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**St. Paul Online Bible
College**

THE OUTLINE

- I. Basic Introduction
- II. Synoptic Gospels and the Gospel of John
- III. Literary Characteristics
- IV. Structure of the Gospel
- V. Book of Signs
- VI. Book of Glory
- VII. “I am” Statements, Priestly Prayer and Holy Spirit
- VIII. Jesus Christ According to John
- IX. Theological Significance of the Book

I. BASIC INTRODUCTION

Structure different from the Synoptic Gospels.

The spiritual tone. Cf. the narrative tone in the Synoptics.

Unique narratives (Samaritan Woman); sayings (I Am); miracles (raising of Lazarus); theology (Son, only Son; Father; Christology)

Fourth Gospel; Contemplative Gospel; Social Gospel; Ecclesial Gospel; Gospel of Matured Christians.

1. **Place of Origin:** Ephesus or Egypt.

2. **Audience:** Gentiles; Jews; Both. Movement: Nicodemus – Official – Samaritan Woman – Greeks – Pilate.

3. Purpose of the Gospel. Cf. Jn 20:31

“But these things have been written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that, by believing, you might have life in his name.”

- that we may believe

- that we may have life

(a) To deepen the faith. Crisis in the community. Examples of faith: Nicodemus, Samaritan Woman, Peter, Martha, Thomas.

(b) To bear witness to the second generation. John the Baptist; Father; Thomas.

(c) To be renewed in Christ. Replacement theme. Wine.

(d) To correct the wrong beliefs. Docetism. Gnosticism.

4. Authorship

A. External Evidence

Johannine authorship – Irenaeus; Polycarp; Andrew's vision.

B. Internal Evidence

A Jew; in Palestine; eyewitness; apostle; beloved disciple.

C. Incidental Evidence

Use of historical present; unique material.

D. Not John

Elder John? John Mark? Mixed works: two conclusions (10:40; 12:37)

Beloved disciple is a witness. Someone from Johannine school. 3 epistles, and Book of Revelation as well.

II. SYNOPTICS & JOHN

93% different.

Synoptics	John
Kingdom of God.	Life, light.
Pithy sayings.	Discourses.
Journey to Jerusalem.	No journey. Back and forth.
John the Baptist is in prison.	John and Jesus work together.
The disciples are called.	The disciples follow on their own.
Miracles are plain.	Miracles are signs.
One Passover.	Three Passovers.

III. LITERARY CHARACTERISTICS

1. From misunderstanding to correct understanding.

[The temple (John 2:19-21); birth from above (John 3:3-8); living water (John 4:10-15); Jesus' food (John 4:31-34); the bread from heaven (John 6:32-34); the sleep of Lazarus (John 11:11-12); his resurrection (John 11:23-25)]

2. Irony.

Derogatory statements become true. (cf. John 3:2; 4:12; 6:42; 7:28f; 7:35; 8:22; 9:24, 40; 11:48ff; 12:19; 19:3, 14, 22).

3. Duplication of speeches.

[John 3:31-36; 5:26-30; 6:51-59; 8:13-18; 10:7, 9; 10:11, 14; 12:44-50; 14:1-30; 16:4-33]. Emphasis.

4. Dialogue becoming a monologue.

[John 3:16; 10:1-18; chapters 14-17]. Addressed to the reader.

5. Inclusion (Packaging or bracketing)

[1:1=20:28; 1:19=1:28; 1:28=10:40; 2:11=4:54; 9:2=9:41; 11:4=11:40]. Closing the attention.

6. Importance of number '7'.

[seven titles for Jesus; signs; witnesses; I am statements]

7. Double entendre (double meaning).

[lifted up = crucifixion; ascension]. Superficial & deeper. Cana: where are the bride & groom?

8. Interpretation by the author.

[Jn 1:38]

9. Liturgical character.

[Temple, feasts, rites, prayer, sacrifice, lamb, sacraments in signs]

IV. STRUCTURE OF THE GOSPEL

1. Two-books classification (R. E. Brown)

- A. Prologue (1:1-18)
 - B. Book of Signs (1:19-12:50)
 - C. Book of Glory (13:1-20:31)
- D. Epilogue (21:1-25)

2. Structure based on Jewish Feasts

- A. Introductory Hymn (1:1-18)
- B. The First Passover (1:19-4:54)
- C. The Feast of the Jews (5:1-47)
- D. The Second Passover (6:1-71)
- E. Feast of the Tabernacles (7:1-10:21)
- F. Feast of the Dedication (10:22-11:57)
- G. The Third Passover (11:55-20:31)
- H. Epilogue (21:1-23)

V. PROLOGUE, BOOK OF SIGNS

1. Prologue (1:1-18)

Preface; preparation for the book; liturgical reading; hymn.
Christmas Day reading.

A. The Word in Relation to God, World and Man

Word at four levels: (i) Pre-existent; (ii) Creative agent; (iii) Source of life; (iv) Conquest of evil. Breaking of boundaries: cosmocentric, gender-inclusive.

B. Introduction to John the Baptist. A witness.

C. Response of the world to the word. Rejection.

D. The word became flesh. (*sarx*)

2. Book of Signs (1:19-12:50)

- A. A call to experience (1:35-51): 'come and see' (4x)
- B. The first sign (2:1-11). Cana.
- C. A call to new life (3:21). Be born again. Cf. Pentecostals.
- D. Jesus the missionary (4:1-42). Samaritan woman.
- E. Jesus the bread of life (6). Choice.
- F. Jesus the light of the world (8:1-9:7). *Misera et misericordia*.
- G. Jesus the good shepherd (10:1-18). Word-picture.
- H. Jesus the life and resurrection (11). Climax. Thomas. Martha.

VI. BOOK OF GLORY, EPILOGUE

3. Book of Glory (13-20)

A. **Washing of the feet (13)**. Act of service, friendship.

B. **Farewell speech (14-17)**. Teaching about the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete; Abiding in Jesus; Jesus' High Priest prayer

C. **Passion and resurrection narratives (18-20)**. Pilate. Mary Magdalene.

4. Epilogue (21)

A. **Doubting / bold Thomas (20:24-29)**. Link between Jesus & us.

B. **Call to discipleship (21:15-19)**. Peter's confession of love.

VII. 'I AM' SAYINGS; PRAYER, SPIRIT

A. 'I Am' Sayings: (a) formula with a predicate (11:25); (b) formula with implied predicate (6:20); (c) absolute 'I am' (8:24). Sacred name of God (Exod 3:14).

B. Priestly Prayer: three reasons. (a) Prayer for the glory of the Father; (b) For the disciples; (c) For those who believe.

C. Holy Spirit: (a) Presence of God (4:24); (b) Paraclete (14:15-17). Cf. Paul. Spirit x flesh.

VIII. CHRISTOLOGY OF JOHN

Through various images and titles.

1. **Word.**

2. **Sonship.** 17x. Intimacy with God. 'Son, and only Son' – unique to John. Son of Man. Son of God.

3. **The Sent One.** *Apostello. Pempo.*

4. **Origin and destiny.** From above. To above.

IX. THEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE

1. The Cross is Salvation.

Crucified and exalted; Glorification and ascension; Passover made anew; Agape.

2. Dualism.

3. Faith.

4. Eschatology.

5. Sacramentology.

6. Prominence to women.

7. Concern for mission.

8. Ecclesiology; 9. Ethics (truth); 10. Mariology.

A. Contemplative gospel.

B. Social gospel.

C. Gospel of dialogue.

ASSESSMENT

1. The probable author of the gospel is: A. John Mark; B. John, son of Zebedee; C. Someone belonging to the Johannine school.
2. John gives more importance to the number: A. 3. B. 7. C. 12.
3. The eschatology of John is: A. Imminent. B. realized. C. Parousia.
4. Jesus calls his mother 'woman' A. to disrespect her. B. to avoid her. C. it is a normal way of calling.
5. How the women are dealt with in the gospel: A. given importance to. B. disregarded. C. treated as second class citizens.

ASSESSMENT

6. The gospel presents Thomas as: A. Bold man. B. **Doubting Thomas.** C. pessimistic figure.
7. Which of these titles is very unique to John: A. **'Son and only Son'** B. son of man. C. son of God.
8. What does Jesus utter finally at cross before his death in John: A. My God, My God why have you forsaken me. B. Into your hand I commend my spirit. C. **It is finished.**
9. To whom Jesus said: I am the resurrection and life: A. Maria. B. **Martha.** C. Lazarus.
10. How does Jesus die on the cross in John's gospel: A. With loud cries. B. very sadly. C. **very solemnly.**

ASSESSMENT

II. Paragraph Questions

1. Describe the purpose (scope) of the Gospel of John.
2. Mention the literary characteristics of John.
3. What is the description of John about the Holy Spirit?
4. Write the theology of the Prologue.
5. Write a note on Christ crucified and exalted.
6. Write a note on the eschatology of John.