

## ***JOHN: The Gospel of BELIEF***

John's explicit purpose in writing was so that the reader might BELIEVE in Christ and thus have life (Jn. 20:30-31). John not only teaches the necessity of faith, but also shows us WHAT we must believe and HOW we must believe. John totally refutes "Easy Believism". Believe is always a "verb" in John's gospel showing that true faith has an active, dynamic nature to it.

John from beginning to end emphasizes the PERSON of Christ as God and makes believing on Jesus as God an absolute essential to true saving faith (see John 8:24). In this respect John is a total LORDSHIP book. It is the gospel of BELIEF (John) which shows we must believe on Jesus as Lord and God. Lord simply means Master, and God refers to the supreme Being. Jesus as God is Master – He is the GOD-MASTER and a saving faith recognizes Him as such which is a life-changing reality.

***Theme of John:*** The Deity of Christ

***Purpose:*** John's stated purpose in writing comes at the end of the book in John 20:30-31 where he says these things are written so that the reader might come to believe in Christ and have life. John's gospel is not directed at any particular target group but rather is directed towards ALL MANKIND (cf. Jn. 3:16).

***Purpose Statement:***

**John 20:30–31 (NKJV)**

**30** And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book;

**31** 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.

In the main body of the book John presents 7 major SIGNS around which the argument of his gospel is developed. John's goal through these SIGNS is to show conclusively WHO Jesus is and thereby bring his readers to the point of BELIEF that Jesus is indeed the Christ, the Son of God.

### ***7 Signs in John***

- 1) Changing the water to wine – 2:1-11
- 2) Healing the nobleman's son – 4:46-54
- 3) Healing the paralytic at the pool of Bethesda – 5:1-18
- 4) Feeding the 5000 – 6:5-14

- 5) Walking on the Sea of Galilee – 6:16-21
- 6) Healing of the blind man – 9:1-7
- 7) Raising of Lazarus from the dead – 11:1-45
  - **GREATEST SIGN: Christ's Resurrection (2:18-22; chp. 20)**

There are also 7 key “I AM” statements in the book. This title stresses the DEITY of Christ. Back in Exodus 3:14-15 God told Moses that His forever Name is “*I AM THAT I AM*”.

With this background, when Jesus said, “I AM” the Jews immediately understood His claim to be God. However, not believing it – they considered it to be blasphemy (cf. Jn. 8:58-59; 10:33). John begins his gospel by stating that Jesus is God (1:1). The main body of the book is replete with this emphasis and the climax of the book presents “doubting Thomas” confessing Jesus as “My Lord and my God” (Jn. 20:28). This is then followed up with the purpose statement in John 20:30-31 emphasizing the goal of bringing people to belief in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God. Thus, the main theme coming through in John is the DEITY OF CHRIST.

### **7 I AM statements in John**

- 1) I am the Bread of Life – 6:35
- 2) I am the Light of the World – 8:12
- 3) I am the Door – 10:7, 9
- 4) I am the Good Shepherd – 10:11, 14
- 5) I am the Resurrection and the Life – 11:25
- 6) I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life – 14:6
- 7) I am the True Vine – 15:1, 5

John is called “***The gospel of BELIEF***”. The word “***believe***” is essentially found 98 times in this book. It is always a verb showing that saving faith is not mere intellectual assent. John is the one gospel, and the one book in the Bible that gives the stated purpose of being written so we might BELIEVE that Jesus is the Christ – the Son of God and that BELIEVING we might have life in His name (His person).

“I’ve often said that the most crucial question that any person needs to answer correctly is the one that Jesus asked His disciples ([Matt. 16:15](#)), ‘Who do you say that I am?’ On that occasion, Peter by divine revelation answered ([Matt. 16:16](#)), ‘You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.’”

– ***Pastor Steven Cole***

In effect, John’s gospel is an extended answer to the question of WHO Jesus is and arrives at the same answer that Peter, under inspiration, gave

in Matthew 16:16. This is the most important issue ever addressed! It is essential knowledge in terms of being saved (Jn. 20:30-31), and it is this truth that Christ builds His Church upon (Mt. 16:16-18).

### **John 1:12 (NKJV)**

**12** But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:

### **John 3:18 (NKJV)**

**18** “He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

### **John 20:28–31 (NKJV)**

**28** And Thomas answered and said to Him, “My Lord and my God!”

**29** Jesus said to him, “Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”

**30** And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book;

**31** 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.

Thomas had said he would not personally believe unless he saw the risen Lord for himself (Jn. 20:25). In one sense Thomas had already been a believer. In John 6 Peter said to the Lord, ***“we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”*** (Jn. 6:69). Jesus then said, that one of the 12 was a devil and the text says that ***“He spoke of Judas Iscariot”***.

So, on one level all the disciples (except Judas) had already believed in Jesus (cf. Jn. 2:11; 13:10-11). The problem is that prior to the resurrection none of them believed in the resurrection. The truth of the resurrection completed their faith, but that did not happen until after the resurrection when Christ appeared to them.

God NOW demands and commands that all people everywhere repent and believe on the NAME of the Lord Jesus Christ (cf. Acts 17:30-31). As Savior He died for all our sins! As Lord over all He arose again! For true believers He is our Savior and risen Lord!