

# **Major Themes, Role-Models and Challenges in the Gospel According to John**

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*The purpose of John is clearly stated in 20:31: “These are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God and that by believing, you may have life in His name.” The following themes are highlighted in John’s gospel:*

## **1. Jesus is God.**

John’s Gospel identifies Jesus as the Word who was with God in the beginning (1:1-2), the one who “came from Father”(1:14) to make Him known (1:18). It shows that Jesus is “equal with God”(5:18) and records conversations in which he identified himself as God (5:58; 9:35-37; 10:36 and 14:9).

## **2. Jesus is the Messiah.**

The miracles recorded in John , function primarily as “signs” pointing to Jesus’ Messianic identity. They had material results, but their spiritual significance was John’s primary focus. The miracles were signs of God’s presence in Jesus’ works & words. Each sign called (and still calls) for a commitment: Who is this Jesus???

## **3. Choose belief or unbelief.**

Jesus’ miracles fostered (nourished/sustained/raised) belief in some (2:11; 9:1-39; 11:1-44) but only hardened the opposition of others (11:46-57). We say “seeing is believing” but in John’s gospel believing is seeing.

## **FAITH IN ACTION**

*The pages of John are filled with life lessons and role-models of faith—people who challenge believers to put faith in action.*

## **Role--Models**

1. NICODEMUS (3:1-21) set aside his preconceived ideas and beliefs to embrace faith in Jesus. He later was criticized for defending Jesus against the majority in the Sanhedrin (7:50-52). After Jesus’ death, he publicly took his Lord’s body and prepared it for burial (19:38-40). As our faith has grown, have we gained boldness in publicly proclaiming our faith in Jesus?

2. THE SAMARITAN WOMAN (4:4-26 & 39-42) believed Jesus, altered her lifestyle and shared the good news with those around her, bringing many to faith in Christ. We need to evaluate, how God has changed our lives? Have we enthusiastically shared our testimony with anyone recently?

3. A BOY (6:1-15) donated his lunch, which Jesus used to feed a multitude. What small thing can you & I give or do for the Lord's use?

4. MARTHA (11:17-27) believed Jesus despite her despair at her brother's death. Have you clung to your faith in the face of intense sorrow? Did it buoy/float/lift you up in hope?

5. THOMAS (20:24-28) displayed honesty, not unbelief, in questioning of Jesus' resurrection. When Jesus answered his question, Thomas responded with faith. Have you/we ever brought our doubts to Jesus? Were they put to rest by His loving response?

## CHALLENGES

- (i) Look for "signs" around you that God is at work, and then find ways to display your faith in those situations.
- (ii) Give something small, but don't be surprised when the Lord uses it in a big way.
- (iii) Be on the lookout this week for opportunities to share your faith with others.
- (iv) If you are overwhelmed with sorrow, open your heart to God's healing and comfort.
- (v) Bring your doubts to God and allow His Spirit to reassure your heart. Choose belief.

