

The Gospel of John

This One Is Not Like the Others

The Synoptic Gospels vs The Gospel of John	<i>The word "synoptic" means to be read with the same lens. As we've learned the last three weeks, the Synoptic Gospels are (1) Matthew (Lion); (2) Mark (Ox); (3) Luke (Man). Mark was written first and Matthew and Luke used Mark as a reference. The Gospel of John, however, stands alone and flies alone in the NT like an eagle.</i>		
John Stands Alone in Material. Much of the material in John's Gospel isn't mentioned in the Synoptics	The Prologue (ch1) Water to Wine at Cana (ch2) Nicodemus (chs2-3) Disciples Baptize People (chs3-4) Woman at the Well (ch4) Healing at Pool of Bethesda (ch5) Bread of Life Discourse (ch6) Woman caught in Adultery (chs7-8)	Sight to Man Born Blind (ch9) Lazarus Raised (ch11) Disciples Feet Washed (ch13) Disciple Whom Jesus Loved (lots) Last Supper Discourses (chs13-16) High Priestly Prayer (ch17) Pilate Trial Details (ch18-19) Statements at Cross (ch19)	Resurrection Appearances: to Mary Magdalene (ch20) to Thomas (ch20) to Peter (21:1-25)
John Stands Alone in Region and Style	Whereas the Synoptics begin with Jesus' ministry in Galilee and the surrounding regions and gradually move towards Judea, the Gospel of John stays primarily in Judea. Whereas the Synoptics primarily use statements and parables from Jesus, John's Gospel features <u>long theological discourses</u> .		
This Begs Important Questions	<i>Who would have accessed to such information? Who would have personal knowledge of the events so much to include long narrative dialogues?</i>		
Answer	There is only one disciple who was qualified to write such a unique account: John. His unique relationship with Jesus helps explain the uniqueness of the book itself and why it's able to stand alone.		

The Disciple Whom Jesus Loved and the Other Disciple

A Unique Identity Marker	In the Synoptics, Matthew doesn't introduce himself. Mark makes a casual reference to his identity in Mark 14 when Jesus is arrested. Luke introduces himself with the pronoun "we" when chronicling Paul's missionary journey in Acts 16. But in John, there are <u>six</u> references to the disciple whom Jesus loved/the other disciple.
The References	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ²³ One of them, <u>the disciple whom Jesus loved</u>, was reclining next to him. ²⁴ Simon Peter motioned to this disciple and said, "Ask him which one he means." (Jn 13:23-25) 2. ¹⁵ Simon Peter and another disciple were following Jesus. Because this disciple was known to the high priest, he went with Jesus into the high priest's courtyard, ¹⁶ but Peter had to wait outside at the door. (Jn 18:15-16) 3. ²⁵ Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. ²⁶ When Jesus saw his mother there, <u>and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby</u>, he said to her, "Woman, ²⁷ here is your son," and to the disciple, "Here is your mother." From that time on, this disciple took her into his home. (Jn 19:25-27) 4. ³ So Peter and <u>the other disciple</u> started for the tomb. ⁴ Both were running, <u>but the other disciple</u> outran Peter and reached the tomb first. (Jn 20:3-4) 5. ⁷ Then <u>the disciple whom Jesus loved</u> said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" As soon as Simon Peter heard him say, "It is the Lord," he wrapped his outer garment around him (for he had taken it off) and jumped into the water. (Jn 21:7) 6. ¹⁹ Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, "Follow me!" ²⁰ Peter turned and saw that the disciple whom Jesus loved was following them. (This was the one who had leaned back against Jesus at the supper and had said, "Lord, who is going to betray you?" (Jn 21:19-20).
Significance	The "disciple whom Jesus" loved is John's reference to himself. The reference doesn't mean Jesus loved John more than the others. But it does suggest a closeness of a relationship that was enough for Jesus to entrust Mary into his care while on the cross.

John's Objectives	
Jesus is the Divine Word/Logos (Gentile)	When you think of Greece, Athens and Rome, you not only think of great military empires, you also think of great philosophers (Aristotle, Plato, Socrates, etc). Philosophers in those days looked for a universal divine reason for existence, one that transcended all imperfections in humanity. They called this the pursuit of the divine word/logos. John writes to let them know they could look no further because the Divine Logos is Jesus.
Jesus is the Great I Am of the Old Testament (Jew)	Jews were not looking for the Divine Word/Logos like the Gentiles. They were not even looking for the incarnation of the Great I Am. They were just looking for the Messiah. John tells them to look no further because Jesus is the Messiah who is also the Great I Am of the Old Testament
Thus the Reason John is Rightly Called the Evangelist	His gospel bears witness to the truth-seeking <u>Gentile</u> and the messiah seeking <u>Jew</u> . Thus the reason for the greatest introductory statement of all time: "In the beginning (a reference to the Hebrew Bible) was the Word (Divine Logos) and the Word was with God and the Word was God . . .and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us."
John Accomplished Both Objective with One Phrase: I Am	(1) "I am" is a declaration of being/existence that appealed to the Greek minded Gentiles looking for the Divine Word. (2) "I am" appealed to the Jews because of the Great I Am: ¹⁴ God said to Moses, "I am who I am. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I am has sent me to you.'" (Ex 3:14)

The I Am Statements Hold the Keys	
I am the bread of life	In the wilderness, the Great I Am fed the Israelites with manna/bread from heaven <i>³⁵ Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. (Jn 6:35)</i>
I am the light of the world	In the wilderness, the Great I am led Israel to the Promised Land with a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night <i>¹² When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." (Jn 8:12)</i>
I am the door/gate	In the OT, the Great I Am watched over his sheep like a shepherd at the gate <i>⁷ Therefore Jesus said again, "Very truly I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep (Jn 10:7)</i>
I am the good shepherd	In the OT, the Great I Am was the shepherd. . . .The Lord is my shepherd (Ps 23) <i>¹¹ "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. (Jn 10:11)</i>
I am the resurrection and the life	In the OT, Ezekiel predicted resurrection in the valley of the dry bones prophecy: Can these bones live again? (Ezekiel 37) <i>²⁵ Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die (Jn 11:25)</i>
I am the way, the truth, the life	In the OT, the Great I Am chose to make his salvation plans known to the Jews. <i>Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." (Jn 14:6)</i>
I am the true vine	In the OT, the Great I Am was the vine and Israel was the branches <i>"I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. ² He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes^[a] so that it will be even more fruitful (Jn 15:1-2)</i>
Plus One We Usually Miss	<i>⁴ Jesus, knowing all that was going to happen to him, went out and asked them, "Who is it you want?" ⁵ "Jesus of Nazareth," they replied. "I am he," Jesus said. (And Judas the traitor was standing there with them.) ⁶ When Jesus said, "I am he," they drew back and fell to the ground. (Jn 18:4-6)</i>

²⁴ This is the disciple who testifies to these things and who wrote them down. We know that his testimony is true. ²⁵ Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written (Jn 21:24-25).

