

# JOHN

Extremes meet in the Jesus of John's Gospel. Jesus' divinity shines through more clearly than in any other gospel, with Jesus being clearly identified with God the Father, having intimate insight into the thoughts of others, and remaining in complete control even during his crucifixion and death. At the same time, this gospel shows Jesus at his most human: He is the Word made flesh who speaks at length of eating his flesh and drinking his blood and who retains the wounds of the crucifixion even in his resurrected body.

A pressing question about the Gospel of John is why it is so different from the other three gospels. While John provides additional teachings and events from Jesus' life, it also a different type of gospel, offering a theological interpretation to a community already familiar with the stories and actions of Jesus. For instance, all of the gospels share the story of Jesus' death and resurrection, but in John, we see a more robust development of the doctrine of the incarnation.

While John's Greek is regularly correct, it is rarely complex. This lack of linguistic complexity belies John's literary complexity. John uses several motifs such as light and dark, life and death, and descent and ascent.

Jesus does not use parables in John, but the narrative itself has several levels of meaning. This gospel makes use of a lot of complex symbolism, and nearly all events and people in the gospel point beyond themselves to something else. For instance, Martha is not only a historical figure but also a character who represents all believers; Thomas is not only a disciple but an allegory for all doubters.

ΛΟΓΟΣ

John identifies Jesus with God more explicitly than the other three gospels, such as with the "I am" statements. But it also emphasizes Jesus' humanity, as the divine Word becomes flesh.

Jewish festivals play a prominent role in John. While they serve the literal purpose of gathering people around Jesus, they figuratively show Jesus as the fullness of what these festivals represent. For example, John has Jesus' death occur simultaneously with the slaughter of the Passover lambs in order to identify Jesus clearly as the Lamb of God.