

1. John chapter 21 is called the epilogue to the gospel. It contains material not recorded in the other Gospels. The disciples are fishing on the Sea of Galilee, something they had not done since the beginning of Christ's ministry.
2. Jesus directs his conversation to Peter because He had denied the Lord and especially needed to be restored. All the disciples responded to Jesus' words. They all left their nets again and never returned to them as a permanent occupation. In chapter 20, Jesus called on them to receive the Holy Spirit and commissioned them to be His emissaries to the "other sheep."
3. The other Gospels tell us that at the ascension, Christ gave the disciples the 'Great Commission.' It appears that the 40 days between the resurrection and Christ's ascension were spent telling the disciples that although Christ would not be physically present with them, their job was still to take the message to the world. He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel."
4. This setting would have brought back a powerful memory to Peter. When Peter first started to follow Jesus there was another night when Peter was fishing and caught nothing. On that night, just as here, Jesus told Peter to try once more and Peter obeyed with the same results – his nets were full. That night Peter had recognized that Jesus was more than just a man.
5. They cast their net and John says they brought in exactly 153 fish. John says, 'Peter, its Jesus!' Peter jumps over the side and goes to meet Jesus.
6. The meeting centers on Peter, partly because of his leadership role with the disciples, but also because he denied Christ three times. Three times Jesus asked him, "Do you love me?" Three times Peter says he does.
7. Jesus and Peter are using different words for love. Agape is the word that Jesus used. It is the word that describes God's supernatural, unconditional love for us. Phileo is the word used by Peter. This means to love or be very fond of. Two times Jesus says, "Peter, do you love me, using agape. Both times Peter answers, "You know I am terribly fond of you." The third time Jesus uses the word "phileo" also, and it is the change of words as much as the third time that hurts Peter. He answers this time, "Lord, you know everything, you know that I love you." Peter who denied Jesus three times, is publicly restored three times.
8. John also deals with a rumor circulating in the church at the end of the first century. Some had begun to say that John would live until Christ came back. John says 'that is not exactly what Jesus said.' And he explains how the rumor got started.
9. The disciples could have related very well to Psalm 107. It is designed to elicit praise from the people of Israel as they reflect on God's goodness to them. The phrase "Let them give thanks to the Lord for His unfailing love and His wonderful deeds for men" occurs in verses 8, 15, 21 and 31.
10. The disciples had experiences very much like those described in Psalm 107, but not because they had disobeyed God. They nevertheless knew what it was like to cry out to God, and experience God's hand of deliverance.

1. 1, 2, and 3 John are some of the last New Testament books written, at the end of the 1st century in Ephesus. As far as we know, John was the only disciple to live a long life and die a natural death. He was greatly respected by the early church.
2. John opens this letter by referring to Jesus as “The Word.” He writes so we may have fellowship with Jesus and the Father. He refers to Jesus as “The Light” (which Jesus called Himself). Jesus gave a new commandment - that we love one another - and John refers to that over and over again.
3. John’s purpose in writing is to give assurance of salvation to God’s children. Many believers have no assurance of their salvation and do not realize that they can know for certain they will spend eternity with Christ in heaven.
4. John offers some tests so we can be sure that our relationship with God is genuine. If we do not pass these tests, we have no right to any assurance of our salvation.
5. The Gnostics: This heresy said it was possible to have a special knowledge of God. They thought that material things like the body were evil, while immaterial things like the soul were good, that material things will reduce themselves to dust and the spiritual part of us will return to God. They believed could do anything they wanted with their body as long as they kept their soul pure.
6. 3 tests so we can know (used 40x) we have eternal life. 1) The moral test – test of obedience. “We know that we have come to know Him if we obey His commands.” 2) The social test – the test of love. “By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” 3) The doctrinal test – the belief that Jesus Christ is God. “Who is the liar? It is the man that denies that Jesus is the Christ...”
7. The Epistle of I John - a spiral staircase that walks around these three ‘tests’ three times.
8. Sin matters. Anyone who says he is not a sinner is deluded. Anyone who says they have reached a point in their walk with God where they no longer sin, calls God a liar. John 1:9, “If we confess our sin, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sin, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”
9. In chapter 2, John says, “My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin, but if anybody does sin, we have a ‘paraclete,’ Jesus Christ the righteous one.” (King James Version uses an obscure English word, “propitiation” - to turn away wrath. Jesus turned God’s wrath away from us on the cross.
10. John recognized three different classes of believers: little children, young men, and fathers. Don’t get hung up on the gender specific language, it is incidental. The point is that the body of Christ is comprised of people who are at different stages in the spiritual development. God expects us to grow in Christ. Knowing God’s Word is essential to that.
11. The last thing to notice has to do with John’s eschatology (the study of last things). John writes, “This is the last hour and you have heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come.” We learn from this that the end times began in the New Testament era and while we are expecting an antichrist who, at the end of time, will oppose the work of God, deceive the nations and persecute the church, that kind of thing has been happening all along. What will come at the end will differ only in degree, not in kind, from what has been happening ever since the resurrection and ascension of Christ.

1. We learn that we are the children of God and John says that “When He appears, we shall be like Him.”
2. We are to live our lives so that when He appears we will stand confident and unashamed before Him. John’s comments about the end times are linked to his exhortations to live a holy life.
3. The New Testament only talks about eschatology (end times) with an ethical connection, not to satisfy our curiosity or to get us excited about hidden things. They are to remind us that because the end is near and history is going to culminate in the return of Jesus, we need to be careful how we live now.
4. When John said, “No one who lives in Him keeps on sinning”, he is not saying that after we become Christians we will never sin again. He is saying that one cannot be a follower of Christ and knowingly and habitually continue to do things that he or she knows God hates. That is the moral test.
5. John turns to the ethical or social test of love. There is a story that has come down from the first century church about when the apostle John was old, how the young men of the church would carry him to church for worship. When they did, John would whisper the same words over and over again. “Little children, love one another.” When asked why he did this, his reply was “Because if this only is done, it will be enough.”
6. In chapter 4, John gives the third test, the doctrinal one. He tells us to test the spirits with the New Testament for orthodoxy. After walking around the staircase of tests a second time, he does it yet again. He talks about love, doctrine, and obedience, in a different order.
7. The conclusion begins in chapter 5, verse 13, where John states his purpose for writing. He says, “I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.” The Gnostics were troubling the church by putting the emphasis on secret knowledge they believed made them superior. John writes about the things that we can know.
8. It is possible to be a Christian and not be sure of your relationship with God and it is also possible to presume that you are a Christian when, in fact, no relationship with God exists at all. John tells us we can be absolutely sure of our relationship with God.
9. At the beginning of verse 8, after the phrase “for there are three that testify,” you read these words: “in heaven: the Father, the Word and Holy Spirit and these three are one. And there are three that testify on earth...” and then the passage continues. These words that are found in the King James Version are not found in any of the old Greek manuscripts. They were probably not written by the apostle John.
10. John’s letter ends with the plea: “Dear children, keep yourselves from idols.” John is talking about spiritual idols.

1. 1 John is a general epistle, a letter to all Christians. 2 John and 3 John are personal letters addressed to specific individuals, “the chosen lady” and John’s friend, Gaius.
2. The word “alethia” or truth is one of John’s favorite words. It appears nine times in 2 and 3 John. He also uses the phrase “love one another”. In both 2 and 3 John, he refers to the Christian life as ‘a walk’.
3. It is possible that the ‘elect lady’ John refers to was a way of identifying a particular church, but it was probably a specific woman who had a church which met in her home. John shields her identity probably because of the times - if the letter fell into the wrong hands, it could be dangerous.
4. A common theme to the letters: The hospitality offered to traveling teachers of the Christian way. The comforts of a modern hotel were unknown then. This hospitality was sometimes open to abuse. 2 and 3 John contain instructions concerning whom to welcome and whom to refuse. Genuine Christian missionaries could be recognized by the message they brought and their motives.
5. Verse 10 of 2 John prohibits the housing or even the greeting of those who come with the intent of propagating false doctrines. Our response to cultists today, who come not to inquire but to instruct, should be guided by John’s words.
6. The book of Jude is similar to 1 Peter. It is written to warn the church about false teachers. False teaching, cults, and apostasy have always been a problem in the church.
7. Jude identifies himself as a servant of Christ and the brother of James, not the son of Zebedee. Jude was the brother of Christ.
8. Jude warns against godless men who “turn God’s grace into a license for immorality.” He appeals to Biblical history to support his warning.
9. Because of Jude’s reference to Sodom and Gomorrah, some have linked the reference to “angels who did not keep their own estate” to the mysterious passage in Genesis 6. This passage says that the comingling between the sons of God and the daughters of men was one of the things that made God angry enough to send the flood, which destroyed humanity in Noah’s day.
10. The reference to Michael the Archangel disputing with the devil about the body of Moses is unique to Jude’s letter. There is no other information about it in the Bible. The quote from Enoch the prophet of God, who is briefly mentioned in Genesis 5, is found only here in Jude.
11. The message of the three letters is clear. Be very careful of how you walk and who you listen to, because there are many false teachers who will try to pull you away from God.
12. Here is the ending of Jude, “But you, dear friends, building yourselves up in your holy faith, and praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in God’s love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life. Be merciful to those who doubt, snatch others from the fire and save them. To others show mercy mixed with fear – hating even the clothing stained by corrupt flesh. And now unto Him who is able to keep you from falling and present you by His glorious presence without fault and with great joy – to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority through Jesus Christ our Lord, by all ages, now and forevermore. Amen.”

1. In Revelation -what is going to happen at the end of the age and beyond. It is full of apocalyptic symbols and language describing persons and things that defy human description.
2. The language used in the description of Christ is drawn from Daniel's vision in Chapters 7 and 10. The words Christ speaks in Revelation 1 come from the Book of Isaiah, where they are spoken by Jehovah Himself.
3. Revelation 1:7 and Zechariah 12: "The inhabitants of Jerusalem will look upon the one that they pierced..."
4. How to approach the interpretation of Revelation:
 - A. The primary meaning is the one which would have made sense to the first century readers.
 - B. Revelation is built around a series of visions and we must not adopt any interpretive scheme that violates the integrity of that structure. Each vision begins with a reference to the Spirit of God.
 - 1) "Millennial" refers to the 1000 years at the end of human history. Christ will rule with His saints over all the earth from Jerusalem. Satan will be bound, sin will be suppressed, the earth will experience what it would have been like if sin had never entered humanity.
 - 2) Pre-millennialists believe that Christ will return before a literal millennium; A-millennialists, that the millennium signifies a spiritual, not physical, reign of Christ which is going on right now in the rule of Christ over His church; Post-millennialists, that a wonderful revival, brought upon the church by the Holy Spirit in the last days, will introduce a period of blessedness which will climax with the return of Christ.
 - C. Interpret what is obscure in light of what is plain, not the other way around.
5. Vision 1 begins in 1:9 and covers Chapters 1-3. John sees the glorified Christ walking in the midst of the lampstands, representing 7 churches in Asia Minor. There is a clearly identifiable pattern in each of the 7 messages: a description of Christ, followed by a commendation, then a condemnation, a call to repentance, and a warning, concluding with a promise that begins with the words, "He who has an ear, let him hear."
6. The letter to the church at Smyrna differs slightly because it contains no condemnation.
7. The Nicolaitans, mentioned in the letter to the Ephesian and Pergamum churches: We have no other knowledge of this group. The early church had an enormous problem with false teachers and apostasy.
8. Some have attempted to see these letters as a kind of prophetic tour through the history of the church: The characteristics of these churches are representative of the church through history (the 1st century church representing the church at Ephesus, moving to the lukewarm church of Laodicea, representing the 21st century church).
9. Preterists believe this book addresses only the church of the first century and has no prophetic significance for us. Historicists believe it deals with prophecies relating to the various periods of church history. Futurists believe that most of, or even all, of Revelation relates to end time events was written for us.
10. Each of the seven churches was a real church and this was written primarily to the real churches that existed in John's day.
11. Revelation was written while John was in exile on the island of Patmos. When his exile ended, John went to Ephesus, where he lived the rest of his life.