

Agape House of Worship
Wednesday Bible Study – February 4, 2026

Study Series: THAT YOU MAY BELIEVE: A Journey Through the Gospel of John

Part 1: Overview of the Book of John

Teacher: Pastor Jide Lawore

INTRODUCTION

I. The Purpose (John 20:30-31)

Over the next several months, we will journey together through the Gospel of John. Whenever we study a book of the Bible, one of the first and most important questions to ask is: *Why was this book written?* What moved the author to put these words on the page? For many books of the Bible, the answer requires careful study and inference. But the Gospel of John is unique. He is the only Gospel writer who clearly and directly tells us his purpose.

In **John 20:31**, he writes: *"But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name."*

John's goal is both evangelistic and discipleship-oriented. He writes so that those who do not yet believe would come to faith in Jesus as the Messiah and Son of God. At the same time, he writes so that those who already believe would continue growing in that faith and experience the fullness of life found in His name.

The goal of this Gospel — and our study — is clear: that we may believe more deeply and live more fully in Christ.

II. Authorship: The Gospel of John is linked to John the Apostle, yet the author never names himself. Instead, he uses the title 'the disciple whom Jesus loved' (John 13:23, 19:26, 20:2, 21:7). Far from being arrogant, this self-reference is seen by scholars as an act of deep humility, shifting the spotlight away from his personal status and onto his relationship with Jesus.

III. Historical and Cultural Landscape

- **Time and Place:** Written between AD 85 and 100, likely from Ephesus, a major urban hub of the Roman Empire in modern-day Turkey. The region was a melting pot of languages, including Aramaic, Hebrew, and Greek.
- **The events described take place in Palestine**, which was occupied by Rome and governed by a mix of traditional Jewish leadership (like the Sanhedrin) and Roman administration.
- **Greco-Roman Fusion:** The author utilizes Greek thought and philosophy (such as the Logos or "Word") to present Jesus in terms that resonated with a Hellenistic audience.
- **Jewish-Christian Tension:** A central feature is the excommunication of Christians from Jewish synagogues (termed "put out of the synagogue"), marking a painful formal separation between the two groups. (John 9:22, John 16:2)
- **The Early Heresies:** John defends against *Docetism* (Jesus was a ghost or lacked a physical body) and *Gnosticism* (flesh is evil and spirit is good) by affirming that God truly became human in Jesus.

OVERVIEW OF THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

I. The Prologue (John 1:1–18): The Divine Staircase

- **Pre-Existence:** "In the beginning was the Word." Jesus did not begin at Bethlehem.
- **The Incarnation:** "The Word became flesh and dwelt (tabernacled) among us."

Question: How does knowing Jesus existed *before* the world began change how you view His authority?

II. The Seven Miraculous Signs

John doesn't just call them "miracles"; he calls them "signs" because they point to a spiritual reality. John selects these specific acts to reveal Jesus' authority over nature, sickness, and death.

1. **Water to Wine (2:1-11):** Jesus is the Lord of transformation and the New Covenant joy.
2. **Healing the Official's Son (4:46-54):** Faith comes by taking Jesus at His word.
3. **Healing the Lame Man (5:1-15):** Jesus is Lord over the Sabbath and tradition.
4. **Feeding the 5,000 (6:1-14):** Jesus is the only one who can truly satisfy hunger.
5. **Walking on the Water (6:16-21):** Jesus is the "I AM" who is present in the storm.
6. **The Man Born Blind (9:1-41):** Jesus gives spiritual sight; those who "see" are often blind.
7. **Raising Lazarus (11:1-44):** Jesus has final authority over the grave.

III. The Seven "I Am" Statements

In John's Gospel, these seven statements are "theological snapshots" where Jesus uses common earthly elements (bread, light, vines) to describe his divine nature. Jesus uses the covenant name of God (Yahweh) to describe His relationship to us:

1. "I am the **Bread of Life**" (6:35)
2. "I am the **Light of the World**" (8:12)
3. "I am the **Door of the Sheep**" (10:7)
4. "I am the **Good Shepherd**" (10:11)
5. "I am the **Resurrection and the Life**" (11:25)
6. "I am the **Way, the Truth, and the Life**" (14:6)
7. "I am the **True Vine**" (15:1)

Discussion: Which "I AM" statement provides the most comfort to you in your current season?

IV. The Upper Room Discourse (John 13–17)

The most intimate look at Jesus' teaching, occurring hours before His arrest.

- **The Mandate (Mandatum):** Foot washing as the model for Christian leadership.
- **The Paraclete:** Detailed teaching on the **Holy Spirit** (the Helper/Advocate).
- **The High Priestly Prayer (Ch. 17):** Jesus prays for His disciples—and for *us*—to be one.

V. The Book of Glory (John 18–20)

- **The Sovereign Savior:** In John's account, Jesus is not a victim. He is in total control (e.g., "Whom do you seek?" in Gethsemane).
- **It Is Finished:** The Greek word *Tetelestai*—a cry of completion and victory.
- **The Resurrection:** Key focus on **Thomas' confession** ("My Lord and my God!") as the climax of the book's purpose.

VI. The Epilogue: Restoration (John 21)

- **Failure is Not Final:** Jesus restores Peter after his three-fold denial with a three-fold call to "Feed my sheep."
- **The Personal Call:** "Follow Me." Our walk with Christ is not to be compared to others.

CONCLUSION

As we embark on this journey through the Gospel of John, remember that these signs, statements, and stories were not recorded merely as historical artifacts, but as a direct invitation into a relationship with the Living Word. From the cosmic heights of the Prologue to the intimate restoration of Peter on the shore, John's singular focus is to reveal Jesus as the Sovereign Savior who offers us a life of abundance. Whether you are approaching this study with deep-seated faith or honest questions, may these pages move you beyond intellectual knowledge toward a transformative belief that anchors your identity in "the disciple whom Jesus loves."

BREAKDOWN OF THE STUDY OF THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

DATE	TOPIC	PASSAGE
2/4/2026	Part 1: Overview of the Book of John	
2/11/2026	Part 2: The Word Became Flesh	John 1:1–18
2/18/2026	Part 3: Behold the Lamb: The First Disciples	John 1:19–51
2/25/2026	Part 4: First Sign & First Cleansing	John 2:1–25
3/4/2026	Part 5: You Must Be Born Again	John 3:1–21
3/11/2026	Part 6: He Must Increase	John 3:22–36
3/18/2026	Part 7: Living Water: Worship in spirit and truth	John 4:1–42
3/25/2026	Part 8: Second Sign: Healing the Official's Son	John 4:43–54
4/1/2026	Part 9: Healing at Bethesda & the Authority of the Son	John 5:1–47
4/8/2026	Part 10: Feeding the 5,000 & Walking on Water	John 6:1–21
4/15/2026	Part 11: I Am the Bread of Life:	John 6:22–71
4/22/2026	Part 12: Rivers of Living Water	John 7:1–52
4/29/2026	Part 13: Mercy, Conviction, and the Light of the World	John 8:1–30
5/6/2026	Part 14: Before Abraham Was, I AM	John 8:31–59
5/13/2026	Part 15: The Man Born Blind: A Sign of Spiritual Sight	John 9:1–41
5/20/2026	Part 16: The Good Shepherd	John 10:1–21
5/27/2026	Part 17: The Father and I Are One	John 10:22–42
6/3/2026	Part 18: Lazarus: I Am the Resurrection and the Life	John 11:1–44
6/10/2026	Part 19: The Plot to Kill Jesus	John 11:45–57
6/17/2026	Part 20: Anointing, Triumphal Entry, and True Worship	John 12:1–19
6/24/2026	Part 21: The Hour Has Come	John 12:20–50
7/1/2026	Part 22: Servant Leadership: Jesus Washes Feet	John 13:1–20
7/8/2026	Part 23: Betrayal, Love Commandment, Peter's Warning	John 13:21–38
7/15/2026	Part 24: I Am the Way, the Truth, and the Life	John 14:1–14
7/22/2026	Part 25: Promise of the Holy Spirit	John 14:15–31
7/29/2026	Part 26: Abide in the Vine: Fruitfulness, pruning, intimacy	John 15:1–17
8/5/2026	Part 27: Hatred from the World & Help from the Spirit	John 15:18–16:15
8/12/2026	Part 28: Sorrow Turned to Joy	John 16:16–33
8/19/2026	Part 29: The High Priestly Prayer	John 17:1–26
8/26/2026	Part 30: Gethsemane, Arrest, and Peter's Denial	John 18:1–27
9/2/2026	Part 31: Jesus Before Pilate: Truth on Trial	John 18:28–19:16
9/9/2026	Part 32: It Is Finished: Cross, fulfillment, burial	John 19:17–42
9/16/2026	Part 33: Resurrection & The Purpose of the Book	John 20:1–31
9/23/2026	Part 34: Restoration of Peter & the Future of the Church	John 21:1–25
9/30/2026	Part 35: Conclusion	