

## **WE HAVE SEEN HIS GLORY**

### **The Glory of the Gospel of John**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

My dad used to say that some preachers are like bush pilots circling around and around looking for a place to land. Several times you think they are landing and then they pull up and go around another time. Well, I call into my defense the ending of the Gospel of John. Some expositors refer to these next two verses as the Second and Third Conclusion. From now on I'm going to use that in my justification if I say "in conclusion" more than once in a sermon 😊.

Now let us look at Johns 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> conclusions:

#### **SCRIPTURE TEXT: JOHN 21:20-24 (ESV)**

*<sup>24</sup> This is the disciple who is bearing witness about these things, and who has written these things, and we know that his testimony is true. <sup>25</sup> Now there are also many other things that Jesus did. Were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.*

#### **THE EXPOSITION**

##### **The Second Ending**

The author is signing his work: *"This is the disciple who is bearing witness about these things, and who has written these things ..."* A careful reading of the grammar of John 21:20-24 indicates the author of the Gospel is the "the disciple whom Jesus loved". The author is persistent in avoiding the use of his name in this Gospel. Many suggest that it points to his humility and emphasizes his relationship with Jesus. The early readers and along with the early Church affirmed it was John. And one can, through the process of elimination, support the idea it was John because he mentions every other disciple's name except his own.

John puts his signature of authenticity on this Gospel: "This is the disciple who is bearing witness about these things, and who has written these things."<sup>1</sup> And then he adds, "and we know that his testimony is true."<sup>2</sup> Who are the "we"? Is he using the royal "we"? Did someone else write this with him? There are several views. The view that I think is most plausible is that John is speaking about the redeemed believers that were part of his community. We read a similar thing in the Prologue these words:

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<sup>1</sup> [\*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version\*](#). (2016). (Jn 21:24). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

<sup>2</sup> [\*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version\*](#). (2016). (Jn 21:24). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

*“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. (John bore witness about him, and cried out, “This was he of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.’”) For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.” (John 1:14–17, ESV)*

It would not be inconsistent to reach back and again invite the “we” to give approval to this Gospel. The same “we” that saw the glory of Christ and the same “we” that received grace. The point to be made is that John is “making the entire Gospel the witness of a community of believers for whom the Beloved Disciple was the truthful witness through whom they had come to know Jesus.”<sup>3</sup>

### The Third and Final Ending

John’s last word is this: *“Now there are also many other things that Jesus did. Were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.” (John 21:25, ESV)*

“The image is not simply of volumes of books but the continuous writing of books. Besides the world not affording enough space, it does not afford enough time.”<sup>4</sup> “In reality no single book could begin to capture the full reality and power, the majesty and glory of the Son of God.”<sup>5</sup>

## CONCLUSION & APPLICATION

John has set out to prove but one thing: Jesus is the Christ. In the first chapter John introduced his audience to the reality that Jesus is the Creator God and that Jesus is the true Tabernacle within who God dwelt.

John then structured his selected biography to show his readers 7 signs that pointed to the Deity of Christ; and 7 “I am” statements of Jesus, each claiming His Deity. Each of these signs and statements garnered a response of the citizens and Jewish leaders which John recorded. But in the end, John laid his case before the reader that through Jesus’ works and words He was the Christ, the Son of the Living God. And all this was to provoke a response: “these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Lamar Williamson Jr.. *Preaching the Gospel of John: Proclaiming the Living Word* (Kindle Locations 4571-4572). Kindle Edition.

<sup>4</sup> Brant, J.-A. A. (2011). *John* (p. 286). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

<sup>5</sup> Osborne, G. R. (2018). *John: Verse by Verse*. (J. Reimer, E. Ritzema, D. Thevenaz, & R. Brant, Eds.) (p. 489). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

<sup>6</sup> *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*. (2016). (Jn 20:31). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

Merrill C. Tenney wrote a commentary on John that he entitled, *The Gospel of Belief*. That's a great title. This is what this Gospel has been about. The word "believe" appears in the Gospel of John in the ESV nearly 100 times. John included accounts of false or spurious faith<sup>7</sup> but he also taught us what true faith is all about. He taught us that true faith:

- A. Trusts Christ. We learned that in the story of the blind man Jesus healed and Martha when her brother died.
- B. Seeks to live life in accordance with the Word. "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples."<sup>8</sup> *"If you love me, you will keep my commandments."* (John 14:15, ESV)
- C. Draws their life from Christ. *"I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned."* (John 15:5–6, ESV)
- D. Loves Christ and His Church. *"By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."* (John 13:35, ESV)

When you consider the Gospel of John in the future, you will do well to recall these 3 verses:

1. *"but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name."* (John 20:31, ESV)
2. *"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly."* (John 10:10, ESV)
3. *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."* (John 3:16, ESV)

Thus ends the Gospel of John. This is my last, last, last word:

Jesus of Nazareth is affirmed by John as the Christ. He is like none other. He is the Father personified as the Word, the Second Person of the Trinity. Because He is God His work, and His words are true. Because He is God His salvation is certain. The verdict that John's evidence demands is, "Do you believe that Jesus is Lord?"

- If you believe that faith will change your life and secure your destiny.
- If you choose not to believe you will "perish".

Let us pray!

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<sup>7</sup> E.g., John 2:23f and John 6:66

<sup>8</sup> [\*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version\*](#). (2016). (Jn 8:31). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.