

## Gospel of John -- Overview John Karmelich

- I. The Gospel of John
  - A. Without a doubt the most unique of the four gospels.
  - B. The other 3 gospels are referred to as the "Synoptic" Gospels.
    1. Synoptic is a fancy word that literally means the "same view".
    2. Mathew Mark and Luke's Gospels are all narrative,
      - a) with some differences in each gospel.
      - b) But each are basically telling the same story from different points of view.
    3. John's Gospel was written many years later.
      - (1) The Gospel of John was probably written about 90 AD.
        - (a) According to most scholars,
        - (b) it was one of the last books written in the Bible.
      - b) The other 3 gospels were probably very well known when John wrote his book.
      - c) John's Gospel is the only Gospel that may not be written in chronological order.
        - (1) If you compare the other 3 Gospels to John's,
        - (2) you will find John jumps around a lot with the time line.
          - (a) Why?
          - (b) Why did John write this Gospel?
          - (c) What is so unique about John's Gospel?
      - d) The answer is actually written in John's Gospel
      - e) The most important verse in the Gospel of John, to you and me is...
        - (1) **John 20:31** (Could everybody please turn to this verse?)
        - (2) The Purpose of the Gospel of John is written in Chapter 20, Verse 31.
        - (3) But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.
          - (a) This book is written for two purposes:
            - (i) **First...**To believe that Jesus is the Christ,
              - (a) Christ comes from the Greek "Kristos"
              - (b) Which means, the King,
              - (c) Or the Messiah.
              - (d) The "sent one" of God!
              - (e) That Jesus *is* God in human flesh.
            - (ii) **Second ...**That *believing* you may have life in His Name.
              - (a) In the Greek *believing* is a continuous verb.
              - (b) So that we may *continue* to believe in Jesus' name.
              - (c) This implies, that the purpose of this book
                - (i) is also to *increase* our faith in Jesus.
        - (4) In the Gospel of John, Chapter 6, Verse 28,
          - (a) the crowd asked Jesus
            - (i) "What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?"
          - (b) Jesus answered them in Verse 29:
            - (i) "'This is the work of God,
            - (ii) that you believe in Him whom He sent."
        - (5) How many people in this room would like to increase their faith?
          - (a) How many people in this room would like to worry less and trust God some more?
            - (i) That is the purpose of the Gospel of John.
            - (ii) This is why it was written.
            - (iii) Again Chapter 20, Verse 31:
            - (iv) "But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name."

- II. I would like everybody to turn to 2 Corinthians 3:18:
1. “And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.” (2 Corinthians 3:18 NIV)
  2. This is a difficult verse to understand.
  3. I'm also going to read from the Living Bible... that helps to understand this verse.
    - a) “But we Christians have no veil over our faces; we can be mirrors that brightly reflect the glory of the Lord. And as the Spirit of the Lord works within us, we become more and more like him.” (2 Corinthians 3:18 The Living Bible)
  4. What this verse is implying is that the more time we spend with Jesus.
    - a) The more time the Holy Spirit is working transforming us
    - b) into the likeness of Jesus.
  5. We do not become better Christians by trying harder,
    - a) or being more self disciplined.
    - b) We become better Christians, by spending more time with Jesus,
    - c) and letting God transforming our lives.
    - d) That is one of the purposes of the Gospel of John.
  6. That is our goal over the next 22 chapters.
    - a) For God to Increase our faith,
    - b) and Super-naturally transform us more into the image Jesus wants us to be.
- III. I want to talk a little about who John was.
- A. For those who don't know,
1. John wrote five books of the New Testament
    - a) The Gospel of John,
    - b) 3 letters, 1<sup>st</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> John,
    - c) and the Book of Revelation
- IV. In our church, we have four stained glass windows on the South wall.
1. One of a lion
  2. One of a ox
  3. One of a man
  4. And one of a eagle
- B. Why?
1. Each one of the four represents a different “view” of Jesus Christ.
- C. First there is the Gospel of Mathew. This is the “lion” window.
1. The Gospel of Mathew was primarily written to the Jew.
    - a) Mathew presents Jesus as the “Lion of the tribe of Judah”
      - (1) A very Jewish, very messianic title of Jesus.
    - b) Mathew focuses on what Jesus *said*.
    - c) The most common expression in the book is “as it was fulfilled”.
    - d) Mathew focuses on Jesus fulfilling the Old Testament Prophecies.
    - e) The genealogy in Matthew, starts with the father of all Jews Abraham.
      - (a) The Genealogy goes to Jesus step-father, Joseph.
      - (b) This is a very Jewish thing, to go through the father's line.
- D. Next, there is the Gospel of Mark. This is the “ox” window.
1. Mark focuses on Jesus the Servant.
  2. This is why there is an ox in one of the 4 windows of our church.
  3. The ox was bred to serve human needs.
  4. Mark focuses on what Jesus *said*.
  5. Mark is the most action-oriented Gospel.
  6. It would be a “shooting script” in Hollywood terms.
  7. The most common expression is “straightway” or “immediately”.
  8. There is no genealogy in Mark, as a servant's genealogy is not important.

- E. Next comes the Gospel of Luke. This is the “man” window.
  - 1. Luke focuses on Jesus Humanity.
  - 2. This is why there is the face of a man in the 3<sup>rd</sup> window of our church.
  - 3. Luke focuses on what felt.
  - 4. The most common expression in Luke was “it came to pass”.
  - 5. Since Luke is focused on Jesus’ humanity,
    - a) his genealogy starts with the first human... Adam.
    - b) The genealogy works it’s way down to Jesus mother.
    - c) It follows the “seed” that God planted in Adam.
- F. The Gospel we are studying is the Gospel of John. This is the “eagle” window.
  - a) The 4<sup>th</sup> window in our church is an eagle.
  - b) The eagle, Levitically, represents the Spirit of God, hovering over us.
  - c) The Gospel of John also has a genealogy,
    - (1) It is basically God and Jesus.
      - (a) And is making the point that Jesus is God.
        - (i) Not that God gave birth to Jesus.
        - (ii) Jesus was with God in the Beginning.
      - (b) And yet Jesus is separate from God.
- G. The focus of the Gospel of John is that Jesus is God.
  - 1. The most common expression used in John is “The Son of God”.
  - 2. Mathew wrote primarily for the Jews.
  - 3. Mark wrote primarily for the Romans.
  - 4. Luke for the Greeks.
  - 5. But Jesus had the whole world in mind when he wrote his Gospel.
  - 6. In my translation, the word “World” is used 80 times in the Gospel of John!
- V. There is a unique quality about John that no other apostle had.
  - A. He had **loyalty**.
  - B. Of the thousands of people who came to see Jesus do miracles,
    - 1. only hundreds of them came to hear Jesus speak.
  - C. Of the hundreds who came to hear Jesus speak,
    - 1. only 70 actually followed Jesus (Luke 10 for a cross-reference).
  - D. Only 70 actually followed Jesus,
    - 1. Only 12 left everything they owned,
    - 2. and were chosen as the 12 apostles.
  - E. Of the 12 Apostles,
    - 1. there were only 3 that were chosen to be part of an “inner-circle”.
    - 2. These were Peter, Andrew and John.
      - a) These 3 got to pray with Jesus at Gethsemane.
      - b) Only 3 got to see Jesus being “transformed” into light (Matthew 17:2).
        - (1) With Moses & Elijah showing up!
    - 3. Of the 3 apostles at the inner circle,
      - a) only 1 was at the cross when Jesus was dying.
      - b) That was John.
      - c) This is probably why Jesus told John to take care of his mother (Virgin Mary).
        - (1) Which is discussed in John Chapter 19...
    - 4. It is also my personal opinion, that it is when John saw Jesus dying on the cross,
      - a) is when John first realized how much Jesus loved him.
  - F. This is why John refers to himself in the Gospels,
    - 1. “as the disciple that Jesus’ loved.
    - 2. John never refers to himself in the first person in the Gospel of John.
      - a) Whenever John needs to refer to himself,
      - b) John calls himself “the apostle that Jesus Loved”.
      - c) Four times John uses that expression of himself.

- VI. The last thing to know about John is that John was a **mender**.
- A. In the Gospel of Mathew, Chapter 4, we read of Jesus first encounters with the disciples.
  - B. We read of Andrew, and his brother Peter, casting their nets into the sea (Matthew 4:18)
  - C. When we first read of John and his brother James (the sons of Zebedee)
    - 1. They were mending their nets.
  - D. Why would God want us to know that Peter and his brother was casting his nets
    - 1. and John and his brother were mending their nets?
  - E. The answer may be, that that was their primary ministries.
    - 1. Peter ended up being one of the early great evangelists.
    - 2. Peter was casting his nets into the sea looking for new Christians.
    - 3. God told Peter “follow me and I will make you fishers of men”.
  - F. John was a “mender”.
    - 1. A mender is one that fixes things that were broken.
    - 2. From the earliest days of the church,
      - a) there were divisions.
        - (1) The 12 apostles themselves were busy arguing over who would be the greatest.
      - b) There were church splits.
      - c) There were arguments over doctrines and theologies.
      - d) Every single one of the Epistles of Paul has sections about dealing with false teachers and false doctrines.
    - 3. This was one of the roles of John.
      - a) John was a church mender.
      - b) John wanted to fix broken relationships in the Church.
      - c) John is most associated with the greatest commandment of believers.
      - d) “TO LOVE ONE ANOTHER”.
    - 4. One of the main purposes of John was to give a response to false doctrine that had already begin to creep in, as early as the first century.
      - a) The Gospel of John is probably the best response to false doctrine.
        - (1) Jehovah Witnesses believe Jesus is the arch-angel Michael and not God.
          - (a) The rebuke to this argument is found in the Gospel of John.
        - (2) The Mormon’s believe that God is an angel sent by God and we can all be like Jesus, and eventually, inherit our own planet.
          - (a) The rebuke to this argument is found in the Gospel of John.
        - (3) The New-Agers, and the Gnostic’s believe that Jesus was a Spirit, and was never really in human flesh.
          - (a) The rebuke to this argument is found in the Gospel of John.
        - (4) Muslims believe that Jesus was a great prophet, but not God.
          - (a) The rebuke to this argument is found in the Gospel of John
        - (5) Just about any false doctrine you can make about Jesus can be rebuked by the Gospel of John.
        - (6) Most people believe there is more than one way to get into heaven.
          - (a) The rebuke to this argument is found in the Gospel of John.
        - (7) Some people argue that Jesus was not involved with the creation of the world.
          - (a) The rebuke to this argument is found in the Gospel of John.
    - 5. John is about mending:
      - a) Mending the church.
      - b) Mending relationships between believers.
      - c) Mending false doctrines.
      - d) Mending how we should act as Christians.

- VII. The Gospel of John is the only Gospel not may not be written in chronological order.
- A. It is organized around 7 specific miracles.
  - B. And seven specific dissertations.
  - C. And seven specific “**I Am**” statements.
    1. I am the Bread of Life. (John 6:35)
    2. I am the Light Of The World. (John 8:12)
    3. I am the Gate, or the Door. (John 10:7)
    4. I am the Good Shepherd. (John 10:11)
    5. I am the Resurrection. (John 11:25)
    6. I am the Way the Truth and the Life. (John 14:6)
    7. And I am the True Vine. (John 15:1)
  - D. The miracles that were chosen were very specific Miracles.
    1. Why did John choose the Water to Wine miracle to mention first?
      - a) To me, a good magician today could pull this off.
    2. What was the purpose of Jesus turning the water into wine?
    3. How come only the servants at the wedding serving the wine knew about the miracle?
  - E. What I am trying to get you to think about is
    1. John had a specific **structure** when writing this book.
      - a) He choose specific miracles.
      - b) He made specific statements about Jesus.
      - c) He laid out specific things about Jesus’ life and ignored many incidents described in detail in the other Gospels.
      - d) All to focus on that fact that Jesus is God,
        - (1) and by believing in his Name we can have eternal life.
      - e) That is what I want you to see as you read through the Gospel of John.
- VIII. The Gospel of John has been described as a body of water,
- A. that is shallow enough to wade your feet in,
  - B. and deep enough to sink an elephant!
- IX. It is been said a Greek with a 6<sup>th</sup> grade education can read John.
1. Remember that the New Testament was originally written in Greek.
  - B. Yet there are millions of sermons preached on the depth of theology of John.
  - C. It is the best book of the Bible to show a beginner,
    1. and it is also one of the best books to study to get a deep grasp of theology.
  - D. I have completed several verse-by-verse studies of the Gospel of John.
    1. The more I study this book,
      - a) the more humbled I am by how much there is to know!
  - E. One point I emphasized to the Bible leaders is that,
    1. don’t even try to fully comprehend every deep theological point in the Gospel of John.
    2. You can drive yourself mad with study!
    3. What you do want is for God:
      - a) To show me what you want me to learn this week in the Gospel of John, and
      - b) show me how to apply this week’s scripture to my life.
      - c) I can’t fully comprehend it all,
        - (1) but little by little, as you reveal yourself to me
      - d) And by increase my faith to be more like Jesus
  4. Let’s Pray, Dear Lord, we thank you for these lessons you are about to teach us in the Gospel of John. God show us the things you want us to learn, and show us the things you want us to apply to our lives. Protect us as we study these lessons, and help us to learn more about you. We ask these things in Jesus name, Amen.