

John

Purpose: “That you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name” (John 20:31).

Outline: 1:1-18 – Prologue

2:1-6:29 – The Beginnings of Jesus’ Ministry

2:1-11:57 – The Book of Signs

12:1-20:31 – The Book of Passion

21:1-25 – Epilogue

Author: John, son of Zebedee – “the beloved disciple” (authorship is greatly debated)

Date: 80ish (date is greatly debated)

Highlights:

The Gospel of John has been described as “a pool in which a child may wade and an elephant may swim.” John’s gospel is one of the simplest books in all of Scripture; and yet, it also contains some of the most profound and complex thoughts ever written.

John is often referred to as the great evangelist for being able to communicate the gospel so clearly and with such depth.

John’s evangelistic purpose is also seen in his words near the end of his gospel (20:31).

It is quite possible that John was writing to Greeks.

The opening prologue (1:1-18) is unique on many levels. It connects Christ to Creation (the divinity & eternity of the 2nd person of God). Note, also, how the thought in verse 1 is finished in verse 14.

There are some passages in John that we also find in the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke); but John also includes many passages that are unique to his gospel account.

The book begins and ends with an event in Cana. Chapter 2 tells about the miracle of changing water into wine at a wedding in Cana. Chapter 21 tells about a miraculous catch of fish in Cana.

John tells the account of Jesus clearing the temple in chapter 2. The Synoptics put the account at the end of Jesus’ life (the beginning of Passion Week). Some conclude that there were two separate temple cleansings. Most conclude that it is the same event, but John places it here for the theological purpose of showing God’s judgment was operative through the Messiah from the outset of his ministry.

The well-known “John 3:16” comes in the context of Jesus teaching Nicodemus (3:1-21).

While John contains less “pithy and slogan sayings,” John is probably quoted more than the other gospels.

When John recounts a miracle of Jesus it is to emphasize who the person of Jesus is.

The earliest manuscripts do not contain John 7:53-8:11.

The shortest verse in the Bible is John 11:35 – “Jesus wept.”

John 13:1-17:26 contains the longest account of the events that took place in the upper room. This was the place of the Lord’s Supper, but John says nothing about the institution of the Lord’s Supper.

John 14:1-17:26 is also referred to as the farewell discourse.

John 17 contains Jesus’ longest recorded prayer. It is also called the “priestly prayer.”

The last verse of John is a wonderful verse to keep in mind when considering Scripture: “Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written.” (John 21:25)