

# Gospel of John

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In the Beginning

# Resources

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- [Formed.org](https://www.formed.org/) for Videos
- The Gospel of John – Catholic Commentary on Sacred Scripture  
– Francis Martin & William M. Wright IV

# Why is this Gospel Important

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- Understanding the New Testament in light of the old
- You cannot understand the Old without the New
  - John points to Genesis
  - Genesis helps understand John
- Why should we learn about the Gospel of John – for our prayer life?

# Who Wrote the Gospel?

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- Anonymous, but most likely the Apostle – John
  - Supported by St. Clement, St. Ireneaus, Eusebius
  - Very close to Jesus
  - At the foot of the cross – Witness to His suffering
  - At the tomb/resurrection – Witness to His resurrection
  - Youngest – lived the longest
  - Lived with the Blessed Mother (what did they talk about?)
  - Similar in style to the Letters of John

# Why was it written?

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- Audience: Hellenists; mixed-raced (Jewish and Greco-Roman)
  - Written in Greek
  - Language indicates a gentile audience, but Jewish indications as well
    - A lot of old testament references
    - 'Logos' is Greek/philosophical
    - Dark and Light – Jewish monastic thought (Essenes)
- Between 70AD and 90AD (not likely earlier) – most likely after the destruction of the Temple in 70AD

# Why was it written?

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- Purpose: The Lamb of God takes away the sins of the world
  - Believe in Him!! **Have eternal life!!**
  - Jesus revealed God the Father through His life and ministry
  - Intimacy of God is revealed in Christ
  - Eternal life (*zoe*) is different from life (*bios*)
  - To convince the reader/hearer of the truth of the gospel – for eternal life

# Unique to this Gospel

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Different from the Synoptics (Matthew, Mark, Luke)

- 92% of the material is unique
- Same basic story, told in an intentionally different order
- Makes explicit what is implicit in the Synoptics
  - Ex. Jesus is The Son
- Long discourses instead of parables
- Jesus' ministry is over 3 years instead of 1 year

# Unique in Scripture

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- No Year of John in the Lectionary – Supplements with unique information throughout the other years
  - Used for Christmas Day
  - Passion narrative and Easter week (after the Resurrection)
  - Bread of Life discourse
- Provides a glimpse of the inner life of God



# Style

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- In the style of the Greek 'bios' – *Who* is this person?
- Sometimes called the 'Gospel from Above'
- Intimate Gospel
  - God & His People; Christ & His disciples; Christ & His Church
  - Incarnation is the ultimate intimacy – God coming 'down'
  - Written by the disciple 'Whom Jesus loved' – we can all be this disciple

# Themes

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- Pairs of Opposites
  - Light and Darkness
  - Water and Life
  - Life and Death
  - Spiritual and Biological Life
- Vocabulary – Greek offers words that mean multiple things, John uses these strategically to point to deeper meanings
- Misunderstanding – People don't understand Jesus, so He elaborates

# Theology

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- Jesus' life/mission is grounded in His relationship with The Father
  - See the Son, you see the Father
  - The Father gives all to the Son, the Son gives all to The Father
- Incarnation – God's love saves the world
  - God's intimacy with His people
  - People are invited to accept or reject Jesus & this communion
  - Communion is reflected in the Church
    - Unity / Communion
    - Love
    - Sent

# Small Group

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- Have you read the Gospel of John before start to finish?
- What do you think of this Gospel?
  - Easy or hard to read?
  - What do you think of the poetry in the first verses?

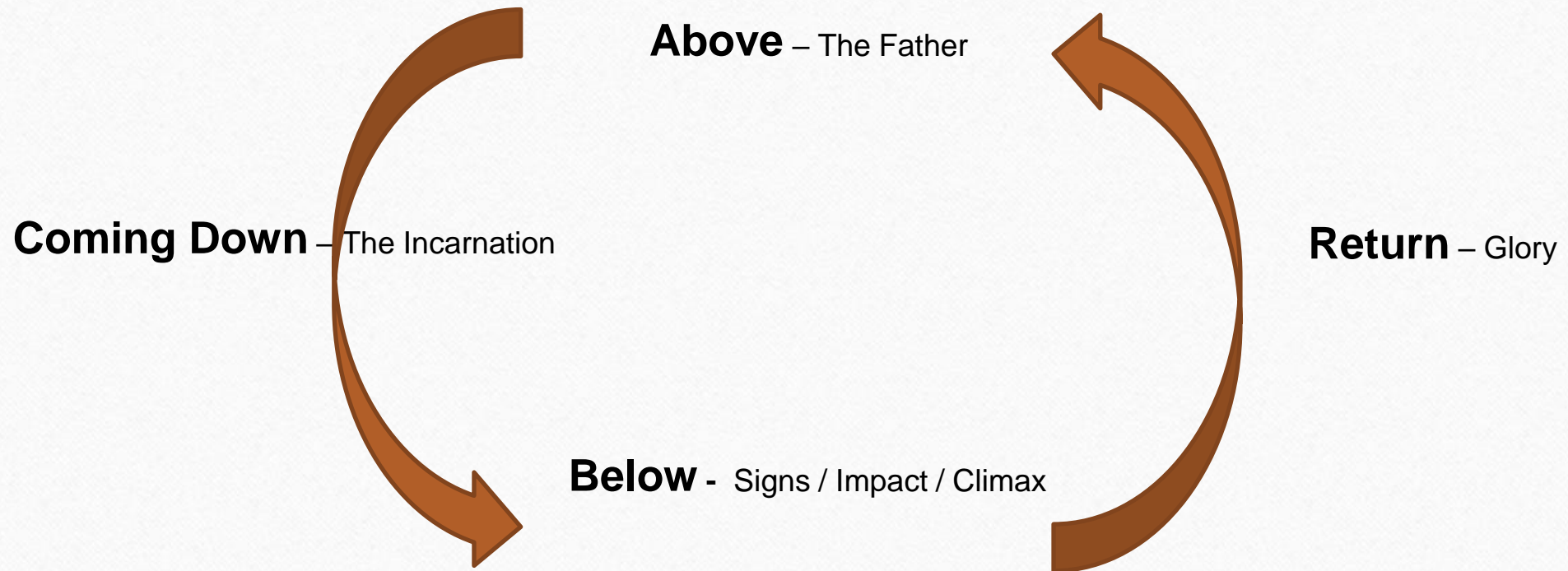
# Structure

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- Prologue (1: 1-18) - Above
- Book of Signs (Chapter 2 – Chapter 11) – Coming Down
  - Each sign is followed by discourse
- Book of Glory (Chapter 12 – 20) – nearing the Climax, then going back above
  - Upper room discourse (ch 13-17)
- Appendix (Chapter 21) – Appearances; ‘other things not written’
- **Look for the Seven ‘I Am’s - show equality with God**

# Structure

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# Above

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- The Word is the totality of Who God is
- Everything about Jesus invites us to believe in Him
  - He is truly God
  - There is a distinction between The Father and The Word
  - Gen 1; Ps 33:6-7 (by His Word, the world was made)
  - The Trinity, Who has come 'down'
  - Redeeming the creation that was lost to darkness

# Book of Signs

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- Signs, not Miracles – Signs point to something greater
- Deeper reality to everything – The Glory of God is revealed
- Impact – Changed forever
- Growing towards climax, a crescendo



# Signs (pointing to the Climax)

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- Wedding at Cana - Water into Wine – Beginning of everything
  - Nicodemus
- Healing of the official's son (chpt 4)
  - Faith and the power of God's Word (the Logos)
- Healing of the man lame 38 years – controversy begins here
- Feeding of the 5000 - Controversy intensifies, people begin to leave
- Jesus walks on water
- Healing of the man born blind
- Raising of Lazarus – They sought to kill him (and Lazarus) – Starts towards Glory and going 'above'

# Book of Glory

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- Pointing to “The Hour” – the event of our salvation to the Passion/Death/Resurrection
- The signs are over, so the crowd begins diminishing
- Begins with the betrayal of Judas, then the Washing of the Feet
  - Christ is glorified in his humility, in service
  - The towel ‘of humanity’ – Incarnation is ‘touching’ the filth of humanity
  - Gives his life for others, but in a hidden way
- Ends with His Ascension and Glorification in Heaven

# Book of Glory

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## The Farewell Discourse

- It is necessary for Jesus to leave
  - Ch 14 – let your hearts not be troubled
  - His glory will be self giving through the cross
- Mix of speaking with the disciples and Prayer to the Father
- Moves through the passion, death and resurrection

# The Seven 'I Am's Invoking His Divinity

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- I Am the Bread of Life
- I Am the Light of the World
- I Am the Door of the sheep
- I Am the Good Shepherd
- I Am the Resurrection and the Life
- I Am the Way, the Truth and the Light
- I Am the Vine

# Small Group Questions

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- What do you think about this idea of ‘intimacy with God’?
- How can Christ help you to grow closer to The Father?
- Is it hard to believe in Christ today?