

JOHN: Introduction

Especially if you have just read the first three Gospels, the book of John feels like something entirely different. While the first three Gospels are called the Synoptic Gospels because of their similarities, John gives us an almost completely unique view on the life of Jesus.

John, the beloved disciple, knew Jesus more intimately than perhaps anyone else on earth. A disciple and close friend of Jesus, who refers to himself as “the disciple Jesus loved,” John tells his stories with a deep sense of closeness and understanding.

The first half of John establishes Jesus’ identity and the second half tells of the days around His death and resurrection:

John 1–12 — Signs and Teaching

John 13–21 — Death and Resurrection

Watch for these characteristics of John as you read:

- John’s account is **very different from the other Gospels**, including new material and omitting much of what the others focused on.
- This book focuses on **the deity of Jesus**. The seven **signs** and **I Am statements** highlight the truth that Jesus is God.
- Much of John’s Gospel focuses on Jesus’ **private ministry** to individuals rather than public ministry to crowds.
- Two of John’s favorite themes are **love** and **eternal life**.
- More than the other Gospel writers, John includes his own **personal commentary** on Jesus’ life and words.
- John’s **evangelistic purpose** is clear in every word: “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” (John 20:31).