

# ANSWER SHEET

## A Study of the Gospel according to John Session 1 – Introduction to the Book of John

1. Who is the Author of the Book of John? Was he one of the 12 Disciples? What do we know about him?

John, the Apostle, the son of Zebedee.

Yes. John was one of the very first disciples of Jesus.

John and James were either partners with their father or worked for their father in his large fishing business.

John and James left everything to follow Christ.

John along with Peter and James comprised the inner circle of disciples, a group that was with Christ on very special occasions like the Transfiguration, and Gethsemane.

John is called the “beloved disciple” because he seems to have been especially close to Christ and because he stresses love so much in his writings. He was a close companion of Peter.

John was the disciple to whom Jesus committed the care of his mother.

John is said by Paul to be one of the three “pillars” of the church.

John also wrote 1 – 3 John and the Book of Revelation.

John was a young man when called by Jesus, and the early church fathers say that John’s Gospel was the last Gospel written.

2. When was the Book of John written? Where was it written?

Most references have it written between 80 – 95 A.D or CE. We do not know how old John was when Jesus called him. But assuming that John was a little younger than Jesus, John would have been in his eighties when writing this Gospel, quite old for a time when the life expectancy was much shorter.

It was written from Ephesus, after the destruction of Jerusalem (A.D. 70) and before John’s exile to the island of Patmos.

3. What is the purpose of this Gospel?

“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. That is John’s clearly stated purpose for writing. However, there is a secondary purpose. The Gospel refutes almost any hearsay that might arise in any generation.

To those who deny Christ’s deity, John argues: “He is the Son of God, the very Word of God Himself (1:1-5; 7:1f)

To those who deny Jesus’ humanity, John argues; He is the Word become flesh, the very flesh which must be experienced. (1:14f; 6:31f)

To those who continue to look for a human messiah and an earthly utopia, John argues: He is

the Messiah, the Savior of the world, the very One who had been promised by God from the beginning of time. (1:1 – 51)

4. To whom was the Gospel of John written?

John writes to the lost, the unbelieving, the new believers, the philosopher, and the theologian.

5. Who are some of the Key People in the Book of John? What are some of the Key Places?

**Key People:**

Jesus,  
John the Baptist  
The Disciples  
Mary  
Martha  
Lazarus  
Jesus' mother  
Pilate  
Mary Magdalene

**Key Places:**

Judean countryside  
Samaria  
Galilee  
Bethany  
Jerusalem  
Capernaum  
Gethsemane

6. What are some of the differences between the Gospel of John and the other Gospels?

John, the eyewitness, chose eight of Christ's miracles (or sign, as he calls them) to reveal Christ's divine/human nature and his life-giving mission.

- 1) Turning Water to wine
- 2) Healing the nobleman's son
- 3) Healing the invalid at Bethesda
- 4) Feeding the 5,000 with just a few loaves and fish
- 5) Walking on water
- 6) Restoring sight to the blind man
- 7) Raising Lazarus from the dead
- 8) Giving the disciples an overwhelming catch of fish.

Only the Gospel of John records the "Upper Room Discourse."

Over 90 percent of John is unique to his Gospel. It does not contain the genealogy of Jesus, record of His birth, childhood, temptation, transfiguration, appointment of the disciples, nor any account of Jesus' parable, ascension, or Great Commission.

There is a unique point that differs from the Synoptic Gospels in that John shows that salvation brought by Jesus is the very climax of Jewish religion. Jesus Himself is the fulfillment of the blessings promised Israel, the substance and truth, the symbolic meaning of the great Jewish festivals.

John repeats four main points: the true identity of Jesus, the necessity of responding to Christ in faith, the gift of eternal life, and the church's mission to the world.

7. The Book of John has been given other names that apply to its themes. Why do you think the Gospel of John would also be called these names?
- a. The Gospel of Simplicity. John used the simplest language and the purest Greek possible. The Gospel serves as a first reader for many Greek students.
  - b. The Gospel of Revelation. The stress and compulsion of John is to show that Jesus Christ is the very revelation of God Himself.
  - c. The Gospel of the Messiah. John shows time and again that the Old Testament prophecies find their fulfillment in Jesus. Jesus claims the Messianic right to secure disciples; to cleanse the temple; to associate and converse with Samaritans; to work on the Sabbath, overriding the religious prohibitions, to feed the people even as Moses, and to claim that He Himself is the very Bread of Life; to forgive sins. John dramatically pictures His Messianic claim with the triumphal entry into Jerusalem.
  - d. The Gospel of Redemption. This redemption is centered in the cross and death of Jesus Christ. He is “the sacrificial Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world.” His passion is the hour toward which His whole life is moving. He draws everyone to Himself – but it is only by being lifted up on the cross. He is to sacrifice Himself that others might be set apart unto God.
  - e. The Gospel of Jesus’ Humanity. John shows Jesus weary and thirsty; spitting on the ground; weeping at the death of a dear friend, Lazarus; troubled because He is to die; disgusted with His betrayer; burning with thirst while dying; and having normal blood and water flowing through His body. John stresses this point by proclaiming that Jesus is the Son of Man.
  - f. The Gospel of the Word. John shows Jesus to be the very Word of God. By this he means that Jesus is everything God ever wanted to say to humankind. God has done more than speak what He wanted to say; God has pictured what He wanted to say in the very life of Jesus. Jesus is the expression, the thought, the idea, the picture of what God wanted to say to humankind.
  - g. The Gospel of I Am. The words “I am” are extremely important to Jewish history. It is the great name of God revealed to Moses at the burning bush. And John shows Jesus revealing Himself as the “I Am” at least ten times.
  - h. The Gospel of Signs. John records eight miracles of Jesus, six of which are given only to him. What he does is select representative examples that point and show that Jesus is the Son of God. The miracles, he says, were not done to amaze people. They were performed as signs of His deity and godly powers.
  - i. The Gospel of the Holy Spirit. John gives the fullest teaching of Jesus on the Holy Spirit among the Gospel writers.