

JESUS, THE CHRIST AND THE SON OF GOD

John 1:1 – 21:25

Leitvers 20:31

"But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name."

Thank God for blessing our 5 books of Moses - Study last year. God has freed his people Israel from the bondage of Egypt and led them through the desert to the border of the promised land for 40 years. In the same way, God led us out of the bondage of sin through Jesus Christ. God has given us in Jesus Christ the new, eternal life. Through the gospel of John we want to get to know this Jesus more deeply. We want to recognize Jesus, so that we and our sheep may have life in him. Who is Jesus for me? What does it mean to have life in him? Many people suffer a lot because they have no relationship with Jesus and do not have the life in him. May God use our John Gospel Bible study for his rescue work in Germany and Europe.

1. Background

The author is the apostle John. He was one of the twelve disciples of Jesus and the son of Zebedee. He was a fisherman in Galilee who belonged to the first group of Jesus' disciples with Peter, Andrew and James. John was an eyewitness. (13:23; 19:26; 20:3) He referred to himself as the disciple whom Jesus loved. (13:23; 19:26; 20:2; 21:20,24) For the dating of the gospel, the time between 90-100 after Christ is assumed. The constitutional place was Ephesus in Asia Minor. His further works were the 1st, 2nd and 3rd letters of John and the Revelation.

The Gospel of John, like the other three Gospels according to Matthew, Mark and Luke, reports about Jesus' death and resurrection. But the essential difference is that John speaks very much about Jesus' words and deeds, which are not found in the other three gospels. For example, John is the only evangelist who writes about the healing of the man who has been paralyzed for 38 years. (Chapter 5) The stay of Jesus in Jerusalem at the Feast of Tabernacles is only found in the Gospel of John. (Chapter 7) Jesus' farewell speeches from chapters 13 to 17 do not appear in the other three gospels. This is because John focuses on Jesus' story in Jerusalem. (for example John chapter 5, chapters 7-8, chapters 13-17)

Matthew, Mark and Luke proceeded inductively when writing their gospels. Matthew saw Jesus as King, Mark saw Him as a servant, and Luke saw Him as a historical figure. They all began to see Jesus as a human being and all came to the same conclusion that Jesus is the Son of God. Therefore, these three gospels are called the synoptic gospels. John, however, proceeded deductively. He began his gospel with the words "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God" and wrote his gospel on the basis that Jesus is God.

The Gospels according to Matthew, Mark and Luke were written about 30 years after Jesus' death and resurrection. The gospel of John was written much later. Why did

John think a fourth gospel was so necessary? John noticed the spread of many anti-Christian pagan heresies, especially Gnosticism, which tried to undermine Jesus' identity as the perfect man and God. The gospel of John was intended to protect the Jews from these heresies. John's listeners were also the Gentiles, who were accustomed to the Greek philosophy of the time. So he wrote to Jews and Gentiles who lived in the great Greco-Roman world. The word "world" appears more than 70 times in his gospel, for example: "For God so loved the world..." (3:16) In this respect the gospel of John is universal. It applies to all people in the whole world. John's gospel is valid for all people then and now, so that all who believe in Jesus may have eternal life.

2. Jesus, the Christ and the Son of God

The main theme of the gospel of John is that Jesus is the Christ and the Son of God. John supports this theme by presenting many testimonies and Jesus' own words about his identity.

There are many testimonies about Jesus, that he is the Christ and the Son of God of:

John the Baptist (1:7,8,15,19-28,29,34; 3:26-36; 5:33-35)

Jesus' disciples and many others who met Jesus personally (1:36,41,49; 4:29,39,42; 6:14; 7:68; 9:38; 11:27; 12:17; 15:27; 16:30; 20:28)

John the author (19:35; 21:24)

God the father (5:32,37; 8:18)

Jesus Christ himself (8:13,14; 18:37)

The works of Jesus (5:36; 10:25; 14:11; and His eight miracles)

The Holy Spirit (15:26; 16:13,14)

The Scriptures (5:39; 13:18,19; 20:9)

Furthermore, Jesus testified of Himself who He is:

"I who speak to you am he." (4:26; 8:24,28)

"The woman said, „I know that Messiah“ (called Christ) „is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.“ Then Je-

sus declared, „I who speak unto thee am he." (4:25,26)

"I told you that you would die in your sins; if you do not believe that I am the one I claim to be, you will indeed die in your sins." (8:24)

„So Jesus said, When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am the one I claim to be and that I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me.“ (8:28)

"I am the bread of life." (6:35,41,48,54,55)

"Then Jesus declared, „I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty.“ (35)

"Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day." (54)

"I am the light of the world." (8:12; 9:5)

"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.“ (8:12)

"I am the gate." (10:7,9)

"Then Jesus said again, 'Truly, truly, I say to you: I am the door of the sheep.'" (10,7)

"I am the gate: whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture." (10:9)

"I am the Good Shepherd." (10:11,14)

"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep." (11)

"I am the good shepherd: I know my sheep and my sheep know me." (14)

"I am the resurrection and the life." (11:25,26)

"Jesus said to her: I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" (25,26)

"I am the way and the truth and the life." (14,6)

"Jesus answered, „I am the way and the

truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." (6)

"I am the true vine." (15,1.5)

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." (5)

Jesus revealed who he is through his miracles. In the gospel of John we find eight of Jesus' many miracles:

Miracles of healing:

The healing of the son of a royal official (4:46-54)

The healing of an invalid at the pool Bethesda (5:2-9)

The healing of a man born blind (9:1-7)

Sign of Jesus' power over nature:

The transformation of water into wine (2:1-11)

Feeding the 5000 with five loaves of bread and two fish (6:1-14)

Jesus walks on the lake (6:19-21)

The great fishing of the disciples (21:1-14)

Signs of being raised from the dead:

The raising of Lazarus (11:1-45)

All these signs reveal the glory of God and that of the Son of God.

Furthermore, there are many conversations in John's gospel that also bear witness to Jesus:

Jesus and Nicodemus (3:1-21)

Jesus and the Samaritan woman (4:1-26)

The conversation with the Jews after the healing of the invalid at the pool Bethesda (5,19-47)

Jesus and the people after the feeding of the five thousand (6:22-65)

Jesus and the Jews at the Feast of Tabernacles (10:22-39)

Jesus' farewell speeches to his disciples (chapter 13-17)

Jesus did many other signs, not all of which

John wrote in his gospel. But what is the purpose of all the signs that John gathered in his gospel? Let us read 20,31 to "Son of God": "But these [signs] are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God..." Our life of faith consists in believing in Jesus, the Christ and the Son of God. After we have recognized who Jesus is, we can testify our faith in him. The disciples confessed their faith in Jesus from the beginning. (1:41,45,49) The Samaritan woman and many Samaritans from the city confessed that Jesus is the Christ and the Savior of the world. (4:29,42) Simon Peter testified that Jesus is the Holy One of God, who has words of eternal life. (6:68,69). The man born blind confessed his faith in Jesus Christ and worshipped him. (9:38) Martha testified that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God who came into the world. (11:27) The doubter Thomas also came to faith and said, "My Lord and my God!" (20:28) I know a man who was not interested in the fact that his friend almost died of anorexia. All he cared about was his own career as a future professor. But the Lord Jesus visited him and asked him through John 5:6: "Do you want to get well?" This man received Jesus as the Christ and the Son of God. Jesus changed him into a broadminded shepherd for the sheep of Jesus. Now he always testifies with joy that Jesus is the Christ and the Son of God. A woman suffered from brain cancer for half a year before she went home. But during this time she held fast to John 11:25 and encouraged her fellow men until the end of her life: "Jesus said to her: "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies." Young people in Germany and Europe must be protected from the heresies of our generation. May God use each of us as witnesses of Jesus and capable Bible teachers for the students on campus. Who is Jesus? Let us believe and testify that Jesus is the Christ and the Son of God.

3. In Jesus is the life

We can find many contrasts or repetitions in the gospel of John: Light and darkness, life and death, love and hate, faith and unbelief, salvation and judgment, truth and lies.

Words that are often repeated are: faith, love, witness, life (eternal life), glory, light and truth. Let us read 20,31: "But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name.

"...that by believing you may have life in his name." The goal of John's gospel is to receive life by believing in Jesus Christ.

Therefore, in summary, the gospel of John is the gospel of life. What is life? John 1:4 says, "In him was life, and the life was the light of men." People seek life in this world, but are disappointed again and again. In the end, death is the end of everything. But in Jesus is life. This life has nothing to do with our old, sinful life. It is a completely new life. It is eternal life. This new, eternal life does not begin after the death of a person. It begins as soon as someone believes in Jesus, the Christ and the Son of God.

This is why John 3:16 says, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish, but have eternal life." Then what is eternal life? John 17,3 says, "Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent." Eternal life consists in the knowledge of God and Christ. In the biblical sense, knowledge is not just the knowledge of God and Jesus, but the personal relationship and fellowship with God and Jesus. Eternal life is realized in the relationship to God and Jesus Christ. Whoever enters into this relationship has a part in the life of God. Quite a few people understand eternal life to be merely a life without death. But eternal life means that I have an eternal relationship with my Lord Jesus Christ. Some students claim that they do not need eternal life, no relationship with Jesus. But Jesus clearly says that whoever does not live in relationship with Him will be thrown away like a vine and thrown into the fire. (15:6)

Through the gospel of John we and our sheep recognize that Jesus is the Messiah,

the Son of God. To believe in Jesus does not only mean to say: "I believe in Jesus", but to have a personal relationship with him based on the words of Jesus. This is why John 8:31 says, "To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, „If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples.“ There are many people who think that they believe in Jesus, but their faith is not based on the words of Jesus. Rather, their faith is based on signs and mystical experiences. Those who have no root in the words of Jesus will sooner or later leave Jesus. Only those who have the Word of Jesus in their hearts will take root in Him, grow and bear fruit. That is why we need faith based on the words of Jesus. May God give us at least one word of Jesus in which we stay and have life in a close, personal relationship with Jesus.

John 5:39.40 say: "You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life." When we do the Bible study, we should not lose sight of the goal of the Bible study. The goal of Bible study is not to gain great knowledge of the Word of God, but to develop a personal relationship with Jesus. Jesus invites us to come to him and have fellowship with him. Every day he offers himself as the true food and drink so that we may have life. He wants us to hold on to His Word continuously so that we have true freedom from sin. (8:36) He wants us to have a vine-vine relationship with Himself so that we may bear fruit. (15:5) May God bless our early morning prayer and one-to-one Bible study teams, so that we and our sheep may grow in the deep love relationship with our Lord Jesus and have eternal life.

I was born in a Christian church and missionary family. In my childhood I heard a lot about Jesus. I tried very hard to be a good Christian. I took part in the church activities. Every week I wrote a testimony. But I was missing something. Physically I lived, but spiritually I was dead. It was because I was

living without a relationship with Jesus. Instead, I walked in darkness, seeking only the love of women, a little material gain and the fun of the world. My shepherd, however, helped me to study the Bible deeply during my studies. In the Bible, through Luke 23:34a, I found my Lord Jesus Christ, who forgave me all my dirty sins. When Jesus came into my heart, all my worries and desires were cast out. Joy, peace and eternal life flowed through my heart. Now I live in relationship with Jesus and it is my greatest joy to share my faith in Jesus with my friends and sheep on campus.

Today we got to know the introduction to the gospel of John. John wrote this gospel so that we may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that we may have life in His name through faith. To believe in Jesus means that I have a personal relationship with Jesus, based on my abiding by his word. Here is the key to eternal life. May God renew our faith in Jesus Christ and use us this summer semester as Bible teachers for the sheep on campus, so that they may believe in Jesus and have eternal life.

Let us read the key verse 20:31: "But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name."