



The Gospel according to John

DESCRIPTIVE SHEET

Author

John, the brother of James and the apostle of Jesus Christ, sometimes identified as “the Beloved Disciple”, is at the same time the author of this fourth gospel, the epistles 1, 2 and 3 John and of the last book of the Bible (Revelation). The Church Fathers unanimously testified to that. Among them, Irenaeus, who was a disciple of Polycarp, who himself was a disciple of John, affirmed that John was indeed the author. Not only Irenaeus, but also Clement of Alexandria and Eusebius of Caesarea, called the father of the history of the Church, confirmed the same thing.

Date

According to tradition, the apostle John lived in Ephesus and ministered in the churches of Asia Minor until his death. It is also affirmed that John wrote his texts between the years 80-90.

Core theme and target audience

The Gospel of John is a special document in that it differs from the other ones, also called synoptic Gospels, in the way it approaches its subject. According to Eusebius, the apostle John was familiar with the synoptic Gospels that, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, he wrote a “spiritual gospel”. His approach was to present Jesus as “the Son of God,” that is, as God, while also showing his humanity. Christ is fully God and fully man. This is not to say that the other Gospels do not teach about Christ’s divinity. However, the data presented by John, in his apologetic approach, is more detailed. John also showed the availability of eternal life only to those who believe in Jesus Christ. In addition, he paid special attention to the ministry of the Holy Spirit announced by Christ, which we do not find in the other Gospels.

According to several theologians, the Gospel of John was intended for a Jewish audience. Others believe that it could have been written for a non-Jewish audience. The miracles and explanatory details in the book are demonstrative of Christ’s divinity. He ended his gospel as follows: “*Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.*” (John 20:30-31).

The outline of John’s Gospel

1. The Incarnation of the Son of God (John 1:1-18)
2. The Presentation of the Son of God (John 1:19-4:54)
3. Opposition to the Son of God (John 5:1-12:50)
4. The Son of God prepares His disciples (John 13:1-17:26).
5. The death of the Son of God (John 18:1-19:16)
6. The resurrection of the Son of God (John 19:38-21:23)
7. Conclusion (John 21 :24-25)