

## THE GOSPEL OF JOHN (Introduction and Chapter 1)

**Gospel of John:** written by John, “the disciple whom Jesus loved” (John 13:23; 19:26; 20:2; 21:7; 21:20)

**When:** written about 95 A.D.; he also wrote **I John, II John, III John, and Revelation**

**Key verse:** John 3:16

**Theme verse:** John 20:31— “But these things were written, that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you might have life through his name.” (1st generation—conviction; 2nd generation—belief; 3rd generation—opinion)

**John is writing to that 3rd generation in a day of emerging GNOSTICISM.**

**Key words in book:** *know* (142x’s); *believe* (100x’s); *see* (105x’s); *verily* aka “truly” (50x’s); *Father* (118x’s); *world* (78x’s); *love* (36x’s)

**John, formerly named “Boanerges” (son of thunder)—Mark 3:17; Luke 9:54—because of His once fiery disposition, became the “Apostle of Love.” (I John 4:7)**

John was an unlearned and “ignorant” (Acts 4:13) fisherman (Matthew 4:21) from the northern “country” of Galilee, YET John produced one of the GREATEST pieces of literature with **The Gospel of John**—in particular [section] **John 1:1-14**, which even supersedes the educated Jewish philosopher, Philo, from Alexandria Egypt (with Philo’s treatment on the “Logos.”) It also supersedes Plato’s treatment on the “Logos.”

“John was *not* a man of learning. John was described as an ignorant and unlearned man, though all the time he was carrying about in his mind the whole of the Fourth Gospel....How did John sink so deep into the unsearchable things of his Master, while all the other disciples stood all their discipleship days on the surface? What was it in John that lifted him so high above Peter, and Thomas, and Philip...?... John thought and thought continually on what he saw and heard. The seed fell into good ground. John was one of those happy men, and a prince among them, who have a deep root in themselves. And the good seed sprung up in him a hundredfold. The first Psalm was all fulfilled in John. For he meditated day and night on his Master, and on his Master’s words, till he was like David’s tree that was planted by the rivers of water so that its leaf never withered, nor was its fruit never lacking in its season.”

“Be men of mind, and be sure you be men of meditation. Mind is the highest thing, and mediation is the highest use of mind; it is the true root, and sap, and fatness of all faith and prayer and spiritual obedience. Why are our minds so blighted and so barren in the things of God? **Why have we so little faith?** Why have we so little hold on the reality and nobility of Divine things? The reason is plain—**we seldom or ever meditate.** We read our New Testament, on occasion, and we hear it read, but we do not take time to meditate. We pray sometimes, or we pretend to pray; but do we ever set ourselves to prepare our hearts for the mercy-seat by strenuous meditation on who and what we are; on who and what He is to whom we pretend to pray; on what it is we are to say and do, and ask, and receive? We may never have heard of Philo, but we all belong to his barren school. The Lord Jesus Christ is but a name and a notion to us; a sacred name and notion, it may be, but still only a name and a notion. The thought of Jesus Christ seldom or ever quickens, or overawes, or gladdens our heart.

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Whereas, when we once become men of meditation, Jesus Christ, and the whole New Testament concerning Him... will become more to us than our nearest friend... **Our conventional morning chapter about what Jesus did and said, and is at this moment doing and saying, will then be far more real to us than all our morning papers and all our business letters.**"

—*Bible Characters From The Old And New Testament*, by Alexander Whyte, 1967

So our focus in the Gospel of John will be **REDISCOVERING** Jesus, while also **REDISCOVERING** what it means to LOVE and FOLLOW after Him, just as John did (without mere lip-service—Isaiah 29:13—*“Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips they honor me, but have removed their hearts far from me, and their fear (reverence) toward me is taught by the precept of men.”*)

**The Bible promises that this meditation will not only change our lives, but ALSO that others will even notice, and be the better for it, as well!!! (I TIMOTHY 4:15)**

“This is what we need to do: take in the entire New Testament, and let each biblical writer teach us about Jesus. Rather than rely upon our favorite parts, our preferred picture of Jesus, we need to rediscover the “whole” Jesus—every portrait, every picture, every single verse. By looking at many different images of Jesus ... we might be in a better position to rediscover Jesus beyond our preferences, challenging our prejudices and enhancing our faith.” —*Rediscovering Jesus*, by Capes & Reeves

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WHY FOUR DIFFERENT GOSPEL ACCOUNTS, & NOT JUST ONE BIG ONE???  
WHY ARE MATTHEW, MARK, AND LUKE CALLED THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS?

“**SYNOPTIC**” basically means “**Seen Together;**” meaning, because Matthew, Mark, and Luke have many of the same stories, often in similar sequence and with similar wording, they are grouped together... **John, however, is unique in its own way, and perfectly complements the first three synoptic gospel accounts.**

“That is just where John’s Gospel completes the others. The earlier three are a presentation of Jesus; the fourth (John) is an interpretation. The other three show us Jesus outwardly; this fourth interprets him inwardly. The other three emphasize the human aspects; the fourth unveils the Divine...The other three concern themselves mainly with our Lord’s public discourses; this fourth (John) gives larger place to his private conversations, his verbal conflicts with the Jews, and his closer teachings in seclusion to His inner disciples...The other three are purely factual; John is also doctrinal. The other three begin with a human genealogy and a fulfillment of Jewish prophecy; John begins with a direct Divine revelation of that which was altogether pre-mundane and eternal.”

—*Explore The Book*, by J. Sidlow Baxter