

Jump In Or Don't At All

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[0 : 00] The Gospel of John is sometimes called the simple gospel. I don't think so. It is true that the simplicity of the language has caused a great many to stumble and call this the simple gospel.

The fact of the matter is that there are many monosyllabic and disyllabic words that are in this gospel. If you just turn anywhere in the gospel, you find out that most of the words are just one-syllable words.

And it's unusual to find one that has three syllables in it. And because of that, why, a great many say, well, look, this is very simple.

I won't have any difficulty of understanding it. Well, let me give to you one of the simplest statements that you can find anywhere, and it's found in John 14, 20.

It says, and ye in me, and I in you. Have you ever noticed every word there is a little monosyllabic word?

[1 : 10] One syllable. Some of them have just two letters. Actually, only two of them have three letters in a word. And I think you could take any 60-year-old child, and you would take any word and ask him the meaning of each word here, and he could tell you.

But did you know when you put them all together, and you read, and ye in me, and I in you, the most profound philosopher and the deepest theologian can never plumb the depths of the meaning of that statement.

That's what I mean when I say, friends, we're coming to the most profound gospel of all, and I believe really the most difficult to understand.

We get the surface meaning of it because we know the meaning of the words. But it doesn't mean that we know it by any means. And here is a gospel where we truly need the Lord Jesus to be our teacher.

Now, let me say today some matters that are matters of introduction that ought to introduce us to this gospel. John the Apostle is the writer.

[2 : 26] He was the son of Zebedee and Salome, and he was the brother of James. And his authorship has been seriously questioned by the Tübingen School of Critics in Germany years ago, and this was taken up by a great many of the liberal school in this country because they have been more or less copycats of the German school.

But the objections that were raised have been fully answered by conservative scholarship, and the Johannine authorship today is received by competent and conservative Bible scholarship.

So there's no question about that. I remember in seminary, and that's a long time ago, we had a young fellow in there that was quite a wag.

He wasn't the greatest scholar that there ever was, but he did have an ability to get right to the nub of any matter. And we had a course in which we studied the gospel of John to determine who was the writer.

And we took up all the different suggestions that had been made, and then we took up the question of whether John wrote it. And when all the evidence was in, we came to the conclusion that John wrote the gospel of John.

[3 : 59] And this fellow, this wag in the class, he says, we just wasted a whole semester. He said, I believed and knew John wrote it when I began this course, and now I'm right back where it started.

And you can waste a whole lot of time, friends, with the liberals. They will take you down the garden pathway, I can assure you, and raise many objections and many questions, but I think you can reasonably not assume but know that John the apostle is the writer of this gospel.

And the early church fathers all ascribed the fourth gospel to John. Theophilus was bishop of Antioch about 180 A.D.

Irenaeus lived about 190 A.D. He was a pupil of Polycarp, and Polycarp was a pupil of John himself, and then Clement of Alexandria over in Egypt, 200 A.D.

And the Muratorian fragment says the fourth gospel is by John. I don't know about you. I get a little weary today listening to the liberal.

[5 : 12] He bores me. If you want to know my viewpoint, I had to go to school to so many of them and listen to other dry lectures that I wish there was some way I could get even with them, because they certainly tortured me, and for no purpose, actually.

Now, the date of this gospel is rather important. Some suppose that it's the last book of the New Testament to be written. It was written somewhere, of course, between 90 and 100 A.D.

I think that John wrote in that period the gospel of John and the three epistles that bear his name, and also the book of Revelation.

Now, I rather take the opinion that the epistles were written after the book of Revelation. That's just my own private judgment, by the way. And they were all written, though, during the last ten years of the life of the beloved apostle.

Thank you. Thank you.