

John and his ministry

Part 2

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[00:00:01] We began last night by looking at the life of the Apostle John. We noted that he was probably the youngest of the Apostles. He outlived all the others. He lived until close to 100 AD, so he was probably in his 90s, at least very late 80s when the Lord took him home. And we didn't quite finish with that outline that I have at the bottom. The Lord had said, and this is recorded in the end of John's Gospel, if I will that he abide till I come, what is that to thee? He said that to Peter. And many have taken from this, and I believe rightfully so, that the writings of the Apostle John are particularly relevant in that time [00:01:04] before the Lord comes. The writings of the Apostle John are very relevant now. But on the other hand, it was a very literal statement. Other disciples picked it up and misinterpreted it. And many times it seems we pick up something from the Word and twist it to suit our purpose. John records, and he's the last one of the Apostles living at the time, that there were those who said, well John isn't going to die. And he says, that isn't what the Lord said. But the Lord said, if I will that he, you know, remain until I come. Peter, what business is that of yours? And it's good, you know, when we quote the Word of God, and when we use the Word of God, that we quote it accurately, and that we use it according to the purpose for which the Lord has given the Word. Now after the [00:02:04] destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70, and by that time, of course, Christianity had been spread to many, many places. And the Jews were dispersed from their own land. We're not sure at what point the Apostle John left Palestine, left Judea, Jerusalem. But if he hadn't left before, certainly after that time. Church history tells us that John eventually wound up at Ephesus, and that he spent the balance of his days in and around Ephesus, except for the time where he was exiled to the island of Patmos. And that's where we'll find this afternoon, God willing, that the Lord used him to write the letter to, or the letters to the seven churches, and the entire book of Revelation. But that's [00:03:04] apparently where he spent his latter years, and Ephesus was the main city of the Roman province of Asia, which is a small part of what is now Turkey. And so John would be acquainted, personally acquainted, with the surrounding assemblies too. He spent time on Patmos. We're not told how long, but it may well have been a year or more before the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus. As a very aged man, probably under the Emperor Domitian, he was exiled to that island. It's an island off the coast of Turkey. They say it's a very rocky island, sun beats down on it, it's hot, nothing wants to grow too well there. And they thought they had him silenced, and from that the Lord has given us a book without which scripture would not be complete. There he was commissioned to [00:04:06] write. Now we are not told anywhere which of his five writings came first, second, third, fourth, and fifth. We find his commission to write in the Revelation. It may well be that he wrote his other writings afterwards. I don't know, but all the evidence is that whatever John wrote, he wrote as a very aged man. The Revelation presents to us the ultimate victory of the Lord Jesus.

I've often said, and I don't mind saying it again, that I like to read, and when I pick up a book I usually

start somewhere other than the beginning. I look at the [00:05:03] latter part of the book, I may look in the middle, start reading a chapter or two just to get an idea of what it's about, how it works out, and if I like it then I'll start at the beginning. And somehow I, you know, what I really appreciate about the Revelation is that it shows us the ultimate victory of the Lord Jesus. You know, things seem so bad, and things are getting worse in the world. We're all in agreement on that, I'm sure, but the final outcome is going to be wonderful. It'll be triumphant, be to his glory, and the Scripture wouldn't be complete without that book of Revelation. They say, one of the church fathers writes that the Apostle John, when he got to be very old, past 90 years old, wasn't able to go [00:06:03] to the meetings unassisted anymore, and Brethren had to carry him to the meetings. He wasn't able to give ministry as he once had, but he would come to the meetings, church history tells us, and he would say little children love one another.

You know, that's the, really the ultimate in application of John's ministry for Christians. Little children love one another. His ministry is filled with Christ. Its application is for us. He writes of, I put it, the affectionate elder.

Very important. Well, now we want to go on to the Gospel, and I've never tried to [00:07:08] speak on the whole Gospel of John in one session, but may the Lord help us with it.

It's written late in John's life, as his other books are also. The synoptic Gospels had probably all been written before the fall of Jerusalem, so they were in existence some 25, possibly even 30 years before John writes his Gospel. Now, you know, if human writers are going to write on a certain subject that has already been written on, the general idea is to try to find something that hasn't been said on that subject, something that is original, something that is going to [00:08:02] characterize your book or your article in contrast to the others. I don't believe that John wrote with those objects. Holy men of God, we read in Scripture, spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. And yet the Gospel of John, in some respects, is something like a thumb to the fingers. You know, it's part of the hand, yes. It's one of the books that gives us the life of the Lord Jesus, and yet it's quite different from the other three. And we need it along with the other three, just like we need our thumb along with our fingers. The Gospel of Matthew, we're well acquainted with the fact that it presents the Lord Jesus as the object of prophecy, the King and Messiah of Israel, the promised one. One of Matthew's [00:09:03] favorite phrases is, you know, that it came to pass as the Prophet said, or as it was written, something like that. Matthew always alludes to prophecy and shows how prophecy is fulfilled in the Lord Jesus. The Gospel of Mark presents us, the Lord Jesus, as God's perfect servant, here on earth. And others have said Mark presents the Lord Jesus as the Prophet, as the one who was God's mouthpiece, here on earth. And therefore also Mark doesn't present us with a genealogy or an account of the birth of the Lord Jesus. If you're hiring a servant, you're not interested in where he was born, who his parents were, all that sort of thing. What you're interested in is, can he do the job or not? So, I mean, there are very [00:10:03] interesting reasons why the Spirit of God presents certain things by this writer, certain things by that writer. Luke is used to present the man Christ Jesus. And if you notice, his genealogy goes back further than Matthew's does. His genealogy goes back to Adam and back to God. And Luke presents us the Lord Jesus, and I don't know how many, how many times he's sitting at the table. He's invited to meals in the Gospel of Luke. But you know, if there's one place where people open up, it tends to be when they're sitting at the table with a good meal before them. And we find the Lord Jesus, the perfect man, and doing much of his teaching in that kind of setting in the Gospel of Luke. And there's so many, many things that to present as the manhood, the perfect manhood of the Lord Jesus, including the perfect boyhood of the Lord Jesus. John, [00:11:09] again, says nothing about his boyhood, about his birth, about his ancestry. Well, it makes a couple

references to it, where he quotes the Jews as making derogatory references to it. But John presents us the Son of God come from heaven. We read yesterday in the first chapter of the Gospel of John, and we'd like to turn there again for a moment.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things received being through him, and [00:12:06] without him not one thing received being, which has received being. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light appears in darkness, and the darkness apprehended it not. We commented last night already as to the Word. The Word is the expression of a thought, and the Lord Jesus is the full expression of the mind of God, and he is God. So we find this in these verses. He is God, and yet he is a distinct person in the Godhead, and one tries to speak very carefully in speaking about these things. These are holy things, and we cannot define God in any way, and yet we want to fully accept and welcome and [00:13:04] appreciate all that Scripture says on the subject of the person of the Lord Jesus. And he is going to be before us in this gospel in all his dignity, in all his glory. You know, this is the gospel where his cross is not born, part of the way by a Simon of Cyrene. He bears his cross. You know, the Son of God, even for something like that, is not viewed as needing the help that the man, Jesus, humanly speaking, could use. And I don't want to even say that he needed it, but his cross was put on another part way. But, you see, John doesn't mention these things. There's an interesting book that I would recommend to all of you who want [00:14:02] to go into the Gospels and the Lord Jesus as he's presented in the Gospels, especially in view of these differences. Brother Corbroyne in England, while he was still a missionary in Lebanon, wrote a book which is entitled The Divine Design in the Gospels. Corbroyne's Believer's Bookshelf sells at \$9.25, and I recommend it. But he goes in, he compares the accounts given us in the four Gospels, and not from the standpoint of tearing them apart as so many human critics do, but from the standpoint of showing the divine design in the Gospels and what the Holy Spirit is trying to bring out in each one, and why this is mentioned here and left out there, or why it's mentioned in this way [00:15:02] here and perhaps passed over with just a half a sentence or something like that elsewhere. It's a very good book. Another book that I wish were available in English, which was a help to me in studying on this subject, is a book by Brother George Andre, entitled The Apostle John and His Ministry. It doesn't go into the full scope of what we intend to go into, but it's a beautiful book, and I've borrowed a few thoughts from him. The thoughts the Lord gives, he gives in various ways, sometimes through one's own meditation and oftentimes through one's reading, and I'm not ashamed or afraid to pick up that which he's given through others. But I wish that book were available in English, because it's a lovely book. It's written in French, it's been translated into German, so maybe somebody will have it in English.

[00:16:07] We saw last night, as we read verses 14 to 18 of John 1, that John speaks of having contemplated the glory of the word become flesh, and we emphasize that word contemplated, which Mr. Darby uses in his translation. We cannot get acquainted with the Lord by giving him a fleeting glance once in a while. In order to appreciate and enjoy the Lord Jesus, we've got to spend time looking at him, and he's the one that we never tire of spending time with him, really [00:17:02] contemplating him. I think in this part of the country, the word study is used sometimes in that sense. I studied about it, thought about it, gave time to it.

Time is a commodity that is getting increasingly rare in today's world, but if we really want to enjoy the Lord Jesus, we've got to take our time with him. And John, not only did he contemplate the Lord during those three, three and a half years that he walked with him, from this time in his gospel where John the Baptist points to the Lord Jesus, behold the Lamb of God, and he and Andrew follow, and the Lord sees them following, and he says, what are you looking for? What seek ye? And they say, I

guess they were kind of shocked that he turned around and asked them that bluntly, something like myself, when I went to my mother-in-law's home [00:18:05] for the first time, and before I got in the house, she turned to me in her broken Hungarian English and asked me if I wanted her daughter. So I had to commit myself right there. But you know, the Lord Jesus turned just that abruptly to these two men who were following him, and he said, what seek ye? Well, Lord, where dwellest thou? Where do you dwell? And the Lord said, come and see. And they not only came and saw, but they stayed with him that day. We noted that they went back to their fishing for a while before the Lord called them to really follow him, but here in John's gospel, John gets acquainted with the Lord. There's a three-and-a-half-year period before, between this and the Lord's death, where he can contemplate his glory as he walks with him, observes him day after day in [00:19:02] all kinds of situations, and I believe the 65 or 70 years afterwards, before the Lord finally took him home, were spent in contemplating the glory of the Lord Jesus. Now, the aim of John's gospel, we find stated near the end. In chapter 20, let's turn there. In chapter 20, he comes, it seems, to a conclusion. It almost seems as though chapter 21 is an addendum to the book, a PS on it, and yet the book certainly wouldn't be complete without it in any way. But at the end of chapter 20, it would seem that we're coming to the conclusion. It's not fully the conclusion, but it is the purpose of the book. Verse 30, "...many other signs therefore also Jesus did before his disciples, which are not written in this [00:20:05] book, but these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life in his name." This is the purpose of the gospel of John. And this is John wrote with definite method. Luke indicates that he wrote with method. He wrote very deliberately. Luke was a medical doctor who's an excellent historian, and he writes his gospel basically in a moral order, brings things that fit together together, and without necessarily just taking everything in chronological order. Acts we have in chronological order. He was able to write in chronological order, but his gospel, he says, he wrote with method. And John also writes with real purpose, with real method. And he [00:21:08] mentions fewer of the Lord's miracles than the other apostles do, and he mentions a number that are not mentioned by the others. But he is referring here to signs that Jesus did before his disciples, and in John's gospel, the miracles are not miracles, but they're signs. He picks out certain ones that show who the Lord is in relation to creation, being able to turn water into wine. Now, as the Creator, he turns water into wine. The grapevine, I'll use a very layman's term, sucks up the water from the ground, and the sun beats down on it, [00:22:03] and we know the heliophorophil and so on, everything works. The grapevine tries to go to seed and to put something around the seed that has sugar in it for nourishment and so on, and, you know, it makes grapes. We had some for breakfast. Well, man has even bred the grapes so that the seeds, the purpose for them, are not there anymore. You breed most of them out, just to have the part you enjoy. But, you know, eventually, those grapes, if they're crushed, and even if they're not crushed, if they hang and get picked at a little bit or so, it ferments and you can get the wine. Well, God can do this in creation through the processes that he has designed. The Lord Jesus can do it instantaneously, too. He is the God of creation. And then we find in Chapter 4, there's a boy, or a [00:23:08] servant, rather. No, it's the son of a noble man who has gotten sick, and this noble man goes to see the Lord Jesus and to share his concern, to ask him to do something about his boy, and the Lord says, well, just go right on home, he's well now. And, you know, the Lord, who can and does use doctors, and who says that it's not the well people that need the doctor, but the sick people. I mean, he even points out the value of the doctor, that he is God. He can act against sickness at a distance, without medication, without a prescription, without so much rest, without so... When the man goes home, his servants meet him on the way, and they say, your boy is absolutely well. And he says, well, when did that happen? It suddenly happened at so-and-so this hour, and he says, well, that's exactly when I was talking with the Lord. [00:24:07] And so, each miracle in the Gospel of John is a sign, and we read here that Jesus did many other signs as well. But these are written, that ye might

believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah, the Anointed One, the One sent by God. These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing, ye might have life in his name. The last of those signs that is given us, is in chapter 11 of the book, when Lazarus, a close personal friend, got sick. And it tells us, specifically in that chapter, that Jesus loved Martha, [00:25:02] Lazarus' sister, and her sister, that's Mary, the one who had sat at his feet, and Lazarus.

They were convinced of the fact that he loved them, so when Lazarus got sick, they sent word, he whom thou lovest is sick. And I'm sure they were shocked when the messenger came back, and came back alone, and nothing had happened.

The Lord hadn't healed from afar, and the Lord didn't come along. And the messenger, Martha and Mary, probably said, what did he say, what did he do? He didn't do anything. He's busy there, he's going to stay a while. I don't know if he's coming, when he's coming. You can imagine what those sisters felt like. And yet scripture says [00:26:04] that Jesus loved, and mentions each of the three. And then a couple days later, the Lord, a couple days after getting the message, the Lord says to his disciples, let's go there. And he lets them understand that Lazarus had fallen asleep. He wasn't just sick, he had died. And they couldn't understand this, why the Lord would put himself into danger, arrive a few days after the funeral, when the Lord finally arrives with his disciples. Lazarus has been buried four days already. In fact, his sister Martha doesn't want the grave open, because he stinks. She's very blunt about it. And yet, this is the one whom, in the Gospel of John, the Lord Jesus raises from the dead.

[00:27:02] In a way that shows his love and his concern, we find the Lord weeping with the sisters, with the mourning friends. And this hit them awfully hard. Four days after the funeral is over, they're still just sitting in the house mourning, and their friends are there to comfort them. You know, in our society, yes, there is grief. But many times, four days after the funeral, you know, we've gotten back to work, and gone back to the job, and we're trying to carry on life. This has hit these sisters awfully hard. And the Lord calls this dead man out of the grave, gives him life. The last of the signs, of course, in John 21, we have still another one. It looks on typically to the Millennium, and what the Lord will do there. But the miracles in the Gospel of [00:28:04] John are definite signs given, each one of them. And it's interesting to meditate on them, and to see what glory of the Lord Jesus is revealed in each one of these signs. How each one contributes to presenting him as the Son of God, walking, as we had in Chapter 1, the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us. And you know, I can just see John writing that at age 90 plus, to think that the Word, the full expression of the mind of God, that he became flesh, and lived here among us. Among people like us, fishermen, ordinary, common people. You know, in Acts, the King James translation refers to the disciples at one point as ignorant and unlearned fishermen. Now, when we [00:29:06] see their writings, we know that they were not ignorant. But as far as the Jewish scribes and Pharisees and chief priests were concerned, that's what they were. They were Galileans. They hadn't had the theological training. They couldn't say, like Paul, I've sat at the feet of Rabbi Gamaliel, you know, and picked up all his wisdom, and all these disciples whom the Lord called the very ordinary people. Well, they knew how to read and write and so on, but they didn't have all the finesse of the scholarly training of the rabbis and so on. And they got along very well without it. And you know, today when I see seminaries and even many Bible schools, much of what is taught tends to be critical of God's Word, and tends to go against the thoughts of God. Thank God, there are places where the Word is faithfully taught in the measure that it's [00:30:05] understood. But these places are few and far between. And like I say, it's in the measure in which it's understood. I had one professor when I was in school for a couple of religion courses. He was a

godly man, a saved man, despite his titles, etc. And these were simply required courses at the university I went to a couple of years. It was not that I was going for that purpose. But, you know, we were in full agreement that what the basis of our salvation was, the work of the Lord Jesus on Calvary. And this man was really a lonely man in his position, and he would, you know, had he stood and had he comprehended and stood for the whole truth of God, he wouldn't have had his titles, and I don't believe he would have had the position that he [00:31:02] had. But I felt sorry for him. We often had discussions together. He was an older man, but I appreciated the man. Godly, trying to do what he could. He told me once that in his required course, I forget how many students he had, at least 75 students, he said, I was the only one that had any interest in the subject whatsoever. The others took it because it was required. Well, anyway, I'm getting back to John here. These are written that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. Notice, John is very specific what the purpose of his gospel is. He's presenting Jesus as the one sent by God, the Christ. He's presenting him as the Son of God. And what is the purpose of writing this gospel that believing ye might have life in his name. John has to record, and I believe he does so to his own shame, although he's no different from us. We noted it yesterday in the [00:32:08] same 20th chapter in verse 8, then entered in to the grave. Therefore, the other disciple also, who came first to the tomb, and he saw and believed. And remember, later on in the chapter, Thomas sees the marks of the nails and nail prints in the hands of the Lord, the spear print in his side, and the Lord says to him in verse 29, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed.

Blessed they who have not seen and have believed. There's a greater blessing for us who have not literally seen and have simply accepted the report. And notice the little painting back there this morning. I hadn't seen it before. Who have believed our report. And the book is [00:33:08] open to Isaiah, and you know, it fits here. We believe, but this is why the gospel is written, that believing he might have life in his name. The Lord knew, and I'm sure that John looking ahead could see, as a very old man, that there were going to be a lot more that had never personally seen the Lord, and that needed to hear who he was, and that he was the Son of God come into the world. You know, at this time, there was a very bad teaching that had really started to blossom out. The Apostle Paul is already writing against it when he [00:34:02] writes his letter to the Colossians. The teaching is called Gnosis, G-N-O-S-I-S, is apparently the Greek word, or one Greek word for knowledge. And these people felt that they had a superior knowledge, and that, you know, if you had the right connections, and you had to have quite a few connections between yourself and God, but you know, this was the way to go. John points out that the Lord Jesus is the Word, and that he is God, and you know, John just dispenses with all these intermediary beings between man and God. You don't have to go through this one, that one, that one, up the channel. No, you have direct access, and one of the things that the Lord Jesus does while he's here, before he leaves, [00:35:04] he puts his disciples into direct access and direct contact with the Father, not just with God. An Israelite could pray to God, yes, normally he came through the priests and with the offerings, and so on. But the Lord Jesus, before he leaves, tells his disciples in John 16 about praying to the Father, praying in his name, and then he tells them these wonderful words. The Father himself loves you, and he uses not the ordinary word for the love of God, not this word agapau, which speaks of the love flowing out from the heart of God. God is love, and the love has to manifest itself. He uses, as an exception, the other word which speaks of the love of friendship. You know, when Paul saw something attractive in Linda, he was drawn to her, [00:36:02] and this is the word that the Lord uses here. He says the Father himself has been drawn to you, loves you in that sense, because you've loved me and have believed that I came out from God. Isn't this wonderful that God, I mean it's wonderful, God so loved the world that he gave, that's the agapau, but also God is drawn to those whom he has drawn to the Lord Jesus and who have responded to that call, and he himself loves us, and therefore we can go directly to him.

We come in the name of his son, the one who is precious to him, and you know, John brings this out in his gospel. Just, you know, one could speak on these kind of things all day long. There's so many precious things, and we're not going to get through the gospel of John, [00:37:02] we're not going to take it just in chronological order, but I'm trying to bring out a few things that, a few of the precious characteristics of the gospel of John. Well, these Gnostics, you know, they believed they had a superior knowledge of God by coming through angels, through higher beings, and the New Age movement today is one more revival of the ancient Gnostic heresies. Jehovah Witness teaching emphasizes another aspect of the Gnostic heresies, that the Lord Jesus is not God the son. He may be the son of God, they say, a son of God, but he's not God the son, and so on. Satan hasn't really come up with much that's new. He's a counterfeiter, and every once in a while he revives some bad teaching and brings it up again, and he's found men were suckers for it a long time ago, and they're suckers for it today [00:38:05] in some other guise, and that's how it goes, and that's why the gospel of John and the writings of John are particularly relevant for our day. With all the teaching of New Age and the Eastern religions and, you know, that man has to somehow work his way up, it's good to know that God came down and dwelt among us, and that he's made direct access to the Father, and that God is now Father, and because the Lord Jesus is our Savior and our Lord. Another thing that John does in his gospel, to a greater degree than the synoptic gospels, each person of the Godhead is presented very clearly. The Lord Jesus, of course, is the central focus of John's gospel, [00:39:02] of all the gospels of the New Testament, of Scripture as a whole. Everything centers on him, but here in this gospel, after a number of chapters that really center and focus on the Lord Jesus, we find the Lord giving his own, not the world as such. I mean, he mentions the Father to the world, but hardly, but he really concentrates on teaching his own who the Father is and the relationship that he is going to open for us to the Father, and he also spends time teaching his own who the Holy Spirit is, and that when he goes back to the Father, he's going to send down the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit couldn't come here to the earth as a divine person to live and to indwell people, to indwell the church as a whole. It couldn't do that until the Lord Jesus was glorified. [00:40:05] But, you know, the Lord Jesus tells us about the person and the mission of the Holy Spirit, and we have more about that subject in the gospel of John than we do anywhere else in Scripture. So each of the persons of the Godhead are clearly set forth in this gospel, wonderfully set forth. What book is it when a person comes to receive the Lord Jesus as Savior? You know, so often John 3.16 has been used to bring a person to the Lord. Well, the gospel in a nutshell, it's been called. I wonder how many sermons have been preached on John 3.16. You know, they tell stories of, they speak of this English preacher Henry Morehouse who came to [00:41:03] the U.S. a century ago, a little over a century ago. He was invited to speak at the Moody Memorial Church, whatever was its predecessor in Chicago. Anyway, he spoke the first night on John 3.16, and he was so full. The second night he spoke on John 3.16. When Moody returned after a week of absence, and his brother had been filling in for him, he found his brother had been speaking every night on John 3.16. And he comes to the meeting that night, and the brother gets up and says, well, you know, all Scripture is so full, has so much to give. Well, there's one Scripture the Lord had just given on his heart. He couldn't seem to speak on any other topic that night. Let's turn to John 3.16. So, you know, a full week. And I'm sure that he could have gone on well beyond that time, had time been allotted to him. But, you know, once a person comes to the [00:42:03] Lord, you tell them, read the Bible. Well, where should I start? Gospel of John, which one single gospel is probably most often given to people, the Gospel of John. To reach out, it's given instead of a gospel tract. If there's anything that'll lead a person to the Lord, it's reading this gospel. And yet, it's the most profound of the gospels. It has the deepest teaching. It's what an old Christian, well-matured in the faith, experienced with the Lord. You know, somehow he loves the Gospel of John. And there's so much to see there. And it's wonderful to have this book written in this way, that the babe in Christ, or the unsaved person who hasn't heard the word before, can grasp it from that

gospel. And it's that which the Father in Christ [00:43:03] thoroughly enjoys.

Into two main parts, chapters 1 to 12, and bring before us the life and ministry of the Lord walking through this scene. Chapters 13 to 21 bring before us the events of the last night that the Lord was with his own, the day that he was crucified, the day that he rose from the dead, and a couple other incidents after his resurrection. These parts, of course, can be subdivided and so on. But I just say, the major break in the Gospel of John is between chapters 12. And you'll find the last part of chapter 12 is really a summary of what has gone before in the gospel. And then you have these next chapters with their [00:44:08] first summary, the verses we read at the end of chapter 20, and then like a little addendum, chapter 21, and finally we get to John's summary at the end of chapter 21, where he states, verse 24, this is the disciple who bears witness concerning these things, and who has written these things, and we know that his witness is true. And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which if they were written one by one, I suppose that not even the world itself would contain the books written. And you know, the supposition, there's one thing, I suppose, no one might say, well John, you didn't know how big the world was. But remember, this, even this, I suppose, is written by inspiration. And I believe God is [00:45:03] wanting to tell us, you don't know how big my son is, how great he is, if you'd go into every detail of what he's ever done, the world itself wouldn't hold the books. And you know, a very fitting conclusion for the gospel of the Son of God, that the world wouldn't hold the books written to describe the things that he did, if one went into detail one by one. Brother Andre, in his book, points out a rather interesting analogy between the gospel of John and the tabernacle. I've never read this anywhere else, and I just mention it. You know, as one was in the tabernacle, looking up at the curtains overhead, or even the veil and the curtain at the entrance, there was basically four colors. The first color to be mentioned is the blue. [00:46:05] This is what John presents, the Lord come down from heaven. We have the scarlet, the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ shed for our sins. We have the purple, his royalty. And we have the fine, twined linen, the white, his perfect manhood. In one sense, they bring before us the four gospels, and yet they're intertwined. We can find every one of them in the gospel of John. But then, as a person came into the tabernacle enclosure, the first thing he encountered was the brazen altar. You don't get very far into the gospel of John after the introduction to the person of the Lord Jesus, before you come to Nicodemus and the serpent [00:47:01] lifted up as the Lord tells him about. He's just to be born again. What is the way? The son of man must be lifted up. God so loved the world that he gave, and so on. When you went farther, you came to the labor. In the gospel of John, as you come to the second part, you really come into the sanctuary, in a sense. In John 13, we find the Lord washing the feet of his own, before they can enter into the holy place. The things that he wants to tell them that are just for them, and that second half of the gospel of John is really for the believers. The world is behind us. It's the dealings of the Lord with his own now. You have the cleansing at the labor. When you get inside that holy place, there is so much more.

[00:48:06] In the holy place, in the tabernacle, there were essentially three objects. You would see the table, which had on it the loaves of showbread. You would see the candlestick, the lampstand, and you would see the golden altar of incense. The lampstand was the only thing that gave light inside of the holy place. The full light of heaven is really shed by the Lord Jesus in these chapters. The full light for his own. We see how concerned he is about his own. We see him presenting them to God as the showbread. These chapters really bring us into [00:49:01] worship and our relationship with the Father. One can go beyond that.

We go into the most holy place.

The ark of the covenant was there. The atonement was made there. We have the chapters that bring before us. First of all, we have John 17, the prayer of the Lord. It brings us into the most holy place. We are standing there listening to him pray. We have the death of the Lord Jesus. Then we have the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. The word sent by Mary, go to my brethren. Tell them I ascend to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God. The veil is rent. You have access. You have full access to God. He's now [00:50:07] not only my Father and my God, but he's your Father and your God too. I appreciate it.

The brother's writings on this, I'm not presenting all that he gave, but just to see this analogy. It's not the whole gospel. As far as some themes of the gospel of John, while you have a framework in a way, in the first chapter there are three days. In chapters one and two, and in chapters 20 and 21, there are three post-resurrection appearances of the Lord to his disciples. The three days in the first chapters, in a typical way, present the Lord at three separate times and to three separate groups. The same times and groups are referred to [00:51:08] in the appearances at the end. The 21st chapter of John, the second chapter of John, the last of these three, bring before us the millennial blessing. We find Israel, Philip and Nathanael in chapter one, and unbelieving Thomas in this chapter. We find them before the millennium. The first ones, of course, are his disciples as a whole, and John and Andrew, who come believing, really picturing ourselves now. I'm taking this backwards, but this is sort of the framework because we have, in one sense, a thing mentioned here and repeated there again. In between, there are five chapters each on these three Ls. [00:52:10] Five chapters, chapters three to seven, that emphasize the Lord Jesus being the life.

We read of him as, in him was life, and the life was the light of men, and so on. But these chapters emphasize life. He must be born again, and so on. I'm not going to trace out the details because we're nearing the end of our time. But then chapters eight through twelve, what is emphasized in these chapters particularly is the light. There are many other things, but there the light is emphasized. Chapters thirteen to seventeen, we see love emphasized. The crucifixion is, of course, the manifestation, how these things all come together, don't they? [00:53:10] Those two chapters stand by themselves, chapters eighteen and nineteen. But these are things I'm just putting down here, things that you can study out for yourself. That's one reason to have a handout, so that you have something beyond what the speaker said. Some of the special features, and I'll just run through the ones we haven't taken very quickly. Well, we took the first one, the eight recorded miracles are all viewed as signs. Seven times in the Gospel of John, the Lord Jesus says, I am. These I am's are very precious, and again give us a very full picture. Although there are more that could be added, but it gives us a very nice balance. Seven is the perfect number of who the Lord Jesus is, [00:54:06] and I am was the title by which God revealed himself to his people in Exodus chapter two, I believe it is. God spoke to Moses when Moses asked, you know, what name he should give the Israelites. Who sent you? Who sent me? I am that I am, and the Lord Jesus uses that title. He is God here on earth. I am. I am whatever you need, essentially. Very few parables. The ones who are given are signs. The Gospel of John gives us very frequent encounters of the Lord with individuals, gives us details of their conversation, and to think that the word became flesh and dwelt among us, took an interest in individuals here. Yes, he would talk with the theological expert. He would [00:55:04] also talk with the woman who was living with the sixth man that had come into her life, and that was an outcast in society, and so on. The Lord took time with individuals. It's so beautiful to see that in the Gospel of John. In the other Gospels, sometimes when the Lord is speaking to an individual, it's with a definite background of having others listening in. In John's Gospel, the Lord also deals with individuals on a purely individual basis, as if he had all the time in the world for that person, and it's precious. He has that for us, too. The miracles and events in John's Gospel are often followed up and lead to the Lord

giving teaching. The encounter with the adulterous woman in chapter 8 leads to the teaching, I am the light of the world, and all that came out [00:56:06] of that. The encounter with the man born blind leads to the beautiful 10th chapter of the Gospel of John, the Lord being the Good Shepherd. The Lord had found this man after he was thrown out of the synagogue, had brought him to himself, the man worshipped him, and then he's attacked by the Pharisees for that, and the Lord speaks about those who come in other ways, and so on, and I'm the Good Shepherd. The events lead to the teaching in this Gospel. Always before us in the Gospel is the cross. Behold the Lamb of God which takes away the sin of the world. Even as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up. You can trace this through the Gospel. The shadow of the cross lies over the whole Gospel. This is why the Son of Man, [00:57:03] or the Son of God, I should say, had come into the world. The Upper Room Discourse, books have been written on it, these chapters 14 to 16, although part of that was actually spoken outside the Upper Room. The Lord says, arise, let's go hence, and they are on the way to Gethsemane, and part of that discourse is there. The 13th and 17th chapters belong with it too, but these are very precious things. In John's writings, we find the family of God. We find the Father is presented in a way that he is not in other areas. I mean, the Father is spoken of elsewhere, but the Father's affections are particularly before us in John's Gospel. The fact that the Father loves the Son is distinctly stated in John's Gospel. The Lord Jesus here in [00:58:05] this world was very conscious and appreciative of the fact that the Father loves the Son. We have commented already, the Holy Spirit, his task here in this world, his personality, his object, and so these things are all brought before us in the Gospel of John. The enemies of the Lord Jesus are referred to as the Jews, again and again in this Gospel. This Gospel was written after the destruction of Jerusalem, after the Jews had been dispersed, and John views them as these people who were against the Lord, and this is the result of their enmity. Well, there's a lot more that could be said, but we'll stop here. Thank you for giving me those extra two or three minutes there.