

1. John's gospel is different from the Synoptic Gospels. They present the same material from different viewpoints. John records only a small part of the material presented in the other gospels. Stories that sound similar have totally different settings, so the likelihood is that a very similar event occurred twice.
2. Other differences: John records some long conversations, but none of the parables of Jesus taught. John basically skips over Jesus' Galilean ministry, and concentrates on Christ's ministry on several different trips to Jerusalem. John's gospel was written independently of the other three.
3. (20:30, 31): "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." Many New Testament scholars believe that John wrote later than the other three. John wrote his account to fill in the blank parts and leave a record of the earlier trips to Jerusalem.
4. A great deal of research shows beyond all doubt that whoever wrote this book had an incredible knowledge of the geography and topography of Jerusalem and Judea. Eyewitness details are preserved which would have been impossible to recreate a century later because of the destruction of Jerusalem. Some of the best scholars now suggest that John's Gospel may have been the first to be written, before the destruction of the Temple in 70 AD.
5. Mark's gospel begins with Jesus' public ministry. Matthew and Luke begin before the birth of Christ. John begins his account in eternity past, before creation, when only God existed.
6. 1:1-18 is the prologue. John is writing as an apologist, committed to making sense to the philosophically trained mind of the Greeks. He uses the concept of 'logos', a word the Greeks understood as an eternal divine principle. God is not an impersonal force, but a personal God who created the world and, at a particular point in time and space, became a man and lived with us. John 14:6 is one of the most important verses in all of the Bible. "The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth."
7. Verse 18: The earliest Greek manuscripts may translate this differently than your English translation. "No one has seen God, but the only begotten God has made him known" - a confirmation that Jesus is God Himself. "The Word was with God and the Word was God."
8. John 1:1-5 gives us a glimpse of the preexistent glory of the eternal Christ. Verse 12 is good to use in helping an inquirer to understand the gospel: something to believe, and a person to receive.
9. Only John records for us the earliest encounter between Jesus and the disciples. John's modesty compels him throughout this gospel to leave his own name out.
10. The cleansing of the Temple described in John 2 is a different instance from the one which occurred on Palm Sunday at the end of Christ's ministry. This one also occurred at the time of Passover. Our understanding that Jesus' public ministry lasted about three years is based upon the notations of time and the feasts celebrated in the Book of John.
11. Christ's first recorded miracle, the changing of water into wine at the wedding in Cana, is unique to John's gospel. He picks out miracles that were left out of the other gospels. John calls the miracles "signs" - to prove Jesus' identity and to help people put their faith in Him.

1. John 3 is one of the great chapters of the Bible. It explains what it means to be 'born again'. The most important verse in the Bible: John 3:16. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life."

- A. God gave up His Son.
- B. God offers us the gift of eternal (everlasting) life.
- C. We access this life through belief in the Son. (Faith is the key.)
- D. Everyone who believes receives eternal life.

2. John 3:16 is a marvelous expression of God's love, but verses 17 and 18 remind us that we cannot separate God's love from an understanding of His justice and holiness.

3. In John 3 and 4 we find a lengthy and significant conversation between Jesus and the people He is seeking to reach. In John 3, it is Nicodemus, a rabbi and member of the Sanhedrin. In John 4, it is the woman at the well. She was a Samaritan, uneducated and immoral. By very different paths, Jesus brought both to the knowledge of Himself.

- A. To Nicodemus, a scholar, Jesus opened the Old Testament Scriptures.
 - 1) He interpreted the experience of Moses, who at God's command fashioned a brazen serpent and placed it on a pole in the wilderness.
 - 2) Jesus said to him, "You must be born again" - an important image of what happens when a person comes to faith in Christ.
- B. From the encounter with the woman at the well comes another NT image, "living water." Jesus told her of living water that could satisfy her spiritual thirst once and for all. We find this image again in John 7.
- C. The way Christ dealt with these two very different individuals is a masterful exhibition of the greatest evangelist who ever lived. For both, He kept the focus on first, His identity, and second, their sinfulness, and moral inability.

4. Jesus made a deeply theological statement: "God is a spirit and His worshippers must worship Him in spirit and in truth." Three statements in the NT that follow the formula "God is" (these statements give us a good beginning for our pursuit of theology – the study of God):

- A. The first is here, "God is a spirit."
- B. The second, I John 4:16: "God is love".
- C. The final one is in Hebrews 12:29, "God is a consuming fire."

5. Two other individuals figure prominently in today's reading. One is John the Baptist and the other is the official whose son was healed by Jesus from a distance. John the Baptist was a man of humility, yet Jesus said of him, "No greater man has ever been born of a woman." The official whose son was healed is not named, but he understood authority well enough that he obeyed Jesus when He sent him away with the assurance that his son had been healed. Arriving home he discovered his son was healed at the exact time Jesus had spoken. John calls this miracle the second "sign" that Jesus performed in Galilee.

1. The material in John chapter 5 is unique to the Gospel of John and intended to help us understand how John came to the conclusion that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.
2. Three preliminary details to address first:
 - A. John tells us the healing of the man took place at the time of a feast.
 - B. The second detail is concerning the names of the pool mentioned: Bethesda, Bethsaida, or Bethzaztha.
 - C. The third detail concerns the explanation given in verse 4 for why the man was beside the pool. The oldest, most reliable manuscripts of the Greek NT do not contain verse 4. It is most likely an attempt by an early copyist to tell readers why the invalid was at the pool.
3. John wants us to be clear about the fact that Jesus Christ boldly claimed for Himself prerogatives that belong to God alone. He healed an invalid on the Sabbath Day, provoking conflict with religious leaders. In the midst of this controversy, He was claiming equality with God, claiming to be God. When you find someone who says Jesus never claimed to be God, this is a passage to have them read.
4. Jesus called God his Father. No Jew would ever dare to do that. He also claimed He had authority to raise the dead and give life. "The time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live."
5. Finally, Jesus claims God has given Him the authority and the right to judge all men. That authority clearly belongs only to God and yet here Jesus was assuming that authority for Himself. Paul would later write in Philippians 2, "He thought it not robbery to be equal with God."
6. Jesus adds to these statements by referring to the testimony of John the Baptist, who the Pharisees acknowledged was a prophet from God, to His miracles, the Father's voice at His Baptism, and to Moses, who prophesied about the greater prophet, (Messiah) who would come.
7. The main reason for the resurrection miracles Jesus performed (Jairus' daughter, the widow's son, Lazarus) was to give credibility to His claim to be able to provide spiritual life to all who seek it in Him.
8. The feeding of the 5,000 is the only miracle except for the resurrection that is told in all 4 Gospels. John gives some details missing from the other accounts: it took place near the time of the Passover; Jesus asked Philip about feeding the people; Christ's purpose in His conversation with Philip was to 'test' him because the Lord already knew exactly what He would do; 12 basketful of leftovers were collected; the people afterward wanted to make Christ the king by force, so Jesus withdrew to the wilderness.
9. Matthew and Mark, along with John, tell the connecting story of Jesus walking on the water the night following the feeding of the 5,000. Matthew gives the fullest account, relating how Peter got out of the boat to join Jesus. The disciples found themselves unable to row across the water even though they were experienced fishermen. They were unable to accomplish the task without Christ's presence. The spiritual claims Christ makes in the rest of chapter 6 are dependent on the physical proof He offered when He created bread to feed the hungry crowd.

1. John 6:25 - chapter 7: the controversy surrounding Jesus and the growing opposition to His ministry. The Jews were actively seeking to kill Jesus. They had concluded that Jesus could not be the Messiah because He came from Galilee, but forgot that He was not born there.

2. Opposition to Jesus was because of His teaching: claimed for Himself deity, challenged their belief about how a person becomes “right” with God.
 - A. First, one is “to believe in the One that He has sent, ” according to Jesus. The religious leaders said to be right with God you had to keep the law and do good works.
 - B. Jesus explicitly took for Himself authority and privileges that belong only to God. He claimed deity.

3. Jesus had supernatural power. He was doing miracles that caused the people to believe and follow Him. If He was not God (the Pharisees were sure He was not), then He must have demonic power. So that is what they said and that is why He must die. Yet Nicodemus, one of the members of the Sanhedrin, had gone over to Jesus.

4. Jesus uses the metaphor of ‘living water’ again. Its Old Testament roots go back to the water Moses brought forth from the rock in the wilderness. John explains that He was talking about the gift of the Holy Spirit who would come to indwell all who believe in Jesus.

5. Jesus’ words about the ‘bread of life’ cause another problem because his hearers did not discern the spiritual meaning of His words. Jesus was speaking metaphorically: “I am the Bread of Life” and later “I am the vine.” He was saying to feed on Him spiritually, and drink His blood spiritually, which is what happens when we partake in a communion service, and when we trust Him for our life moment by moment.

6. This passage is the anchor of the Roman Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation, which insists that each time a priest consecrates the bread and wine of the Mass, it actually becomes the flesh and the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is what happens when you take something literally that was not so intended. The problem with this doctrine is that it means every time you celebrate communion you literally repeat the sacrifice of Christ. It compromises the New Testament assertion that the work of Christ in redemption and atonement was finished on the cross. There is nothing more to do. “It is finished.”

7. Today we read Jesus’ reference to election. He said, “No one can come to Me unless the Father draws him.” He also says in chapter 6, “All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away...and...I will lose none of all that He has given me, but raise them up at the last day.”

1. Two textual problems:
 - A. John 7:53-8:11: missing from the oldest and most reliable manuscripts of the Greek New Testament
 1. This story comes in the middle of the scroll.
 2. It is consistent with Jesus' actions, but we need to be aware of the question regarding this story.
 - B. Mark 16:9-20: possible that the very end of one the oldest (or even original) scroll of Mark's Gospel was damaged
2. This was an attempt to trap Jesus: The Roman government did not allow the Jews to carry out a death sentence. If Jesus said stone her He could be charged with breaking Roman law, but if He said release her, He could be charged with not upholding Mosaic Law (which was being 'bent').
3. Christ's response: unexpected, dispersed the crowd - no one was without sin. Jesus chose not to condemn the woman and forgave her of her sin. He did give a strong warning to go and "sin no more."
4. The main focus of chapters 8 and 9 is the incredible claims Christ made for Himself and the adamant refusal of the Jewish authorities to accept that He was the Son of God.
 - A. He claimed to be able to grant everlasting life to those who follow Him - His opponents accuse Him of being demon possessed.
 - B. He used the title "I AM" - His opponents were ready to stone Him for blasphemy.
5. The proof of Jesus' claims comes from three sources – from Himself, from His heavenly Father, and from miracles done in God's name. He backs up His claims.
6. The disciples asked the question, "Who sinned, this man or his parents that he was born blind?" The underlying attitude was that all sickness is the direct result of sin. Jesus says that some sickness may be the result of sin, some sickness has nothing to do with sin but God allows it for some reason. In this case, it was so God could be glorified in the man's healing.
7. We are told that even though Christ was teaching publicly in the Temple, and even though His enemies were determined to take Him, they were unable to do so "because His time had not yet come." God had decided when Jesus would die and no one would be able to change that timetable.
8. This miracle occurred on the Sabbath and caused controversy because the Pharisees defined this as "work." The blind man's response to the Pharisees was, "All I know is this, I was blind and now I see." The Pharisees protested they did not know where Jesus came from. The man told them, "You don't know where He came from, yet He opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners... If this man were not from God, He could do nothing." The Pharisees were the blind ones.
9. Pay attention to the very last verse of chapter 9. The Bible never directly answers the question of "What happens to an infant who dies or to a stillborn child?" Jesus may have given us a clue. He said to the Pharisees, (dealing with a very different subject, but still laying out a principle that would be useful), "If you were blind"(that is without the ability to know right from wrong) "you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains." If they were really blind, God would not hold them accountable. This verse provides a ray of light on a very troubling subject.