

“Disciple U”
Bystander: John and the Rabbi From Nazareth (The Gospel of John)
Class Notes
Session 1

Goals for the Class:

- Deepen our understanding of the range and scope of the Gospel of John, as we examine John’s structure and thematic elements.
- Fully understand who Jesus is and what He came to do in your life. We will examine the Gospel of Mark through the lens of an increasingly “converting” group of disciples who experienced a changing understanding of Jesus and His mission in the world.
- To understand the dynamics of personal transformation and conversion in your life. We will discuss conversion and the conversion process. It will be the thesis of this study that Christian discipleship is a process, a “spiritual pilgrimage” through which we increasingly become the people we were created to be.
- Encourage an on-going commitment to Christian discipleship and applying to your life the scriptural truths discussed in this class.

Author: John the Apostle, the Son of Zebedee.

Date: Likely written in Ephesus approximately the late 80’s to the early to mid-90’s A.D.

Genre: “Gospel.” Ancient Historical-Biography.

Purpose: *John 20:30-31 Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹but 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.*

“Audience:” Jews; Greco-Roman-Gentiles (Philosophical).

John structures his Gospel around seven “signs” (miracles) of Jesus, as well as seven “I Am” statements that describes who Jesus is and what He has come to do.

Jesus’ Seven “Signs” in the Gospel of John

1. Changing water into wine in Cana (2:1–11)
2. Healing an official’s son in Capernaum (4:46–54)
3. Healing an invalid at the Pool of Bethesda in Jerusalem (5:1–18)
4. Feeding the 5,000 near the Sea of Galilee (6:5–14)
5. Walking on the water of the Sea of Galilee (6:16–21)
6. Healing a blind man in Jerusalem (9:1–7)
7. Raising dead Lazarus in Bethany (11:1–45)

Jesus’ Seven “I Am’s” in the Gospel of John

1. “I am the Bread of Life” (6:35).
2. “I am the Light of the world” (8:12).
3. “I am the Gate for the sheep” (10:7; cf. v. 9).
4. “I am the Good Shepherd” (10:11, 14).
5. “I am the Resurrection and the Life” (11:25).
6. “I am the Way and the Truth and the Life” (14:6).
7. “I am the true Vine” (15:1; cf. v. 5).¹

¹J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.). *The Bible Knowledge Commentary* (Wheaton, Illinois: Victor Books, 1985).

The Prologue: John 1.1-14.

The Gospel of John begins with what is known as “The Prologue,” which ends at v.14.

Immediately we see one of the distinctives of John from the other Gospels. While all of the Gospels begin with historical referents, the Gospel of John opens with a theological prologue.

John Introduces:

Who Jesus is.... “Moving Into the Neighborhood.”

*John 1.1 In the beginning was the **Word**, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*

λόγος (*logos*) = Lit., “Word” (“To express” “To say”)

What Jesus Came to Do....

To _____ you!

*John 1.14a And the Word became flesh and **dwelt** among us, and we have seen his glory....*

σκηνοῶ (*skēnoō*): “To take up residence” (“To Tabernacle” “Pitch one’s tent”)

To _____ you!

John 1.14b glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Jesus’ First “Sign” (Miracle): Water into Wine...The Wedding in Cana.... “Mamma Says.”

-Beginning with first-century followers of Jesus, trusting in Jesus has been a *response to evidence*—not simply a *hope* that something is true.

-The Gospel writer John referred to the miracles of Jesus as signs that gave evidence of who Jesus was/is.

-Jesus came to show us the Father and punctuated His teaching with evidence that He spoke on behalf of the Father.

-The significance of the water into wine was explained by John as a manifestation of Jesus’ glory.

-The Old Covenant (The Stone Water Jars) was giving way to the “New Wine” of Jesus and the Gospel!

-Jesus, the “Bridegroom” has come for His “Bride” (Us!)...We can experience the joy (Wine) of Jesus’ life!