

Theme and Summary of the Gospel of John  
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Theme: The grace and truth revealed in Jesus leads to everlasting life when we believe.

Introduction: The Gospel of John was written for the purpose that one might see grace and truth in Christ's works and teachings and believe unto life eternal. John states that what he selected to include in his Gospel narrative was for this goal in John 20:30-31:

“And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: 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.”

The first 14 verses of chapter one give us a complete synopsis of the book: Jesus Christ is equated with God the Father, He is life, He is the light of men, He was uplifted by John the Baptist, He was rejected by men in general and by His own (Jews), He was received by some, and because He dwelt among us we were able to see the glory of His grace and truth. These themes are repeated throughout the narrative, masterfully filling in the details of John's theme as stated John 1:14, “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.”

Let's take a birds-eye-view of the Gospel of John and see the glory of the Lord's grace and truth.

- I. Christ's grace and truth is revealed that we might believe in Christ the messiah unto life eternal (John 1:1 - John 12:50):
  - A. In chapter 1, John the Baptist testified of His grace: “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (1:29),
  - B. In chapter 2, Jesus' disciples saw His grace as they beheld the beginning of Jesus' miracles in Galilee: “And manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on Him” (2:11),
  - C. In chapter 3, Nicodemus saw His grace and truth as he learned of Christ's purpose for coming: “For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved” (3:17, cf. 3:16),
  - D. In chapter 4, the Samaritan woman saw His grace and truth as she talked with the Messiah about living water: “but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life (4:14). And the nobleman saw His grace as he believed Jesus' word and found his son healed: “And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken”(4:50),

E. In chapter 5, the impotent man saw His grace as he was healed, and the Jews saw His grace and truth as they heard Jesus' subsequent teaching:

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life” (5:24),

F. In chapter 6, the 5000 saw His grace and truth as Jesus divided the 5 loaves and 2 fish to feed them all and then taught the next day that He is the Bread of life

“And this is the will of Him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life” (6:40),

G. In chapter 7, the common people and the Jewish leaders saw His grace and truth as Jesus taught in the temple: “and the Jews marveled, saying, how knoweth this man letters, having never learned” (7:15) “If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water” (7:37-38),

H. In chapter 8, the woman taken in adultery saw His grace as Jesus forgave her and then His disciples saw His truth as He revealed that He is the light of the world: “I am the Light of the world: he that followeth after me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life” (8:12),

I. In chapter 9, the man born blind saw His grace as Jesus healed the man as he obeyed the command of Christ, then Jesus revealed the truth that he is the light of the world to his disciples: “Doest thou believe on the Son of God? . . . Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee. And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him.” (9:35-38),

J. In chapter 10, the Pharisees saw His grace and truth as Jesus spoke in parables, revealing himself as both the door of the sheep and the good shepherd (John 10),

K. In chapter 11, Lazarus and his sisters saw His grace as Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, Martha also learned that Jesus is “the resurrection and the life” and “he that believeth in (Christ), though he were dead, yet shall he live” (11:25),

L. In chapter 12, Many saw His grace and truth as He taught and when God spoke from heaven: “Believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light” (12:36).

II. Christ grace and truth is revealed to believers that they might serve him and bring glory to God the Father (John 13-21):

- A. In chapter 13, the disciples saw His grace and truth as Jesus gave an example of humble service and gave a new command: “That ye love one another; as I have love you, that ye also love one another.”
- B. In chapter 14, the disciples saw His grace and truth as Jesus reveals the Father and promises to send the comforter (Holy Spirit) as He challenges them to keep His commandments if they love Him.
- C. In chapter 15, the disciples saw His grace and truth as Jesus reveals that they must abide in Him as the true vine if they are to have fruitful lives of service that glorify God.
- D. In chapter 16, the disciples saw His grace and truth as Jesus prepares them for His departure and the necessity of dependence on the Holy Spirit in the future to lead them into all truth.
- E. In chapter 17, the disciples saw His grace and truth as Jesus prays for them that the Father would keep them from the corruption of the world.
- F. In chapter 18 & 19, the disciples saw His grace and truth as Jesus submitted to the Father’s will and laid His life down willingly to give His life a ransom for many.
- G. In chapter 20, the disciples saw His grace and truth as Jesus revealed himself to them after His resurrection and prepared them for service (John 20).
- H. In chapter 21, the disciples saw His grace and truth as Jesus restored Peter after he had denied Him three times.

Conclusion: Various forms of the word *believe* occurs 101 times in 86 verses in John’s gospel. Throughout the book there is a contrast between those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and those who don’t. John 3:36 clearly sets forth this contrast, “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth of him.” Do you have life? Or are you under the wrath of God. If you are under God’s wrath, having never believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, you still have time to choose life in the Lord Jesus Christ by believing on Him. He is a Glorious Savior full of grace and truth. Will you experience His grace and truth today by calling upon His name? And if you know Him, will you not dedicate yourself to serve Him, to love Him, and to obey Him, for he has given himself for you that ye might have eternal life?

Bibliography: A careful reading of the Gospel of John.