

## JOHN, THE DISCIPLE WHOM JESUS LOVED

Text: John 21:20, 24

INTRO: John, in his account of the gospel, never mentions himself by name. He refers to himself & to his brother James in 21:2 as the sons of Zebedee.

Most frequently, he refers to himself as the disciple whom Jesus loved, 13:23; 19:26; 20:2; 21:7, 20.

The N.T. reveals so many things about John that in this lesson, we will not be able to examine each of them, but we will look at several of the interesting aspects of the life of this beloved apostle.

### I. HE CAME FROM A WEALTHY & PROMINENT FAMILY.

A. John & his family were partners with Peter & Andrew in what was apparently a prosperous fishing business.

READ LUKE 5:1-10.

B. They had hired servants, Mark 1:20.

C. John's mother, Salome, was one of the women who "followed Jesus from Galilee" & "who provided for Him from their substance." See MT 27:55-56; LK 8:1-3.

D. John was apparently on good terms with Caiaphas, the high priest, JN 18:15.

E. It is likely that John's mother was a sister to Mary, the mother of Jesus. Compare MT 27:55-56, MK 15:40-41 & John 19:25.

## II. JOHN WAS A DISCIPLE OF JOHN THE BAPTIST BEFORE BECOMING A DISCIPLE OF JESUS.

READ JOHN 1:35-40

A. Later, he received a "permanent" call & left all to follow Jesus.

Mark 1:20, And immediately He called [James & John] & they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants & went after Him.

Luke 5:9, 11, [Peter] & all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish which they had taken... So when [Peter, Andrew, James & John] had brot their boats to land they forsook all & followed Him.

B. Still later these 4 along with 8 others were appointed as official representatives or apostles of Jesus & sent out to preach the message that John B & Jesus had already been preaching from city to city: Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand, Matt. 10:1-8.

III. JOHN WAS NOT ONLY AN APOSTLE, BUT ONE OF THE 3 MEN WHO MADE UP JESUS' "INNER CIRCLE."

- A. It was Peter, James & John who were present when Jesus raised a young girl from the dead, LK 8:51.
- B. These 3 were with Him on the Mount of Transfiguration, Mark 9:2.
- C. Again they went farthest with Him into Gethsemane, Mark 14:32-33.
- D. These 3 along with Andrew, asked the question that led to Jesus' famous discourse on the Mount of Olives, recorded in Matt 24, Mark 13 & Luke 21.
- E. It had been Peter & John that Jesus had sent ahead to prepare the Passover, Luke 22:8.
- F. These 2 were apparently life-long friends. They, along with James, the brother of Jesus, became "pillars" in the church in Jerusalem, Gal. 2:9.
- G. John had to be rebuked from time to time, but he never questioned Christ's love for him, nor allowed his disappointments to threaten his commitment to Christ.

1. When he had forbidden an unknown disciple from casting out demons in Jesus' name, LK 9:49-50

2. When he & James wanted to call down fire from heaven to destroy a Samaritan village where they had been refused lodging, LK 9:55.

3. When he & James along with their mother had asked that they be given special places of honor in His kingdom, MT 20:22.

H. John was the one man on earth Jesus chose to take care of His mother till her death, John 19:26-27.

#### IV. JOHN, LIKE THE OTHER APOSTLES & MANY OTHER EARLY CHRISTIANS, SUFFERED NUMEROUS SEVERE FORMS OF PERSECUTION.

A. Imprisonment, Acts 4:3, 18-21

B. Beatings, Acts 5:40

C. Exile, Rev 1:9

D. Probably death.

Mark 10:39, Jesus said to [James & John], "You will indeed drink the cup that I drink, & with the baptism I am baptized with, you will be baptized"

1. James was executed by King Herod Agrippa, I, Acts 12:2

2. We have no record or certain knowledge of John's death. Tradition says he alone died a natural death, but Mark 10:39 probably indicates that he too suffered martyrdom.

#### V. JOHN WAS INSPIRED TO WRITE 5 BOOKS OF THE N.T.

- A. Early traditions are universal in placing him in Ephesus after the destruction of Jerusalem.

1. External evidence seems to favor a date for the book of Rev about 96 AD.

2. John's other writings were probably written around 78-80, or later.

#### VI. JOHN'S ACCOUNT OF THE GOSPEL.

- A. Probably written around 80 AD. If so, the other accounts (MT, MK, LK) had probably been circulating throughout the world more than 20 years.

- B. John, for the most part, recorded events & details omitted in the other 3 accounts.

1. Of course, he recorded much about the crucifixion & resurrection, just as the other 3 writers did.

2. He mentions the feeding of the 5,000, but adds significant details the others did not mention.

3. He recorded Jesus' walking on water. Otherwise, he primarily covers new territory.

4. John alone mentions the pre-existence of Jesus. He alone refers to Jesus as "the Word." This probably stems from the fact that the sect of Gnostics had already arisen challenging Jesus' Deity.

C. Unlike the others, John was an eyewitness of ALL He recorded about the incidents of Jesus' ministry.

D. The other gospel writers use the word "Jew" rather sparingly--& always in its national or racial sense--Jew, as opposed to Gentile. They wrote before the destruction of Jerusalem when the vast majority of Christians were of Jewish extraction.

E. John, writing after the destruction of Jerusalem, used the word "Jew" frequently--& always in a religious sense--Jews as opposed to Christians, Samaritans, or pagans.

F. John seems to imply that miracles had ceased--or at least, that those who read his book would not be likely to experience one, John 20:30-31.

G. He insists that his eye-witness account is sufficient to produce saving faith in the hearts of all who are willing to accept Jesus as God's Son & anointed King.

1. Jesus' kingdom is not of this world, not worldly or political, John 18:36-37.

2. Citizenship in Christ's kingdom is not determined by fleshly relationships, JOHN 1:11-13; 3:1-8

Exton, PA, April 2, 1989

Shiloh, Mexia, TX, September 13, 1992

Susquehanna, Marietta, PA, December 7, 1997

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