

G R A C E

REFORMED BAPTIST CHURCH

SOLI ◇ DEO ◇ GLORIA

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

Sermon Notes

The Uniqueness of John's Gospel

September 12, 2004

Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.

John 20:30-31

I. General Background Information

- *Gospel* - "good news" - this word never appears in the Gospel of John
- *Synoptics Gospels* (Matthew, Mark, and Luke)
 - *syn* - same
 - *optic* - to see

II. Authorship

- The Gospel of John is anonymous
- Appearances of the phrase "the one (disciple) whom Jesus loved" in the Gospel of John
 - The tomb
 - The last supper

- The argument whose the Greatest
 - The Crucifixion
- The phrase “the one (disciple) whom Jesus loved” could possibly refer to four individuals:
- The apostle John
 - Lazarus
 - The only person who, by name, was called by Jesus, the one Jesus loved
 - The Rich Young Ruler
 - John Mark
- Four Arguments Against Johannine Authorship
- John the fisherman was from Galilee and much of the Gospel occurred in Judea.
 - John and Peter in Acts 14 - unschooled, untrained, and unlearned (it means that they did not go to rabbinical school).
 - James and John - called “the sons of thunder”
 - Since John was a Palestinian, how could he write such fluent Greek
 - However, most people in that area were either bi-lingual and tri-lingual

III. Date

- Probably A.D. 85-95
 - Some scholars point to the phrase, “to be put out of the synagogue” (9:22, cf. 12:42; 16:2) points to a period after the Council of Jamnia (canonization of O.T. Scriptures by the Jewish Rabbis) to ban Christians from the synagogue.
 - The Gospel is silent on the Sadducees. Why would this be significant?
 - Theology in John was not developed until the end of the First Century.
 - “Regarding the date of writing, the period subsequent to the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem seems likely. As will be argued in greater detail below, John’s emphasis on Jesus’ replacement of the temple and Jewish feasts probably represents an effort to exploit the temple’s destruction evangelistically in an effort to reach diaspora Jews and

Gentiles attracted to Judaism (proselytes). If so, a date after A.D. 70 (the destruction of the temple), but not *immediately* in the aftermath of the traumatic events in Jerusalem, seems most likely.

Also, the reference to Peter's martyrdom in 21:19 seems to indicate that this event had already taken place at the time of writing. Since Peter was martyred around A.D. 65, this, too, points to a date toward the last decades of the first century A.D.

This would place the time of composition in the reign of the Roman emperor Domitian (A.D. 81-96).

Most fascinating is the fact that coins of that time period have been found that identify Domitian as "Dominus et Deus" (Lord and God), the precise equivalent of Thomas's confession of Jesus as "My Lord and My God" in 20:28. Thus 20:28 may represent a not-so-thinly veiled allusion to Christians' confession vis-à-vis that required by the Roman emperor of John's day. For these reasons a date in the A.D. 80's seems most likely." -

Andreas I. Kostenberger

IV. Textual Evidences of John

- a. A Textual Source
 - P⁵²
 - AD 130
 - John 8:31-33
 - P⁶⁶
 - Most of John 1-14
 - Late 2nd Century

V. Purpose Of John

- **John basically says at the beginning that Jesus is the Christ (Messiah) and he spends the rest of the Gospel explaining that**
- Complements the Gospels (the Three Synoptic Gospels) – or takes it further in the area of theology

- A handbook to point to Jewish attackers or accusers
- A hybrid used to evangelized Jews, Hellenists, strengthen the church and a handbook for new Christians
- **John 20:31 - “you may believe”**
 - Depending on the actual Greek, the purpose of John could be either primarily discipleship, or evangelistic
 - ινα πιστευητε
 - hina pisteue(ay)te
 - Present (continual) subjunctive
 - Translated: “*in order that you may continue to believe*”
 - Polemic / Discipleship

Or

- ινα πιστευσητε
- hina pisteuse(ay)te
- Aorist (punctiliar in the past) Subjunctive
 - Translated: “*in order that you may (decisively) believe*”
 - Apologetic / Evangelistic

NOTE: John already wrote (in 1 John 5:13) to strengthen believers

- The Following two passages do not appear in the most reliable early manuscripts:
 - Mark 16:9-20
 - John 7:53-8:11

- **John has three major convictions (when writing the Fourth Gospel):**
 1. Jesus is unique – humanity and his deity
 2. His Messiahship
 3. There is a new messianic community that will take the place of the Jewish community

VI. Uniqueness of the Gospel of John

- **I AM Statements**

- There are Seven (7) of them
- They are a play off of Yahweh's name in the Old Testament
 - READ Exodus 3:14
 - Moses and the burning bush
 - God left the I AM statements blank and they were filled by Jesus in the Gospel of John

- **The Seven (7) Signs in the Gospel of John**
 - NOTE: Jesus turning water into wine is only found in the Gospel of John

- What is the difference between a **miracle** and a **sign**?
 - A **miracle** _____.
 - A **sign** _____.

- **What major events from the Synoptic Gospels are missing from John?**
 - 1.) Sermon on the Mount
 - 2.) Transfiguration
 - 3.) Temptation
 - 4.) Birth
 - 5.) Casting out the demons
 - a. John basically goes into a theology of demons instead of giving the actual account
 - 6.) Gethsemane
 - 7.) "The Kingdom of God"
 - a. Eternal Life is used in John
 - In John it is like the gaps are being filled that are left in the synoptic gospels

- John also expands more theological rather than focusing on the events chronologically
- **John does not (primarily) use the phrase, “The Kingdom of God,” or “The Kingdom of Heaven,” but rather,**
_____.

VII. Major Themes

1.) God (Theology)

- God is known in two unique ways
 - The one who sent Jesus (John 5:37)
 - The Father of the Son (John 5:17-23)

2.) Christ (Christology)

- Jesus is the Son of God
- Jesus is the Messiah
- *Logos*
- Seven Signs

3.) Holy Spirit (Pneumatology)

- Three designations
 - The comforter / helper (paraclete)
 - Holy Spirit
 - Spirit of Truth

4.) Salvation (Soteriology)

- Substitutionary Atonement
 - The greatest place in John - “Behold the Lamb of God” John 1:29
- Doctrine of Last Things (Eschatology)
 - The Kingdom of God - The Synoptic Gospels
 - John - A Realized Eschatology