46; 5:2) and he includes details of an eyewitness (2:6; 13:26; 21:8, 11). Both internal and external evidences point to the apostle John the son of Zebedee and Salome as the author. It appears that John preached in the area of Ephesus in the middle of the first century and that the gospel was written about that time before the destruction of the city in AD 70, ["Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches." John 5:2]

Purpose of the Book: The Gospel of John has clearly an evangelistic purpose, presenting Jesus and calling upon men to make a decision about him (John 20:31). The book opens with an affirmation that eternal life is to be found in Christ (John 1:4). While Matthew was written primarily for the Jewish audience, and Mark and Luke for the Roman and Greek, John appears to have been aimed at a universal audience.

Major Themes:

1. One of the unique themes of John's Gospel is the opening doctrine of the Word (Greek, *ho logos*), John 1:1-18. The Jew understood that *ho logos* created the world (Gen.1:3), gave life (Isa.55:3) and accomplished the divine purpose in all things (Isa.55:11). The Greeks perceived *ho logos* as giving the universe order and harmony (e.g., Heraclitus) and serving to direct mankind to ultimate realities.

John presents Jesus as the divine *logos* who has come in the flesh. To the Jew, this meant that God's power, plans, and promises were contained in Jesus. To the Greek, it suggested that the one who created and gave order to the universe, who sustained it in an orderly fashion had come in the flesh to dwell among men.

2. In John's gospel the evidential nature of miracles as signs is most prominent. A *miracle* is "an extraordinary work of God in the world which serves as a sign or attestation." We often hear the word used loosely and incorrectly. A miracle (*dunamis*) is a mighty work or exhibition of extraordinary power. John uses the idea of Jesus' miracles being 'signs' (*semeion*) a distinguishing mark or seal of genuineness, (John 2:23; 3:2; 4:54; 6:2, 14).

Miracles in the Bible served the purpose to accredit a man as being from God (e.g, Moses before Pharaoh, etc.) In Jesus' case his miracles confirmed that he was from God (5:35; 3:1-2) and identified him as the Messiah (7:31), and gained the attention of the people and showed God's compassion for the plight of mankind.

It is impossible to remove miracles from the life and record of Jesus Christ. If one rejects the miracles (including the virgin birth and Jesus' resurrection) he has no grounds for accepting the philosophy and truthfulness of Jesus.

On the other hand there are obvious contrasts between Jesus' miracles and the alleged miracles of today's "faith healers." Jesus worked miracles in the absence of faith, he worked a variety of miracles, including control over nature, multiplying food, raising the dead, and were never done for selfish gain.

3. Jesus speaks of the "new birth" in John 3:1-21 and expresses that a man must be born again, or from above, to enter into the kingdom of heaven. This new birth involves water and the spirit. The association of "water" with the process of man beginning life anew would immediately be identified with baptism in the mind of Nicodemus and those in that time. As seen in the context of this passage John was baptizing multitudes and this was for the forgiveness of sins (John 1:15-34; 3:22-28; Mark 1:4).

Baptism is consistently paralleled with one beginning a new life in Christ (cf. Romans 6:3-6; 1 Peter 3:21). It pictures the putting to death of the man of sin and his burial, his cleansing by the blood of Christ (Rev. 1:5), and his resurrection from the grave of water to a new life (Rom. 6:4-6).

John's Plan in the Gospel: The thesis of John's record is that Jesus was God in the flesh. The principle part of the book provides supporting evidence of this thesis. John presents seven great signs (or

miracles) that serve to credential Jesus as the Son of God. Nicodemus said something about the power of these miracles when he said in John 3:2 _____

- 1st sign (2:1-11) _____
- 2nd sign (4:46-54) _____
- 3rd sign (5:1-18) _____
- 4th sign (6:1-14) _____
- 5th sign (6:15-21) _____
- 6th sign (9:1-41) _____
- 7th sign (11:1-57) _____

John presents seven witness who give their testimony to Jesus as the Son of God. Who were these witnesses and what did they say, (1) John 1:34 (1:19-36); (2) John 1:49 (43-51); (3) John 6:69 (66-69); (4) John 11:27; (5) John 20:28; (6) John 20:31; (7) John 10:36 (31-47).

John presents the seven great "I AM" statements of the Lord himself and his own claims. (1) 6:35; (2) 8:12; (3) 8:58; (4) 10:11; (5) 11:25; (6) 14:6; (7) 15:1.

And John presents clearly his own purpose for writing these things, "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." (John 20:30-31).

Overview of John:

- I. Incarnation of the Son of God, 1:1-18
- II. Presentation of the Son of God, 1:19 - 4:54
- III. Confrontations with the Son of God, 5:1-12:50
 - A. At a feast in Jerusalem, 5:1-47
 - B. At passover time in Galilee, 6:1-71
 - C. At f east of tabernacles, 7:1-10:21
 - D. At feast of dedication, 10:22-42
 - E. At Bethany, 11:1-12:11
 - F. At Jerusalem, 12:12-50
- IV. Instructions by the Son of God, 13:1 - 16:33
- V. Intercession of the Son of God, 17:1-26
- VI. Crucifixion of the Son of God, 18:1 - 19:42
- VII. Resurrection of the Son of God, 20:1 - 21:25
 - A. The empty tomb, 20:1-20
 - B. His appearances afterwards 20:11-21:25

A Service With Jesus
 John 20:19-23 (Luke 24)

Introduction:

1. What first Lord's Day service do you remember? Here is one that stands out in John's mind.
2. Notice the week the disciples had come through.
3. Look at the condition of their spirit when they met.
4. Jesus met with them on that great day, and let's notice three things that happened in that assembly:

I. *THEY WERE COMFORTED*

- A. By What Was Not Said.
 Jesus did not shame and criticize them.
- B. By What Was Said.
 Jesus greeted them with 'Shalom' or "Peace," and really wanted them to have the peace He could give them (v.19, v.21).

II. *THEY WERE CONVINCED*

- When the Lord appears they were terrified and how does He convince them? What evidence? (Luke 24:37, 38-39)
- A. The Scars -- Luke 24:39
 - B. The Scriptures -- Lk.24:44-46; Isa. 53; Psa.22

III. *THEY WERE CHALLENGED*

- John 19:21-23 is John's record of the commission. They had been challenged before (Matt. 10) but now it is broader and greater. How would they respond?
- A. This Would Be An Exalted Privilege
 1. They would be ambassadors. Credentials.
 2. They would go in the name of Christ.
 3. They had a message for every man -- that every man needed to hear -- (2 Cor.4:4-5; 1 Tim.1:11-12)
 - B. It Would Be Extremely Personal
 Even as I send "you," that means Peter, James, etc.
 1. Can we imagine the personal resolution on the part of each one as he hears he is to be sent!
 2. Think how each one has a chance to talk of something like this.

Conclusion:

1. Follow these apostles after this Sunday meeting, do you think any said, "Well, I slept half way through it!" or "I didn't get much out of it!"
2. What effect did this meeting have on those present? How did it affect their conduct?
3. What can a "Sunday Service" do for you and me?