

### #30 John the Apostle | September 23, 2018

#### John's Position within the Twelve

- John was from a prominent family in Jesus' ministry.
  - James, his brother, was also an apostle, was the first apostle to die as a martyr (Acts 12:2).
  - Their father, Zebedee, is mentioned by name 12 times in the scripture. No other father of an apostle is even referenced.
  - Their mother is mentioned twice in the scripture –
    - When she asks for a prominent position for her sons in the Kingdom (Matt. 20:18-28).
    - As one of the women at the cross (Matt. 27:56).
- Jesus nicknamed James and John the *sons of thunder* (Mk 3:37).
- James and John, along with Peter, were mentioned many times in the scripture together as the *inner circle* of the twelve.
  - Along with Andrew, the four were also disciples of John the Baptist.
- It is believed that John is *the disciple whom Jesus loved* in the Gospel of John.
- In understanding John's writings, it is important to remember his role within the twelve.
  - He was not an apostle to the gentiles, but an apostle of the Kingdom.
  - He lived beyond the destruction of Jerusalem, when there was no feasible way for the Kingdom to be established.
  - His writings were penned after the destruction of Jerusalem, and are *Kingdom writings in a post-kingdom age*.

#### The Gospel of John

- The first three Gospels (the *synoptics*) begin with Jesus presenting the Kingdom to the nation of Israel. The Gospel of John begins with the *rejection* of the Kingdom by Israel (John 1:11).
- John explains the dispensational aspect of his Gospel in John 1:12 –
  - John is written *after* the nation of Israel was a focus and during this age of grace when *anyone* could receive Christ as their *personal* Savior.
  - Therefore, the things recorded in John are the things spoken of by Jesus that are compatible with the age of grace.

- Three examples of a dispensational change of perspective:
  - the word *believe* is used 39 times in the synoptics, and 100 times in the Gospel of John.
  - The word *repent* is used 16 times in the synoptics, and 0 times in John.
  - The word *Jew* is used 16 times in the synoptics, and 68 times in John, most often as an explanation of Jewish way of life.
- John 3:16 is the most commonly used evangelistic verse of all the Bible.
  - It is *possible* that this verse (and the surrounding verses) is a commentary by John to the things spoken of by Jesus ending in verse 13 or 14.
  - At the time Jesus spoke to Nicodemus, God had not given His son and Jesus was forbidding His apostles from going to the Gentiles. Both of these truths are incompatible with John 3:16 at the time of the speech, but perfectly compatible commentary at the time of the writing of the Gospel.

#### The Revelation Given to John

- The Revelation is the **of Jesus Christ** and about things which **must shortly come to pass** (Rev. 1:1).
  - It is a book about the *apocalypse of Jesus* not about the Christian life or any other topic.
  - It is a book which is entirely prophetic, none of it having yet been accomplished.
- Both the nation of Israel and the church is saved through the blood of Jesus Christ, but the *church* and the nation of *Israel* are distinct. The Revelation concerns *Israel* and not the church.
- Revelation is a Kingdom book, unlike the writings of Paul. The book picks up after the rapture and during the renewed time of the Kingdom program.
- Therefore, one would expect to find an emphasis on the works of the Law rather than the work of faith alone in the book of Revelation. The word *faith* is never used in a "believing" sense in the book. (See Rev. 2:10). The word *believe* is never used in the book, the word *overcome* is used 17 times.
- Every indication is that John wrote the final *prophetic* work of the Bible, and all prophetic works are connected to the nation of Israel (Paul having written the final book concerning the *mystery*, and all *mystery* works are connected with the church).

#### What you may not know

- Irenaeus (120-202AD) says that John lived in Ephesus.