

7th Grade New Testament (Gospels)**Lesson Plan:** (Re)Introduction to John**Learning Goals:** Students should be able to differentiate between unique features of John's Gospel and the basic features of the Synoptic gospels.**Question:** What is unique about John's Gospel? (What do you remember from our previous discussions/notes?)

Prayer.

Discuss question on board. (5 minutes)

What does the word "gospel" mean?

- comes from an Old English word *godspel* (god = good; spel = story) - therefore, "good story" or as many of us know it: "good news"

John is the most straightforward and the most complicated gospel. (One scholar said it was "shallow enough for a child to wade in and deep enough for an elephant to swim in.") It is often suggested as the first book for a new Christian to read. It is also the gospel most often contemplated by theologians. John had a knack for demonstrating the simplicity and the vastness of the gospel message.

Purpose:1. Evangelism

John 1:7, "So that we may believe that Jesus is the Son of God."

2. Discipleship

John focuses on Jesus' private ministry to his disciples in chapters 13-17. This glimpse into the daily ministry of Jesus with his disciples is unique to the gospel.

Outline of John:

1. Public Ministry of Jesus (1-12)
2. Private Ministry of Jesus (13-17)
3. Passion Ministry of Jesus (18-19)
4. Resurrection Ministry of Jesus (20-21)

John's method in conveying the life of Christ is centered around 7 signs (miracles), 7 statements (ex. "I am the bread of life"), and 7 speeches (or sermons).

Authorship:

Strictly speaking, the gospel is anonymous. Five different times, the author refers to a mysterious person described as "the disciple whom Jesus loved" (13:23-25; 19:26-27; 20:2-8; 21:7, 20). In the concluding verse, this person is identified as the author of the Gospel (21:24).

However, all evidence points to John, the disciple of Jesus, as author (not John the Baptist). - *see evidence from earlier notes.*

Who is John?

- Parents: Zebedee and Salome (?)
- Brother: James
- Was a fisherman when Jesus called him.

- According to Tertullian, John was thrown into a caldron of boiling oil before the Porta Latina in Rome, but he did not suffer injury. When that failed to kill him, John was exiled to a rocky, seemingly God-forsaken small island called Patmos (very little outside contact and extreme boredom). Here, he wrote the book of Revelation.
- Eusebius writes that after his release he went around encouraging the churches in Asia Minor. When he arrived at the churches, they would break out in applause and he would deliver a simple message on loving one another.

Date/Place:

John wrote his gospel prior to 90-100 CE. John is most likely writing from Ephesus

Compare/Contrast John and the Synoptic Gospels:

Gospel	Unique Material	Material Found in Other Gospels
Matthew	7%	93%
Mark	42%	58%
Luke	59%	41%
John	92%	8%

1. John's gospel begins with a cosmic scope, beginning with the words "in the beginning" (parallel with Genesis), while the synoptics start with Jesus' earthly life.
2. John presents Jesus' Judean ministry, while the synoptics focus on his Galilean ministry
3. John records three Passover celebrations, while the synoptics record only one.
4. John tells of three visits to Jerusalem, while the synoptics only tell of one.
5. John describes a few complicated allegories and the synoptics describe simple parables.
6. John focuses on the theme of eternal life, while the synoptics focus on the theme of the Kingdom of God.
7. John gives long, complex discourses of Jesus, while the synoptics provide short pungent statements.
8. Only two events are shared between John and the synoptics before Passion Week: feeding the 5,000 and walking on water.
9. John's gospel has a unique focus on the theme of light (versus darkness).

Maybe a good comparison of the synoptics to John is to compare a similar subject from realist painters and impressionist painters

"San Giorgio Maggiore"

"Parliament Building"

Lesson Summary/Review:

Students should review and highlight the following vocabulary terms and concepts from this lesson in their notes:

- Gospel

- What are the unique features of John's Gospel?
- What are the two purposes for John's Gospel?