

Introduction to the Book of John “These Are Written”

Please Stand and Open Your Bibles to John 1:1-18

What we have just read is the prologue to the book of John. It will take us a few weeks to get through it and today we are just going to do an introduction. But if have been with us for any time through the study of the other gospels you can tell right away this one is different.

First, the gospels are four different eyewitness accounts of the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. This is important to those who would try to say that this book is just a fairy tale made up by people to fool you. If this was true it would be the greatest conspiracy ever perpetrated on the Human Race and would make it necessary to throw out all history books ever written. No, anyone who honestly approaches the Bible with the same skepticism as a reporter or a detective will come to the conclusion that Jesus is the Son of God, the Savior of the world. That His death paid the price for our sins and that His resurrection proves His mission and that faith in Him promises eternal life. (Cold Case Christianity and Case for Christ) If this is true and can be proven, it changes everything! It will demand a response. You cannot walk away without making a choice. You either accept the evidence, or you reject the evidence. But

you cannot deny the evidence. Now you may ask, “If the evidence is so good, why doesn’t everyone believe?” Because we do not want to. If I can prove to you that there is a God, then you are now accountable to Him. There is now no excuse.

Romans 1:18-20

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse...

This is like the game of tag. Once it catches up to you, “You’re It!”. You either respond by faith positively or you suppress it negatively. You will make a choice and that choice will have eternal consequences.

Back to our introduction. Who is John? John is one of the twelve disciples that Jesus personally called who, 11 of them, would become the leaders in the early church. He had a brother named James and they are the sons of Zebedee and they were by trade fishermen. (Sons of Thunder!) His brother James would be killed by Herod in Acts 12 and become the

second martyr recorded in scripture. He and the other disciples on the instruction of Jesus fled Jerusalem after the Romans came to besiege the city in 66 AD. Tradition tells us that he fled to Ephesus with Jesus's Mom, Mary and died there of old age. Both of their tombs are there today. Now almost all first and second century Church fathers say that John wrote this book in 85-90 AD and the arguments that people are raising about it are not worth our time here as they are easily proved otherwise. John wrote five books of the Bible...

John

1 John

2 John

3 John

Revelation

He wrote these all while he was in Ephesus and all were written between the year 85-100 AD. While John was ministering in Ephesus during the reign of Domitian, who demanded everyone to worship himself that John and His followers refused. * Domitian ordered him to be boiled in oil, and it did not kill him. Other accounts say after that they tried to drag him behind a chariot and that didn't work either. That led him to be sent to the penal island of Patmos where he would have the vision of Revelation that he wrote from there or after his

release. Why could they not kill him? Because Jesus said he would die a natural death...

John 21:20-23

Then Peter, turning around, saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following, who also had leaned on His breast at the supper, and said, “Lord, who is the one who betrays You?” Peter, seeing him, said to Jesus, “But Lord, what about this man?” Jesus said to him, “If I will that he remain till I come, what is that to you? You follow Me.” Then this saying went out among the brethren that this disciple would not die. Yet Jesus did not say to him that he would not die, but, “If I will that he remain till I come, what is that to you?”

John was known as the Apostle of Love and would make that the focus of his first letter to the church. Tradition tells us that as a very old man he could no longer walk and had to be carried around on a stretcher. People would come from all over to gather to see that last living Apostle and they would carry him in only to be able to repeat over and over again “Beloved, love one another”.

But why did he write this gospel? After all, by the time he wrote it the other three have been written, copied and were in circulation. The Bible says...

Deuteronomy 19:15

by the mouth of two or three witnesses the matter shall be established.

Three have been given and the matter has been established as the church has grown by leaps and bounds. But John wanted to do something the others didn't. He was seeking a broader audience, and we will discuss that in a moment but first we need to remember that the gospels were originally written to different audiences. Let's remind ourselves...

Matthew:

Written to a Jewish audience presenting Jesus as the Messiah

The Lion of the Tribe of Judah

Ensign: The Lion

Mark:

Written to a Roman Audience presenting Jesus as the Servant

Jesus came to serve and give His life for us

Ensign: The Ox

Luke:

Written to a Greek Audience presenting Jesus as the Son of Man

Jesus was born as a man even though He is God

Ensign: The Man

John:

Written to Everyone

Jesus is God the Son!

Ensign: The Eagle

Show Picture of Camp

Revelation 4:6-7

Before the throne there was a sea of glass, like crystal. And in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, were four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back. The first living creature was like a lion, the second living creature like a calf, the third living creature had a face like a man, and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle.

All the gospels are written to be evangelical but John more so. He tells us why he wrote it...

John 20:30-31

And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are

written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

This gives us the theme of the book...faith. What does that mean? Is it just a simple belief that Jesus is who He claims to be? Is it agreeing with the right theology? What does it mean?

Believe:

Greek – πιστεύω pisteuō

1) to think to be true, to be persuaded of, to credit, place confidence in

1a) of the thing believed

1a1) to credit, have confidence

2) to entrust a thing to one, i.e. his fidelity

2a) to be intrusted with a thing

But of course, it depends on how it is used in sentence. Is it a noun? Or a verb? Both are used as a verb and meant towards you!

John 20:30-31

And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe (2nd Person Verb) that Jesus is the

Christ, the Son of God, and that believing (Present Verb) you may have life in His name.

The first thing you need to do is put your trust in it. The idea is to “Trust in, to rely upon, to cling to” Jesus did not just come to show you who God is, but to die for your sins. The Bible is very clear...

Romans 3:23

... for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

What is sin? John would later define it later...

1 John 1:4

Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness.

What Law? God made it easy by giving us the big ten. All you got to do is ask yourself a couple of questions...

Have you ever told a lie?

Have you ever stolen anything?

Have hate towards another?

What about lust?

How we answer these tells us two things. God is righteous and we are not.

But God does not want us to suffer the consequences of these things and provided a way for us to be reconciled to Him...the shed blood of Jesus Christ. This is the purpose of this book. The central theme of the entire book and really the whole message of the Bible, is found here...

John 3:16

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

The simplicity of the Gospel is found in these pages, and we are going to learn a lot about what it means to believe and the reason for the new birth. Let's finish with one of the passages we read at the beginning...

John 1:11-13

He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

We must put our trust in Him and receive the free gift of salvation that He offers to us and we will be “Born Again”!

Communion

1 Corinthians 11:23-24

For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, “Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me.”

1 Corinthians 11:25

In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

1 Corinthians 11:26

For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death till He comes.

