

Introducing the Gospel of John

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John 1:1-21:25

Well, hello everybody.

Morning.

Great to see all of you. Thanks for being here. You too in the gym, thank you for being here as well, and all of you watching. I'm Jon, I'm one of the pastors here. So um, ushers, you guys can come up now. I heard we don't have any programs left, but we do have, we've got a couple, good. And we've got Bibles and pens. And so, if you need one or all of those things, just wave to them and they will give them to you. While they're doing that, ladies, anybody here go to the women's conference? Right on, right on. Anybody watch it because they couldn't go? Right on, had a bunch of men in all the services. That's awesome. No, seriously, progressive Christianity is a real threat, especially to your kids and grandkids.

And just to make that plain, I know of at least two former youth pastors in the city of Gilbert who have gone down this road and when they had youth groups, they had hundreds of kids in those youth groups. And so, this is not something that's out there or on the left and right coast of America. It is right here in Gilbert, Arizona, progressive Christianity.

So you should watch all three sessions. You should get Alisa Childer's book and read it, and you should get equipped. Alright? That's why we do these things, we want you to be ready in case these things come into your homes and in your life.

Open your Bibles to John 20. John chapter 20. If you got a Bible from our ushers, that's page 1005, page 1005, John chapter 20. Yes, if you've been here for a little while, you know we're finally in the book of John. Met hundreds of people this weekend, hey, we were taking bets whether or not it was going to happen. Well, here we are.

So if you are able, will you please stand for the reading of God's word. John chapter 20, drop down to verse 30, John 20:30. This is God's word to start our series in John. "Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the son of God, and that by believing, you may have life in his name." And that's God's words, you may be seated.

As you are, let's pray. God, what John writes in this book is what I hope happens here in this series. I pray that people will see the true Jesus in all of his greatness in all of his glory, and that they will believe in him and receive eternal life. Oh father, do that here, please, I pray. And father, please, pastor Eric at Evident Life Church is probably done preaching now, but father, bless the words that came out of his mouth today, use them powerfully in people's lives. Save people and grow saved people because of the teaching he did there today. May you be honored highly. May Jesus be lifted up there. We pray the same for him here. Do this please in Jesus name, Amen.

So today, we begin the Gospel of John at Redeemer Bible Church. And one scholar I admire called John "the most amazing book ever written." He also said anyone reading John may need to take their shoes off because the place that they are about to stand is holy ground. It may be true that no book is impacted Christianity more than John. It's easy enough for a child to grasp yet it's

deep enough for the brightest scholars to fail to plummet the depths of. It's the most recommended book in the Bible. It's a favorite among Christians.

By show of hands, how many of you have read the book of John from beginning to end? Oh, that's intimidating. Awesome. Okay. Good to know. But if you didn't raise your hand, my hope is that this series maybe even today will whet your appetite for this.

Now, on the first page, it says the gospel according to John. And the word gospel comes from the world of the military. When a war was ended, the king would send his announcer, his herald back to the cities that he's the king over. And those heralds would proclaim, the war is over, victory has been won. Notice that people merely hear the news, they contribute nothing to the victory. They merely receive the benefits that the army achieved for them. That's why the gospel is good news. It's not good advice, it's not good directions, but it is an announcement that something has been done on your behalf.

It's good news because you didn't do anything, Jesus does everything for you. You get the benefits, you don't do anything to earn them, you can't do anything to keep them. They are good news.

Now you might be thinking, with all that's going on in the world, why John? Why go through the book of John? Talk about something relevant. Now simply put, Jesus is the most relevant subject in history. Nothing in the news or in the White House or in any courthouse is as relevant than the life and teachings, the person, the work of Jesus Christ, and eternal life found in his name. If this book has influenced Christianity more than any other book in the Bible, then listen, I want that influence here. I want that influence for you. Nothing is more important for you than to see the glory and the greatness of Jesus. And in the Bible, it seems that nobody does it better than John.

So before we look at each text and we start in chapter 1 and work our way through the whole book, we need to get the big picture. What's the big picture of John? And so to do that, I've given us three headings. We're going to work through each of them this morning or this afternoon now.

The first heading that we're going to look at, I've called the Introductory Details. So as a nerdy first year Bible student, my, one of my teachers said, when you approach a text, you ask it five questions, who, where, what, when and why. And so, that's what we're going to do. We'll just start there. So, first question is who, who was the author? Answer, John. But not John the Baptist. Be honest, how many of you were thinking it was John the Baptist? Don't raise your hand. But it's another guy, John, the son of Zebedee. He's the brother of James. But not the James who wrote the book of James. That's a different James. Why can't they all just have different names? That'd be so helpful, because it's history, that's why.

Anyway, from the earliest days, this work was associated with John, the disciple, the apostle. And there is proof for that, and I want to go through that quickly with you. The first proof that John wrote the book of John comes from history. This is a Bible nerd moment, so, bear with me for about a minute.

There's this guy named Irenaeus, early Christian leader in France. He dies around 200 AD. So, 1,821 years ago. One of his mentors is a guy named Polycarp. K, Polycarp dies in 155 AD. And Polycarp also had a mentor as well. His mentor's name was John. Yes, that John. And so, Polycarp is alive when John writes the book of John, and then he tells the guy that he's mentoring, Irenaeus, yes, John wrote the book of John, and then Irenaeus writes it down and says, Polycarp told me who was a disciple of John, that John wrote the book of John.

And there's another guy named Papias. He is a leader in modern Turkey, he dies around 130 AD. So very close to the time of writing, very close to the time of the apostles. And he writes in his writings, not only was, did John write the book of John, but how does he know that? Answer, he was also disciplined by John the apostle. You've got two guys who actually had interaction with John himself saying John wrote the book of John.

There's another early Christian leader named Clement of Alexandria, Alexandria, Egypt. He dies in 215 AD, and he says this, we still have his writings, 1800-year-old writings, and this is what he says, "Last of all, John, perceiving that the external facts had been made plain in the gospel, meaning, knowing that there were these three other gospels being urged by his friends and inspired by the spirit, he composed a spiritual gospel."

So you have this statement very close again to the time of writing that John is the author. So you've got France, you've got Turkey, you've got Egypt, leaders in all of those places, two leaders, in fact, who interacted with John personally, all of them saying the same thing, John, the disciple wrote John the gospel.

The first Christians are practically unanimous on this. In fact, the only theory with any evidence at all really is that John wrote John. So there's evidence in history, but there's also evidence in John itself.

So here we look at the text itself, to get a better idea about who wrote the gospel that we call John. Now, maybe you know this, maybe you don't, but Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John do not come with a signature saying, I wrote this book. All of them come to us anonymous. And sometimes first century authors do this thing where they indirectly identify themselves. They don't say I, John, wrote this book, but they put themselves in the story in a kind of cryptic way, and that's their kind of way of telling you.

Now, this author does as clearly a statement about himself as he can in chapter 21:24. He doesn't give his name but he describes himself, and when we look at this description, we're going to go, okay, there aren't too many people that could say this who were alive at the time of writing. Notice what it says, verse 24, "This is the disciple who is bearing witness about these things and who has written these things," these things referring to the whole book. "And we know that his testimony is true."

Let's break this down a little bit, notice this person is the one quote who has written these things. So we're talking about the author. The author describes himself first, verse 24, as a disciple, a follower of Jesus. Third, notice he's bearing witness. He's giving testimony. Those are legal words. And what those words refer to is eyewitness testimony. So he's saying, what I wrote here is eyewitness testimony.

Well, what is it that he wrote? He wrote about the life, the teachings, the death, and the resurrection of Jesus. And he's saying as a witness, I am an eyewitness of these things, that's why end of the verse, my testimony is true. You can trust me. Now, this same disciple in verse 24 is described in 21:7 as the disciple that Jesus loved.

So if you're going to write a book and you can call yourself by your name, or you can call yourself by the phrase, the disciple that Jesus loved, which one are you going to use? I don't know about you but I'd take door number two. If that's how I was known, that's how I would want to describe myself in this book. And this same disciple that Jesus loved says that in chapter 13:23, that he was seated next to Jesus at the last supper, which means that the disciple who Jesus loved had to be one of the 12 because only the 12 were there at the last supper.

This same disciple that Jesus loved, look at 21:2, he is named as one of these seven disciples in 21:2, Peter, Thomas, Nathaniel, two unnamed disciples, and two "sons of Zebedee," which is James and John. So you've gone from 12 to seven. But then when we look at the other gospel's, we know that there's, that Jesus has an inner circle. So there's the crowds, and then there's the 70, and then there's the 12, and then there's what, then there's the three, there's the inner circle.

And if you are called the disciple that Jesus loved, with that special title, then you are probably one of those three. Well, James dies in 44 AD, 10 to 15 years after Jesus dies. And so, he's not the author of this book. And what we know from church history is that Mark was the one that wrote down Peter's preaching. So by a process of elimination, 12 to seven to three down to one, it seems the best case from the text is that John wrote the book of John. And then we compare that to history, and we see that really, he's the most likely author by far.

Now, maybe you're like Dale, one of our pastors here, I'm talking to him about this, and he goes, well, Jon, it just says on the first page that John wrote the book of John, so I don't need anything else. Awesome. That's true. However, if you needed a little more, I gave that to you just now.

So, from who wrote the book, let's ask now, when was this gospel written? What is the date? Answer, around 90 AD. 90 AD. So about a hundred years ago, it was really popular to say that John was written towards the end of the second century. So 150 to 200 AD, that's when it was written. However, 1920, a little small fragment of John 18, the conversation with Jesus and Pilate is found. And when that fragment is dated, it dates to 115 to 125 AD.

So John couldn't have been written in 150 or later because you have a fragment of it dating to one 115 to 125, which means by the way, that it must have been written earlier than that, because this is a copy. Which means, by the way, another unbelieving progressive Christianity theory bites the dust in that moment, that John, no group of people or some person pretending to be John wrote the book of John. Also, there are two early Christian leaders before 150 AD who quote John in their writings.

That's why most scholars today say that this book was written around 90, that's what that C means, sometime around there. So maybe as early as 80 or as late as 100. Some Christian leaders alive at the time said John survived his imprisonment on the Isle of Patmos, you read about that in Revelation. He settles in Ephesus, which is in modern Turkey, and there he oversees churches and he does some writings, and maybe that's the time that he writes the book of John, which would be some 60 years after he was an eyewitness to Jesus' ministry.

So you've got the who, John, we've got the where, Ephesus. We've got the when, 90 AD, but what about the why? You still in chapter 21, look at the end of chapter 20 again, the passage we read. Why was John written? What was the goal? What was the point? Why did he write this book? Unlike most books in the Bible, John actually tells us, here's why I wrote it. Here's why, this is, I sat down and put pen to paper.

Verse 30. "Now Jesus did many other signs," that's key, "in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book, but these," namely, "these signs are written." Why? "So that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the son of God, and that by believing, you may have life in his name."

So John is written to convince non-Christians to believe in Jesus and be saved. That's why this book is here. It is to overcome the power of Satan in people's lives, break them free from that. How? By the only power that's greater, which is the power of the gospel, the power of Jesus Christ.

In other words, it's no accident that Christians for century have given the gospel of John to their non-Christian friends and said, "hey, you need to read this". I talked to a guy in the last service who said I was saved after reading John 3. I read John 3 over and over again, it was like, I want to believe in Jesus. And we could say that numerous times. And so maybe you knew that's why John wrote, maybe you didn't, but in your actions, you're like, hey, you need to read John. Now, you know why. This is why John wrote so that people would be saved.

One cool thing about this book, as you read it, there are these parentheses where John kind of explains things that he knows his readers don't understand, and they're typically Jewish words or customs or geographical locations. And what that means is that he expected people to read it who didn't understand some of the words that he used. And some of those words are Jewish. So, he's anticipating either Jewish people that don't speak Hebrew or he's anticipating non-Jewish people are like, I don't understand what Messiah means. I don't understand that word. And so, he gives a definition. He'll say that is the Christ, for instance.

The idea there is that John's book can be read by Jews and non-Jews, believers and unbelievers, so that people will believe or continue to believe. Because really, all the Bible is written for believers so that we can grow in our salvation. Right? 2 Timothy 3, God's word, all scripture is inspired by God and profitable to grow you and equip you for every good work. And so this text is written primarily for non-Christians, but really, it's written for any Christian as well so that you would grow deeper in your commitment to Jesus.

So if we take John's statement here and try to summarize it in 10 words or less, what is the book of John all about? What's the, what's the purpose of John? I'm glad you asked. The purpose of John is this, eternal life is given to all. Eternal life is given to all who believe in Jesus.

When I study the Bible, I try to take the whole Bible, the whole book and summarize it in 10 words. Why was this book written? And that's it right there, eternal life, life forever is given to all who believe in Jesus. This is the message Christians should preach, this is the message that all non-Christians need. This book, in other words, with that word all, it's meant to transcend its original audience. Like all the other books in the Bible, is meant to be read, studied, believed by every single person.

This verse, chapter 2:31 is now going to be our guide through the rest of the book. Why? Because John says, you can understand my entire book by what I say here in verse 31. So from these details, the who, the when, the where, and the why, let's now talk about the what. And for that, I've given us six, point number 2 of the most important themes in this book. Six important themes.

What are the big ideas that keep coming up in John? What are the words and phrases that should capture your attention as you go through it? So, you read the book of John, what are the things that should be highlighted or underlined or circled? Well, chapter 20:30-31 tell us, the first major theme that we see there in verse 30 is the word signs. Signs, which are miracles. Things that only God can do.

Look at it again, in 20:30, there it is, "Jesus did many other signs," verse 31, "but these are written so you may believe." Now a sign is something that points to a reality beyond itself just like signs on the freeway though that's not your destination, but what, they point to your destination. So it says like Phoenix, 20 miles. And so you know, okay, I got 20 miles and that's my destination pointing to a reality beyond itself. Well, that's the idea here, these miracles point

to a reality beyond the moment. So he does this miracle, but that miracle gives you insight into who he is.

So, this means, by the way, because of this verse, we should be able to look back at the book of John and see what? Miracles. We should be able to see miracles throughout the book that then tell us about who he is. And when you do that, you know what you find? There are seven miracles between chapter 2 and chapter 12, seven of them. And then in chapter 20, there's the ultimate miracle, which is the resurrection. You can see that at the beginning of chapter 20. And then at the very end of chapter 20, John says, "I wrote these miracles, these signs, I wrote these so that you may believe". So these eight before that.

So this whole book is organized around eight miracles. Each one reveals something about Jesus and encourages everybody who reads it to believe in him. And I want you to see this, so turn to chapter 2. I want to go through these miracles with you. Why? Because if you get this, you get the whole book of John, and we're doing the overview today. By the way, you're going to see what I say really easily, if you have a red-letter Bible with you, because what's going to happen is you're going to have miracle and then explanation. Or you're going to have explanation and then miracle. The miracles are either, they either happen and then they're explained, or the explanation happens and then the miracle comes.

And so, take a look at this chapter 2, drop down to verse 11. Jesus turns water into wine, but to show that this is very important, before John moves on, notice what he says in verse 11, "This the first of his sign Jesus did it Canna and Galilee and manifested his glory."

So let's think about that for a minute. Here's the sign, he says it's the first one, so you should take note of that. John, John is giving us a clue that this is important. Here's the first one. And what was the result? We got some insight into his identity, notice, manifested his glory, chapter 1:14, says that this is the glory of God that is tabernacling in Jesus.

So you've got the sign, you've got his identity, manifesting his glory, he does something only God can do. And then notice the response of his disciples. What does it say? And they what? Believed. So that's the paradigm, miracle, explanation, identity, here's who Jesus is. Belief. In fact, the sign of water into wine leads to a long teaching about the new birth, where Jesus says that you need to be born of the water and the spirit. This is chapter 3. And like I said, red letter Bible, how much of chapter 3 is in red? A bunch of it, right? If you have one, you know that this whole thing is, now, in John's organization, he's explaining this miracle with what is happening in chapter 3.

Let's look at another one, chapter 4. Chapter 4 towards the end, there is the healing of the official's son. Ok, so his son is sick, he heals him. But this comes after a long conversation with a woman at a well about him being the Messiah and him giving living what? Living water. So there's that water idea again, he's the Messiah. And then look at verse 56, I'm sorry, verse 54. He heals the official's son, he does something that Messiah was promised to do, which is that he would heal their diseases. And before he moves on to chapter 5, notice he says, this was now the second sign that Jesus did.

So John again is cluing us into these signs are very important. So he wants you to notice that, that's why he pauses in the narrative to make a statement like that and then moves on. Well, look at chapter 5. Chapter 5 begins with a miracle, Jesus heals a man who was born paralyzed. And again, healing people, that's what the Messiah does, which then leads into the rest of chapter 5, which is what, Jesus explaining various proofs that show he is the Messiah. Look at chapter 6.

Chapter 6 begins with two miracles, the feeding of the 5,000, which is really probably 10,000, and Jesus walking on water.

From there, after after those two miracles, there's this long sermon, right? starting in verse 22, about Jesus being the bread of life. Now, why would Jesus be the bread of life? Because he just got done feeding thousands of people with what? Bread. So here he is saying like, here's this food, but hey, this is just a picture of a reality that's even more true than this food that I can feed you miraculously. I can do that because I'm God, I'm the source of eternal life.

Then there's the sixth sign all the way in chapter 9. In chapter 9, Jesus heals a man who was born blind. K, So think about blindness. You live in darkness, your entire existence. In chapter 8, though, if you look back, there's this long sermon about Jesus, and the central message of chapter 8 is that Jesus is the what? Do you remember? Light of the world. He's the light of the world. And here's chapter 9, he gives a man who's lived in darkness physical light, physical sight.

And then from there, it moves into chapter 10, where it talks about Jesus being the good shepherd, that he guides, and he gives life to his people. Chapter 7, I'm sorry, Chapter 11 is the last sign before chapter 12. And this is the raising of Lazarus, raising him from the dead. And all of that is surrounded by chapter 1:25, yeah, chapter 11:25, where he says, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me though he die yet he's shall live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die." And then notice the question he asks, "Do you believe this?"

So all of these miracles are meant to say something about who Jesus is. And Jesus tells you like, this is the point of this miracle. I am the resurrection in a life. Therefore, believe. Well, chapter 13, you have this very long section of Jesus um talking to his disciples, his private ministry to them. And its, they don't understand what's going on, they're very confused, he's answering their questions. He's giving them comfort.

But this section then, the only way that there's actual comfort that can come from this section is if Jesus rises from the dead, and we all know that rest of the story, chapter 20, the ultimate miracle in the book of John becomes the foundation for everything Jesus says to his disciples about life after he leaves. And so are you seeing this, that there's miracle, there's identity, and there's believe.

Now, in the book of John, there's a whole other group of people that don't do that at all. Look at chapter 12. This chapter 12 is a turning point in John. This is where Jesus' public ministry ends. And this is where his private ministry to his followers becomes more focused. And notice how this is described. Look at the middle of verse 36, "When Jesus had said these things, he departed and hid himself from them." That's key. If Jesus hides himself from you, that is an act of judgment.

And then notice he continues, "though he had done so many signs before them, they did not believe in him. So the word that was spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled, Lord, who has believed what he heard from us, and to whom of the arm of the Lord has been revealed. Therefore, they could not believe". Believing is to be the goal of these miracles. It's the goal of how, of your true knowledge of Jesus, that's the goal. But also, so John's telling us, "hey, my, my whole book is about these miracles. And my whole book is about, here's how you should respond to them". But also like we see here, here's how you should not respond to them.

So the next major theme is Jesus, the man. Jesus, the man. If you were in Galilee or you were in Jerusalem when Jesus was there, you would say, well, that's a man. He walks like me, he looks like me. He coughs like me. He gets tired, he gets thirsty. He eats. And in fact, 12 times in the

book of John, he is called the man or a man. Jesus even calls himself a man in chapter 8:40, which we'll see in a little bit. In chapter 4:29, Jesus gets tired. In chapter 19:28, he gets thirsty. He is depicted in the book of John as he is a man. But he's more than a man. The third theme is that he is the Christ. He's the Christ. This man is the king of the world. He's called the Christ numerous times. In fact, Andrew tells his brother, Peter, hey, we found the Messiah. And then John puts in parentheses, that is the Christ. He's called Jesus Christ in chapter 1:17. Jesus calls himself the Messiah, chapter 4:26, and chapter 10:26. And then when Jesus is praying to the father in chapter 17:3, Jesus says of himself that he is Jesus Christ. Christ is not his last name. You know that, right? It is a title. He is the king. He is the Messiah.

Fourth, Jesus is also the Son of God. The Son of God. I'm going to spend a lot of time on this as we go through the book, but for now, you just need to know that the title Son of God does not mean physical offspring. It does not mean the physical offspring of God. What it means is divinity, deity, God. The eternal God has become a man. The creator of the universe has become a part of his creation to give sinners eternal life. He is truly human. Yes, we saw that. But he is also truly God.

And I want to show you the meaning of Son of God, so turn to chapter 5 John chapter 5, I forgot to tell you you need to stretch your fingers out this morning or this afternoon, because we're all going to be, we're going all over the place today. John chapter 5, page 986. He's fighting with the religious leaders, how dare he heal a man born paralyzed on the Sabbath. How dare he do something like that? Drop down to verse 16. And this is why the Jews were persecuting Jesus because he was doing these things on the Sabbath. How dare he heal a man born paralyzed on the Sabbath.

But Jesus answered them, "My father is working until now and I'm working." Well, if God's working on the Sabbath, I'm going to work on the Sabbath. Now we would read that and kind of miss it, and keep going, but the religious leaders do not let us do that. We may not know what Jesus meant by that statement in verse 17 but the religious leaders know exactly what he's saying. Verse 18. "This is why the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him." Huh? All you said was God your Father. Like what's the big deal about that? Don't we pray to Our Father. Like why why is that a big deal? Because not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own father, what? Making himself equal with God.

They knew Jesus was saying, "I am God". So when you hear people talk about, oh Jesus is just this great religious leader and this great teacher, Jesus taught that he was God. If I did that right now, we should all run. I should run from myself. Jesus did it and people bowed their knee and said, yes, yes you are.

All of this leads to the fifth theme, which we've been looking at all day, which is that if you know all of this about Jesus, what should be your response? Believe. Believe. This word is used 98 times in John. Faith is very misunderstood, faith is more than just knowing facts. I grew up in Sunday school, these are the facts, Jesus lived and he died and he rose again for sin. I know the facts. And it's even more than knowing the facts are true. Yes, I think that's true, Jesus is real, and he really lived and he really died, and he really rose again.

The kind of believing that gives eternal life is beyond these intellectual things, knowing and thinking something's true. Belief, saving faith, saving belief means trusting in Jesus. Committing yourself to him.

I you, I want to show you in John chapter 8, that there is a faith that does not save. If there's, not all faith saves. I don't know if you know that. In fact, did you know that demons actually have faith? James 2:19 says, "the demons believe." They know the facts. And it says, "And they tremble," which means they know the facts are true. Demons know the facts, they know the facts are true. They know the facts about Jesus, they know all of it is true, but they don't trust. They rebel, they reject, they hate Jesus.

Well in John, the same can be said for people too. Look at chapter 8, drop down to verse 30. It says there, "As he was saying these things, many believed in him." Got that? So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, "If you abide in my words, you're truly my disciples and you will know the truth and the truth will set you free."

Well, these Jews, it says they believed in him, but look at how they start to talk to him. Verse 39. The same Jews, "the same people that believed in him, answered him, Abraham is our father. Jesus said to them, if you were Abraham's children, you would be doing the works Abraham did, but now you seek to kill me." Wait a minute, they believe in him, but they want to kill him. Huh? Let's keep reading.

"You want to kill me, a man," there's Jesus calling himself a man, "who has told you the truth that I heard from God. This is not what Abraham did. You're doing the works your father did." They said to him, "We are not born of sexual immorality, we have one father, even God." We might miss that but that is such an offensive statement to Jesus, which we'll probably get to five years from now. But you need to know that. They are slamming him right now. Jesus says to them, "If God were your father, you would love me." Wait a minute, they believe in him, but they don't love him. Huh?

"For I came from God and I'm here, I came out of my own accord, but he sent me. Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot bear to hear my word. You are of your father," the what? The devil. Wait a minute, they believe in him, how are they of their father, the devil? "And your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning and does not stand in the truth because there's no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character for he is a liar and the father of lies. But because I tell the truth, you do not," what? "Believe me."

Huh? 30 and 31 says they believe in him. 45, Jesus says you don't believe in me. How's that possible? Because they have the faith of Satan. They know the facts and they know the facts are true. They're seeing the miracles, they're seeing everything being done. And they have no other explanation, he must be the Messiah. And yet instead of giving their lives to him, trusting in him, committing themselves to him, they want him dead.

How many times I've talked to parents who've said something along these lines, my son, my daughter has said to me, "yeah, mom, dad, I believe all that's true. I just don't want to live it. I don't want to live it". They know the facts and they know the facts are true, but they have the faith of a demon. And John wants you to know that there is a wrong way to respond to Jesus, to have all the information and yet still reject.

When you reject, you cut yourself off from the sixth theme, which is life. There is eternal life and there is eternal death in John. The question for every person is which one will be your experience. Maybe you think about this all the time, maybe you don't, but you are eternal. You will last forever.

10,000, 10 million years from now, you will still exist. And you will exist in one of two locations. And John writes this book so that you will avoid hell and wrath. And I want you to see this, turn to John 3, turn to John chapter 3. 17 times in this book, John uses the word life to refer to eternal life. He tells us this is his goal, he says it in chapter 20:31. And there are 11 verses in John that connect belief in Jesus to eternal life, I just want to look at a few. So take a look at John chapter 3, drop down to verse 14.

"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness so must the son of man be lifted up. And whoever believes in him may have eternal life." Why? "Because God so loved the world that he gave his only son that whoever believes in him should not perish". That's one side. But on the other side, have eternal life.

K, Now look at verse 36. "Whoever believes in the son has eternal life. Whoever does not obey the son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him." So now we've got perish and the wrath of God on one side, eternal life on the other.

Now turn to John 5. John 5:24, Jesus says, "Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment," now there's a third concept, "but has passed from death", there's a fourth concept to life. Notice all of these statements are statements made by who? Jesus. So if this makes us uncomfortable, well, it should make us uncomfortable, but if it's like, I don't like that, I'm going to reject that, just recognize you're not rejecting me, you're not rejecting one of the apostles, you're rejecting Jesus himself.

Look at chapter 12. John 12. Here, we see the connection, we hear we see that faith is more than just knowing the facts and believing the facts are true. Here, we see this concept of commitment, of trust. John 12:25, "Whoever loves his life, loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for," what?

Eternal life.

Eternal life. Here, the concept of faith is understood as you've got your life on the one hand and you've got Jesus on the other. Nothing, not even your life is more important than having Jesus. So you will lose your life, you'll be done, you'll stay, you'll be uncommitted to yourself so that you'll be committed to Jesus.

And then finally, turn to chapter 17. John 17. If there is a holy of holies in the New Testament, scholars have said it's chapter 17. Really, anybody with a brain knows it's chapter 17 because chapter 17 is Jesus praying to the father, this intimate relationship that has been there for all of you, we had a picture of it in chapter 17, and look at chapter 17:3. Jesus says, "this is eternal life, that they know you". That's true faith. It goes beyond intellectual to this knowing, this closeness, this intimacy. "This is eternal life that they know you, the only true God and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent."

So when you put all that together, the question is, do you know God? You can only know him through Jesus Christ, so do you know Christ? and John's message is, if you know him truly, you will believe in him.

Now the last part that I want us to look at to get the big picture of the Gospel of John is point 3) this intentional outline. Intentional outline. We've already seen the intention of the whole book. Right? It's that people will believe. However, the bullet point under point three is the word uniqueness. Uniqueness. And what I'm getting at here is that if you've read the other gospels and then you read John, you realize that they're not the same. They're different.

One scholar did the research found over 90% of John is not in the other three. So he writes not to contradict them, don't think that, but he writes to compliment them with his own memories. So he doesn't talk about Jesus' genealogy or his birth or his childhood or his baptism or casting out demons, his temptation, any of his parables, his agony at Gethsemane, his Ascension. None of those things are mentioned by John because he's giving his own independent witness to Jesus using his own style, his own memories and with his own purpose, which is that people would believe.

He's more theological too, but what he does is he supplements the other three, but really there could be three trillion, right? Because the very last verse in the book says, "The world itself could not contain the books that could be written about Jesus." So whether there's four or four trillion, it's not even scratching the surface.

Now, with the rest of our time, I want to summarize the whole book of John in about five minutes. So let's see if we can do that. K? So I give you this little if you want.. As you think through the whole book, here's a quick three-point way to think through the whole book. Chapters 1 to 12 is Jesus' public ministry. This is Jesus doing ministry amongst the people. Chapter 1 is an introduction and it describes who Jesus is.

So, the first 18 verses, he is God who's become a man. And then the rest of the book, there are like seven other identifiers for Jesus in the rest of chapter 1. He's the Lord, he's the lamb of God, the Son of God, the rabbi, the son of man, the Messiah, the king of Israel and Jesus of Nazareth.

So chapter 1, John is saying, this is who Jesus is. Why? So when you move into the miracles, starting in chapter 2, it's like, oh yeah, of course he can do all that stuff because he's all these things in chapter 1. And starting in chapter 2 to chapter 12, there are these seven miracles that we looked at already. We see the miracle and an explanation, or we see an explanation that leads to a miracle and then more explanation.

The thing you need to know about this section is chapter 5 changes everything, because in chapter 5, there begins to be this dark cloud, because we just read it in chapter 5:18, that now they want to what? Want to kill Jesus, and that cloud is going to grow and grow and grow until you get to chapter 19, where Jesus is put to death.

Seven miracles, all to draw out the response of belief, but we also see unbelief. The amount of people that believe get smaller and smaller as John goes, and the amount of people that don't believe gets bigger and bigger. This culminates in chapter 12, which we saw Jesus going, I'm out of here, I'm hiding myself from the public who is rejecting me and rejecting the miracles. And I'm now going to focus on my disciples, which we'll call Jesus' private ministry, chapters 13 to 17.

Here, Jesus prepares his followers for what life and ministry will be like when he dies, rises and returns to heaven. So again, they clearly don't understand what he's talking about. How does the Messiah die? They couldn't figure that out. So he answers their questions. But if you read that section, what you find is that he's trying to comfort them, and he says, I'm going to comfort you in two ways. One with my peace, which I will give you. And two, with the holy spirit who I will give you.

Everything in the book really leads up to chapters 18 to 21, which we'll call Jesus' passion, Jesus' passion and resurrection. Jesus' passion is his suffering. It's his torture. It's his mockery. It's his bloody death on the cross where he defeats all the powers of darkness, pays for sin. But this, John wants you to know that this section is the apex of unbelief. This is what unbelief takes you

to, to the point where the people are screaming for his death. Pilate is like, there's nothing wrong with him, I find nothing guilty about him, but he must die because of the sins of those people, even though he's innocent. Sound familiar?

Chapter 20 ends with this statement from one of his disciples, who at first didn't believe that he rose from the dead. Jesus shows up, says, "Thomas, touch my hands, touch my side". And Thomas' response is what, do you remember? "My Lord and my God". That word is critical because the whole book back in chapter 1 starts with the word was what? God. So John is book mark, book-ending this book by saying, hey, Jesus is God. Are you going to believe in him? He even says in verse 29, "Blessed are those who don't see me and still believe," which is like all of us.

21 is kind of an epilogue, where the book ends on a statement of Jesus' greatness. Again, verse 25, "There's also many other things that Jesus did, which every one of them, if every one of them were to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written." So here's the end of the book, this statement of the greatness and the glory of Jesus. Which way do we begin the book of John, "In the beginning was the word and the word was with God, and the word was God." And all things were created by him. And nothing was created that was not created by him". And then verse 14, "The word became flesh and dwelt among us and we saw his glory."

So John's entire goal is that you see the greatness, the glory, the grace of Jesus, so that you will believe in him. So that's the question, do you believe in him? Do you believe that he's the Christ, the Messiah, the king of the world? Do you believe that he's the Son of God, the second person of the Trinity, very God and very God, God becoming a man, the bread of life, the light of the world, the door into heaven for all who believe. The good shepherd, the resurrection and the life. The way, the truth and the life. The true vine, the only source of eternal life in this world.

If you do, if you do believe in him, listen, you're not waiting for eternal life. If you believe in him, you have eternal life now. It is your experience. It's the smell of eternal life that you live and until the day when you enter into that eternal life now and forever.

John writes this book so people will have that eternal life. So listen, that's why we're going through this book. That Jesus will be lifted up every week at a time when our world desperately needs him, and that he will draw people to himself and be saved.

I remember when the three elders that were here when I got here on Thursday morning, 6:00 AM, we would come here and we would pray in the prayer room over there. It's now a couple offices because you can pray anywhere. But in those early days, 6:00 AM, we would go there and there's no meetings, it's no business, it's just we're here to pray. And I remember being in that prayer room and praying, Lord, please make it harder for people to go to hell from Gilbert, Arizona, because of this church. I had no reason to pray that. The entire church could fit right here pretty much. But I was like, God, please, make that a reality. That is the reality that John is the reason why he writes this book, so that you would not spend eternity in hell, but that you would spend your entire eternity, which you will experience, in heaven. That is my hope for our going through this book, that's my hope for this church, that's my hope for the people that you know that need Christ. I've gone way over and they're probably so mad at me right now. But, oh well, I have that prerogative so. Let's pray. Let's pray.

Jesus, thank you for what you did that we see in this book. Thank you for your goodness, your grace, your glory, which like I said, John may be the one who proclaims this better than anybody. And so, I pray for your grace. Even though I went too long and we can't even sing our closing song right now, many in this room because of you can say it is well with my soul. We love you And pray that we would love you more as a result of our time in this book. And I pray for anybody here who knows the facts and knows the facts are true but have not committed themselves to you, I pray that they would do that now. Today is the day of salvation. Do these things, please, I pray, Jesus, for the glory of your name. Amen.