An aerial photograph of a rocky hillside, likely the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem. The foreground and middle ground are dominated by large, light-colored rock formations. Several groups of people are scattered across the rocks, some standing and some sitting. In the background, a dense residential area with multi-story buildings is visible, interspersed with green trees. The overall scene is bright and clear.

# Preparing to Share Our Faith: Answering Tough Questions

Did Jesus Claim to be God?

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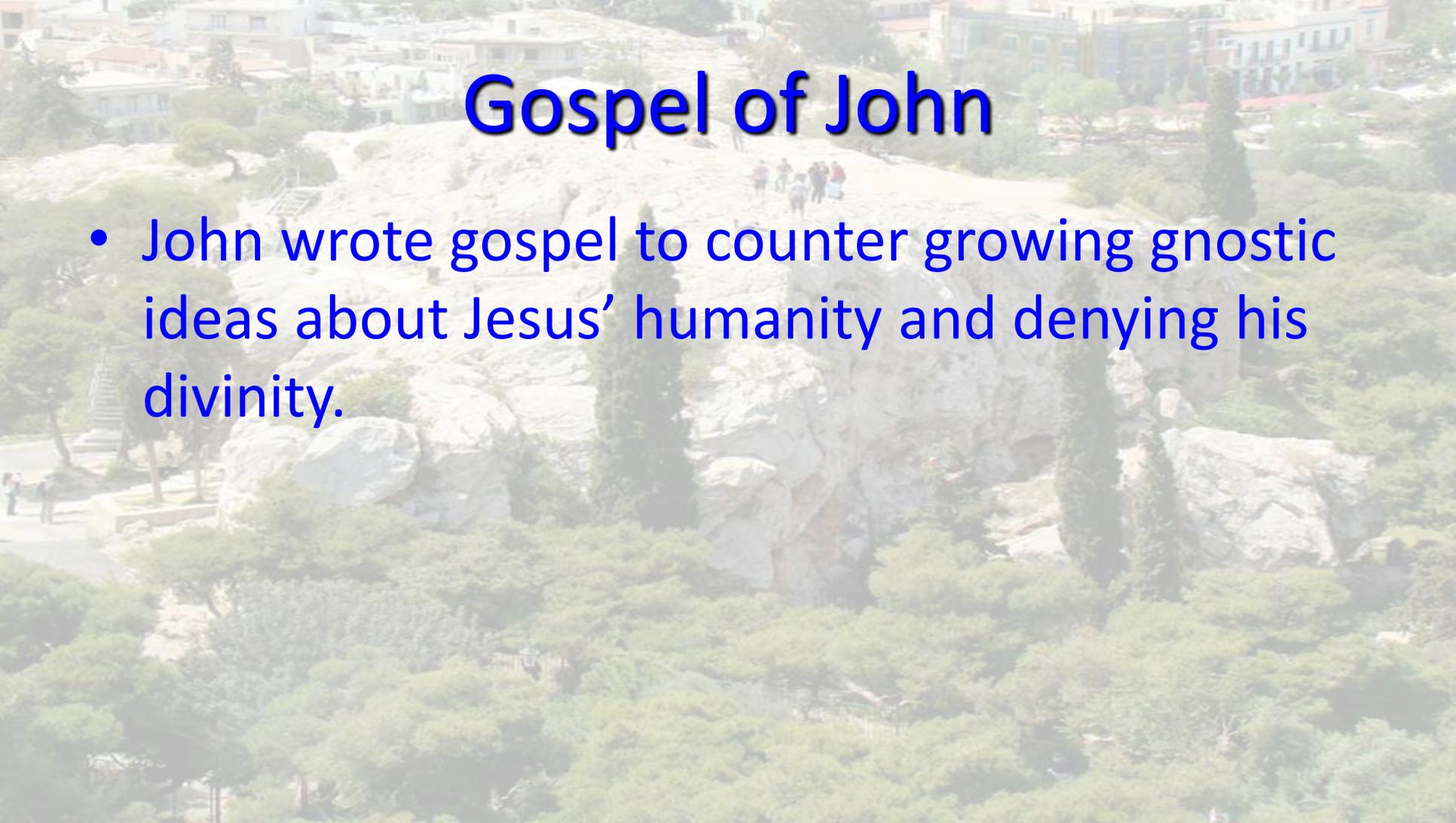
# Objections

- Gnostic gospels were written first
- Our gospels came later and replaced other at Counsel of Nicea
- John is only gospel that declares Jesus as God
- Synoptic gospels written earlier don't include this claim. Therefore a changed story

# Dating of the Gospels

- Matthew – before 70 AD. Probably 60's
- Mark – As early as 50's or 64 – 65 AD
- Luke – Probably 60-62 AD. Just before Acts
- John – 80 – 90 AD

# Gospel of John

An aerial photograph of a rocky hillside. The foreground is dominated by a dense, lush green forest. The middle ground shows a large, light-colored rock formation with several people walking on top. In the background, a town with various buildings and a red-tiled roof is visible under a clear sky.

- John wrote gospel to counter growing gnostic ideas about Jesus' humanity and denying his divinity.

# Jesus as God in John 1

- V1 Word = God
- V14 Word = Jesus
- Therefore Jesus = God
- V2 Jesus is eternal, therefore not created
- Jesus did the creating (compare John 1:3 w Gen 1:1)

# Jesus' Statements Equating Himself w God

- About His place of Origin (John 8:23; John 18:36)
- About His Position (John 8:24; John 3:19; also Mat 13:41-43; Luke 12:8-9)
- Equating Himself with God (John 14:6-9; John 10:25-30)
- If we think He is being evasive, the Jews didn't (John 10:31-33)

# Jesus' I AM Statements

- I AM the Bread of Life
- I AM the Light
- I AM the Sheepgate
- I AM the Resurrection and the Life
- I AM the Way the Truth and the Life
- I AM the True Vine
- Before Abraham was, I AM

# Attributes of God in OT

- *Isa 41:4 NASB* "Who has performed and accomplished it, Calling forth the generations from the beginning? 'I, the LORD, am the first, and with the last. I am He.'"
- *Isa 48:12 ESV* "Listen to me, O Jacob, and Israel, whom I called! I am he; I am the first, and I am the last.
- *Isa 43:10 NASB* "You are My witnesses," declares the LORD, "And My servant whom I have chosen, So that you may know and believe Me And understand that I am He. Before Me there was no God formed, And there will be none after Me.
- *Isa 43:13 NASB* "Even from eternity I am He, And there is none who can deliver out of My hand; I act and who can reverse it?"
- *Isa 43:25 NASB* "I, even I, am the one who wipes out your transgressions for My own sake, And I will not remember your sins.
- *Isa 46:4 ESV* even to your old age I am he, and to gray hairs I will carry you. I have made, and I will bear; I will carry and will save.

# Compare to Jesus' Statements

- *Rev 1:17-18* When I saw Him, I fell at His feet like a dead man. And He placed His right hand on me, saying, "Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last, (18) and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades.
- *Joh 10:28 NASB* and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand.(not an I AM verse, but you get the similarity)
- *Joh 6:20 ESV* But he said to them, "It is I; do not be afraid."
- *Joh 6:20 MKJV* But He said to them, I AM! Do not be afraid.
- *Joh 8:24 NASB* "Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins."
- *Joh 8:28 NASB* So Jesus said, "When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and I do nothing on My own initiative, but I speak these things as the Father taught Me.
- *Joh 13:19 NASB* "From now on I am telling you before it comes to pass, so that when it does occur, you may believe that I am He.
- *Joh 18:5 NASB* They answered Him, "Jesus the Nazarene." He \*said to them, "I am He." And Judas also, who was betraying Him, was standing with them.

# Jesus was Mad, Crazy (or Possessed), or He is God

*I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept his claim to be God. That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic — on the level with the man who says he is a poached egg — or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God, or else a madman or something worse. You can shut him up for a fool, you can spit at him and kill him as a demon or you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God, but let us not come with any patronising nonsense about his being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to. ... Now it seems to me obvious that He was neither a lunatic nor a fiend: and consequently, however strange or terrifying or unlikely it may seem, I have to accept the view that He was and is God. **C.S. Lewis, Mere Christianity***

# Jesus Uses a Similar Argument

Joh 8:45-55 NASB "But because I speak the truth, you do not believe Me. (46) "Which one of you convicts Me of sin [evil]? If I speak truth, why do you not believe Me? (47) "He who is of God hears the words of God; for this reason you do not hear them, because you are not of God." (48) The Jews answered and said to Him, "Do we not say rightly that You are a Samaritan [evil] and have a demon [crazy]?" (49) Jesus answered, "I do not have a demon; but I honor My Father, and you dishonor Me. (50) "But I do not seek My glory; there is One who seeks and judges. (51) "Truly, truly, I say to you, if anyone keeps My word he will never see death." (52) The Jews said to Him, "Now we know that You have a demon. Abraham died, and the prophets also; and You say, 'If anyone keeps My word, he will never taste of death.' (53) "Surely You are not greater than our father Abraham, who died? The prophets died too; whom do You make Yourself out to be?" (54) Jesus answered, "If I glorify Myself, My glory is nothing; it is My Father who glorifies Me, of whom you say, 'He is our God'; (55) and you have not come to know Him, but I know Him; and if I say that I do not know Him, I will be a liar like you, but I do know Him and keep His word.