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Jesus. Who is Jesus? What did He say? What did He do? A lot of people talk about Jesus, but have you ever followed the trail of historical evidence to discover who He is? What do you think Jesus might mean for your life...today? We beckon you to come and see...

THE GOOD NEWS ACCORDING TO JOHN

What Jesus said and what Jesus did will show who Jesus is. Are you ready for this?

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Getting into the "sand" of the story...

Author and Date of Writing

Each book of the Bible was written by the inspiration of God, the Holy Spirit (2 Tim. 3:16). And yet, God chose to write His Word through moving upon human authors (more than 40) to pen the very words of God – without any error (cf. 2 Peter 1:21; John 17:17). They wrote with their own personalities, perspectives, and language ability. Therefore, each book of the Bible is incredibly unique yet amazingly united with every other book, together representing the one story of God throughout the ages.

The apostle John wrote his good news ("Gospel") message about Jesus Christ around 80AD, although it could have been written as early as 55AD or as late as 90AD. Nevertheless, the clear evidence points to John the apostle

authoring this book, most likely while he was in Ephesus. John never mentions himself by name in his gospel, which demonstrates his desire to direct the reader's attention to Jesus. But John the apostle is mentioned within the subtext of the narrative – he is most likely one of the two Galileans to leave John the Baptist and follow Jesus (1:35-42), and he is identified as the disciple "whom Jesus loved" (13:23; 19:26; 20:2; 21:7, 20).

Although John the Baptist is highlighted several times at the beginning of John's Gospel, he is not the author. Herod had the Baptizer beheaded quite early on in Jesus' public ministry (Mark 6:14-29).

Jesus nicknamed John and his brother, James, the "Sons of Thunder" (Mark 3:17). They must have had quite the reputation. John also wrote four other New Testament books: 1-3 John and the Revelation.

CULTURAL BACKGROUND

Getting into the "sandals" of the story...

Purpose

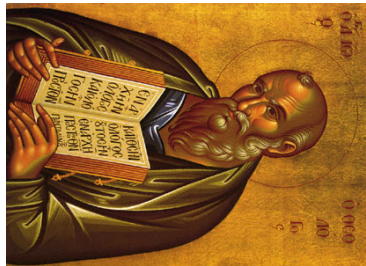
John's purpose is given – loud and clear: "...but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name" (20:30-31). Similar to a legal briefing, John sets out the evidence to show that what Jesus said and what Jesus did will prove who Jesus is. Therefore, his purpose is two-fold: apologetic (that they will know that Jesus is the Messiah, Son of God), and evangelistic (that they will respond with personal belief in Jesus as the Messiah, and thereby receive life in Him).

Setting

Tradition says John wrote His gospel while in Ephesus (Irenaeus, *Haer.* 3.1.2)* But the message of John clearly and easily spans all times and cultures.

CONTRAST THEMES

Death – Life | Darkness – Light | Old – New | Empty – Full |
First Birth – Second Birth | Empty Religion – Family Relationship



EVIDENCE FOR JESUS

7 Signs [Pieces of Evidence]

1. Jesus changes water to wine (2:1-11)
2. Jesus heals the nobleman's son (4:43-54)
3. Jesus heals the lame man at the Pool of Bethesda (5:1-15)
4. Jesus feeds the 5,000 (6:1-15)
5. Jesus walks on water (6:16-21)
6. Jesus heals the blind man (9:1-41)
7. Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead (11:1-44)
8. *Extra:* Jesus clears the Temple (2:13-22) [whether or not this is a specific "sign" in company with the others is debated.]

7 "I Am" Statements [Direct]

1. "I am the Bread of Life" (6:35, 48)
2. "I am the Light of the World" (8:12; 9:5)
3. "I am the Door" (10:7, 9)
4. "I am the Good Shepherd" (10:11, 14)
5. "I am the Resurrection, and the Life" (11:25)
6. "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life" (14:6)
7. "I am the True Vine" (15:1-5)

5 Witnesses [On the Stand]

1. The Personal Witness of Jesus (5:30-32)
2. The Witness of John the Baptist (5:33-35)
3. The Witness of Jesus' Works (5:36)
4. The Witness of the Father (5:37-38)
5. The Witness of Scripture (5:39-47)



*The Theater in Ancient Ephesus, Max capacity: 25,000
Ancient tradition holds that John wrote His Gospel while at Ephesus*

Broad Outline of John's Gospel*

- I. **Prologue – Introduction: (1:1-18)** *The Eternal Word comes as the Revealer of the Father*
- II. **Jesus Starts Public Ministry... (1:19-2:12)**
 - A. Through John the Baptist (1:19-34)
 - B. To His first disciples (1:35-51)
 - C. At Wedding in Cana (2:1-12)
- III. **Jesus Reveals the Father to the World... (2:13-12:50)**
 - A. In Judea (2:13-3:36)
 - B. In Samaria (4:1-42)
 - C. To a Royal Official (4:43-54)
 - D. In Jerusalem (5:1-47)
 - E. In Galilee (6:1-71)
 - F. In Jerusalem (7:1-10:39)
 - G. Beyond the Jordan and toward Golgotha (10:40-12:50)
- IV. **Jesus Reveals the Father to His Followers... (13:1-17:26)**
 - A. In the Last Supper (13:1-30)
 - B. In the Upper Room Discourse (13:31-16:33)
 - C. In the High Priestly Prayer (17:1-26)
- V. **Jesus Reveals the Father through His Death and Resurrection... (18:1-19:42)**
 - A. In the Passion Narrative (18:1-19:42)
 - B. In the Resurrection Narrative (20:1-29)
 - C. Purpose Statement: 20:30-31
- VI. **Epilogue – Closing: (21:1-25)**

NOTES FOR TODAY

FOR FURTHER STUDY...

*Selected Bibliography

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