



Sermon Booklet
The Gospel of John - Part 2

Overview of John's gospel

“³⁰ Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. ³¹ But these are written that you may believe^b that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.” (John 20:30-31)

It has been said of John's gospel 'Like him who it portrays, this book readily welcomes the humble and endlessly challenges the wise.'

And that is my prayer for us as a church: that we'd approach this sermon series with humility, yearning for greater wisdom and understanding. I pray as we sit and soak ourselves in this gospel, our view of Jesus would be so radically deepened; that it'd be like a light being switched on so that we might truly enjoy God; that we might truly see, we might truly believe, we might truly have life in His name. It's time for those who hunger for more; time for those who want to dig deeper; time for those intrigued by Jesus; time for the weak and the wounded; time for the strong and the thirsty; time for the sinners and the saints. It's time for us to 'see the real Jesus'.

The commentator Leon Morris describes John's gospel as 'a pool in which a child may wade and an elephant can swim.' So for those new to the faith, John's gospel will be a wonderful opportunity to grasp some foundational truths about Jesus. But for those who have been following Jesus for many years, John's gospel will continue to deepen our understanding. It really is an inexhaustible treasure chest which I'm excited to be delving into.

Of course, we should expect this gospel to divide people. Those in the darkness hate the light! And those in the light will be filled with wonder yet again at the real Jesus!

My recommendation was that we study John's gospel in 3 parts - we studied John 1-10 in Term 4 2020, with our series entitled "A dawn light breaks". This year our series is "We have seen His glory", and we will be considering John 11-17.

The Author:

The gospel concludes with a conversation between Jesus, Peter and 'the disciple Jesus loved' (John 21:20). And it is this disciple who wrote down what he heard & saw (John 21:24). But who is the 'disciple Jesus loved'?

He is the one who reclined next to Jesus at the Lord's supper (John 13:23), raced Peter to the empty tomb (John 20:2-5), recognized the resurrected Jesus (John

21:7). In the other gospels, it is Peter, James and John who form the trio who were the kind of 'inner circle'. But since James was martyred early (Acts 12:2), this leaves John the Apostle as the author of the 4th gospel.

John was the son of Zebedee, who was called by Jesus to leave their father and their fishing (Mark 1:19-20). In the gospels he is portrayed as zealous yet at times quite selfish (e.g. Mark 10:37). He was a leader in the early church, who (with Peter) bore the brunt of Jewish hostility to the early Christian church (Acts 4:13, 5:33). At some point he left Jerusalem, and went to Ephesus, where he was banished to the Island of Patmos 'on account of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus' (Revelation 1:9). He is not only the author of John's gospel, but the letters 1, 2 and 3 John, as well as the book of Revelation.

The Purpose:

Why was this book written? Was it just to entertain us or to motivate us to a cause? Was it written to rethink our world view or purely for educational purposes?

John gives us his purpose statement near the end of the book. Listen to John 20:30-31 'Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of His disciples that are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may believe Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and by believing you may have life in His name.'

John is saying 'there's loads more I could have written down' (John 21:25). Because Jesus did so many things that if they were all recorded somewhere no library in the world could contain them all. But John deliberately chooses certain events for a simple purpose – that you might BELIEVE and so have LIFE!

John focuses on just 21 days of Jesus' earthly ministry: events carefully chosen around the 7 'I am' statements. John also records significant conversations with people who we don't hear a lot about in the other gospels (e.g. Nicodemus, Samaritan woman, Lazarus)

But there's a clear 3 fold purpose:

A) EVIDENCE

John claims clear indisputable evidence. He wants us to understand that faith is no leap in the dark. These are honest testimonies of honest people – who saw, heard, touched and encountered Jesus. If you put them in the witness box, they would be

people of integrity and truthfulness, but more importantly they were there 'in the presence of Jesus'.

B) FAITH

John wants us to believe or trust or have faith in certain things, namely:

- Jesus is the Messiah – particularly for the Jewish audience
- Jesus is the Son of God – remember Thomas' confession 'My Lord and my God', also how John starts his gospel 'The Word was God'.
- So Jesus is to be worshipped, adored and honoured as God.

C) LIFE

Life that is truly life – eternal life. New birth into the kingdom of God (John 3). Life 'in his name' – by coming to Jesus.

So there's an 'evangelistic purpose' to this gospel – that we might believe that the Christ, the Son of God, is actually Jesus! With that in mind, this will be a great sermon series to be inviting friends. Every week we get to find out a bit more about the identity of Jesus! Every week we'll learn more about what it really means to have LIFE in Jesus.

But John's gospel also has an 'edification purpose' – because the theology in this gospel is so deep and profound and will build us up in our knowledge and trust in Jesus!

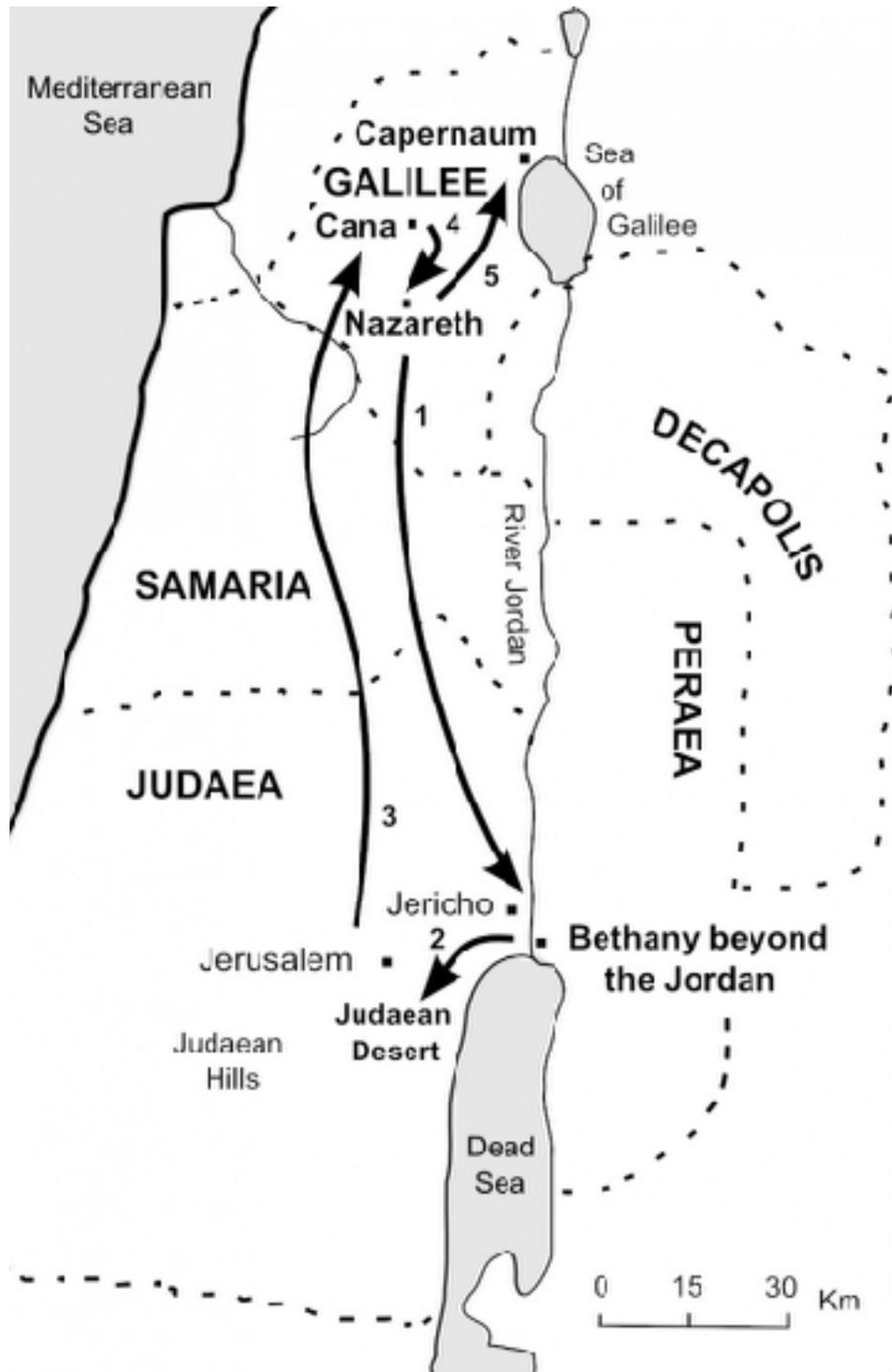
So John is not just a historian, a teacher or preacher – but an evangelist! Jesus is the Saviour of the World – and the fields are ripe for harvest.

The Setting:

The events of John's gospel take place in Palestine which had been part of the Roman Empire since 63BC. John's gospel, more than the synoptics, focuses on the southern part of the geographical area – Judah / Samaria. Of course, the story climaxes in the capital city, Jerusalem. This was the city that was destroyed by the Assyrians in 586BC and rebuilt under Nehemiah 150 years later.

At the time of Jesus, around 50,000 people would have lived in Jerusalem. At the centre was the temple, the house of God. During the festival of Passover, the population would almost double – so perhaps 100,000 people would have been in Jerusalem at the time of the crucifixion.

This gospel is dated anywhere between AD55 and 95, with a fragment being found from AD130. I would suggest John's gospel was written around AD80. It was eagerly received by the first-generation believers, as the account from the man whom Jesus loved - the eyewitness who had seen, heard and touched Jesus. It had a profound impact on the early church - establishing the identity of Christ and His works and words.



The Audience:

Irenaeus (AD180) wrote “John the disciple of the Lord, who leaned back on his breast, published the Gospel while he was resident at Ephesus in Asia” (Against Heresies III.1.2). So if John went to Ephesus at the outbreak of the Jewish war (AD66-70) when everyone fled Jerusalem, we’d expect him to write for both Jew and Gentile, and that seems to be the case.

The Nature:

Clement of Alexandria wrote; ‘John, last of all, conscious that the outward facts had been set forth in the gospels, was urged on by his disciples, and, divinely moved by the Spirit, composed a spiritual gospel.’

Augustine likewise, comparing John to the Synoptics, wrote; ‘the Evangelist John, like an eagle, takes a loftier flight, and soars above the dark mist of earth to gaze with steadier eyes upon the light of truth.’ (Tractate 15.1)

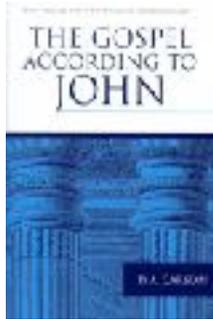
John’s gospel is obviously very different to the synoptic gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke. There are no parables, no temptations, no exorcisms! And central themes like ‘Kingdom of God’ or ‘kingdom of heaven’ are scarcely mentioned. It’s not necessarily written in chronological order (hence several chronological difficulties must be addressed, such as the cleansing of temple in Jn 2 cf Mk 11; the Passover etc.).

In addition, John includes so much material that is absent from the synoptics (e.g. Ch 2-4, Lazarus, private instruction to disciples in ch 13-17). Also, John reports far more of Jesus’ ministry in the south, in Judea and Samaria, and makes a series of important ‘I am’ statements.

The style of writing is also very different – being structured around certain ‘signs’ (symbols of deep spiritual truths about Jesus’ character).

Whilst this should not surprise us, since each friend’s recollection of a friend is different, we need to read and preach John’s gospel according to its style and genre.

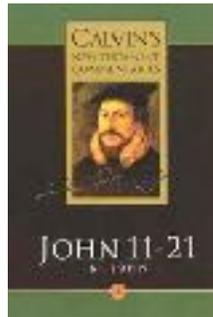
Recommended reading:



The Gospel according to John *D.A. Carson*

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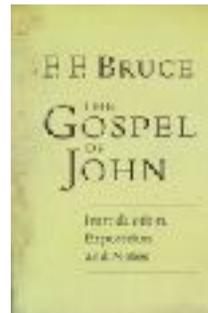
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John's gospel *Calvin*

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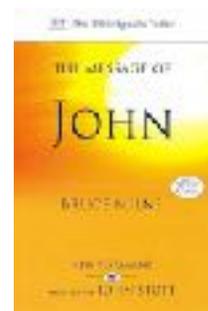
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The Gospel of John *F.F. Bruce*

Available here:

https://www.koorong.com/product/ecbc-gospel-of-john-introduction-exposition-notes-f-f-bruce-ed_9780802875914?ref=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.koorong.com%2Fsearch%2Fresults%3Fw%3DThe%2BGospel%2Bof%2BJohn%2BF.F.Bruce



Bible speaks today *Milne*

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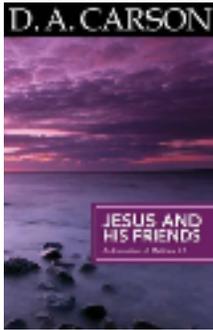
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John: Read, Mark, Learn Series *St Helen's Bishopsgate*

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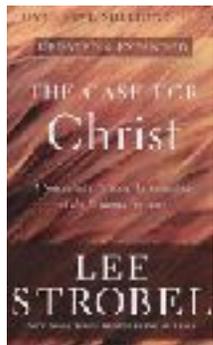
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Jesus & his friends *D.A.Carson*

Available here:

https://www.koorong.com/product/jesus-and-his-friends-an-exposition-of-john-14-17-carson_9781850788911?ref=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.koorong.com%2Fsearch%2Fresults%3Fw%3DJesus%2B%2526%2Bhis%2Bfriends%2BD.A.Carson



The Case for Christ *Lee Strobel*

Available here:

https://www.koorong.com/product/case-for-christ-the-revised-study-guide-lee-strobel-garry-poole_9780310698500?ref=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.koorong.com%2Fsearch%2Fresults%3Fw%3DThe%2BCase%2Bfor%2BChrist%2BLee%2BStrobel

What's On This Term:

OCTOBER	Tue 5th	Alpha Course Term 4 Launch (10 wks) Christianity Explored Term 4 Launch (7 weeks)
	Wed 6th	Monthly Central Prayer Evening (mission focus)
	Fri 8th	Teens and Mental Health Event Ignite Term 4 commences
	Sun 10th	Mission Sunday
	Mon 11th	Wellbeing & Care Seminar - Emotional Health & Boundaries
	Sun 17th	Launch John's Gospel Sermon Series (9 weeks)
	Oct 31st	Return to Onsite Church
	NOVEMBER	Wed 3rd
Sun 21st		Christmas Appeal launch
Sun 28th		First Sunday in Advent
DECEMBER	Wed 1st	Monthly Central Prayer Evening
	Fri 3rd	Ignite Term 4 final meeting
	Sun 5th	Christmas Appeal Collection
	w/c 6th	Final Connect Groups, Playtime, Bay Kids
	Thu 9th/Fri 10th	Wreath & Gingerbread at home
	Sun 12th	Final Kids Church Greenway Christmas BBQ
	Sun 19th	Carols in Church
	Fri 24th	Christmas Eve Services
	Sat 25th	Christmas Day Services

We have seen His glory - Gospel of John - Ch 11-17

AIM: 'These are written that you might BELIEVE that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have LIFE in his name'

Weekly Bible reading breakdown:

17 th Oct	John 11
24 th Oct	John 12:1-19
31 st Oct	John 12:20-50
7 th Nov	John 13:1-38
14 th Nov	John 13:31 - 14:14
21 st Nov	John 14:15-31
28 th Nov	John 15:1-25
5 th Dec	John 15:26- 16:33
12 th Dec	John 17



The Bridge Church