

John, the Unique Gospel

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In the introduction to the series of commentaries on the Gospel According to John, this writer included the following lists that should be of interest to most Bible Students:

SIGNS IN THE JOHN'S GOSPEL

1. Changing water to wine, 2:1-11.
2. Healing of an official's son from a distance, 4:46-54.
3. Healing the sick, 5:1-14.
4. Feeding 5000 men, plus women and children, 6:14.
5. Walking on water, 6:16-20.
6. Healing of a blind man, 9:1-34.
7. Raising of Lazarus from the dead, 11:38-44

THE I AM SAYINGS OF JESUS IN JOHN

1. I am the bread of life - 6:35.
2. I am the light of the world - 8:12.
3. I am the door of the sheep - 10:7-9.
4. I am the good shepherd - 10:11.
5. I am the resurrection and life - 11:25 -26.
6. I am the way, the truth, and the life - 14:6.
7. I am the true vine, 15:1ff

JESUS' SEVEN SAYINGS FROM THE CROSS

1. Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do." (Luke 23:34, NKJV)
2. And Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise."(Luke 23:43)
3. When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, "Woman, behold your son!" Then He said to the disciple, "Behold your mother!" And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home. (John 19:26-27)
4. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" (Matthew 27:46)
5. After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, "I thirst!" (John 19:28)
6. So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit. (John 19:30).
7. And when Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, He said, "Father, 'into Your hands I commit My spirit.' "Having said this, He breathed His last."(Luke 23:46).

The Gospel According to John is unique in that it does not follow the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) in recording events in the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. The word Synoptic simple means seeing alike. It is usually recognized as the Evangelistic Gospel.

It begins with a refutation of all false religions and cults, with a particular emphasis on Gnosticism, a philosophy many non-Jewish believers had grown up with and sought to integrate it into the church.

John began the Prologue with these words,

“In the beginning was the Word; and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. All things were created through Him, and apart from Him not one thing was created that has been created. In Him was life, and that life was the light of men. That light shines in the darkness, yet the darkness did not overcome” (John 1:1-5, HCSB).

This not only refutes the Gnosticism of the First and Second Centuries, it destroys Eastern Mysticism and drives the final nail into the coffin of the New Age Movements. Redemption, or salvation is a major theme of the Fourth Gospel. One of the best known verses in the Bible, and certainly the best known verse that tells us how one is saved it John 3:16: “For God loved the world in this way: He gave His One and Only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16, HCSB, bold added by this writer). Many believers memorized this verse in the King James Version: “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

Jesus assures all who believe in Him to receive His salvation that they are saved forever: “I give them eternal life, and they will never perish – ever! No one will snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all. No one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand. The Father and I are one” (John 10:28-30).

That passage assures the believer that once we are saved by grace we cannot lose our salvation (1) accidentally, (2) intentionally, or (3) incidentally. Amen!

Appendix

HIGHLIGHTS OF CHAPTERS

From the Introduction to Chapter 16 in this volume

In Chapter One, there is the Prologue, in which we find a statement about Jesus that destroys all cults, all false religions, and all heresies, as well as atheism and agnosticism. Yes, this Gospel has been around two thousand years and we still have cults, false religions, heresies, atheism and agnosticism, but their demise has been assured, as has the reward for all who embrace them. John begins this Gospel with the words, “In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. All things were created by Him, and without Him was not anything created that was

created" (KJV). The first chapter proclaims Jesus to be life, light, Savior, the Lamb of God, the Messiah.

In Chapter Two, Jesus, through the First Sign, declares Himself to be the fulfillment of all Messianic prophecies.

In Chapter Three, we read: "For God so love the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him will not perish, but have everlasting life" (my paraphrase).

In Chapter Four, He says to the woman at the well in Samaria, "Everyone who drinks from this water will get thirsty again. But whoever drinks from the water that I will give him will never get thirsty again – ever! In fact, the water I will give him will become a well of water springing up within him for eternal life" (John 4:13-14, HCSB). Also, in Chapter Four, we have the Second Sign, the healing of an official's son from a distance.

In Chapter Five, we find the Third Sign, the healing of a man who had been sick for 38 years (on the Sabbath), as well His declaration about Jesus' relationship with His Father. He also offers witnesses who support His claim to be the Son of God.

In Chapter Six, He feeds five thousand men, plus women and children with a child's lunch (the Fourth Sign). That evening His disciples were caught in a violent storm in the middle of the Sea of Galilee when Jesus came to them, walking on the water (the Fifth Sign). The next day, He declared, "I am the bread of life."

In Chapter Seven, Jesus went to the Temple privately, but in the middle of the Festival of Tabernacles, He stood up and cried out, "If anyone is thirsty, he should come to Me and drink! The one who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, will have streams of living water flow from deep within him" (7:37-38). Without saying it in so many words, He is saying that He is water of life. He continues to make statements that support the great claims set forth in the Prologue.

In Chapter Eight, Jesus masterfully deals with a crowd bent on trapping him by forcefully dragging into His presence a woman caught in the act of adultery. When the scribes and Pharisees sought to paint Him into a corner from which there was no escape, He brilliantly put the ball back in their court. When they gave up and left, He dismissed the woman with an order for her to "Go, and from now on do not sin any more" (8:11).

In Chapter Nine, Jesus gives the sixth sign, the healing of a man born blind, after He had dealt with the question: whose sins caused his blindness, his or his parents'? The Jewish religious authorities were enraged that Jesus made a paste of spittle and placed on the eyes of the blind man on the Sabbath Day. They questioned the man about the

One who had healed him and “He answered, ‘Whether or not He’s a sinner, I don’t know. One thing I do know: I was blind, and now I can see.’” (9:25, bold added by this writer). Wow! What a testimony.

Chapter Ten is very special for a number of reasons. First, Jesus makes two unforgettable “I AM” statements in this passage. He said, “I am the door to the sheepfold,” and then He declared, “I am the Good Shepherd.” Second, this chapter reveals that Jesus fulfills the hopes and promises of Psalm 23. Third, Jesus offers assurance of eternal security to every single person to whom He gives eternal life, whether they understand it or not (and whether they believe it or not!). The Savior never announces anywhere that He will grant temporary life to anyone who believes in Him.

In Chapter Eleven, Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead after making another of those amazing I AM statements. He declared to Martha, “I am the resurrection and the life.”

In Chapter Twelve, we have the anointing at Bethany by Mary and the Royal Entry (commonly called the Triumphant Entry).

In Chapter 13, Jesus washed the feet of His disciples and explained the significance of it. He then predicted His betrayal by Judas. Next, He gave them His new commandment, that they should love one another.

In Chapter 14, as a part of His Farewell Discourse, Jesus announced that He was going to the Father to prepare a place for His followers. He then declared, “I am the way, the truth, and the life.” Also, in chapter 14, Jesus promised, “Whatever you ask in My name, I will do it so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.” Also, Jesus promised that when He returned to the Father He would send the Holy Spirit to minister in and through true believers.

In Chapter 15, Jesus said, “I am the true vine, and My Father is the vineyard keeper.” He went on to explain that those who love Him are the ones who Obey Him. Jesus taught that the world hates Him because it hates the Father, and it will hate those who follow Him. He also taught them about the ministry of the Counselor, the Holy Spirit.

In Chapter 16, Jesus promised that when He went back to Heaven He would send the Holy Spirit, the divine Comforter. He said, “But now I am going away to Him who sent Me.... I will send Him to you. When He comes, He will convict the world about sin, righteousness, and judgment: about sin, because they do not believe in Me; about righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you will no longer see Me; and about judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged (John 16:5-12). 13 When the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all the truth” (16:13).

In Chapter 17:1-5, Jesus prays for Himself: “Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son so that the Son may glorify You” (17:1). In 17:6-19, He prayed for His disciples: “I pray for them. I am not praying for the world but for those You have given Me, because they are Yours. All My things are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I have been glorified in them. I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to You. Holy Father, protect them by Your name that You have given Me, so that they may be one just as We are” (John 17:9-11). In 17:20-26 Jesus prayed for all saints of all ages.

In Chapter 18, Jesus was betrayed, arrested, and taken to Annas. Peter denied Jesus to servants (18:15-18). Jesus is questioned by Annas (18:19-24). Simon Peter denied Jesus twice more (18:25-27). Jesus was taken to Pilate where the Roman governor questioned Him (18:18-38a). Barabbas was chosen for release rather than Jesus (18:18b-40).

In Chapter 19, Jesus was subjected to physical torture and mocked ruthlessly. He was sentenced by Pilate to be crucified (18:5-16a). In 19:17-24, we see Jesus was on the cross. When Jesus saw His mother and the disciple He loved standing there, He said to His mother, “Woman, here is your son.” Then He said to the disciple, “Here is your mother.” And from that hour the disciple took her into his home” (John 19:26-27). In 19:28-30, Jesus bowed His head and gave up His Spirit. John gives his own personal testimony about the fulfillment of OT prophets when the Roman soldiers pierced Jesus side (19:1-37). The burial of Jesus is recorded in 19:38-42.

In Chapter 20, the disciples find that His tomb is empty (20:1-7. After hearing the news, Peter and John ran to the tomb. “The other disciple (John), who had reached the tomb first, then entered the tomb, saw, and believed” (John 20:8). In 20:11-18, John records Jesus’ appearance to Mary Magdalene. In 20:19-22, Jesus appears to ten disciples (Thomas absent), who were meeting behind a locked door. Thomas was not with the others when Jesus appeared to His disciples the first time, but eight days later, Jesus appeared to the eleven and invited Thomas to touch the scars in his hands and side (20:24-29). John states the purpose of this Gospel: “Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of His disciples that are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may believe Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and by believing you may have life in His name” (John 20:30-31).

In Chapter 21, Jesus made a dramatic appearance to seven of His disciples beside the Sea of Tiberias (Sea of Galilee), told them to cast their net on the other side of the boat, where they caught 153 fish, and then He served them breakfast. In 21:15-19, Jesus commissions Simon Peter to feed His sheep, after Peter confess his love for Jesus three times. In verses 20-23, John corrects the false rumor that Jesus had said that he (John) would be left on earth until Jesus’ return. What Jesus said was, “If I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you?” (John 21:23). In 21:24-25, John identifies himself as the author of this Gospel, and the one Peter has asked about when Jesus foretold Peter the

manner of his death. John, then, is the disciple Jesus loved. He is the author of the Fourth Gospel.

Note: I have seven volumes on the Gospel According to John posted on www.pastorlife.com, and online ministry of Dr. J. Mike Minnix. This closes the seventh volume. I saved Acts (8 volumes) and John (seven volumes) for my last commentaries - unless the Lord leads me back into this challenging task again. Now, I am working on a Bible Character Series and you can find a number of them at www.pastorlife.com as well. On the PastorLife website you can find some of the best works can a number of outstanding Southern Baptist pastors and writers.