

THREE EXCERPTS FROM JOHN'S GOSPEL (WGS)

JOHN 1

William Graham Scroggie DD

There is almost universal agreement that the fourth gospel was written by John, the son of Zebedee, the disciple who Jesus loved (21.20, 13,23, 19.26). Otherwise there are no direct references to John in the Gospel. The writer's intimate knowledge of Palestine in general and Jerusalem in particular (18.16) and his acquaintance with contemporary Judaism and the testimony of early tradition tends to confirm this view.

John's Gospel was the last to be written as its position in the vast majority of manuscripts suggest ; it was probably penned in Ephesus in the last decade of the first century AD.

By this time, the other gospels were in circulation and so there was no need for duplication and John indicates his selectivity (20.30).

Even in the early days of the church, there was a tendency to formalism in the church which this gospel seeks to correct. Moreover, theoretical tendencies were apparently apparent denying or obscuring the deity and humanity of Christ. Against this background, John emphasises that the Eternal Word is the Christ, the begotten Son of God who became truly incarnate and stresses that spiritual life can only be obtained by saving belief in Him (1.12, 10.10, 20.31 etc)

The opening of this gospel falls into five parts

1. Prologue 1. 1-18
2. The revelation of God to the world as life (1.19 to 12.50)
3. The revelation of God to the disciples as light (13.1 to 17.26)
4. The revelation of God to the disciples and the world as love (18.1 - 29 31)
5. The Epilogue (21. 1-25}

Three distinct paragraphs emerge

The Divine revelation of the Word (1-50 to God (1,2) to creation(3) and to man(4 and 5).

God has only spoken of one Word. He is the Eternal Word and nothing could plainer. In the beginning there was the Word. He, who is Creator and God, is the Eternal Word. He has come into the world as light and the life of men and that light cannot be overcome.

The historic manifestations not the Word (6-13). He who was the Eternal Word in eternity is now manifested in time. The light was revealed (6-9) rejected (10-11) and received (12-13). Everyone must do something with the Light. He was in the world which He made and was not known (90, He came to his own, the Jews, and they rejected Him (v 11).

Note that in the beginning He was the Eternal Word and not known by any other Name.

The human apprehension of the Word (14-18). Here we have the witness of the apostles (14), the Baptist (15) and of the church (16, 18)

JOHN 8

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There are times when the Lord could be very tender and , at other times, He could be terrifying. In John 8. 31 to 47 , He speaks of freedom and relationships.

The freedom refers to the statement that only by the truth can we be set free from the bondage of sin which is by the Lord Himself since He is the Saviour from sin. He is the truth (verses 32 ,34 and 36). It is pathetic to hear people say Britons never shall be slaves but thousands are slaves to drink, drugs, lust , greed, pride ,selfishness and many other tyrants .

The Lord said.,Whosoever commiteth sin is the servant of the devil (verse 34)

In a battle a soldier called out, I have a prisoner.

Bring him in , replied the officer.

He won't come, said the soldier.

Then come yourself, said the officer.

He won't let me, the soldier responded.

Who was the prisoner ?

Every sinner is a slave and every Christian is free since the Son sets them free.

There are only two relationships. You are of God the father or of the Devil. 38. 44, Christ's teaching on this is very plain . Children of Christian parents does not make those children Christian. The Jews were in the natural physical line of Abraham but not in a spiritual line . Galatians 3.9 reads, Only they which be of (personal) faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.

JOHN 13

based on a few notes by Dr W Graham Scroggie DD

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Chapters 13 to 17 are peculiar to John and are very precious.

Before the feast of Passover ,the Lord knew that His hour was come and that He would depart to be with His Father. After supper He laid aside His garments and girded Himself with a towel ,poured water into a bason and began to wash His disiples feet. Peter protested, Do you wash my feet ? and the Lord replied, If I wash thee not thou hast no part with me. Then Peter said, Lord, not just my feet but my hands and my head. The reply was that he who was washed need only wash his feet and then is clean.

The washing of feet was necessary because of sandy and dusty roads.

But the Lord knowing who was to betray Him said ,Ye are not all clean.

The chapter begins with statements

1. The Lord knew His hour was come.
2. He knew that He would depart from His earthy life.
3. He would go back to His father.
4. The Devil has entered the heart of Judas Iscariot and the Lord knew this.
5. The Lord knew that all things were delivered into His hands.
6. The Lord knew He had come from God and to do His Will.

He knew that He would return to the father. This is said twice.

7. He loved His own unto the end and that may be the most telling comment of them all.
8. And He became the servant washing His disciples feet. Love in action.

In Luke 7.44 the washing of feet was a regulation. When you entered a house it was customary for water to be available to wash your feet. Here, in John 13, it is a revelation of love.

If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. We need to be cleansed from sin made possible by the crimson tide of Calvary. If not cleansed and saved we have no part with the Lord and eternal salvation.

It has been said that if we are cleansed initially we need only the cleansing of daily sin akin to the washing of feet.

The opening of this chapter is not just the pouring out of water but the pouring out of the Lord's love and it is remarkable.

The hymn writer Elton M Roth (1881-1951) wrote

Down from the splendour in glory He came
 Into a world of woe.
 Took on Himself my guilt and my shame
 Why should He love ME so?
 How can I help but love Him
 When He loved ME so?

(1151)

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