

## **ORIENT**

- New year, new major study – most popular book in the Bible, most popular verse in the Bible (3:16), first book we refer to people who don't know Jesus.
- Augustine – “Deep enough for an elephant to swim, shallow enough for a child not to drown.”
- Martin Luther – If we had only John and Romans we would have all we need for the Christian life.
- A book for everyone: Seekers, Skeptics, for Spiritual Slackers and for Faithful Followers.

Studying John's gospel is like climbing a mountain – today we are at base camp preparing to set out. *Note: not paying attention to the orientation can be deadly!*

## **EXPOSE**

### History

- “According to John” – not in earliest manuscripts (Same with Synoptics). John is never named in the book.
- Internal and external evidence points to the author as the Apostle John, son of Zebedee, one of Jesus' inner circle of Three (Peter, James), James and John = “Sons of Thunder”; AKA “The Beloved Disciple”, while on the cross Jesus entrusts care of his mother to John. Wrote Gospel, 1-3 John, Revelation, Leader in the early church in Jerusalem, later moved to Ephesus, exiled to Island of Patmos.
- Wrote somewhere between 80-90 AD, after the destruction of the Temple.
- His audience was both Jews and Jewish Proselytes in the Diaspora. He was writing to the greater Greco-Roman world of his day.

### Literary

#### Gospel

- “Good news”; more than biography, gospels are a unique ancient literary genre – convey the essence of Jesus as the Messiah.

#### One of 4 Gospel accounts

- Matt, Mark, Luke (*Synoptics* – “to see together”) like network news; John like a non-traditional news outlet
- The 4 Gospel accounts represent an interwoven presentation. They reinforce, explain, and complement each other. (Ex. “Follow me”)
- 90 Percent of John is not found in Synoptics
- John would have been aware of the other Gospel accounts but wrote his work independent of them with a different theological focus.

#### Not in John

- Narrative Parables, eschatological discourse, demon exorcisms, healing lepers, list of the 12, formal institution of Lord's Supper, birth, baptism, transfiguration, temptation, agony in Gethsemane, ascension.

#### John but not Synoptics

- Preexistence, incarnation, early ministry in Judea and Samaria, first miracle, Nicodemus, Samaritan woman, healing of lame man and blind man in Jerusalem, bread of life, good shepherd, living water, explicit claims to deity, raising Lazarus, foot washing, upper room discourse, high priestly prayer, post resurrection miraculous catch of fish, reinstatement of Peter.

## Famous Verses in John:

- 1:1, 14; 3:16; 4:23-24; 8:32, 58; 10:28; 11:35; 13:34-35; 14:6; 15:12-13; 16:33; 17:17;

The result of the fourfold gospel witness is a picture of Jesus unlike any other figure in the ancient world. John as literature is very important to completing our picture of Jesus.

## Theology

“Believe” – key word used over 100 times (over twice as much as the Synoptics)

- The Jewish people already believed in God. Would they believe that Jesus was the Son of God, the Messiah. Their temple was gone. Their people had been scattered. What would happen to their sacrificial system and their religious identity as a whole?
- John wrote to show that Jesus, the Messiah, fulfilled the symbolism embodied in the Temple and in their Jewish feasts. Jesus was their answer.
- John is making a detailed case for Jesus’ true identity as Son of God. He goes to great lengths to show the divinity of Jesus, that he was the Son of God.

## Seven Signs

1. Water to Wine (2:1-11)
2. Healing official’s son (4:46-54)
3. Healing the Paralytic (5:1-15)
4. Feeding the 5,000 (6:1-14)
5. Walking on Water (6:16-21)
6. Healing man blind from birth (9:1ff)
7. Raising of Lazarus (11:1ff)

## Seven Statements (“I Am...”)

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

“Eternal Life” – Unique to John; A quality of life to be experienced now

John presents Jesus as Son of God and Savior. Through his life, death and resurrection he provides the means of salvation and eternal life. People respond to Jesus by either believing or rejecting. Those who believe receive eternal life. Those who choose to reject him are rejected by him and receive eternal condemnation.

Purpose: John 20:30-31 - The only book with the explicit purpose of turning non-believers into believers. John wrote to equip believers to reach unbelievers. The book calls all of us to “Believe and Live”.

## **EXHORT**

An invitation to discover Jesus: Seeker, Skeptic, Slacker, Follower.

- 2020 – Season 1: John 1-12; 2021 – Season 2: John 13-17; 2022 - Season 3: John 18-21.
- Personal Study Guide – Next Week’s Sermon Text: **John 1:1-18**