



**Lecture # 10 Part 1**

# INTRODUCTION TO JOHN

## I. OPENING STATEMENTS

- A. Matthew and Luke begin with Jesus' birth, Mark begins with His baptism, but John begins before the creation.
- B. John presents the full deity of Jesus of Nazareth from the first verse of the first chapter and repeats this emphasis throughout the Gospel. The Synoptic Gospels veil this truth until late in their presentations (“**The Messianic Secret**”).
- C. Apparently John develops his Gospel in light of the basic affirmations of the Synoptic Gospels. He attempts to supplement and interpret the life and teachings of Jesus in light of the needs of the early church (late first century). He was the last apostolic witness.
- D. John seems to structure his presentation of Jesus the Messiah around
  - 1. seven miracles/signs and their interpretation;
  - 2. twenty seven interviews and/or dialogues with individuals;
  - 3. certain worship and feast days
    - a. the Sabbath
    - b. the Passover (cf. [John chapters 5–6](#))
    - c. the Tabernacles (cf. [John chapters 7–10](#))
    - d. Hanukkah (cf. [John 10:22–39](#))
  - 4. “**I Am**” statements
    - a. related to the divine name (YHWH)
      - 1) I am He ([John 4:26](#); [John 8:24, 28](#); [John 13:19](#); [John 18:5–6](#))
      - 2) before Abraham was I am ([John 8:54–59](#))
    - b. with predicate nominatives
      - 1) I am the bread of life ([John 6:35, 41, 48, 51](#))
      - 2) I am the light of the world ([John 8:12](#))
      - 3) I am the door of the sheepfold ([John 10:7, 9](#))
      - 4) I am the good shepherd ([John 10:11, 14](#))
      - 5) I am the resurrection and the life ([John 11:25](#))
      - 6) I am the way, the truth and the life ([John 14:6](#))
      - 7) I am the true vine ([John 15:1, 5](#))



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- E. The differences between John and the other Gospels
1. Although it is true that John's primary purpose is theological, his use of history and geography is extremely accurate and detailed. The exact reason for the discrepancies between the Synoptics and John is uncertain.
    - a. an early Judean ministry (early cleansing of the Temple)
    - b. chronology and date of the last week of Jesus' life
  2. It would be helpful to take a moment to discuss the obvious difference between John and the Synoptics. Let me quote **George Eldon Ladd** from *A Theology of the New Testament* on the differences:
    - a. "The Fourth Gospel is so different from the Synoptics that the question must be honestly faced whether it reports accurately the teachings of Jesus or whether Christian faith has so modified the tradition that history is swallowed up in theological interpretation" (p. 215).
    - b. "The solution that lies closest to hand is that the teachings of Jesus are expressed in Johannine idiom. If this is the correct solution, and if we must conclude that the Fourth Gospel is couched in Johannine idiom, this important question follows: To what extent is the theology of the Fourth Gospel that of John rather than that of Jesus? To what extent has the teaching of Jesus been so assimilated in John's mind that what we have is a Johannine interpretation rather than an accurate representation of Jesus' own teaching?" (p. 215).