

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

INTRODUCTION

Who do you think Jesus is? We all have different ways to answer that question because there is no one name that says everything about Him. Jesus has many titles which is why there are four Gospels in the Bible that reveal Who He is to us from various angles because Matthew tells the story of Jesus as king. Mark tells the story of Jesus as a servant. Luke tells the story of Jesus as a man and John tells the story of Jesus as God. This morning, we are going to begin our study of John's account of the life of Christ by answering "3 Questions about His Gospel."

1. Who Wrote It?

John did. It is the overwhelming testimony of the early church that he is the one who was responsible for giving us the words of this book. John was an interesting character in the Bible because Mark 3:17 says that Jesus nicknamed him and his brother James "Sons of Thunder" for wanting to bring down fire on some Samaritans and kill them. However, John 13:23 says that he was also known as "the disciple whom Jesus loved" because the Lord changed him. As John got to know Jesus, He turned his world upside down and softened his heart so that he was no longer a hotheaded man but a tender, gracious one.

(Discussion Question: How does this make John easy to relate to? Have you ever lost your temper and wanted to reign down fire on someone? What changed you? What part did Jesus have to play in it?)

2. Why Did He Write this Book?

John 20:30-31 says, “Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples ... but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.” In other words, this book was not written in order to help you merely learn about Christ but to believe in Him. John wants you to respond to these words by putting your faith in His name. The reason this is important is because many of us have grown up in church and are tempted to ignore a book like this since we have read it so many times before. However, the issue is not: Have you read it before? The issue is: Has it ever made an impact on your soul?

(Discussion Question: How many times have you read the Gospel of John personally? Can you honestly say that it has made an impact on you? How so? Can you share that with a friend this week?)

3. How Did He Write this Book?

Church History says that John composed his Gospel after Matthew, Mark, and Luke had written theirs so that he knew what they wrote about and did not want to repeat too much of the information. Instead, he intended to give us a unique account of the life of Christ where a large portion of the material is brand new. In order to do that, he gives us 7 miracles of Jesus and 7 “I AM” statements such as the following: “I am the Bread of Life” (6:35); “I am the Light of the World” (8:12); “I am the Door for the Sheep” (10:7, 9); “I am the Good Shepherd” (10:11, 14); “I am the Resurrection and the Life” (11:25); “I am the Way and the Truth and the Life” (14:6); and “I am the True Vine” (15:1, 5).

(Discussion Question: What does Jesus mean when He says “I am the way” in John 14:6? How does that set Him apart from every other religious teacher in the world? How does it set Christianity apart from every other religion?)