

The Gospel of John—the book of signs

(review of overview notes appear below)

John: “*The Beloved Disciple*”, as he calls himself 5 times. It is the last Gospel written, circa AD 85. Church tradition says he wrote it while in Ephesus late in the 1st century AD. The theme of John’s gospel is that the Kingdom of God is relational; that is, to enter it is to enter into relationship with God’s only son, and not only that, the Kingdom spreads through relationships. **THEME: RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS=RELATIONSHIP WITH THE ETERNAL FATHER, CREATOR OF ALL THINGS...**

Differences with other Gospels (the Synoptics):

- (1) Does not focus on parables, but rather long discourses of various stories.
- (2) Chooses only 7 hand-picked miracles, which he called ‘signs’
- (3) Jesus’ ministry is examined by topics, not by time-sequence.
- (4) The ‘I am’ sayings are only in John, also considered signs of His deity

The ‘I am’ signs:

The Bread of Life (6:35, 48–51)

**Light of the World (7:2, 8:12, 9:5)*

Door of the Sheep (10:7, 9)

Good Shepherd (10:11, 14)

Resurrection and the Life (11:25)

Way, Truth, Life (14:6)

True Vine (15: 1, 5)

(technically, there is an 8th: 8:58 says ‘before Abraham was, I AM’—Existed before Nativity)

**Some of these were associated with Jewish Feasts, for example, the ‘Light of the World’ happened at Feast of Tabernacles, when giant lampstands were/are used to demonstrate the light of God.*

Though it is likely John was aware of the other three accounts, he chose to not use their sequence of events as a basis for his story, but focus on topics, called ‘discourses’, where he would expound on a story or a teaching.

Breakdown of Book of John:

(1) Chapter 1 deals with His legitimate claim to being God

A: 1:1–18 teaches that He is the Pre-existent and was the predicted One

(2) Chapters 2 – 12 deal with Jesus’ Public Ministry, and announces His intent for mankind in John 3:16–17; **RELATIONSHIP**

(3) Chapters 13–21 deal with His private ministry to His disciples

A: Like Mark, more than 1/3 of the book devoted to last week of His life.

Recurring Theme of John: He came to earth for Relationship with us—

(1) *Emphasizes our need to actively seek relationship; believe, trust, commit (3:16-17).*

(2) *John emphasizes human relationships, too*

(A) *John defines himself by his relationship with Jesus; calls himself ‘the disciple that Jesus loved’ rather than using his own name, or ‘I/me’*

(B) *John talks a lot about Jesus’ relationship with people, as Lazarus, Mary, Martha, esp the week before His death. He needed people around Him as we need Him, especially in crisis.*

(C) *Human relationships always subject to Father’s will. (ch 11, Jesus waits 2 days to come see his good friend Lazarus, essentially giving him time to die).*

The Father had spoken to Him to wait, that He would resurrect Lazarus later.

(My) favorite passages---

John 17 (the ‘High Priestly Prayer), where Jesus prays, for Himself first, then His disciples, then for all the rest of us. Read it, and let it re-ground you as you read what He really thinks of you.....

John 21:20-23-- Jesus addresses Peter to let Him know that His plan for him was an individual one, as it is for all of us. Jesus’ plan for John was different than Peter’s, as the nature of their relationship was different.

This turned out to be prophetic, as church tradition says that John died an old man, rather than to be martyred like Peter and the others. Discipleship is individualized, and we need to be personally engaged with the Savior to find out what His path for each of us is.