

The Gospels Period- Christ As God... *John 1:1-21:25*

John is the final gospel account of the Bible. The first three are similar to each other but John is a unique account of the life and ministry of our Lord Jesus. John is the gospel written to the whole world.

In the Gospel of John Christ is presented as God. The divinity of Christ is clearly presented in this Gospel. Traditional the symbol of John is an eagle.

The author is John the apostle. This is the first of five books written by John. (*I John, II John, III John* and *Revelation* are the others.) John is the theologian of the gospel writers. He does not include a genealogy because Christ as God really has one nor need one. Matthew took us back to Abraham, Mark gave us no genealogy, Luke went back to Adam but John goes back to the beginning with these words; **"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."** *John 1:1*

John's key thoughts are faith and eternal life. He also introduces us in a very personal way to God as Father as he speaks of God as, **"The Father"** over 100 times. One of the things that is clear in the relationship of John to Christ also is the fact that John knew he was loved by Christ. John refers to himself in *John 13:23* as **"...one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved."**

John is also the one whom Jesus trusted the care of His mother to when he was on the cross. (*John 19:27*)

He alone recorded Christ's conversation with Nicodemus (*3:1-21*) in which Christ told him, **"Ye must be born again."**

John is also the only gospel to record the events of the Samaritan woman at the well (*4:1-26*).

Unger's Bible Handbook says, "About 92% of the content of the fourth Gospel is unique to John...Matthew has 42%, Luke 59% and Mark only 7% which is unique to their gospel." (p. 544)

If you will allow we will not study this gospel by a chronological outline. There is some basis divisions of John however that need mentioned. After the introduction of the Word in *John 1* we have the public ministry of Christ in *John 2-12*. *John 13-17* is the private instruction of Christ to His disciples. His death and resurrection is found from *John 18* on. Merrill C. Tenney called the three divisions of John the Periods of Considerations, Controversy, and Conflict. (*John the Gospel of Belief*.)

The emphasis of John is on the doctrine of Christ. He states the purpose of his writing in *John 20:30-31*. This statement follows on the heals of the confess of faith by Thomas.

We will not turn our attention to the "Signs" of John. While the other gospels record many miracles that Christ did, John records only seven sign miracle. *John 21:25* says, **"...there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written."** So we can clearly see that these signs were chosen for a purpose.

The greek word for sign here is *Semeion* (*say-mi'-on*). Tenney says concerning these sign miracles:

"When applied to a miracle, usually implies that the deed is an indication of some power or meaning behind it to which it is secondary in importance...While the use of this term as applied to a miracle is not confined to JOHN, it is the only word used for miracle in that Gospel. JOHN, then, presented the miracles not merely as supernatural power, nor even as exceptions to the usual current of events, but definitely as material witnesses to underlying spiritual truths." (p. 29)

For the rest of our study of John lets focus our attention for a brief time on the sign miracles recorded in this gospel that shows that Jesus was the Divine Son of God. The purpose of these miracles was to turn the attention not to the miracles themselves but to the one who performed them.

First Sign: Jesus Turned the Water Into Wine- 2:1-11

Chronological this is the first miracle recorded that Jesus performed. The deeper truth here is that Jesus is the creator of life and like the water was made into wine he takes our old nature and turns it into a new one. He is both Creator and ReCreator.

Second Sign: Healing of the Nobleman's Son. 4:46-54

This man came to Jesus with a concern about his son. He was told by Jesus to go his way because his son would be healed. (4:50) The very act of him turning to go home is a picture of great faith. This sign miracle shows us the type of faith needed to believe to truly trust Jesus. This also teaches us that Jesus is Lord over space because

the son was not with the father when he was healed. He touched Him from miles away. The healing leads to faith by not only the man but his household. (4:53)

Third Miracle: Healing of the Man at the Pool- 5:1-18

The first two miracles were performed in a private setting. This one however was in a public venue. Not only that it was also performed on the Sabbath. The picture here is of the complete helplessness of mankind and their total dependence upon God. The man picked up his bed and carried it on the Sabbath. This caused a controversy among the Jews who were more worried about religious ritual than the welfare of the man. This miracle marked the opposition of Jesus by the Jewish leaders.

Fourth Sign: The Feeding of the Five Thousand- 6:1-14

This sign miracle set the stage for the great discourse when Jesus presented Himself as the bread of life. The problem that had occurred was that there were five thousand people and it was suppertime.

Four solutions were offered. One was to send them away but Jesus knew some would faint from hunger. Second was to raise money to buy food. This was cost prohibited. Third was to feed them with the little boy's lunch. Fourth was that Jesus would supply their needs.

The great teaching of this is that He is the provider and sustainer of life and its provision.

He seized the opportunity to teach a great truth because of the miracle. He probably performed the miracle to set the stage for the teaching.

It shows us to give all we have and let the Lord multiply it.

Fifth Sign: Jesus Walking on the Water- 6:16-21

The disciples departed and left Jesus. During the storm that followed for the disciples Jesus came walking on the water to them. Matthew and Mark also record this miracle. This miracle shows Jesus power over nature and served to increase the faith of the disciples.

Six Sign: Healing of the Blind Man- 9:1-41

This miracle gives us a picture of the reaction that was polarizing in relation to Christ. He was accepted by many as pictured by the man healed and rejected by many such as the Pharisees. These Pharisees examined the man and cast him out of the temple.

This man was born blind. He had never seen the light of day. This shows Jesus as being the light of the world and the illumination of men's souls. It was also not the spittle that cured the man but the power of Messiah. The great yet simple statements of the man in **John 9:25-27** to the Pharisees shows his faith and their unbelief. **John 9:25-27 " He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see. ²⁶ Then said they to him again, What did he do to thee? how opened he thine eyes? ²⁷ He answered them, I have told you already, and ye did not hear: wherefore would ye hear it again? will ye also be his disciples?"**

Seventh Sign: Raising of Lazarus- 11:1-44

The last and perhaps the greatest sign given to us that Jesus performed

was the raising of Lazarus from the dead. By this sign miracle Jesus taught us that He is the life. His claim of being the resurrection and the life is authenticated by this. While Lazarus would die again physically Christ proved He could give eternal life.

Application to Life's Steps:

- 1- There was more to Jesus than just a miracle worker. Jesus is concerned with our motives and reasons. We should not do things just for attention but to draw attention to Jesus.
- 2- Christ demonstrated by these miracles that He was the incarnation of the Very God of the Universe. As God He is worthy of our worship.
- 3- The signs show that He is Lord over nature, man, life and death and we should make Him Lord of our life.
- 4- He was concerned with the needs of humanity.
- 5- Him being the resurrection is the cause for hope.

Retracing our Steps:

- 1- Which John was the author of John?

- 2- What is the symbol of John? _____
- 3- How many sign miracles did John record? _____
- 4- To whom does John write his gospel?

- 5- Which miracle stands out in you mind that He performed and why? _____

