

The Gospel According to John

The Gospel According to **John**

- When I was 19 or 20 years old, I took a course in the **Gospel of John** and **Revelation** at SUNY at Buffalo.
- I was a newer Christian and this was my first college-level Bible course.
- It was taught by Reverend Doctor Someone or Other and I really came into it ready to learn something.

The Gospel According to John

- One basic assumption of our textbook commentary was that John could not have been the author.
- It mostly got worse from there.
- After that it was a very long time before I ever took another Bible course at a college or seminary.

The Gospel According to John

- Allow me to say that I do not recommend SUNY at Buffalo as a place to go to study the Bible.
- (But the State of NY covered all my tuition, so I guess it was worth every penny I paid for that course.)
- Further, an enormous number of competent, well-educated Bible teachers hold a more traditional view.

The Gospel According to John

Early church fathers like Irenaeus and Clement of Alexandria attributed authorship to the apostle John, the son of Zebedee ...

*– Tony Evans,
Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship*



The Gospel According to John

... Some modern critical scholars have attempted to argue that the Fourth Gospel was penned by a different John (or someone else entirely), but this is speculation lacking genuine proof. ¹

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The Gospel According to **John**

- The Reverend Doctor Tony Evans is right.
- What evidence we have from the early church indicates that the **Apostle John** is the author.
- He wrote this Gospel in **Ephesus** around **85 or 90AD**.
- This book seems intentionally designed as an add-on to the other three Gospels.
- It supports the Synoptics while not imitating them.

The Gospel According to John

Things that we **won't find** in John:

- The baptism or temptation of Jesus
- The Sermon on the Mount or Olivet Discourse
- Parables
- Demonic exorcisms
- The Lord's Supper
- Christ praying at Gethsemane

The Gospel According to John

- The first three Gospels tend to give us long sections of teaching and parts with one miracle after another.
- John usually pairs a miracle or “sign” with a section of narrative or teaching that gives the sign meaning.
- John is also deeply theological.
- Here are a few major themes.

The Gospel According to John

1. Raw material for the doctrine of the Trinity
2. The deity of Christ
3. Jesus as the anticipated Messiah
4. Our need to personally believe
5. The church as a community of love, service, etc.
6. Eternal Life (in place of “kingdom” wording)
7. The clearest teaching on the role of the Holy Spirit

John 1 Introduction

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- John begins farther back than the other Gospels.
- He starts not with John the Baptist, nor with a birth story, and gives no genealogy of Christ's human family.
- He starts prior to creation, much like **Genesis 1**.
- From there he moves on to John the Baptist and the earliest disciples.

John 1 Key Verse

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- **John 1:14** (ESV)

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

John 1 Outline

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1. Prologue 1:1-18
2. John's Testimony 1:19-28
3. The Lamb of God 1:29-34
4. The First Disciples 1:35-42
5. More Disciples 1:43-51

1. Prologue 1:1-18

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Key words / ideas that show up throughout John:

- Life
- Light
- Sent
- Witness
- Believe
- World
- Born (esp. New Birth)
- Glory
- Father
- True / Truth

1. Prologue 1:1-18

- 1:1-5 John makes several points here:
 1. Jesus (*the Word* or *Logos*) is eternal.
 2. Jesus is God, yet distinct from God the Father.
 3. Jesus was active in creation.
 4. He has also entered the created world to overcome the darkness now in it.

1. Prologue 1:1-18

- **1:9-13** We must believe in Jesus, in the sense of trusting him completely as God.
- Not everyone does so, but some do.
- When we do, we receive the new birth, through which we become members of God's family.

1. Prologue 1:1-18

- 1:14 The eternal **Word** or *Logos* entered into the created world, which was initially made through him.
- This **Word** is none other than **the Son**, the unique **Son of the Father**.

1. Prologue 1:1-18

- Isaiah 55:8-11

⁸ For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD.

⁹ For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
so are my ways higher than your ways
and my thoughts than your thoughts.

¹⁰ “For as the rain and the snow come down from
heaven ...

1. Prologue 1:1-18

- Isaiah 55:8-11

... and do not return there but water the earth,
making it bring forth and sprout,
giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater,
¹¹ so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth;
it shall not return to me empty,
but it shall accomplish that which I purpose,
and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

1. Prologue 1:1-18

- 1:18 The ministry of Jesus is to reveal God to us.
- made him known Greek *exēgēsato*
- Bible teachers work to dig out the truth of a passage of Scripture and make its meaning clear to others.
- They call that process *exegesis*.
- In a similar way, Jesus makes God known by revealing truth and making its meaning clear to us.

2. John's Testimony 1:19-28

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- 1:23 John saw himself rightly as the forerunner of the Messiah, a role foretold by [Isaiah the prophet](#).
- He also knew that he was nothing compared to Christ.

2. John's Testimony 1:19-28

- 1:26-27 In the Jewish Talmud we can read, *Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said: All tasks that [a Canaanite] slave performs for his master, a student performs for his teacher, except for untying his shoe, [a demeaning act that was typically performed by slaves and would not be appropriate for a student to do.]* (Ketubot 96a)

2. John's Testimony 1:19-28

- 1:26-27 John saw his true position before Jesus.
- He had the privilege to proclaim him to others.
- Still, he knew he was less than a Canaanite slave before the Lamb of God and Savior of the world.

3. The Lamb of God 1:29-34

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- 1:29 Already in the first chapter, this verse points to Christ's death on the cross.
- He is the **sacrificial Lamb of God** that takes away all our sins.
- This is perhaps the chief way that the light of Jesus overcomes the darkness of sin and death.

3. The Lamb of God 1:29-34

- Remember 1:4-5,

⁴ In him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

- Jesus created the world and entered it to defeat the sin and death that we had brought into it.

4. The First Disciples 1:35-42

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- The first phase of our mission here at Horizon Central is taken right from these verses.
- Leading others *to Christ*, as we see in **John 1:40-42**,
- *One ... who ... followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which is translated, the Christ). And he brought him to Jesus."*

4. The First Disciples 1:35-42

- We don't hear as much about Andrew as about Peter.
- He appears less in the Bible and less in the history of the church.
- Still, how would you like to have been the one who introduced the Apostle Peter to Christ?
- This is usually the ideal way to do evangelism.

4. The First Disciples 1:35-42

- Almost everyone who comes to Christ does so because of a friend or family member.
- Someone close to them told them about Jesus, started bringing them to church, etc.
- I started reading a Bible I found in my house, told a friend and he explained his faith to me.

5. More Disciples 1:43-51

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- Earlier we saw John the Baptist point his disciples toward Jesus.
- John clearly knew his role and who Jesus was.
- Andrew then brings along his brother Peter.
- Jesus calls Philip, who calls his brother Nathanael.
- Do we need a better example of disciple-making?

5. More Disciples 1:43-51

- We do not need to look for any secret hidden meaning in this story about the fig tree.
- It is a first example of **supernatural knowledge**, which Jesus will display repeatedly in the **Gospel of John**.

John 1 What We Just Read

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John 1 Key Points

1. Raw material for the doctrine of the Trinity
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4. Jesus as the anticipated Messiah
5. Jesus as the Lamb of God
6. Our need to personally believe
7. The need to tell others about Jesus

John 1 A Prayer

- After we pray, let's close by reading the Prologue in **John 1** one more time.

John 1 A Prayer

- Heavenly Father,
- We thank you for sending Jesus Christ your Son, the eternal and living Word of God, to reveal you to us.
- We also gladly trust in him as the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.
- As those who believe, we thank you for giving us the right to become children of God.

John 1 A Prayer

- We thank you for the new birth that comes to us by faith in Christ. We thank you for this new eternal life.
- We also see our need to be true disciples of Jesus and to be disciple-makers ourselves.
- Help us to be part of the movement to multiply committed followers of Christ, the Messiah.

John 1 A Prayer

- We receive the life that you offer and we pray that you would allow us to see many others come to faith in you.
- And we pray all of this through Jesus Christ our Lord,
- Amen
- (Now let's read the Prologue again.)

John 1 References

1. Evans, Tony. *The Tony Evans Bible Commentary*. B&H Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.