



1. Who is the writer and/or speaker ?
2. When was it written and/or said ?
3. To whom was it written and/or said ?
4. What are the major natural divisions ?
5. What is the repeated key word ?
6. What simple phrase sums it all up ?
7. What is the application to my life today ?

The Gospel according to John

1. **The writer :** The apostle John hides behind the title “the disciple whom Jesus loved” (13v23, 19v26, 20v2, 21v7, 20 & 24) or “the other disciple” (18v15, 16, 20v4, 8 and probably 1v37 & 40), but he identifies himself in 21v24. The absence of his name in all the Gospel reinforces this conclusion. And the three epistles of John which focus on the love of God are written by the same hand. The style of the Greek of the Revelation written by John (Rev1v1) and his key phrases (Jn1v1 & Rev19v13) lend also to the authenticity of this Gospel. John was from a family of fishermen (Mt4v21) associated with the family of Peter and Andrew (Lk5v10). He and his brother James had the reputation as “sons of thunder” (Mk3v17) because of their angry outbursts (Lk9v54 & Mk9v38). Their father Zebedee had employees (Mk1v20) and probably a house in Jerusalem (Jn19v27 & Mt27v56). Their mother was called Salome (Mt27v56 & Mk15v41). Known by the High Priest (Jn18v15) John came back to follow Jesus after his flight (Mt26v56). His choleric character changed after the Cross (1Jn4v7) where he saw the love of God (Jn3v16 & 4v16). He & Peter are associates in the early Church (Ac1v13,3v1,3,11,4v13,19,8v14).
2. **The date :** As in the other Gospels there is no mention of the destruction of Jerusalem in the year 70 so it is obvious that John wrote very early. Chapter 1 is a response to the doctrine of the Essenes from the region of the Dead Sea. This cult did not exist after the fall of Jerusalem. Therefore a date between the year 50 and 60 seems the most reasonable.
3. **The readers :** John addresses those who are already sensitive to spiritual things. His Gospel is not an introduction to the subject, but deeper study from an intimate point of view. This Gospel rarely recounts the same details as the three others. Only John 6, 7v1, 12v12-19, 13v21-28, 18v1-20v25 are in common. The rest is unique to John. He addresses his readers as if they are not Jewish (2v6, 13, 3v1, 4v9, 5v1, 6v4, 7v2, 11v55, 18v20 & 19v40). Like the Gospel of Mark, the reader doesn’t need a Bible knowledge to understand it.
4. **The divisions :** Four STEPS on the way to believe (trust) the Lord Jesus Christ -
 - i. Believe because of the witnesses, ch 1-3 (key verse 1v7)
 - ii. Believe because of His Word, ch 4-11 (key verse 4v41)
 - iii. Believe because of His followers, ch 12-17 (key verse 17v21)
 - iv. Believe because of the Gospel, ch 18-21 (key verse 20v31)
5. **The key word :** Believe (98 times from John 1v7 to 20v31).
6. **The message :** The answer to the question, “Why trust Jesus ?” “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him (trusts Him) shall not perish, but have eternal life.” **John 3v16**
7. **The application :** “These have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God ; and that believing you may have life in His name.” **Jn 20v31**