

JOHN

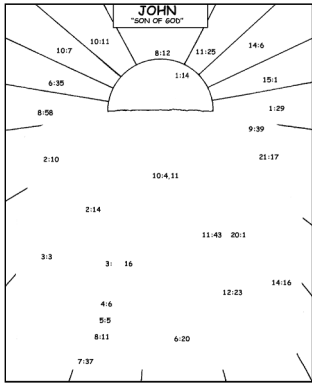
Son of God

Orientation: (Write: Title & subtitle in box provided on Student Sheet)

John, the author of this book (plus four other New Testament books), experienced his own personal transformation in knowing Jesus. From a rough fisherman, known for his hot temper (Mark 3:17), he became the “apostle of love” (John 19:26). He enjoyed the special privilege of being in the inner “circle” with Peter and James as an eyewitness at the Transfiguration (1:14). At the cross, Jesus entrusted the care of His own mother into John's hands. John was the “disciple whom Jesus loved” (19:26), sometimes “leaning on Jesus' bosom” (13:23), which may explain the character and depth of his Gospel. John is believed to have been both pastor in Ephesus for several years, and later, an exile on the Island of Patmos (Rev. 1:9).

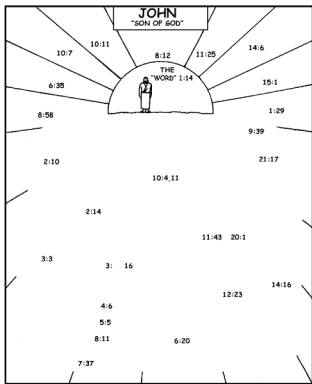
The book of John is sometimes called “the other Gospel” because, although John contains much of the same content as the other Gospels, his book is very different in style and format. Chronology, for instance, is of little importance to John, as he weaves his theological priorities through various events. His emphasis is on the Person of Jesus, not His works. John 20:30-31 helps us understand John's purpose: “Truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but, these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and believing, you may have life in His name.” John presses us to look beyond, look deeper, than the obvious.

NOTES:



A. “In the beginning.” (Draw: sun & emanating rays) John's opening phrase, similar to Gen. 1:1, is a clue that this will be a different approach to the life of Christ.

1. The other Gospel writers start with His birth and “human” beginnings. John goes back before creation and declares, “He was in the beginning with God, because He was, and is, God” (1:2).
2. The author of Hebrews declared Jesus to be “the brightness of His (God's) glory” and the “express image of His person” (Heb. 1:3). John declares that, “He was the Light that lights every man, and the light that darkness could not comprehend.”
3. Jesus Christ was not created: He, Himself, was the Creator of all things. “Without Him nothing was made, that was made” (1:3). He is God!



B. The Word Became Flesh. (Draw: figure of Jesus. Write: “The Word”)

1. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is given a new name in the Gospel of John—“The Word.” Just as we cannot know what a person is thinking until they communicate, we cannot know God until He speaks. “In the last days,” writes the Hebrew author, “God has spoken to us through His Son” (Heb.1:2).
2. John's Gospel does not contain background information regarding the incarnation—he just simply says, “and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us...” (1:14). Jesus left His home, His habitat in heaven, and became a human baby. He “dwelt among us” for 33 years, “but” John would insist, “He never ceased to be God.” “The Word was with God and the Word was God” (1:1).