

Discover the New Testament – John

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The New Testament is a collection of 27 books by 8 or 9 authors (Hebrews is disputed), written over a 50-year time period.

Major Book Division of the New Testament:

- Historical – Matthew, Mark, Luke, John & Acts
- Doctrinal – Romans, I & II Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, I & II Thessalonians, Hebrews, James,
- I & II Peter, Jude, and I John.
- Personal – I & II Timothy, Titus, Philemon, and II & III John
- Prophetic – Revelation

New Testament authors:

- All of the writers were Jews except Luke.
- Only Matthew, Peter, and John were of the original 12 disciples of the Lord.
- Mark, James, and Jude were engaged in active ministry in the early church and had been with the apostolic group.
- Neither Luke nor Paul was an eyewitness of the life of Christ, but both men were well known to those who were.

The Gospels

Matthew, Mark and Luke are known as the “Synoptic Gospels,” because they take similar views of the life, ministry, and teaching of Jesus.

They focus on the Kingdom of God.

The Gospel of John approaches the Life of Jesus from a completely different view point. It omits things the others cover and covers things the others omit. John focuses on Eternal Life, not the Kingdom.

The Gospel of John

Author: John

- John was the brother of James (*not the writer of the book of James, who was Jesus’ half brother, but James who was killed by Herod with the sword [Acts 12:2]*) and the son of Zebedee.
- A fisherman in partnership with James, Andrew, and Peter
- The son of Salome, who was believed to be the sister of Mary, the mother of Jesus – Matthew 27:56
- James and John were known as the Sons of Thunder – Mark 3:17
- A Jew familiar with Palestine and Jewish customs
- Probably a disciple of John the Baptist
- Occupied a place of privilege next to Jesus in His earthly ministry – 13:23
- He referred to himself as “the disciple whom Jesus loved.” – 19:26
- John, with Peter and James, shared the privilege of accompanying Jesus where others were not permitted:
 1. Mount of transfiguration – Matthew 17:1
 2. Garden of Gethsemane – Matthew 26:37
 3. Raising of Jairus’ daughter from the dead – Mark 5:37

- Had access to the court of the high priest – John 18:15-16
- John was an eyewitness to the trial and the crucifixion – 19:25-26
- Received the responsibility of caring for Mary, Jesus’ mother – John 19:26
- One of the first visitors to the tomb (mentions that he is faster than Peter and arrives first) – John 20:8

Background:

- Probably written from Ephesus at the end of the first century, 85-95 AD
- Certain details in the Gospel of John point to a later date. (For example, it must have taken some time for the false story about John not dying to circulate around the church) – 21:22-23
- 92% of John’s gospel is not covered in the other three gospels.
- It was written with the understanding that Gentiles would be reading it, as the feasts and usages of the Jews are explained – 2:13, 4:9, 19:31
- John emphasizes the signs and wonders of the ministry of Jesus
 1. Water to wine (First miracle)– 2:1
 2. Healing of the nobleman’s son (Second miracle) – 4:46
 3. Healing of the lame man at the pool of Bethesda – 5:1
 4. Feeding the 5,000 – 6:1
 5. Walking on water – 6:16
 6. Healing of the man blind from birth – 9:1
 7. Raising of Lazarus from the dead – 11:1
- Of the 7 miracles recorded in John’s gospel, 5 are exclusive (numbers 1,2,3,6,7)
- The word BELIEVE occurs 98 times.
- Unlike the synoptic gospels (Matthew, Mark & Luke), John is not written to one particular group of people, but to “Whosoever Will.”
- This gospel contains no parables.

Summary:

1. Jesus, the Eternal Word – 1:1-18
2. Jesus’ deity declared by:
 - a. John the Baptist – 1:8 (Witness of the Light)
 - b. Witness of the scriptures – 1:23 (John quotes Isaiah)
 - c. Miracle Jesus performed – 2:11 (Revealing his glory)
3. Jesus’ interview with Nicodemus – 3:1-21
4. Jesus’ interview with the woman at the well in Samaria – 4:5-30
5. Controversy concerning the Sabbath and Jesus’ appeal for His disciples to believe – 5:1—6:71
6. Period of conflict – 7:1 – 11:53
 - a. Opposition of the Jews – 7:14-24
 - b. Jesus purposes to keep his Father’s commandment and lay down his life. – John 10:15
7. Period of crisis – 11:54 – 12:36
 - a. Raised Lazarus – 11:1-43
 - b. Plotting of Pharisees to destroy Jesus – 11:45-53
 - c. Triumphal entry – 12:12-15
8. The end of Jesus’ public ministry and His private conference with His disciples (Jesus teaches them) – 12:36 – 17:26
9. The betrayal, passion, and resurrection of Jesus. Our reason to believe – 18:1 – 20:31
10. John’s account of the crucifixion is unique:
 - a. Pilate writes the accusation over the cross – 19:22
 - b. Parting of Jesus’ garments – 19:23,24
 - c. Jesus gives John the responsibility of caring for his mother – 19:26,27
 - d. The 2 utterances of Jesus on the cross (“I am thirsty,” & “It is finished.”) – 19:28-30
 - e. The piercing of Jesus’ side – 19:34

Theme:

John reveals Jesus as: God – Deity – the Eternal Word.

John 1:1- In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was with God in the beginning.

Eternal Life is the central theme of the Gospel of John

The central verse of John's gospel is:

John 20:31 - But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

- Born of God!

John 1:12-13 – 12 Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—13 children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

- The New Birth

John 3:1-8 – 1 Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish ruling council 2 He came to Jesus at night and said, "Rabbi, we know you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the miraculous signs you are doing if God were not with him." 3 In reply Jesus declared, "I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again." 4 "How can a man be born when he is old?" Nicodemus asked. "Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb to be born!" 5 Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. 6 Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. 7 You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.'

- His Forever!

John 10:28 - And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.

- Must Believe!

John 3:15-17 – 15 That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. 16 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. 17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.