The Gospel of John

Jesus is the Savior of the World

**Context**

**Who wrote this gospel account?** John, the beloved disciple (21:20-25) and early church leader (Galatians 2:9) who also authored 1-3 John and Revelation

**When did he write it?** 85-95 AD (about 20 years after Matthew, Mark and Luke)

**Who is he writing to?** John’s audience is the world, all man-kind. This is different than the gospels authored by Matthew, Mark and Luke who wrote to specific people groups.

**Keys to Understanding John**

**Purpose of 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*." (John 20:30-31)

**This gospel account portrays Jesus as:**

* Word of God
* Savior of the World
* See seven "I Am" statements: the Bread of Life; the Light of the World; the Door; the Good Shepherd; the Resurrection and the Life; the Way, the Truth and the Life; the True Vine

**Key Chapters:** 3; 8; 10; 11; 13-17

**Themes:** Word of God; Seven "I Am" statements & seven "signs"; Belief & Unbelief - Division; Light & Darkness; Life & Death; Authority of the Son of God

**Key Verse(s):** 1:1, 1:12-13; 3:16; 5:18, 5:24; 6:68-69; 8:12, 8:58; 10:7, 10-11, 30; 11:25-26; 12:46; 13:34-35; 14:1-3, 6, 18, 21, 27; 15:5; 13; 16:33; 17:3; 18:37; 20:28-29, 30-31; 21:25

**Outline of the Book:**

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| Chapter 1 | Chapter 2-12 | Chapter 13-20 | Chapter 21 |
| Prologue | **Book of Signs** | **Book of Glory** | **Epilogue** |
|  | Jesus’ ministry beginnings and its spread  “Signs” of Jesus’s deity: turns water into wine (2:1-11), heals at a distance (4:46-54), heals a lame man on the Sabbath (5:1-15), multiplies food source to feed 5000 people (6:5-13), walks on water (6:16-21), heals a man blind from birth (9:1-7), raises Lazarus from the dead (11:1-44)  5 of the 7 “I Am” statements  Opposition to Jesus’ ministry | Farewell instructions and preparation of the disciples to establish community of believers (13-17)  Final 2 “I Am” statements  Passion and Resurrection (18-20) |  |

**Why does John emphasize signs performed by Jesus?**

The 7 signs that John shares with us serve as evidence supporting John’s portrayal of Jesus as the Savior of the World. The term sign refers to miraculous works that Jesus performed while he was here on earth. John highlights 7 of them in his gospel account. They are evidence of His deity; showing the audience the Jesus really is from God.

**Why does John emphasize these 7 “I AM” statements that Jesus makes?**

Similar to the signs, these “I Am” statements portray Jesus’ claim to deity. It’s important to note that in these statements, Jesus, Himself, is claiming to be God. Furthermore, in each claim, He is meeting a human need in His offering of Himself. These statements therefore portray Jesus as God and as the ultimate source and satisfier – ultimate Savior of the World.

**Features unique to the gospel of John:**

The key word in the book is the verb believe (Gr. pisteuo), which appears 98 times. Interestingly, the noun form of the word (Gr. pistis, “faith”) does not occur at all.

About 90% of the material in John’s Gospel does not appear in the other three Gospels. This fact indicates the uniqueness of this Gospel. John’s unique purpose accounted for his selection of material. He omitted Jesus’ genealogy, birth, baptism, temptation, exorcizing demons, parables, transfiguration, institution of the Lord’s Supper, agony in Gethsemane, and ascension.

There is no "messianic secret" in John. The "kingdom of God" is only mentioned twice.

John uses material not included in the Synoptic’s: water to wine, Nicodemus, Samaritan woman, raising Lazarus, washing the disciples' feet, high priestly prayer, doubting Thomas, etc.

Almost half of the gospel deals with the Passion Week (13-21).

Jesus' teaching about the Holy Spirit as our Advocate and Helper (14-16)

The use of symbols and metaphors (e.g., bread, water, word, light, door, shepherd)

The use of contrasts (e.g., light v darkness; life v death)

Emphasis on Jesus' identity as the Son who reveals the Father Three Teaching Types: 1) Personal interviews - Nicodemus, Samaritan Woman; Blind Man; 2) Public Debate and 3) Private Teaching Chronology based on Jewish Festivals (Passover, 2:13-4:54; Sabbath, 5:1-47; Passover, 6:1-71; Tabernacles, 7:1-10:21; Dedication, 10:22-42; [prelude to the final Passover, 11:1- 12:36)

Jesus & the Fulfillment of the Jewish Festivals - Sabbath (John 5), Passover (John 6), Tabernacles (John 7-9), Hanukkah (John 10) Emphasis on Jesus' "hour" (1:39, 2:4, 5:25, 7:30, 8:20, 12:23)