

## The Gospel of John

Welcome to the Anchor Discipleship Ministry's study of the Gospel of John. We trust that you will be encouraged and challenged as you consider this important Gospel of the life and ministry of Christ. We have determined to study these chapters as a means of growth to maturity in partnership with our Pastoral staff & elders' plan for corporate worship for the months ahead. Toward that end, you will note that we will be a few weeks behind the preaching schedule during the months of January & February...so you'll be studying "familiar territory" as you get to each lesson.

A few things to note as you begin your study.

- These lessons have been written to *guide* your personal study. We're hoping you will grow in your joy and pleasure in the Word and that you will go beyond the scope of these particular questions as the Holy Spirit leads you!
- We've provided the *text* for each lesson in the English Standard Version. We want you to have access to the cross references and our experience has been that it is really helpful to have the text "set aside" on its own so that repeated words, emphasis and phraseology are more obvious to the observer. We'd encourage you to use colored pencils & highlighters on this printed text to illustrate repetition, descriptive words & phrases, verbs & action words, and odd words/ideas that stand out.
- Each week you'll be encouraged to use study helps in addition to your Bible. If you do not have "hard copies" of study helps (like commentaries, Bible dictionaries, etc.), these are readily available for free on the internet. Two good resources are [www.esvonline.org](http://www.esvonline.org) and [www.crosswalk.com](http://www.crosswalk.com). If you are not familiar with on-line resources, your Discipleship Leader will be available to help you. If you do not have access to on-line resources, *please* let your Discipleship Leader know and we'll find a way to help you!
- You'll find some questions repeated in many lessons. This is intended to *guide* your study and to encourage you to *think*. Do not get stuck trying to get the "right answer"! If you do not know an answer and cannot find one, prayerfully move on. It is possible the answer will become clear as you work through the lesson ---- or it may remain a mystery to you. NO WORRIES. Let it go!
- If you would prefer to answer these questions in your own journal, feel free to do so. We'll be in the Gospel of John for many months and you may want to keep these thoughts and ideas and truths in a more "permanent" journal for reflection and review later.

We're so pleased and grateful to be studying John's Gospel with you and we're looking forward to what God will do in and through each of us as we are in His Word together. Your study will be enhanced by each Sunday morning's sermon, so if you do not attend Christ Covenant Church, we would encourage you to download those sermons and listen as you can. In the meantime,

Grace to you as you study and grow,

*Susan*

Susan Shepherd, Director - Women's Ministries

## John Study – Calendar

Week for study	Text	Title	Sermon date
December 8 – 28, 2010	John 1:1-8	<i>The Life of Men</i>	Dec. 5 & 12
December 29-January 3, 2011	John 1:9-13	<i>God in the World</i>	Dec. 19
January 4	John 1:19-34	<i>The Lamb of God</i>	Dec. 26
January 11	John 1:35-51	<i>Those Searching for God</i>	Jan. 2
January 18	John 2:1-12	<i>New Wine for a New Age</i>	Jan. 9
January 25	John 2:13-25	<i>Nominal Christians</i>	Jan. 16
February 1	John 3:1-21	<i>The Ignorant Churchman</i>	Jan. 23
February 8	John 3:2-36	<i>One from Above</i>	Jan. 30
February 15	John 4:1-42	<i>The Immoral Woman</i>	Feb. 6
February 22	John 4:43-54	<i>The Government Official</i>	Feb. 13
March 1	John 5:1-18	<i>The Whining Victim</i>	Feb. 20
March 8	John 5:19-47	<i>Life in Christ</i>	March 13
March 15	John 6:1-27	<i>Food that Perishes</i>	March 20
March 22	John 6:28-40	<i>The Bread of Life</i>	March 27
March 29	John 6:41-59	<i>Two Sides to Salvation</i>	April 3
April 5	John 6:60-71	<i>The Words of Life</i>	April 10
April 12	John 7:1-31	<i>The Key to Knowing God</i>	April 17
<b>NO CLASS THE WEEK OF APRIL 18</b>			
April 19	John 7:32-52	<i>Rivers of Living Water</i>	April 24
No lesson week of April 26	<b>END OF YEAR CELEBRATION – May 3</b>		

### Weather policy

The Anchor follows the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School System cancellations/closing.

If there is **no morning Anchor** on Tuesday, there is also no **evening Anchor** --- even if the weather clears up.

## John 1:1-8

**1** <sup>1</sup>In the beginning was <sup>2</sup>the Word, and <sup>3</sup>the Word was with God, and <sup>4</sup>the Word was God. **2** He was in the beginning with God. **3** <sup>5</sup>All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. **4** <sup>6</sup>In him was life, and <sup>7</sup>the life was the light of men. **5** <sup>8</sup>The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. **6** There was a man <sup>9</sup>sent from God, whose name was <sup>10</sup>John. **7** He came as a <sup>11</sup>witness, to bear witness about the light, <sup>12</sup>that all might believe through him. **8** <sup>13</sup>He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light. The English Standard Version is published with the permission of Good News Publishers. (English Standard Version)

### ***Cross References***

1. John 1:1 - Gen. 1:1; [Col. 1:17; 1 John 1:1; Rev. 1:4, 8, 17; 3:14; 21:6; 22:13]
2. John 1:1 - Rev. 19:13; [Heb. 4:12; 1 John 1:1]
3. John 1:1 - 1 John 1:2; [ch. 17:5]
4. John 1:1 - Phil. 2:6
5. John 1:3 - ver. 10; Ps. 33:6; 1 Cor. 8:6; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:2
6. John 1:4 - ch. 5:26; 11:25; 1 John 1:2; 5:11
7. John 1:4 - ch. 8:12; 9:5; 12:46
8. John 1:5 - [ch. 3:19]
9. John 1:6 - ver. 33; ch. 3:28; Mal. 3:1
10. John 1:6 - Matt. 3:1; Mark 1:4; Luke 3:2
11. John 1:7 - ch. 3:26; 5:33
12. John 1:7 - Acts 19:4
13. John 1:8 - ver. 20

**Day One – An introduction**

Look in your Bible to find an “intro” to the Gospel of John. Read the introduction to answer the following questions. (NOTE: If your Bible does not have an introduction, one has been provided for you at the end of this lesson).

1. Who is writing this book? What do you know about the author, either from the introduction or from your own previous study? *(If you use additional references, please note them.)*
  
2. To whom is he writing? What do you know about these people?
  
3. What do you learn about the timing of his writing?
  
4. What other interesting facts do you learn about the author or this Gospel from the introduction?
  
5. Prepare your heart for this week’s study by reading through John 1:1-8 several times.
  - a. Find at least one version that is different from yours. Read the passage in that version.  
  
Which version did you read?  
  
What differences do you notice?  
  
What similarities are evident?
  
  - b. Returning to your own version, read the passage at least once out loud.

## Day Two – *Observations*

Read John 1:1-8. Let's consider what **observations** can be made from these verses.

1. Who are the main “characters”?
  - a. How are they described?
  
2. What is the passage about?
  
3. What is emphasized? (Look for repeated words & ideas.)
  
4. Is there an “event” described?
  - a. When did the event happen?
  
5. What do you notice about the *language* in these verses?
  - a. Do you see subject and/or verb tense changes? Note the verses and consider the intent of the author.
  
  - b. Are there *comparison* and *contrasts* made?

### Days Three & Four – Interpretation

Read John 1:1-8. We'll take two days to consider how to rightly **interpret** these verses.

1. Consider at least one of the cross-references listed in each footnote for these verses. What do other Scriptures contribute to the text?

Verse 1

Verse 2

Verse 3

Verse 4

Verse 5

Verse 6

Verse 7

Verse 8

2. If you have access to a “Strong’s Concordance”<sup>1</sup>, look up the Greek words translated here as “Word” and “witness”. What do you learn?

Word:

Witness:

---

<sup>1</sup> You can use [www.crosswalk.com](http://www.crosswalk.com) Bible study tools. Look up the verse in the *King James Version* and check the box that says “Strong’s numbers”. When the verse is displayed, click on the word that you want to look up. The “Greek Lexicon” will display for that word.

3. From a study Bible or a study Bible website, what do the notes contribute to your understanding of these verses?

4. Read at least one commentary on these verses. What insight is given?

## Day Five – Application

Read John 1:1-8. How do these verses **apply** to our lives and to the church today?

1. What particular information did you learn about GOD? Why is that information important?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Did you learn anything about yourself as you studied these verses? ((HINT: Don't limit your application to "doing". As you read these verses, what do you learn about who you are?)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Did you learn anything about the world?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. Is there a promise, or a truth, communicated here that is particularly helpful and/or encouraging?
  - a. How does that truth impact your life? How does it "firm up" your faith?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. What questions do you have about what you have read?  
*Keep these questions in mind as you continue your study. It will be interesting to note how your understanding increases as you continue in this chapter.*
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. What is your response to what you've learned? How does *this Word* impact your life?

## Intro to the Gospel of John

### Author

The author is the apostle John, "the disciple whom Jesus loved" (13:23 [see note there]; 19:26; 20:2; 21:7,20,24). He was prominent in the early church but is not mentioned by name in this Gospel -- which would be natural if he wrote it, but hard to explain otherwise. The author knew Jewish life well, as seen from references to popular Messianic speculations (see, e.g., 1:21 and note; 7:40-42), to the hostility between Jews and Samaritans (see 4:9 and note), and to Jewish customs, such as the duty of circumcision on the eighth day taking precedence over the prohibition of working on the Sabbath (see note on 7:22). He knew the geography of the Holy Land, locating Bethany about 15 stadia (about two miles) from Jerusalem (11:18) and mentioning Cana, a village not referred to in any earlier writing known to us (2:1 [see note there]; 21:2). The Gospel of John has many touches that appear to reflect the recollections of an eyewitness -- such as the house at Bethany being filled with the fragrance of the broken perfume jar (see 12:3 and note). Early writers such as Irenaeus and Tertullian say that John wrote this Gospel, and all other evidence agrees (see Introduction to 1 John: Author).

### Date

In general, two views of the dating of this Gospel have been advocated:

1. The traditional view places it toward the end of the first century, c. a.d. 85 or later (see Introduction to 1 John: Date).
2. More recently, some interpreters have suggested an earlier date, perhaps as early as the 50s and no later than 70.  
The first view may be supported by reference to the statement of Clement of Alexandria (died between 211 and 216) that John wrote to supplement the accounts found in the other Gospels (Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, 6.14.7), and thus his Gospel is later than the first three. It has also been argued that the seemingly more developed theology of the fourth Gospel indicates that it originated later.

The second view has found favor because it has been felt more recently that John wrote independently of the other Gospels (see essay and chart, p. 1943). This does not contradict the statement of Clement referred to above. Also, those who hold this view point out that developed theology does not necessarily argue for a late origin. The theology of Romans (written c. 57) is every bit as developed as that in John. Further, the statement in 5:2 that there "is" (rather than "was") a pool "near the Sheep Gate" may suggest a time before 70, when Jerusalem was destroyed. Others, however, observe that John elsewhere sometimes used the present tense when speaking of the past.

## **Purpose and Emphases**

John's Gospel is rather different from the other three. Whether or not he knew them (or any one of them) continues to be debated. In any event, his witness to Jesus goes its own way, highlighting matters that in the other Gospels remain implicit and underdeveloped. The literary style of this witness of Jesus is also unique among the Gospels; here focus is on the "signs" of Jesus' identity and mission and on lengthy, theologically rich discourses.

John begins with the profound announcement that Jesus is the "in the beginning" creative Word of God who had become embodied (incarnated) as a human being to be the light of life for the world. After this comes the proclamation that this Jesus is the Son of God sent from the Father to finish the Father's work in the world (see 4:34 and note). God's own glory is made visible in him ("Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father," 14:9), and what he does glorifies the Father. In him the full grace and truth of God has shown itself. Strikingly, a series of "I am" claims on Jesus' lips echoes God's naming of himself in Ex 3:14, further strengthening the link between the Father and the Son (see 6:35; 8:12; 9:5; 10:7,9,14; 11:25; 14:6; 15:1,5).

Jesus' words to Nicodemus nicely summarize this Gospel's central theme: "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life" (3:16). Although a variety of motivations for the composition of John's Gospel have been posited by interpreters (such as to supplement the other Gospels, to combat some form of heresy, to oppose the continuing followers of John the Baptist), the author himself states his main purpose clearly in 20:31: "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 1:9-13

**9** <sup>1</sup>The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. **10** He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet <sup>2</sup>the world did not know him. **11** He came to <sup>3</sup>his own, and <sup>4</sup>his own people <sup>5</sup>did not receive him. **12** But to all who did receive him, <sup>6</sup>who believed in his name, <sup>7</sup>he gave the right <sup>8</sup>to become <sup>9</sup>children of God, **13** who <sup>10</sup>were born, <sup>11</sup>not of blood <sup>12</sup>nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. (English Standard Version)

### ***Cross References***

1. John 1:9 - Isa. 49:6; 1 John 2:8
2. John 1:10 - [ch. 16:3; 1 John 3:1]
3. John 1:11 - Matt. 21:38
4. John 1:11 - ch. 13:1
5. John 1:11 - ch. 5:43; [ch. 3:11, 32]
6. John 1:12 - See 1 John 5:13
7. John 1:12 - 1 John 5:1
8. John 1:12 - 1 John 3:1; [Matt. 5:45]
9. John 1:12 - [Gal. 3:26]; See ch. 11:52
10. John 1:13 - James 1:18; [ch. 3:3; 1 Pet. 1:3]
11. John 1:13 - 1 Pet. 1:23
12. John 1:13 - ch. 3:6



## Day Two – Observations

Read John 1:9-13. Let's consider what **observations** can be made from these verses.

1.
  - a. Who is the main "character"?
  
  - b. How is he described?
  
  
  - c. Are there other "characters" described in the passage? (*HINT: consider "groups" of people*)
  
2. What is the passage about?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. What is emphasized? (Look for repeated words & ideas.)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. How do these verses fit into the context of John 1:1-8?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. What additional general observations can you make? What questions do you have as you observe these verses?

### Days Three & Four – *Interpretation*

Read John 1:9-13. We'll take two days to consider how to rightly **interpret** these verses.

1. Consider at least one of the cross-references listed in each footnote for these verses. What do other Scriptures contribute to the text?

Verse 9

Verse 10

Verse 11

Verse 12

Verse 13

2. Using cross references & Bible study notes, what do you learn about...

“His own people”:

“His name”:

“born not of blood...but of God”:

3. From a study Bible or a study Bible website, what do the notes contribute to your understanding of these verses?

4. Read at least one commentary on these verses. What insight is given?

