

The Gospel of John

The four canonical Gospels are like beautiful stained-glass windows that offer us four *colorful pictures* to appreciate the life and teachings of Jesus.

- **Mark** emphasized the _____ of Jesus.
- **Matthew's** account emphasized the _____ of Jesus in five major sermons.
- **Luke's** Gospel emphasized the _____ of the story.
- John wrote that Jesus clearly showed in _____ and _____ Who He is.

So, who wrote this Gospel?

There are really **two ideas** presented by scholars.

- The **older** _____ **view** was that *John the Apostle* wrote the text, but...
- Another view emerged in recent generations that suggests that either **another man** named "*John the* _____" (or Presbyter) or a perhaps even a _____ *of John's disciples* gave us this writing.

The Apostle John as writer

A search of the early church _____ who were closer to the time of the writing made clear *they* uniformly thought the writer of the Gospel of John was John the Apostle. For instance:

Irenaeus of Lyons (c. 180 CE), who was a disciple of _____, a disciple of John the Apostle, explicitly stated that in *Against Heresies* (Book 3, Chapter 1.1).

His contemporary, **Clement of Alexandria (c. 200 CE)** _____ that belief.

The **Muratorian Fragment (c. 170 CE)**, that old fragment of a book list of writings included in the New Testament identified _____ as the writer of the fourth Gospel.

Tertullian (c. 200 CE), Origen (c. 220 CE) and Eusebius of Caesarea, the so-called “Father of _____” (c. 260–340 AD) confirmed that was the uniform testimony of the earlier writers.

Yet, **some** modern scholars argue:

- **The Gospel of John does not explicitly _____ its author.**
- They argued **the _____ depth of the contents** reflected more than an eyewitness account..
- Some comment the Gospel was written in **sophisticated _____**, an unlikely production for a Galilean fisherman like John, assuming he was not highly educated.
- Others indicated a distinction between "John the Apostle" and "John the _____".
- Some teach that a _____ **School or _____** produced this Gospel.

This whole approach feels contrived, and I think the evidence leads us to John the Apostle as the writer.

Now, if that is the case, what do we know about “John the Apostle” as a man?

First, we know the meaning of his _____, Johanan, which meant in Hebrew "God is gracious" or "YHWH is gracious."

We know about his _____: John seemed to be from the town of _____.

It also seems, we may know something of John's _____: In fact, there's a real possibility that **Jesus and John were biological** _____. Graham Scroggie suggested this a century ago.

We know about John's earlier _____: John was **one of the earliest disciples** of Jesus, called from a life of *boat fishing* in the Sea of Galilee.

John came from a family of reasonable _____ **for his time**. Their family business also included " _____ " and what may have been a small fleet of vessels.

We know he was **RECRUITED** to be a disciple while very _____. He was **born** somewhere around _____ CE. Since it seems **Jesus's ministry began in either** _____ CE or _____ CE, we can see that Jesus likely called to John to be a disciple while **he was in his teen years**.

We also know John was deeply _____ **in nature**: In the resurrection story from **John 20**, John made mention that he accessed the tomb *faster* than Peter, though both ran to the site. He made sure any reader knew "*he got there first*."

We also alluded before to the record that he tended to a rash _____. He was called by Jesus one of the "sons of _____" (Mark 3, Boagernes).

Despite his temper, we know he became particularly _____: **Peter, James and John** seemed to have been an essential "**inner circle**".

Now, as the youngest, it appears Jesus kept him especially _____: John recalled his title as "the disciple whom Jesus loved," in the Gospel of John.

Looking beyond the Gospel accounts, it seems that John was _____ by Jesus.

Yes, John grew emotionally, but also _____ **in his lifetime**. John opened his Gospel in a *Greek form* though he grew up a Galilean *Hebrew*.

We know from the scene at the Cross of Jesus, John was apparently assigned a "**SPECIAL** _____" by Jesus.

We know about John's MINISTRY _____?

What about John's death?

After Emperor _____'s forced suicide, there was a struggle for imperial leadership that saw the quick *rise and fall* of three Roman generals, until an able and careful leader named _____ donned the purple robe.

- After a few years he died, but he left an able ruler in his son _____.
- Sadly, he died after a short reign. That left Titus' brother, _____, as emperor, and that changed both the empire and the trajectory of John's life.

The Milieu

We cannot be sure about the specific circumstances of the writing of the fourth Gospel, but it is generally thought to have come _____ than the other three writings.

Still, we may be able to indicate generally **why John wrote this Gospel account**, based largely on evidence from *within* the Gospel itself.

The essential point is, since the account appeared to finish in John 20:30-31, the _____ appeared to be added for John to state his purpose for writing.

In Chapter 21, Jesus' prophecied concerning _____ and _____'s **respective deaths**.

Take a minute to think about the very special congregation that John pastored.

- John inherited a thriving church from _____'s outreach and _____'s discipleship, and that was coupled with a long-standing and deeply rooted group of Jesus' followers, both Jewish and Gentile.
- _____ **had been there**. He was a Jew from Alexandria, Egypt,.

- Several **unnamed** _____ and _____ were mentioned among those who commended Apollos to the believers in Achaia (cp. Acts 18:27-28).
- _____ and _____ **had been a part of that church.** in Acts 18:18-19.
- Of course, _____ was a congregational leader for a time, according to the historical record of Eusebius (260-335 CE) in his “Church History” (3.4).
- Then there was the so-called “ _____,” the **twelve disciples of John the Baptist** who were uninformed about the work of the Spirit who later joined that church (see Acts 19).

Ephesus was a cosmopolitan and an important _____ hub: the Roman mail courier route for Western Asia minor originated and ended at the city.

Thus, the recipients of John’s Gospel, even among those of Gentile birth, were well-trained. It was a mix of some strong Jews and disciplined Gentiles *blended*.

Let’s take a few moments to recall the contents of the Gospel account, on our way to seeking the meaning of the message.

- In John 1, Jesus was introduced as the _____ that became flesh. (1:1-18) He was **affirmed in John the Baptist’s testimony** about Him (1:19-34) and He called His **first disciples** (1:35-51).
- By John 2, Jesus was in Galilee, and turned **water into** _____ at Cana (2:1-11) and later came to Jerusalem for a feast, and **cleared the temple** of vendors in Jerusalem (2:13-22).
- John 3 recorded a time when Jesus spoke to _____ and told him: “You must be born again” (3:1-21). In the end of the chapter, for greater endorsement, **John the Baptist publicly exalted Jesus** (3:22-36).

- Then in John 4, Jesus talked to a _____ **woman** at the well of Sychar (4:1-26) that led to many **Samaritans believing** in Jesus (4:27-42). Further north in Cana, Jesus healed “long distance” an **official’s son** (4:46-54) that lay sick in Capernaum.
- In John 5, Jesus again journeyed to a feast celebration and healed a **paralyzed man at the** _____ in Jerusalem (5:1-15) setting up His teaching about His **divine authority** (5:16-47).
- In John 6, Jesus **fed** _____ (6:1-15) and later miraculously **walked on the Sea of Galilee** (6:16-21). Nearby, He gave the “I am the Bread of Life” discourse as well (6:22-71).

John 7 – 10 recorded Jesus at the Feast of _____ and later at the Feast of _____ in Jerusalem.

The plot to kill Jesus began in John _____.

- There, in John 11 Jesus **raised** _____ from the dead (11:1-44) and the plot to kill Him intensified (11:45-57). Jesus said, “I Am the Resurrection and the Life.”
- Then, in John 12 Jesus entered Jerusalem at Passover in the “**Triumphal Entry**” (12:12-19) and soon after, Jesus _____ **His death** (12:20-36).

John 13-17 revealed events of the night in which Jesus was betrayed:

- John 13 unfolded the story of **The Last** _____ as Jesus **washed** the disciples’ feet (13:1-20), **predicted** His betrayal (13:21-30) and **taught**: “A new commandment: Love one another” (13:31-38).
- John 17 included **Jesus’ High Priestly** _____ where He prayed for **Himself** (17:1-5), His **disciples** (17:6-19) and the **believers yet to come** (17:20-26).

The remainder of the book detailed Jesus' trial, crucifixion, Resurrection and final sayings:

- John 20 unfolded the powerful story of the _____, beginning with the scene at the empty tomb (20:1-10), followed by **Jesus' appearances** to Mary Magdalene (20:11-18), the disciples (20:19-23) and Thomas who proclaimed Jesus: "My Lord and my God" (20:24-31).
- In John 21, Jesus appeared to the disciples by the _____ (21:1-14) and renewed Peter as He told the disciple to "Feed My sheep" (21:15-25).

It is admittedly a different look at Jesus' ministry, but John explained his record.

You see, John pastored both _____ and _____.

- For most _____, a man was **judged by his WORDS**, or the philosophy he espoused.
- Among _____, they seemed historically more concerned with what a man **DID** than what he **SAID**.

John knew that reaching both people groups required using both what Jesus said about Himself (for Gentiles) and what Jesus did that demonstrated His identity (for Jews).

John selected _____ actions Jesus performed, citing seven miracles that revealed Jesus' identity:

- **First, He changed _____ into wine** (John 2:1-11).
- **Second, He _____ a child** "long distance" (John 4:46-54).
- **Third, Jesus _____ the legs of a lame man** (John 5:1-11).
- **Fourth, he _____ the loaves and fish** (John 6:6-13).

- **Fifth**, He **shut down a** _____ on the Sea of Galilee (John 6:16-21).
- **Sixth**, He **gave** _____ **to a man born blind** (John 9:1-7).
- **Seventh**, He **raised His friend** _____ (John 11:1-45).

Jews could trust what Jesus DID, but, what did He SAY about Himself?

To Gentiles, John offered “Seven I AM” statements of Jesus revealing His identity:

- **First**, He said: “I am the _____ of Life; he who comes to Me shall not hunger.” (John 6:35).
- **Second**, He said: “I am the _____ of the world; he who follows Me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life.” (John 8:12).
- **Third**, He said: “I am the _____; if anyone enters through Me, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.” (John 10:9).
- **Fourth**, He said: “I am the _____; the good shepherd lays down His life for His sheep.” (John 10:11).
- **Fifth**, He said: “I am the _____ and the _____; he who believes in Me shall live even if he dies.” (John 11:25).
- **Sixth**, He said: “I am the _____, and the Truth, and the Life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me.” (John 14:6)..
- **Seventh**, He said: “**I am the True Vine, and My Father is the vinedresser.**” (John 15:1). Drawing from my strength, your life will become FRUITFUL. Apart from it, you will produce *nothing*.

You see, John revealed the purpose of his writing: Encounter Jesus through His words and actions, and you will engage all that you need to believe in Him. If you could just KNOW my Jesus, you’d see that He is trustworthy and powerful, loving and just.