

The Gospel of John, Introduction

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[0 : 0 0] So, don't worry about it. We'll stay with this one. Apparently, you need batteries, and that's my fault.

Okay, so if you have your Bibles, let's open up to the Gospel of John this morning. John 20, and turn to John chapter 20.

I've been thinking about doing this for a long time, and finally feel like it's the right time. So, we're going to go through in Sunday school the Gospel of John, verse by verse, chapter by chapter, from chapter 1 to chapter 21.

And my intention right now, and who knows how it'll go, sometimes I can't get out of my own way in this kind of stuff, but my intention is not to get bogged down and really analytical on a specific word and such a teaching.

I'd like to just try to be a little more of a broader study and just try to make sure we're making application each week. That's my intention, but who knows?

[1 : 1 8] Sometimes I can really get caught on something and get focused on it and just get this tunnel vision on a phrase of a verse and study it out through the whole Bible because it's so good.

But anyway, okay, so what we did years ago, several years ago, we studied through the Gospel of Matthew, verse by verse.

And I know that not everybody here was involved in that entire, from start to finish study. It went for months, I don't know, maybe over a year. I forget now, but probably over a year it took.

And in that study, we went through the ministry of Jesus Christ. And that's 28 chapters from his birth to his death, burial, resurrection. And we kind of got the whole three-and-a-half-year ministry of Christ.

And it may make you think, well, we just did that one. Why do we have to do another one? Well, as you'll see, Matthew, we spent so much time pointing out the doctrinal viewpoint of Matthew.

[2 : 2 5] He pointed out that Jesus Christ is the King of the Jews, that he is the rightful heir to the throne of David, and that he is the Messiah that God promised would be sent to Israel to be their king and their deliverer.

And this kingdom that God had promised to his people, this kingdom of world domination and of perfect peace, a kingdom where he himself as God would come to earth and rule the earth, that was promised to the Jews and that has not yet been fulfilled.

When Christ came, he told them the kingdom of heaven was at hand. He offered this kingdom to them as their king and Messiah, and they rejected it, and they murdered him.

They crucified him. They said, we have no king but Caesar. And so the kingdom has been postponed, or the offer of the kingdom has been postponed. But in Matthew's gospel, that's his angle.

He drives at that kingdom. He gives us rules and regulations and laws that apply in that kingdom because that's what was being offered to that nation. But as we know what they did, they crucified their king, and so that got put on hold.

[3 : 37] And what we did in going through the gospel of Matthew saw all of these miracles, saw how Jesus Christ was proving he is the Messiah with signs, with wonders, with preaching, with mysterious or mystery parables, with what they call the Beatitudes, the Sermon on the Mount, where he's giving doctrine or what they call the Constitution of the kingdom.

He's telling them this is how it's going to be. All of that is just kind of still right there in Matthew. And it's still, we can almost just pick all that teaching up and say, well, it's going to apply right over here when he does come back in his second coming and establish that kingdom.

A lot of people get really messed up when they go into the book of Matthew and begin reading what Jesus Christ preached to Jews about their kingdom and think, oh, he's talking to me because I'm a child of God.

And he says, blessed are the peacemakers. Well, anyway, there's so much in there that I tried to point out clearly to you that this is not aimed at you doctrinally.

This is aimed at somebody else. And we don't want to build our Christian life off of the gospel of Matthew. Now, when we come to the gospel of John, John gives a total different take on Jesus Christ.

[4 : 55] And when I say at that extreme, obviously, he's talking about the same man during the same days of his ministry on earth. Sometimes the very same stories, a few of them, occur in John that occurred in the other gospels.

But John looks at Jesus Christ far differently. He presents him to us far differently than Matthew, Mark, or Luke. And John, he's kind of in his own category of presentation of Christ.

Matthew, Mark, and Luke, the three of those guys, you can match a lot of the stories together and very much. But John, much of John is unique.

Very little in the gospel of John can be found in Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Very little. So it's a unique gospel. It presents Jesus Christ in a way, as we'll see, that is far different than anybody else.

And I'll give you some reasons why. But let me show you, first of all, the purpose of this book that we're going to study here in the next months to come. In John chapter 20, look at verse number 31.

[6 : 05] I'll start in 30. Verse 30 says, And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. Now verse 31.

But these are written. These words. These signs that he did. These chapters that we're going to read. These are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.

And that believing, ye might have life through his name. Matthew never says anything even close to that. Mark never says anything even close to that.

And neither does Luke. I am writing these things that when you read them, you will believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.

And that believing, you might have life through his name. Eternal life. The purpose for John's gospel is for the reader to understand and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

[7 : 12] And to receive eternal life by their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. No other gospel writer has that goal specifically. Or they don't articulate it like that.

And now this purpose is displayed in, in, I'm going to say in every story. Maybe there's one that you could find that doesn't point this out.

But in nearly every chapter, in nearly every story, in nearly everything that John wrote, is going to have an emphasis and point the reader to a faith in Jesus Christ.

And I'm going to show you this. I'm going to prove this to you today. I'm going to run you through the entire book. Just skipping and skimming and popping in chapter after chapter.

And it's going to be a lot of verses. And if you take notes and you want to write it, I'm just telling you, you're going to write a lot of verses. Come back to chapter one. And I want you to see this. I want you to believe this.

[8 : 12] I'm going to force this down your throat. Because John does. And I want us to, from the very beginning, understand the angle that John writes. And I know I mentioned, I don't know if this was a Sunday or a Wednesday a while ago.

I listened to this guy very, like, maybe two to three weeks ago. This pastor on the radio. And he said, he said, well, this reminds me of John's gospel because the theme of John's gospel is love.

And I remember driving in a car thinking, and I just was, I said out loud, I was like, no, it's not. And I wasn't talking to anybody, but to the radio, but he, he needed to hear it.

The theme is not love. I looked up the word love in the gospel of John. I don't remember. It's like 30. Sometimes maybe the word shows up. It might sound like a lot. I could say that's more than once every chapter.

That's almost twice a chapter. And I could really try to pitch that. But most of the references of love, you know what you thought of? Most of you probably thought of when I said, the theme is love for God.

[9 : 18] So loved the world that he gave his own. That's John three 16. And we all know it, but does that verse make this the theme of the book? Just because you know, one verse, does that automatically become the theme because it's popular?

I know. I looked up the word love and found that most of the references of the word love has nothing to do with God loving anybody. Some of the references have to do with the disciple that you love one another, things like that.

There is Christian love or brotherly love. But some of the references are like, you don't love. You don't. It's like negative. It's against. It's lacking in them.

I'm going to prove to you overwhelmingly what the theme or the purpose of this book is. And I can tell you, it is not the love of God or the love of man toward each other or being nice to your neighbor.

Not even close. John chapter one. And let's look at just seven verses in. Verse number seven. Speaking of John the Baptist, it says, The same came for a witness to bear witness of the light.

[10 : 23] Notice the last phrase. That all men through him might believe. Why did John come? To bear witness of Jesus Christ. Why?

That all men through him might believe. Look at verse 12. But as many as received him, to them give you power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name. There's belief again mentioned.

Now, I'm not going to hit every verse that says the word believe in it, but I'll hit a bunch. Look at verse 50. To the end of chapter one, verse 50. And this is Jesus meeting Nathaniel for the first time and kind of blowing him away that he knows him.

He says in verse 50, Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? Thou shalt see greater things than these. And what we have here is Nathaniel believing on Christ.

And verse 40, confessing that he is the son of God, the king of Israel. And so there's an example of one man, because of something Jesus Christ did, believing on him. Look at chapter 2.

[11 : 29] John's the only one to tell us about this marriage in Cana, where Jesus performed this first miracle, turning water to wine. He's the only one to tell us this. And it says in verse 11, after the miracle, here's what he gives us to wrap it up.

He said, This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee and manifested forth his glory. And notice what else? And his disciples believed on him. There's another reference to individuals believing on Christ as a result of something that he did.

Matthew doesn't talk like that. None of the other gospel writers tell us the results of these miracles. They just tell you the blind man could see and he went away leaping. But here it talks about his disciples, Nathaniel.

They're believing on him. That's the emphasis. Watch it again in chapter 3. And here's a passage. I'll just read it all. But when we get to verse 16, you're going to know verse 16.

I want you to carefully see that verse 16 is not the climax of this discourse between Christ and Nicodemus. Verse 16 is just like an addition to verse 15.

[12 : 39] Watch how it goes. Verse 12. Christ said, If I have told you earthly things and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things? And no man hath ascended up to heaven but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man which is in heaven.

And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have eternal life.

And now he backtracks a little bit in verse 16. For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, and now repeats himself, that whosoever believeth in him, specifically, as he already mentioned, being lifted up and being killed, just like Moses lifted up the serpent, whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Everlasting life. Verse 18. He that believeth on him is not condemned. But he that believeth not is condemned already.

So there's the fork in the road. There's the two choices. You either believe on him or you don't believe on him. If you believe on him, you're not condemned. He came that you would be saved.

[13 : 53] Condemned means that you're declared guilty. You're not declared guilty by God if you believe on his Son, Jesus Christ. If you don't believe on his Son, Jesus Christ, you are condemned already, declared guilty from a holy God.

And that guilt is going to land you in hell with the wrath of God experiencing it, but it's already on you. Look at verse 36. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life.

And he that believeth not the Son, there's the two options, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him. Now, John, I'm already three chapters in and just putting little pins in these chapters and showing you the theme and the root of what John's trying to get across.

Look at chapter 14. I'm sorry, chapter 4. When Christ offers this woman water that's going to spring up in her to everlasting life, and then she goes and gets more people, and they come out to hear him.

And look at verse number 39. This whole occurrence of this whole... Nobody... John's the only one that tells us about this time where Christ stopped in Samaria at Jacob's well.

[15 : 15] He's the only one that tells us about this conversation with the woman and the events that fall out because of the discussion he had, revealing who he is to her. She goes and gets more. Verse 39.

Many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified, he told me all that ever I did. Look at that. It wasn't just the woman that got in because of that.

Verse 40. So when the Samaritans were coming to him, they besought him that he would tarry with them, and he abode there two days, and many more believed because of his own word. That's impressive.

And John tells us about the people believing on Christ. All of these stories, you see the outcome. You see that John includes that important element. Come a little bit later to verse 48.

And let's read from 48 down. Then said Jesus unto him, except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe. The noble man said unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die.

[16 : 13] And Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way, thy son liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him when he went his way. And as he was now going down, his servants met him and told him, saying, thy son liveth.

He inquired of them, the hour began to amend, and they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the feller left him. So the father knew that it was at the same hour in which Jesus said unto him, thy son liveth, and himself believed, and his whole house.

This is the second miracle. How about that? The first one resulted in his disciples believing on him. The second one was this man believed an individual and his whole house as he goes and tells of it all.

I think you're seeing that each circumstance results in somebody believing on him. That's why John is putting these stories in. He's not including certain others maybe, but the ones that he's including, the ones he's writing, it's all with a style, it's all with a point to get you, the reader, to also believe on Jesus Christ.

Chapter 5, look at verse 24. This was one you ought to underline and memorize. Very verily I say unto you, he that heareth my word and believeth on him that sent me hath everlasting life and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life.

[17 : 33] We'll talk about that more when we get there. That's a good one. Verse 38. And ye have not his word abiding in you for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not.

That's Jesus Christ. He's condemning people that don't believe on him. And it goes on in verses 46 and 47 about believing his words.

Look at chapter 6. John chapter 6. Let's find... Oh, verse...

I'm not seeing it. Verse 29. Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.

That's a definitive statement because they asked this question in the previous verse. What shall we do that we might work the works of God? You're pretty fancy in the stuff that you do, so how can we do that stuff?

[18 : 37] He said, This is the work of God. This is the thing you need to be concerned with is you believe on me. You see the theme? Verses 35 and 36.

I am the bread of life. He that cometh to me shall never hunger. He that believeth on me shall never thirst. And he said unto you, But I said unto you that ye also have seen me and believe not.

Again, condemnation for one thing, unbelief. There's so many verses in chapter 6. I'm not going to bog you down with all of it. Look at chapter 7.

Flip over to 7. And John points this out. When his own brethren were telling him to go to the Feast of the Tabernacle, to go early in it, and it says that in verse 5, John tells us this, For neither did his brethren believe in him.

He didn't say... These are the points. These are the... This is the thing. This is the most important thing. And John is very emphatic to tell us all through Jesus Christ's life and ministry when he goes here, whether they did or didn't believe on him.

[19 : 49] And when he's even at home in his own hometown amongst his own brethren, he lets us know if they believed on him or not because that's what matters. And then he goes to another place and he preaches this and he says, These people believed, but these people didn't.

And do you see that this... I think you see it by now. We're only in chapter 7. And it just gets stronger. And it just carries all the way to the end. I got other verses scribbled down here for chapter 7, verse 31, 37 to 48.

It just is more of the same. Verse 31 says, Many of the people believed on him and said, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done?

Chapter 8, verse 30. This is John writing, filling in the blanks of what's taking place.

He says, As he spake these words, many believed on him. And then he continues with his discourse. Later in verse 45, some more condemnation for those who don't believe.

[21 : 03] Because I tell you the truth, you believe me not. Which of you convinceth me a sin? And if I say the truth, why do you not believe me? Because that's what matters. In chapter 9, we have him healing a blind man.

A man that was, from his birth, he was blind. And you get the story, and you get him, the Pharisees, and the parents, and the back and forth, and the questioning, and do you believe in, do you believe in, and we don't believe in, we follow Moses, we don't follow this Jesus guy.

He was born of fornication, and they don't, they don't have anything to say for Jesus Christ. And John gives us this story. Why? Because at the end of it, he's going to show us something.

There's a, a return visit to the man, a follow-up visit to the one that was blind by the great physician. In verse 35, Jesus heard that they had cast him out. And when he had found him, he said unto him, dost thou believe on the Son of God?

See, all of it before that is just, just kind of a story. You're just hearing about the great miracle that he did, and the, the outcome it had in his home, or in his family, or how others didn't agree with what he did, and didn't believe that he did it.

[22 : 17] But when, but John's going to finish this story, and he's going to let us know that Christ got back to him, and checked up, and said, dost thou believe? And verse 36, he answered and said, who is he Lord, that I might believe on him?

And Jesus said unto him, thou hast both seen him, and it is he that speaketh with thee. And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshiped him. If he didn't include those couple verses, John never would have included anything about this man.

Remember he said later on that truly, many other signs, all kinds of things I witnessed Jesus Christ do from day after day after day.

In this town, he didn't just run into one blind man. It could have been 50 of them. It could have been 200 of them over a space of a week or a month of men or women or lives that Jesus Christ influenced, touched, healed, etc.

But when John narrows in on something, it's because he has a point to it. He wants to let us know that the result of what Jesus Christ did this meeting, this interaction, is that man believed on him.

[23 : 21] He believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, and he finishes with the Pharisees not believing on him, and again, their condemnation. John chapter 10, and we're almost through with this.

John chapter 10, and look at verse 24 through 28. Then came the Jews round about him and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt?

If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. Jesus answered them, I told you, and you believe not. The works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me, but ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep.

As I said unto you, my sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

Those are some powerful verses and thoughts, things that we love to know and to hold on to, and it all hinges on whether you do or don't believe on Jesus Christ.

[24 : 27] Look a little later, chapter 10, and verse 37. 37, If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not.

But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works that ye may know, and believe that the Father is in me and I in him, and then they want to kill him.

Chapter 11. Let's see it again. Verse 14.

The death of Lazarus. Why is that put in there? Nobody else talks about it, but John. Verse 14. Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead.

And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent that ye may believe. You don't see him saying love, to the intent that ye may love one another.

[25 : 26] That's not why this story about Lazarus is in there. It's for them to believe on him. I think you get it. It's such a milky, such a sorry exposition of a book of the Bible to just throw out the theme is love, because it's in the most popular verse that everybody knows.

It's such a surface. It's never even diving into the scripture itself. It's just stating what we want everybody to say or what everybody will receive.

And what a... I don't want to get belligerent here, but just what a sorry exposition. to call yourself a pastor, to put your voice out on the airwaves for people to listen to and follow your leading, and to just give them what they want to hear or what they will accept is, well, if I talk about the good side and the love of Christ and the love of God and the love of one another, you know what the theme of Zachariah is?

It's love. Do you know what the theme of Esther is? It's love. Do you know what the theme of Revelation is? It's God's love. Oh, don't you know he loves you?

Like, it's so sorry. And so anyway, I'm trying to be nice, but I think you understand already in 20 minutes what the theme of John is. And we're not done.

[26 : 58] Where are we at? Chapter 11? Okay, look at 25. Verse 25. Here he's speaking to Martha. Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life.

He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Question, Martha, believest thou this? Do you believe?

Little intimate conversation. John's going to include it because Christ is asking somebody if they believe. Believest thou this? Oh, she believes that that there's a resurrection coming.

I believe that thou art the Christ, she states. Notice that in verse 27. Yea, Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world. Well, amen then. That's a great confession. Oh, he does it again, and I'm going to skip through this.

Look at chapter 11, verse... verse 48. This is what the Pharisees have to say about him when they're with the chief priests and the council.

[28 : 00] In verse 48, they say, if we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him, and the Romans shall come and take our place away. So even the religious leaders of the day, the Jews that didn't believe on him, were afraid that everybody else would, and they had good reason to.

John chapter 12, verse number 9, he mentions Lazarus, and notice the Jews knew about him, and it says they wanted to put him to death.

Verse 10 says, but the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death, including Christ. And verse 11, because that by reason of him, many of the Jews went away and believed on Jesus.

Again, this is a statement that other gospel writers are not including, and they're not emphasizing, but John does. So we're in chapter 12, one more chapter or so, 13.

In chapter 13, this is the famous foot washing. This is the night preceding the crucifixion. He's with his 12 in the upper room, and he says in verse 19, he tells them some things that are about to take place.

[29 : 15] Somebody's going to betray him, and in verse 19, it says, now I tell you before it come that when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he. And what follows is chapter 14, and well, look at verse 1, let not your heart be troubled.

Ye believe in God, believe also in me. Nobody else wrote that statement but John. In 14, he gets some good stuff in here with some discourse about believing in him in verses 10 and 11.

14, 10, and 11. Again, in 14, 29. When it has come to pass, ye might believe, ye might believe, believe, believe, believe, believe.

And as it continues forward, we'll stop with that. We're about two-thirds of the way through the gospel, and we're at the night of the crucifixion to where chapter 15 and 16, 17, take us through this discourse of him with the 12, leaving, going to the garden, and that's where it picks up with all the events with the soldiers coming.

Of course, before that is prayer, the soldiers coming, the betrayal, the arrest, the trials, all of that taking place in overnight hours leading up to the crucifixion.

[30 : 39] So what you have and what we've just kind of touched on, and like I said earlier, just kind of putting some pins throughout these chapters, just, I did not, I did not give them all to you.

We could have went through about, probably covered about two-thirds of the references that I scribbled down. What you have is a powerful theme, a theme that permeates the entirety of the gospel of John, and I showed you at the very end in chapter 20 where he says, I wrote these things specifically that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, not believing you might have life through his name.

So his angle, his message, and his purpose is plain. It is just right there if you want to read it and understand it.

It's not hidden. Now, a few things about John. I said to you earlier that John has a very unique perspective. Look at John chapter 13 and verse 23.

John 13 verse 23. Now, there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples whom Jesus loved. Now, we know this to be John, the author.

[32 : 01] It's interesting, and this isn't really the point here, but it is an additional point. It's interesting that John doesn't give his name. He remains anonymous.

But for now, notice how close he is to Jesus Christ, like physically leaning and laying against him as they're all around where this is their last time together.

He's not across the table, so to speak. He's not on the other side of the room chatting with his brother. He is laid up against the Lord Jesus Christ.

No other disciple that we can discern has this closeness to the man, to the minister, to the Messiah, to Jesus Christ.

Look at chapter 19 when Christ is at the cross here. John's there, and he's in front of the Lord Jesus Christ.

[33 : 04] He's within earshot, so he's close enough. In John 19, verse 26, when Jesus therefore saw his mother and the disciple standing by whom he loved, there's John again, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son.

And he saith unto the disciple, Behold thy mother. And from that hour, that disciple took her unto his own home.

So there's speculation that Mary's husband Joseph was off the scene because he's nowhere to be found, and John's taking her to his own home.

That would be totally inappropriate had Joseph still been in the picture. And so this perhaps widowed woman, not even, he's got brothers.

You know that from, I think it's Mark chapter 6. Jesus has brothers, Judah, Joseph. But he puts the responsibility of the care of his earthly mother to this disciple.

[34 : 15] I'm trying to make the point he is close. Like, these guys became so close that he's closer than any of his earthly brothers who we already read don't believe on him. and he's laid up against him.

He gives the care of his mother to John. Look at chapter 20 now and verse 2. This is on the day of his resurrection.

Verse 2, it says, Then she runneth and cometh to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord. So there's a third time that he's mentioned as the disciple whom Jesus loved.

And three times in chapter 21, he's mentioned also just kind of in the third person. Never identifies himself.

Verse 7, chapter 21, verse 7, Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. In verse 14, No, that's not the one.

[35 : 19] Oh, verse 20. Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following, which also leaned on his breast at supper and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee?

And he goes on. So this man now is, he's following Jesus Christ. When Christ says to Peter, Follow me, in verse 19, John didn't need a command to follow him.

John just got up. Christ's getting up to leave. John's getting up to leave. And Peter stops and says, Hey, what's this guy supposed to do? In verse 21, Peter seeing him, saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do?

And Christ kind of mildly rebukes him and says, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou me. Don't worry about what John's doing. Don't worry if John's following me closer than you are.

You just do it, tell you. But nevertheless, there's John. Some interesting things, and we're going to wrap up with this thought here. John has a unique perspective in his writing of Christ in this three and a half year ministry because John's closer.

[36 : 30] However, as it appears, he's closer to Christ. He has a more intimate fellowship than any of the other disciples, particularly the ones that wrote their own gospels, Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

Now, of those other three, Matthew is one of the twelve. John is one of the twelve. But John's angle, John's description, and we're going to see this as we begin to get into it from the very beginning, John's angle is completely different.

And his purpose is completely different. And that's why his gospel stands alone and is so beloved. And it's a common thing for a new believer if you find, lead somebody to Christ or if you're not even sure.

You ever see these these church companies that print material? They print out John and Romans. John and Romans. John and Romans. Instead of printing a whole Bible, if they can print something small and inexpensive that they can just hand out to the masses, they want to give them John and Romans.

Why? Because John's going to point you to believing on Jesus Christ and Romans is going to teach you the doctrines of salvation by faith. And so, those two, if you can get those two, which is a lot, but if you can believe on Christ and then understand your position in Christ, that's a great place to start.

[37 : 51] And that's why that's very popular. It's not Matthew and Romans. It's not Matthew and Acts. That would be a confused mess if you handed out a lost person. Here, read Matthew and read Acts.

That's all you need to know. But John and Romans, if there's ever, you know, I'm not necessarily a proponent of only read those two and that's all you need, but you get the idea.

There's a theme in both of them and those, both themes go together very well. John has a unique perspective because he's very close to Christ. Now, there's something I want us to get here before we quit in this introduction.

Because of John's close fellowship, because he's like this, because he leaned upon his breast, because he's that type that where Christ would give his mother, so to speak, to that man for his care, because his relationship with him was so close, John sees Jesus Christ as he is.

John sees him as the son of God. He doesn't talk about John or Christ, you're the king of the Jews, right? You're the king, right? No, you're the son of God.

[39 : 01] You're the word from eternity. John describes Jesus Christ as the eternal, almighty God that came from heaven to earth in the flesh.

That's John's description of Jesus Christ. He is the eternal God that came to earth. John is also, as we've seen, because of his closeness to Christ, because he knows who he is, he is compelled to tell the world that you need to believe on Jesus Christ for eternal life, I might add that.

because of his close fellowship with Christ, he's compelled to tell the world you need to believe on him for eternal life. And then thirdly, as we've seen, he wouldn't mention his name. He is humbled in comparison or to put his name beside his, he feels maybe unworthy to draw attention to himself.

Unworthy as the author of this book to draw the attention of the reader to himself? No, I need to draw the attention of the reader to Jesus Christ alone. And so there's some interesting things that come out of this gospel and I think the reason is because John was so close.

He was so close that I'm not going to talk about me, I know who he is and the world needs to know who he is. The world needs to know they need to believe on him, they need to know that he is in fact God in the flesh.

[40 : 29] Now, John walked so closely with Christ that he exalted him, he abased himself, and he wanted everybody else to believe on him.

Let's think about those three things before we walk out of here. John was so close to Jesus Christ that the only thing he felt he should do with his life is exalt Christ, abase himself, and make sure everybody he ever met and could get a hold of believed on Jesus Christ.

So I would say if we could make application that if you're close to Jesus Christ, if you're even a little bit close to Jesus Christ, you're going to want to exalt him.

The closer you get, the higher you exalt him. John's the closest of all the gospel writers and he puts him higher than anybody. If you think they're all, I mean, yes, they all exalt him, yes, they all believe, but John takes him up here.

He just does. It's evident. It's there. And if you're close to Jesus Christ, the closer you get, the more you're going to want to put him up. And the closer you get, the more you're going to see yourself and say, I'm not worthy.

[41 : 45] And like John, you're going to hide behind him and abase yourself. And then thirdly, the closer you get, the more you're going to see the need that everybody you run into, everybody on this planet, they need to believe on Jesus Christ.

They need to put their faith in him that they might have life through his name because they don't have life without Jesus Christ. So, there's more to say, but that's an introduction to the book.

You get the theme, right? It's solid. We covered it. You're going to see it as we go through page by page, verse by verse. The theme is strong. Believe on Christ. John is going to, from very, very first verse, he's going to take us all the way back to the beginning of time.

He's going, what he says is going to coincide with Genesis 1 and verse 1. But he's not going to tell us what Moses told us. He's going to tell us something more.

He's going to tell us something a little more detailed, a little more specific than what Moses said in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. John's going to give us more. And this is, this is what the Bible is, is it's progressive revelation.

[43 : 03] More light is coming out. More light comes out as you continue to read. And we got to stop with that. But next week, we'll pick it up and start with verse number one and try to cover what we can in the Gospel of John.

So let's take a 10 minute break and we'll come back at 10 o'clock.