

John 1- 3 Overview – THROUGH HIM

I. Introduction

- a. Have you ever had the friend that spoils the movie or TV show you have been so excitedly waiting to watch?
 - i. Today, I'm that friend. As we enter the *Through Him* series, a study of the book of John, I am going to spoil the ending.
 - ii. According to the author of John in Chapter 20 verse 31, the reason the book documents many of the signs that Jesus did in the presence of his disciples was . . .
 1. John 20:31 ESV (SLIDE)
 - a. ". . . so that you may believe Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name."
 - iii. Today, we expectantly enter this series with the same intention – that you would believe Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.
 - iv. Last week, we celebrated the resurrection of Jesus. We celebrated the fact that Jesus came and lived a perfect life and did exactly what he said he was going to do, which was die and rise again in 3 days.
 - v. This is good news. This is gospel.
 1. Matthew Bates summarizes gospel in this way.
 - a. "The gospel is the true story of how Jesus the Son was sent by God the Father to become the saving King who now rules forever at his right hand through the sending of the Holy Spirit, fulfilling God's promise in scripture." (SLIDE)
 - b. Gospel is good news, not advice or a transaction.
 - vi. It's from this reality, that I preach today.
 - vii. It's from this reality, on the other side of Easter, we are tasked with living as people of the Resurrection.
 - viii. This morning, it is my greatest privilege and honor to preach gospel and announce that Jesus is the saving king.
 1. Through our study of the book of John, we will learn that we have the chance to believe this truth and have our lives radically transformed as we apprentice under Jesus.
 2. Expand the Vision
 - a. Can you imagine a world full of people who are transformed by this good news?
 - b. Can you imagine a city that is transformed by people who know who their king is and live according to his way?
 - i. GOD-GIVEN PURPOSE
 - c. Can you imagine a world whereas we apprentice under Jesus, it affects how we show up in our homes, our work, and in every interaction we have with other humans?
 - d. Can you imagine a king selecting you to be his apprentice. This is our reality.
 3. As we consider how this good news has the potential to transform us through an intimate relationship with Jesus, I want us to consider what Glenn Packiam writes in his book, *Resilient Pastor*.
 - a. In discussing the fact that Barna research points out despite that 68% of people "strongly agree" that "the best thing that could ever happen to someone is for them to come to know Jesus, "only 64% of Christians polled by Barna) agree that it is every Christian's responsibility to share their faith – down from 89% who agreed in 1993."
 - b. Packiam says, "Could this change in attitudes about sharing the good news of Jesus be because we think sharing our faith means something like the "If you died tonight, do you know where you are going speech? Would our attitudes change if we recognized that announcing the good news was announcing Jesus as the saving King? We have proclaimed gospel proclamation around heaven

and hell rather than centering it in Jesus himself. Our version of witnessing has become a “get out of hell” card as opposed to a “look at what the Lord has done” story. The preaching of the early church offered a testimony of Jesus’s lordship here and now with eternal effects that cannot be reduced to a mere transaction for a better afterlife. But if we don’t start with Jesus, it won’t sound like good news. And one can’t be blamed for not wanting to share it.” (SLIDE)

4. The book of John is going to remind us that THROUGH JESUS – THROUGH HIM, we get to live a full life. An abundant life. A transformed life. That obeying the words of Jesus is the essence of being a disciple while we live out our lives each day and for eternity.
5. My prayer is that we will embrace this truth and be transformed by the life of Jesus that we see Jesus live out as we study the book of John and become disciples of this saving King.
 - a. Stanley Haurwas writes:
 - i. To be a disciple of Jesus, it is not enough to know the basic facts of his life. It is not enough to know his story. Rather, to be a disciple of Jesus means that our lives must literally be taken up into the drama of God’s redemption of this creation. That is the work of the spirit as we are made part of God’s new time through the life and work of this man, Jesus of Nazareth. (SLIDE)
 - ii. May it be so.

II. Overview of John

- a. Bible Project Overview (SLIDE of Bible Project Poster of John)
- b. 21 Chapters in this book.
- c. Ch. 1 is a beautiful introduction where John reminds us through his poetic language like that used in Genesis 1, that . . .
 - i. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not anything thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.”
- d. Chs 2-10 consist of miraculous signs and controversies that come from them
- e. Chs 11 and 12 tell us about Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead
- f. Chs 13-17 are all about Jesus’s final words to his disciples
- g. Chs 18-20 give us an account of Jesus’s death and resurrection
- h. Ch. 21 serves as an epilogue to the whole book

III. John 2: 1-12 – The Wedding at Cana

- a. I’d like to spend most of our time this morning considering the story of Jesus turning the water to wine at a Wedding in a town called Cana in Chapter 2 verses 1 – 12.
 - i. As I was studying this text, one scholar commented that in the book of John, “we need to be on the alert . . . for symbolism everywhere.”
 - ii. As we dig into this text, I hope we can get a picture of who Jesus, the saving King, is and what kind of Kingdom he has invited us to be a part of.
- b. John 2: 1-12
 - i. (1) On the third day there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there.
(2) Jesus also was invited to the wedding with his disciples. (SLIDE)
 1. John situates “the mother of Jesus” at the center of this story. The presence of Jesus and his disciples is an addition to this story. How John opens this story of Jesus’s first sign reminds the reader of Jesus’ respect for family and his devotion to his affection of his parent, in this case, his mother.
 2. We know that the mother of Jesus is named Mary, but in John, she is never referred to as Mary; but “the mother of Jesus” or “woman.”

3. John uses Mary's presence in this story as a paradoxical symbol of both (1) being able to have him act on her behalf, and (2) clearly showing the reader that no one has a claim on Jesus's time except the Father.
 4. The fact that the wedding is situated in Cana is important as well.
 - a. Cana, the town, is of no consequence, but for the fact that it is in Galilee. Galilee is the place where Jesus is received well compared to Judea, where he is widely rejected.
- ii. (3) When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." (SLIDE)
 1. With this statement the reader becomes intimately aware that the party has come to a halting stop.
 2. This would have been an incredibly embarrassing situation for the family of the couple getting married. Even families without great wealth would have saved for this wedding feast to provide the best hospitality possible.
 3. Jesus's response in the next verse will give us notice that there is more to the story than just a mom pleading with her son to do something so the host of the party will not be embarrassed because he did not plan well enough ahead.
 - iii. (4) And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come." (SLIDE)
 1. The use of Woman here is the same word for Eve that was used in Genesis, reminding the reader of the bigger picture of humanity and its relation to God.
 2. John is also reminding the audience that no person's demands on Jesus take priority over God's timing and demands – Jesus only does what the Father tells him to do. The relationship with the Father and the Son is all part of a divine design which requires divine timing.
 3. He will not be swayed by earthly requests without knowing that he has the blessing from His Father.
 - iv. (5) His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." (SLIDE)
 1. Let's not skip over this incredible part of the story.
 - a. This command from Mary to the servants is not merely a suggestion. It is a reminder for everyone who claims to be a Christian, that doing whatever Jesus tells us to do is the essence of discipleship. John lets us know that the mother of Jesus knows the power of Jesus, that he is the source of life, and that doing what he says will give us life.
 - v. (6) Now there were six stone water jars there for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. (7) Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim. (SLIDE)
 1. This part of the story is less about how much wine, even though that would have been a lot of wine to have ready to serve mid-party.
 2. John is wanting us to realize where the water that ultimately was turned into wine came from. The servants would have realized that this water had its origins in Jesus.
 3. This would have been a verbal clue to the readers that would prepare them for the "living water" that Jesus will promise the Samaritan woman in Chapter 4.
 4. Once commentator noted that John's style of writing doesn't force the meaning of the passage on the reader. John prefers to plant clues around the landscape of the story and wait and see who can interpret his serious theological charade.
 - vi. (8) And he said to them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the feast." So they took it. (9) When the master of the feast tasted the water now become wine and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom (10) and said to him, "Everyone serves the good wine first, and when people have drunk freely, then the poor wine. But you have kept the good wine until now." (SLIDE)

1. This passage in John shows us that the good wine being served now is a first disclosure of the glory of Jesus.
2. Jesus is the good wine that is here on the scene ready to start making his glory known.
- vii. (11) This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him. (12) After this he went down to Capernaum, with his mother and brothers (and sisters) and his disciples, and they stayed there a few days. (SLIDE)
 1. We see through this story provided by John that the author is immediately letting us in on his conviction of faith in Jesus from the start.
 2. This seemingly no frills ending to the story is expressed by John to remind us that a small company of people's lives can be transformed and yet existence for others goes on as before with nothing changed.
- viii. Final observations of this story.
 1. This story is a profound reminder that through uttered word Jesus can make all things new.
 - a. His command and instructions literally changed the water to the wine – from dead to alive, from water to wine, from a party seemingly on the brink of ending to a new reality with the best party favors.

IV. So what?

- a. What do we do with this story? What do we make of it and how do we live fully because of it?
 - i. FIRST - We have to actually consider whether we believe that this Jesus, the one many of us have put our trust in and dedicated our lives to, can actually change our here and now?
 1. Are we merely hoping that our belief in him will get us a "get out of jail" card for a future time and date?
 - ii. SECOND – It's time to embrace the reality of the gospel of John that this story of Jesus is a picture of absolute newness. The old is gone. There is a new reality and this new reality forces us to change and operate differently.
 1. Some of you know the reality of new very well. You remember what your life was like before you encountered this Jesus.
 2. One of the things I hope studying the book of John will do for all of us is remind us how the life of Jesus and our belief in him transforms today and lets us live in the newness from this moment on – not merely waiting for an eternity with Him.
- b. As we close, I want to remind you through scripture that THROUGH HIM, we have been transformed and have life and this life begins now.
 - i. John 1:3
 1. All things were made THROUGH HIM, and without him was not any thing made that was made.
 - ii. John 1:7
 1. He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe THROUGH HIM.
 - iii. John 1:10
 1. He was in the world, and the world was made THROUGH HIM, yet the world did not know him.
 - iv. John 3:17
 1. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved THROUGH HIM.
 - v. Acts 2:22
 1. "Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did THROUGH HIM in your midst, as you yourselves know –"
 - vi. Romans 5:2
 1. THROUGH HIM we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

- vii. Romans 8:37
 - 1. No, in all these things we are more than conquerors THROUGH HIM who loved us.
- viii. Romans 11:36
 - 1. For from him and THROUGH HIM and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.
- ix. 2 Corinthians 1:20
 - 1. For all the promises of God find their Yes in him. That is why it is THROUGH HIM that we utter our Amen to God for his glory.
- x. Ephesians 2:18
 - 1. For THROUGH HIM we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.
- xi. Philippians 4:13
 - 1. I can do all things THROUGH HIM who strengthens me.
- xii. Colossians 1:16
 - 1. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities – all things we created THROUGH Him and for him.
- xiii. Colossians 1:20
 - 1. And THROUGH HIM to reconcile to himself to all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.
- xiv. Colossians 3:17
 - 1. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father THROUGH HIM.
- xv. Hebrews 7:25
 - 1. Consequently, he is able to save the utter most those who drawn near to God THROUGH HIM, since he always lives to make intercession for them.
- xvi. Hebrews 13:15
 - 1. THROUGH HIM then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name.
- xvii. I Peter 1:21
 - 1. Who THROUGH HIM are believers in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.
- xviii. I John 4:9
 - 1. In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live THROUGH HIM.
- c. Fellowship Dallas, may we embrace the truth that we have life through Jesus Christ, that he is the saving King, and we get to live it now! May our lives be transformed through this belief and may those who encounter us experience this truth as well.
 - 1. John 20:31 (SLIDE)
 - a. “. . . so that you may believe Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have LIFE in his name.”
- d. Let’s sing.