

Session #1 – April 30, 2017

First of all, thanks for coming!

John's Gospel is different from the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Luke and John).

The synoptic Gospels – tell the story of Jesus from a chronological perspective (from the Greek word “chronos”). They tell the story based on the details of what Jesus did – Ex – On Monday Jesus did this, on Tuesday this happened, on Wednesday he did this, etc.

John's Gospel – looks at Jesus from a different understanding of the concept to time, using the

Greek word “Kairos” – God’s time - John is not concerned with chronicling the events of Jesus in terms of their historical accuracy. - John wants to look at Jesus life in terms of the meaning of what Matthew, Mark and Luke describe. John is not concerned about being historically accurate or precise. He is interested in being theologically accurate about the meaning of Jesus life for history.

So putting it another way, Matthew, Mark and Luke tell you: “This is what happened”. John seeks to tell us “This is the meaning of what happened”

Authorship - & Dating - John, Son of Zebedee is the undisputed author of John’s Gospel. John is

acknowledged by scholars to have been written late, the last of the 4 Gospels to be written.

Generally the following dating of the N.T. books is generally agreed upon:

St. Paul – wrote his Epistles in the 40's and 50's AD making them the earliest N.T. works, before any of the Gospels

Mark – usually considered the first Gospel – 66-70 AD during Nero's persecution in Rome

Matthew and Luke – 85-90 AD

John – usually thought of being written 90-100 AD

It makes sense then that John's Gospel would be the most developed in terms of sorting out the meaning of Jesus life.

The Structure of John's Gospel

The structure of John's Gospel is divided into 4 sections:

1. The Prologue - John 1:1-18
2. The Book of Signs – John 1:19-12:50
3. The Book of Glory – John 13:1-20:31
4. The Epilogue – John 21:1-25

The Prologue - takes us from before creation to creation, to the Incarnation

The Book of Signs – contains 7 signs (7 being the perfect Hebrew number) The creation was completed in 6 days and on the 7th day God rested

from all His work and declared Saturday to be a Sabbath, a day of rest.

What is a sign? - A sign is something that signifies a reality beyond itself. Ex – Red traffic light – means stop. But the reality it signifies beyond stop is that if you disobey and run through it, you could be greatly harmed in an automobile accident.

John's 7 signs in the Book of Signs are:

1. Changing water into wine at the wedding feast at Cana of Galilee – John 2:1-11
2. Curing of the Nobleman's Son – John 4:46-54
3. Curing of the paralytic at the pool of Bethesda – John 5:1-15
4. Multiplication of the loaves and fish to feed the 5,000 – John 6:1-15

5. Jesus walks on water at the Sea of Galilee –

John 6:16-21

6. Story of the healing of the man born blind –

John 9:1-41

7. The raising of Lazarus – John 11:1-44

The pattern of the way John writes in the Book of Signs is that he tells us the sign, and then he follows with a discourse about the sign. We will see this as we go along.

The Book of Glory – chapters 13-20 – comprise the Book of Glory. They reveal John's understanding of the meaning of what happened on the cross. The Book of Glory is stylistically written to change the feeling of the way the Passion is told in the Synoptic

Gospels. Nowhere in John's Gospel do you get an emphasis on Jesus suffering. For John the cross is about glory. Nowhere in John's Gospel do you read anything about darkness prevailing from noon – 3PM. For John, the cross is not darkness it is light. In John's Gospel, he is in charge. There is nothing about Simon of Cyrene carrying his cross. Herod, Caiaphas, they are not in charge, Jesus is in charge of the events of His death.

The Prologue - The Gospel of John originally ended with Chapter 20: vs 30 (read this verse). Chapter 21 was added to the Gospel to exonerate Peter, who as you recall denied Jesus three times in the Synoptic accounts. In chapter 21 of John's Gospel, Peter's image is seen in a new and better light,

something important for the early church. More on this later.