



EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE ANNUNCIATION

## **The Gospels Bible study** **The Gospel of John**

**The Gospel of John** (Greek: Κατὰ Ἰωάννην εὐαγγέλιον, *kata Iōannēn euangelion*) or the **Gospel According to John** (τὸ εὐαγγέλιον κατὰ Ἰωάννην, *to euangelion kata Iōannēn*), usually referred to simply as **John**, is the last of the four canonical gospels. In John, Jesus is crucified the day before Passover, not the day of. Also interesting to note lectionary has Matt (YrA), Mark (YrB), & Luke (YrC), John highlights major feast days.

The final editing of the gospel and arrangement in its present form probably dates from between A.D. 90-120. Traditionally, Ephesus has been favored as the place of composition, though many support a location in Syria, perhaps the city of Antioch, while some have suggested other places, including Alexandria as early papyri have been found in Egypt.

The Gospel of John- is wholly different from the 3 other gospels. Irenaeus wrote around 180 AD against Heresies: that John wrote the gospel in Ephesus and that St. Polycarp knew John. It is written in simple Greek and that John was based on a Palestinian geography. Continued debate makes it difficult to accept the idea that the gospel as it now stands was written by one person. John 21 seems to have been added after the gospel was completed; it exhibits a Greek style somewhat different from that of the rest of the work. The prologue (John 1:1-18) apparently contains an independent hymn, subsequently adapted to serve as a preface to the gospel. Within the gospel itself there are also some inconsistencies, e.g., there are two endings of Jesus' discourse in the upper room (John 14:31; 18:1). To solve these problems, scholars have proposed various rearrangements that would produce a smoother order. However, most have come to the conclusion that the inconsistencies were probably produced by subsequent editing in which homogeneous materials were added to a shorter original. John never contradicts the synoptics and he brings them out in another way. John follows the pattern of Kerygma (proclaim, preach) and follows the pattern of a Greco-Roman life, about his person, his works and deeds (not thoughts and motives) purpose is to promote followers among the hearers. John is working at two levels, a story about Jesus, and that it has a bearing about the life of a community. Lots of material are similar, heals sick, debates authority, breaks Sabbath, deals w/ sinners, Chap 6 feeds multitude, crosses a lake and follows same sequence as Mark. One question is if this is so because those who wrote John's gospel may have known about synoptics and wrote meditations on it.

The content is very different and scholars think that the gospel was massively rearranged; however nobody explains how or why it was arranged. The gospel is like someone unintentionally messed up the paper work and that nobody knew how to put work back in order. Chap 6 should be put in between Chaps. 4 & 5 and would help out the geography. Chap 5:31 and 8:13 contradict each other. John 20:30 seems like the last part of the text but chap 21 is about Peter being the rock of the church and that is important and also the last chapter is about saying that the disciple would not die, but this is important to the story. The most obvious difference is the pericopes (short stories) throughout the synoptics, but John does not have these different little stories and they are blocks or sections for the story. The blocks are not in a logical progression but a collection of episodes, monologues by Jesus, and most of the blocks you will have some kind of sign or mighty act. John 7 is the feeding and debates about the bread and people getting upset and talking about it, John 10 has the same kind of literary style. John has a tendency to write in a dualism-polar opposites, those of the world & those not of the world, light to dark, evil to good, & these do not happen much in the Gospel. Bultmann contends that the gospel of John appears that it was written in the Gnostic form and was written for Gnostics which arose in the early Christian era. The writers of the 4<sup>th</sup> gospel may have had some connection to the Qumran, who were a people dedicated to the strict discipline of the Torah.

One aspect of John's gospel is that he has a source of anti-Semitism and Jewish relations. The Greek word for Jews **οι ιουδαιοι** can be translated as Jews or Judeans. Look at the many different things that have happened, the instance that of being thrown out of the synagogue, Chap 7,9, &10 are pretty hot debates and the discourse throughout seems to be this way. The way the arguments go back and forth would never happen in the synoptics. John has this discourse to show the acrimony. Families have rows all the time and this type of discourse shows the life of a family living together and these are a part of Johannine history and this may be the anger of being thrown out of the synagogue. John's Jesus is very different and is a spiritual Gospel and that Jesus is very sure as Jesus the revealer and one w/ knowledge of Heaven. A great deal of John's gospel deals w/ Jesus as the revealer and one that brings the knowledge of God to others. Now the son of man is being glorified in the passion of Christ. Jesus in John talks mostly about himself and that true life will be revealed in believing in him. Jesus' final words in John about his life is "it is done" and the works of Jesus are the story of what Jesus is all about in the gospel of John. Jesus lays down his life for his friends, the healing of the blind, and the sick are healed, the dead rise, are the works of Christ. The technique of John's gospel has the reader involved in the revelation of Christ and in our lives. We as readers are obliged to identify w/ the characters and the irony of this in John is the question of anything good coming out of Nazareth and in Chap. 7 where questions are asked to those who say they think they know Jesus. The Nicodemus story also has content by saying you will have life in me.

The Gospel of John is the incarnation narrative of Christ and fits the foundation of the Episcopal Church as an incarnate based religion, which is Jesus is the incarnate word of God. The Greek word *παρακλητε* is only mentioned in the Gospel of John and the disciples w/ trying to figure out where they are in the world. The last supper fits this discourse and they are told what to expect, how to live, and what comes in the future. The consultation and exultation is the advocate or legal council or confidant. This is where the Greek word *paraklete* fits in. John 14 is the story of Jesus preparing a place for us and the many rooms. John is very competent in the realized eschatology that Jesus is w/ us in the here and now. John 14:16-17 and Jesus promises them that he will be there advocate and will come to them and John 14:26 has the same but now the spirit will be w/ them also which is the power of God and the dynamic of God that is at work among us. John 16:7 is another reference to what Jesus will be for us and this after the discourse of the two meal stories in 14 & 15, and that Jesus will be the prosecutor against the world and what takes place and of the world's sin that has to be defeated. The spirit is also an agent just as Jesus is and this is not another God it is the trinity as one.

The 1<sup>st</sup> 14 verses utterly capture what Jesus Christ is about in the faith. Christianity is completely excluding the possibility that we are all the same, can not get away with it in John's gospel. The gospel is so full of images; John knows his scripture. The symbolism in the prologue is incredible and the center of our existence. Jesus is the incarnate and mediating word of God. Jesus lays himself down as a link and a bridge to God. Salvation is not of this world, but the world is good, and God is much bigger and greater than we can recognize. John recognizes that there is evil in the world, some like darkness more than light, corruption and sin over righteousness. John understands worldliness to be the idolatrous embrace of the world that is good. Family, church, and other things that are good that we try and hold onto rather than the religion's God. God is for and not against the world; the same who is creator is the redeemer. John's view of eternal life is not past but present tense. John has 9 chapters after Jesus' ministry ends; Jesus leaves the disciples with two pieces of info. I have finished the work God has sent me to do and going back to my father, and I will not leave you as orphans, but I will send you the Holy Spirit. Jesus asks the Father to send the *paraklete*, the spirit, to the church. The spirit will teach the church, remind, will not witness to the spirit itself, will glorify only Christ, will not speak on own authority, but that of God in Christ. The Spirit will convict the world of its errors. John requires clear continuity with what the message proclaims and the words of Jesus. Any spirit that would sever the good news from history or the flesh of Jesus is not the Spirit.