

My Favorite Thing About JOHN

John 20:31

October 23, 2021

Today the book of John.

Once again, the author of the book is not identified within the text. Early church tradition identifies John, *“the beloved disciple”* as the author and it is widely believed that it was the final book of the New Testament to be written = between **95-100 AD** from Ephesus.

My Favorite Thing About JOHN is The Deity of Jesus – the Great “I AM”.

The central theme of John’s Gospel is that Jesus is the Son of God. *“In the beginning was the Word..... not just any word, but the self-existent, eternal Word. Nothing exists without this Word. He is life and light and He came to shine light in the darkness.... That same Word became flesh and lived among us. We beheld His glory. He was full of grace and Truth And His name is Jesus. No one has ever seen God, but Jesus came to reveal Him to us.”*

Right from the beginning, John proclaims that what Jesus is – God is. To see Jesus in action was to see the Father in action:

- **Ellen White {LHU 26.6}** - In word and in deed the Messiah, during His earthly ministry, was to reveal to mankind the glory of God the Father. Every act of His life, every word spoken, every miracle wrought, was to make known to fallen humanity the infinite love of God. . .

John highlighted seven *“signs”* in his book:

- Water Turned to Wine ([John 2:1-11](#))
- Healing of the Nobleman’s Son ([John 4:46-54](#))
- Healing of the Lame Man at the Pool ([John 5:1-17](#))
- Feeding of the Five Thousand ([John 6:1-15](#))
- Walking on the Water ([John 6:16-21](#))
- Healing of the Man Born Blind ([John 9:1-41](#))
- Raising of Lazarus from the Dead ([John 11:1-47](#))

Every *“sign”* added evidence to John’s assertion regarding Jesus’ Divinity and he selected them specifically for their ability to help his readers believe that Jesus is who He claimed to be.

- **John 20:30-31** - Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. ³¹ But 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.

In addition to the seven *“signs”*, John records the *“I AM”* statements of Jesus - which do not occur in the other Gospels. Before we look at those statements, let’s go to the Old Testament:

- **Exodus 3:13-14** - Moses said to God, "Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' Then what shall I tell them?" ¹⁴ God said to Moses, **"I AM WHO I AM.** This is what you are to say to the Israelites: **'I AM'** has sent me to you."

Ellen White says straight up that Jesus is the *“I AM”* Moses encountered at the burning bush {DA 24.3}, but let’s see what the Bible has to say.

The Bread of Life - John 6:1-35

Jesus had recently fed the 5000 and casually walked on water. He was now on the other side of the Lake. The people there wanted to know how He got there. He responded by saying, *“I know that you only follow me around in order to get a free meal. Be more concerned about the food that leads to eternal life. Food that only I can give you.”* The crowd didn’t understand and asked again for a miraculous sign as proof that He was who He claimed to be - They even brought up the manna their forefathers had eaten in the wilderness...

I AM the Bread of Life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty.

The Light of The World – John 8:1-59

Jesus was in the Temple when the scribes and Pharisees came to Him with a woman who had been caught in adultery. They were looking for a way to trap Him, but as always, Jesus did something they didn't expect – He began writing their own sins in the dirt.... The encounter ended with not a scribe or Pharisee in sight. Jesus looked at the woman and said, ***“There is no one here to condemn you. I don't condemn you either. Go and sin no more.”***

When Jesus spoke again, he said, **“I AM the Light of the World.”**

He followed that declaration with an invitation — ***“Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”***

Jesus was not claiming to be ***“a light”*** He was claiming to be ***“The Light”***. He was declaring Himself to be the Messiah – the only One who can pierce the darkness of sin {see Is 49:6}.

The Religious Leaders knew exactly what He meant which is why it provoked such a heated response. Their pride prevented them from accepting Jesus for **WHO** He claimed to be and instead, they looked for a way to discredit Him.... ***“Now we know that you are demon-possessed! Abraham died and so did the prophets, yet you say that if anyone keeps your word, he will never taste death. Are you greater than our father Abraham? He died, and so did the prophets. Who do you think you are?”*** {52-53}

“I tell you the truth,” Jesus answered, **“before Abraham was born, I AM!”**

- **Ellen White {DA 469.4-5}** - ... Silence fell upon the vast assembly. The name of God, given to Moses to express the idea of the eternal presence, had been claimed as His own by this Galilean Rabbi. He had announced Himself to be the self-existent One, He who had been promised to Israel, "whose goings forth have been from of old, from the days of eternity." {Micah 5:2}

And so, those who claimed to be the Children of Abraham and followers of the Old Testament God, picked up stones to kill Him....

The Gate and The Good Shepherd – John 9:1–10:18

Jesus had just healed a young man blind from birth, which resulted in the young man being kicked out of the Temple. Jesus and the religious leaders, once again, got into a heated debate regarding the nature of true blindness. ***“The real problem,”*** Jesus said, ***“is that you don't think you're blind – there is no cure for a blind man who insists that he can see.”***

Jesus followed this comment by stating that only thieves and robbers go over the wall of the sheep fold instead of going through the gate. The true shepherd goes through the gate and the sheep recognize his voice and follow him.

I AM the Gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out and find pasture. {see Acts 4:12}

But Jesus didn't stop there....

I AM the Good Shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. And I have other sheep, that are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will heed my voice. So, there shall be one flock, one shepherd. For this reason, the Father loves me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again; this charge I have received from my Father.

Please don't miss this – Jesus knew full well what was coming. The cross wasn't a tragic mistake. It didn't ***“happen”*** to Him and He wasn't a victim of circumstance. Jesus died because He deliberately chose to lay down His life - because there was no other way to save the sheep – ***all the sheep*** – who hear His voice and obey.

- **Oswald Chambers** – The death of Jesus was not the death of a martyr; it was the revelation of the Eternal heart of God.

The Resurrection and The Life – John 11:1-26

Lazarus had been sick and Jesus chose not to intervene. Now Lazarus was dead. His sisters threw some accusations Jesus' way, ***“If you had been here, my brother would not have died.”***

Jesus was moved by their sorrow and then He turned death on its head.....

“I AM the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die.”

This was an amazing statement – a promise full of hope and power. They say there are only 2 guarantees in life: death and taxes, but for followers of Jesus, death is just sleep – a moment.... a blink of an eye.... a blip on the screen of eternity.

Turning, Jesus looked at the tomb and commanded Lazarus to come out ---- and he did! Promise made. Promise fulfilled.

- **1 Thessalonians 4:16-18** - For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of *the* archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore comfort one another with these words.

The Way, the Truth, and the Life – John 14:1-6:

Supper was winding down and Jesus had only a few hours left with His disciples. Peter denied that he would deny Jesus: *“I will lay down my life for you!”* Knowing the pain and shame the next few hours would bring, Jesus made a powerful statement:

- **John 14:1-3** - Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. ² In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.

Thomas didn't understand, *“Lord, we don't know the way, so how can we know where you are going?”*

I AM the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

Jesus did not say, *“I am A way (one of many) or A truth (one of many) or A life (one of many)”*. He could not have been more clear. He is the **ONLY** way, truth and life. To reject Him is to reject eternal life.

Concluding His remarks, Jesus said, *“Get up, let's go.”* And they began to make their way to the Garden of Gethsemane. As they walked through the vineyards, Jesus spoke again to His disciples:

The Vine – John 15:1-5

I AM the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

Vines only produce grapes because they remain connected to their source of life. So, it is with the Christian. Fruitful Christians are only fruitful when they stay connected to their source of life – Jesus.

I Am - John 18:4-6:

Jesus had endured Gethsemane and now the time has come – Judas and the mob, came into the Garden carrying torches and weapons and Jesus walked out to meet them: *“Who are you looking for,”* He asked. *“Jesus of Nazareth,”* they replied.

I AM. Jesus said, and the mob drew back and fell to the ground. {The original Greek says simply: “I AM”. The word “he” does not appear. It is implied}.

What a simple, yet staggering response, *“I Am”*

- **Ellen White {DA 694.5-6}** - As these words were spoken, the angel who had lately ministered to Jesus moved between Him and the mob. A divine light illuminated the Saviour's face, and a dovelike form overshadowed Him. In the presence of this divine glory, the murderous throng could not stand for a moment. They staggered back. Priests, elders, soldiers, and even Judas, fell as dead men to the ground.
The angel withdrew, and the light faded away. Jesus had opportunity to escape, but He remained, calm and self-possessed. As one glorified, He stood in the midst of that hardened band, now prostrate and helpless at His feet. The disciples looked on, silent with wonder and awe.

And with that.... the Bread, the Light, the Gate, the Good Shepherd, the Resurrection, the Way, the Truth and the Life.... The Great “I AM”, allowed Himself to be led away.

John 20:31 - But 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.