

## **Men's Sunday Night Live**

### **Introduction**

### **The Gospel of John**

### **“Finding Identity and Purpose”**

John's theme is Jesus Christ, the divine Son of God. His book deals with the signs Christ gave during His ministry, signs that prove His deity. These signs were seen by dependable witnesses (His disciples and others) and therefore are trustworthy. John wants men to believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and receive new life through His name.

The first three Gospels are called “The Synoptic Gospels” from a Greek word that means “to see together.” Matthew, Mark, and Luke all view the life of Christ in a similar way.

- Matthew pictures Christ as the King of the Jews.
- Mark shows Christ as the Servant, and writes for the Romans.
- Luke views Christ as the Son of Man, writing for the Greeks.
- John presents Christ as the Son of God, and writes for the whole world.

While the first three Gospels deal primarily with the events in Christ's life, John deals with the spiritual meanings of these events. He goes deeper and presents truths that are not emphasized in the other Gospels. For example, all four Gospels record the feeding of the 5,000, but only John gives the great sermon on the Bread of Life that explains the meaning of the miracle. This is why John uses the word “sign” instead of “miracle,” for a “sign” is a miracle that carries a message with it.

Note as you read John's Gospel that these words are repeated: life, believe, light and darkness, truth, witness, world, glory, receive, Father, come, eternal and everlasting. These key words summarize the message of the Gospel. John emphasizes the Person of Christ as well as His work. He reports several sermons in which Christ talks about Himself and explains His mission. Note the seven I AM statements of Christ: I AM the Bread of life (6:35, 41, 48, 51); I AM the Light of the world (8:12; 9:5); I AM the Door of the sheep, (10:7-9); I AM the Good Shepherd (10:11, 14); I AM the Resurrection and the Life (11:25); I AM the way, the truth, and the life (14:6); I AM the true Vine (15:1).

Out of the many miracles that Christ performed, John selected seven to prove His deity. These seven signs are given in a specific order and forms a picture of salvation.

The first three signs show how salvation comes to the sinner:

1. Water into wine (2:1–11) “salvation is by the Word”
2. Healing the nobleman’s son (4:46–54) “salvation is by faith”
3. Healing the paralytic (5:1–9) “salvation is by grace”

The last four signs show the results of salvation in the believer:

4. Feeding the 5,000 (6:1–14) “salvation brings satisfaction”
5. Stilling the storm (6:16–21) “salvation brings peace”
6. Healing the blind man (9:1–7) “salvation brings light”
7. Raising of Lazarus (11:38–45) “salvation brings life”

One major theme of John’s Gospel is the conflict between faith and unbelief. John begins with rejection on the part of Israel, finally concluding with the crucifixion. Throughout the book, you see most of the Jews refusing to accept the evidence, growing harder and harder in their unbelief. On the other hand, you also see a small group of people willing to believe on Christ; the disciples, a nobleman and his family, the Samaritans, a paralytic, a blind man, etc. This same situation exists today. The world at large will not believe on Christ, but here and there you find people who see the evidence and accept Him as the Son of God.

There are three crisis events in John’s Gospel. 1. When the multitudes leave Him after wanting to make Him King; 2. When the people refuse to believe on Him; 3. When they crucify Him. In the first crisis, they want to make Him King, yet they leave Him. Secondly, they hail Him as King. Thirdly, they cry out, “*We have no King but Caesar.*” He is the way, but they will not walk with Him; the truth, but they will not believe Him; the life, but they kill Him.