

# John

## The Apostle Who Jesus Loved

### Introduction:

1. The apostle John is familiar to us because he wrote so much of the NT
  - a. He was the human author of a gospel and three epistles that bear his name as well as the book of revelation
  - b. Aside from Paul and Luke, John wrote more of the NT than any other human author
  - c. Much of what we know about John we extract from his own writings
    1. In his gospel, we see how John viewed Christ
    2. In his epistles we see how he dealt with the early church
    3. In the book of Revelation we see the future through the visions God gave him
    4. He hardly mentioned himself in his gospel
2. In medieval art John is often portrayed as a meek, mild, pale-skinned, effeminate person, lying around on Jesus' shoulder looking up at Jesus with lovie-dovie eyes. Forget that caricature
  - a. He was rugged and hard-edged just like the other disciples
  - b. He was intolerant, ambitious, zealous and as explosive as his brother
3. John is an outstanding character because of the close fellowship he had with the Lord
  - a. He also served the Lord longer than any of the other apostles
  - b. John aged well and by the work of the Holy Spirit John was eventually transformed into the apostle of love

21 And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them. 22 And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him.

1. John was the younger son of Zebedee and Salome
2. He is thought to have been the youngest of the apostles and is the one who lived the longest
3. John came from a more or less well-to-do family for his father Zebedee owned a fleet of fishing boats and hired servants to help in the lucrative fishing business
4. We do not know the reaction of Zebedee to the decision of this two boys to follow Christ
5. We do know that Salome became a follower of the Lord
  - a) *Many believe that after the boys left home that Zebedee died*
  - b) *The business was probably sold allowing Salome to be one of the women who ministered to Jesus of her substance*
6. Picture John as a man with hands hardened by toil, features bronzed by sea and storm. Strong and daring, he possessed courage equal to any emergency
7. Perhaps it was John who lead his mother to Christ and his heart must have been thrilled as he watched her sincere and growing devotion to Him

## II. FROM A DISCIPLE OF THE BAPTIST TO A DISCIPLE OF CHRIST

In 1:35 Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples; 36 And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God! 37 And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. 38 Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,)

where dwellest thou? 39 He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: for it was about the tenth hour.

1. John began as a disciple of John the Baptist
2. How long John listened to the preaching of the Baptist we do not know
3. The Baptist claimed to be the forerunner for the coming Messiah
4. When Jesus arrived a John the Baptist pointed him out, John believed and followed Christ
  - a) *John was familiar with the OT and knew about the Passover lamb and the prophecy that Christ would come like that*  
Isa 53:7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.
  - b) *When John the Baptist identified Jesus as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, John followed Jesus*
  - c) *He concealed his name in Jn 1:35, 40*  
35 Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples; 40 One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.
5. More than 20 times in the book of Revelation, John refers to Jesus as the “Lamb”

### **III. A SON OF THUNDER – Mk 9:38-40**

- Mk3:17 - And James the son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James and he surnamed them Boanerges, which is the sons of thunder.
- A. Who Would Be Greatest? – Mk 9:33-37**
- 33 And he came to Capernaum: and being in the house he asked them, What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way? 34 But they held their peace: for by the way they had disputed among themselves, who should be the greatest. 35 And he sat down, and called the twelve,

and saith unto them, If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all. 36 And he took a child, and set him in the midst of them: and when he had taken him in his arms, he said unto them, 37 Whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name, receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me.

1. James and John wanted to sit on Christ's right and left hands in the kingdom.
2. They squabbled over who was most important, who was doing the most and who would receive the largest reward.
3. Jesus knew the nature of the arguing
4. Jesus took a child and told the disciples to be like the child
5. John learned to accept second place
  - a) *Peter and John were sent to prepare the Passover – Lu 22:7*
  - b) *When Mary Magdalene realized that the stone had been rolled away, she ran to Peter and John – Jn 20:1-2*
  - c) *Peter and John went up to the temple and healed the crippled man – Acts 3:1-4*
  - d) *Later the religious leaders seized Peter and John – Acts 4:3*

## **B. A Demon Incident –vs 38-40**

38 And John answered him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbid him, because he followeth not us. 39 But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me. 40 For he that is not against us is on our part.

1. John was like the Sea of Galilee where he had made his living by fishing
  - a) *He was given to hot-terrible outbursts, tornadoes of anger*
  - b) *He was given to whirlwinds of enthusiasm so much so that Jesus name him a son of thunder*
2. James and John were intolerant and stern in their attitude toward

others

3. John saw a man using Jesus' name to cast out demons. He was not of the disciple band, but was helping others. John was intolerant and self-righteous. He ordered the healer to stop.
4. He thought Jesus would be pleased at this
5. John didn't expect Jesus' negative response
6. He thought Jesus would compliment him
7. By divine grace, the son of thunder became a son of love
8. Throughout his life, John was a vigorous defender of truth and was rigorous in standing against false teaching

## **IV. THE DISCIPLE JESUS LOVED**

### **A. A Special Friendship – Jn 20:2; 21:7, 20**

20:2 Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him.

21:7 Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his fisher's coat unto him, (for he was naked,) and did cast himself into the sea. 20 Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee?

1. John seemed to occupy first place in the heart of Jesus
2. John described himself as “the one whom Jesus loved”
3. Of course, Jesus loved all the disciples, but he loved John as he loved his own soul
4. John was the disciple who best loved Jesus and had a keen and truth insight into his Master's thought and spirit.
5. The writing of John on love is vibrant with deep heart knowledge and experience of one how had sounded its depths

6. This is the kind of friendship we see between David and Jonathan and between Paul and Timothy
7. Close friendships between men make us feel uncomfortable and suspicious because of so much open homosexuality today

### **B. A Special Request – Jn 19:26-27**

26 When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! 27 Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.

1. On the cross, Jesus commits the care of Mary, to John
  - a) *Jesus could not have given a more honorable testimony of His particular love for John than to commit his mother to John's trust and care*
  - b) *We picture John standing next to Mary and supporting her with a strong arm in the hour of her anguish*
2. Imagine how John must have felt to be entrusted with this very personal and important responsibility

### **v. A LEADER IN THE EARLY CHURCH – ACTS 8:14-15**

14 Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: 15 Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost:

1. When revival broke out in Samaria the early church looked for a couple of mature disciples to send up there
2. John was one of the ones chosen for this important mission

### **vi. A WRITER OF REPUTE**

#### **A. His Gospel**

1. In John's gospel we learn that Jesus was actually with the Father from

the beginning

2. It was John who wrote “the gospel in the nutshell” – 3:16
3. His gospel is the “gospel of conversations” – 24 conversations with 17 people
4. John wrote so people would be saved – 20:31-32

30 And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: 31 But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

## **B. His Epistles**

1. Two were written to specific people
2. 1 Jn is the epistle of love
3. John never forgot the lesson of Christ at the passover meal when he washed their feet and the new command – Jn 13:34-35

34 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. 35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

4. Five times in the epistle John says “love one another”
  - a) 3:11 *For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.*
  - b) 3:23 *And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment.*
  - c) 4:7 *Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.*
  - d) 4:11 *Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.*
  - e) 4:12 *... If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.*

### **C. Revelation**

1. There is no doubt about John's authorship of this final book of the Bible
2. He withheld his name from his gospel and epistles, but uses it 5x in Revelation
3. Probably John cared for Mary until she died then he went back to work for the Lord
4. Finally around the age of 90 a new emperor decided to renew persecution of believers. Domitian had John banished to Patmos. Imagine being afraid of a 90 yr old man
5. John received these visions while exiled on the Isle of Patmos

## **VII. A MODEL TO COPY**

### **A. John is an Example of Closeness to the Lord**

1. John loved his Master and the Master loved John
2. We need a closer walk with the Master

### **B. John is an Example of Someone Changed by the Lord**

1. John had wanted to call fire from heaven onto a Samaritan village
2. It was John who told the man to stop casting out demons in Jesus' name
3. God is able to transform us as the potter shapes the clay

### **Conclusion:**

1. Chuck Colson was a special assistant to Richard Nixon. He was a tough-minded Marine turned politician. He would do anything to "serve" the president – and in the process feather his own nest. Colson understood power and he loved it. Then something happened that he hadn't counted on. He along with several others were caught breaking into Democratic Party Headquarters in the Watergate Hotel. They were charged and sentenced to do time in prison. The president they served resigned in



disgrace. Before Chuck Colson went to prison, something else happened in his life. It was supernatural and dramatic. He was born again by the Spirit of God. Many people couldn't believe that it was true, but it was. While in prison, Colson developed a burden for other inmates. Sensing God's call on his life, he made a commitment to help these men find Christ and launched an organization called Prison Fellowship. God took a rugged, dishonest, and self-serving politician and turned him into a man who has reflected the love and compassion of Jesus Christ.