

GOSPEL OF JOHN

OVERVIEW AND CHAPTER I-II REVIEW



SEPTEMBER 24, 2024

STRUCTURAL DIVISIONS

The Gospel of Saint John can be divided into four parts.

- 1) **Prologue: 1:1-18** (Logos Hymn: The Word with God; Believers become Children of God; The Word becomes Flesh; The Son Reveals the Father)

- 2) **The Book of Signs: 1:19—12:50** (Wedding at Cana; Temple Incident; Dialogue with Nicodemus; Royal Official's Son; Samaritan Woman at the Well; Healing at the Bethesda Pool; Feeding 5000 & Bread of Life Discourse; Conflicts in Jerusalem; Man Born Blind & Good Shepherd Discourse; Raising of Lazarus; Anointing at Bethany; Plots to Kill Jesus) John provides a record of Jesus' miracles with detailed 'commentary' about their significance in signifying Him as Messiah (Christ) and Lord, the Living Word of God, revealing Himself to the disciples and the world.

- 3) **The Book of Glory: 13:1—20:31** (Last Supper: Washing the Disciples' Feet, Foretelling Judas' Betrayal & Peter's Denial, Farewell Discourses; Jesus' Great Prayer; Passion Narrative: Arrest, Hearings & Trials, Crucifixion, Death & Burial; Resurrection Appearances, esp. to Mary Magdalene and Thomas) To those who accept Christ as the Living Word and God, this section of the Gospel, thorough several long discourses by Christ Himself, the doctrines of His Personhood and work are most deeply explained. Here Christ relates Himself to God the Father, to the Holy Spirit and to His community of believers in clear and certain terms. He is one with God, whose words He speaks, whose works He accomplishes and Whose will He performs. And through the Holy Spirit, bears witness to Him in the world. Christ remains abiding forever in those who are His through their faith and co-service of God.

- 4) **Epilogue 21:1-25** (Another Resurrection Appearance at the Sea of Tiberias/Galilee). The final chapter of the book is traditionally considered to be an addition following the first ending of the gospel, to affirm the reinstatement of the apostle Peter to the leadership of the apostolic community after his three denials of the Lord at the time of His passion. It may have been a necessary inclusion to offset a certain lack of confidence in Saint Peter by some members of the Church. This section also includes the post-resurrection appearance of Christ to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias.

TECHNIQUES USED BY JOHN IN HIS GOSPEL

SYMBOLISM

A unique feature in John's Gospel is his use of symbolism in his narratives. Six (6) "symbols" are particularly present in John's Gospel.

Birth

Water

Signs

Bread

Light

Resurrection

JESUS AS THE MASTER TEACHER

In most every encounter between Jesus and the characters of John's Gospel we see how Christ gradually develops and moves a person from a worldly and literal understanding to the ultimate understanding of His words as His Personhood as the Christ or Savior.

Most often this leads the person to faith such as in the case of the Samaritan Woman (4:29) or Mary at Lazarus' death (11:27) but has also led to rejecting Him as by the Pharisees (5:39-40) or by the crowds (6:66)

This "conversational interplay" from literal to divine is established using a literary structure consisting of five (5) stages.

- 1) a sign, image or feast is established at the beginning of the narrative,
- 2) an individual or group misunderstands the image/sign through literal interpretation,
- 3) struggle of the main character(s) to acquire a proper understanding as they move towards symbolic interpretation
- 4) a definitive response which invokes acceptance or rejection
- 5) conclusion with a statement of faith or rejection.

KEY VERSES IDENTIFYING CHRIST

INTENT	VERSE	
Christ the Word	1:1	In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
	1:14	And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son,
	8:31	Then Jesus said, 'If you abide in my Word, you are truly my disciples and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.
Christ the Son of God	1:18	No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, who has made Him known.
	1:34	And I myself [John the Baptist] have seen and have testified that this is the Son of God.
	1:49	Nathanael replied, 'Rabbi, you are the Son of God!
	1:51	And [Jesus] said to [Nathanael], 'Very truly, I tell you that you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.'
	3:16-18	For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may not perish but may have eternal life. Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through Him. Those who believe in Him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.
	3:36	The Father loves the Son and has placed all things in his hands. Who so ever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever disobeys the Son will not see life, but must endure God's wrath.
	5:23	Anyone who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him.
	5:25	Truly, I tell you, the hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live.
Christ the Son of Man	1:51	And [Jesus] said to [Nathanael], 'Very truly, I tell you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.
	3:13,14	No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up.
	5:27	and [the Father] has given [Jesus] authority to execute judgement, because he is the Son of Man.
	6:27	Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you.
	6:53,54	So Jesus said to them, 'Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Those who eat My flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day
	8:28	So Jesus said, 'When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will realize that I am He.
	9:35	Jesus heard that they had driven him [the blind man] out, and when He found him, He said, 'Do you believe in the Son of Man?'

Intent	Key Chapter Verses	
Christ the Creator	1:8	Jesus said to them, 'Fill the jars with water.' And they filled them up to the brim... When the steward tasted the water that had become wine...
	6:11	Then Jesus took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated; so also the fish, as much as they wanted.
	6:19	The [disciples] saw Jesus walking <u>on</u> the lake and coming near the boat
	9:6	Then [Jesus] spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes...Then he went and washed and came back able to see.
Christ the Water of Life	4:10,13	Jesus answered [the Samaritan woman], 'If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, "Give me a drink", you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water... The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life.
	7:37,38	Jesus cried out, 'Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, 38 and let the one who believes in me drink. As[k] the scripture has said, "Out of the believer's heart shall flow rivers of living water.
Christ the Bread of Life	6:35	Jesus said to them, 'I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry...
	6:48-50	I am the bread of life. Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.'
Christ the Light	1:4	[Jesus] was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.
	3:19	And this is the judgement, that the light has come into the world...
	8:12	Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.
Christ the new Temple		Jesus answered [the Pharisees] 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up...But he was speaking of the temple of His Body.
Christ the Judge	3:19	And this is the judgement, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil.
	5:22	The Father judges no one but has given all judgement to the Son
	5:30	I can do nothing on my own. As I hear, I judge; and my judgement is just...
	8:16	Yet even if I do judge, my judgement is just; for it is not I alone who judge, but I and the Father who sent me.
	9:39	Jesus said, 'I came into this world for judgement so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind.'
Christ the Teacher	3:2	Nicodemus came to Jesus and said to him, 'Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God.
		So when the Samaritans came to [Jesus] and asked him to stay with them; and He stayed there for two days. And many more believed because of his word.
	6:2,3	A large crowd kept following [Jesus], because they saw the signs that He was doing for the sick. Jesus went up the mountain and sat down there with his disciples. (see also Luke 9:11)
	7:14	About the middle of the festival Jesus went up into the temple and began to teach.
	8:2	Early in the morning [Jesus] came again to the temple. All the people came to him and He sat down and began to teach them.

Intent	Key Chapter Verses	
Christ is Human	1:14	And the Word became flesh and lived among us.
	2:16	And Jesus said, "Take these things out of here! Stop making my Father's house a market-place!"
	4:6	Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired out by His journey, was sitting by the well.
	4:7	A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, 'Give me a drink'.
Christ is Divine (God)	1:1	In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
	4:25	The [Samaritan] woman said to him, 'I know that Messiah is coming' (who is called Christ). 'When he comes, he will proclaim all things to us.' And Jesus said to her, 'I am He, the one who is speaking to you. (see also Deut. 18:15)
	5:18	For this reason the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because He was not only breaking the sabbath, but was also calling God his own Father, thereby making Himself equal to God.
	8:58	Jesus said to them, 'Very truly, I tell you, before Abraham was, I Am.

Chapter 1 Prologue

1-18 John presents a succinct introduction to who is the subject of his Gospel as well as the purpose of his Gospel. John clearly identifies Christ's divinity stating that "He was with God in the beginning." He also then identifies Christ with the terms "light" and "Logos."

"Universal divine reason, immanent in nature, transcending all imperfections in the cosmos and humanity. An eternal and unchanging truth present from the time of creation, available to every individual who seeks it."

John then speaks about John the Baptist and his role in announcing the coming of the Messiah (Christ) from which the Orthodox Church refers to him as Πρόδρομος (Forerunner)

John then identifies Christ's humanity (verse 14) and the unique event in history where God dwells physically among His people.

32 John identifies Christ as the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world leading to a connection with the Jewish idea of animal sacrifice to which Orthodoxy would agree with Christ as "perfect" i.e. without sin, and that His death and resurrection reestablishes Mankind's connection with God. However care must be taken to avoid the literal interpretation of "sacrifice" which has led to the Protestant theology of atonement, specifically expiation and propitiation was developed .

35-51 Jesus calls His disciples

Chapter 2 Wedding at Cana and the Cleansing of the Temple

1-12 Jesus performs the first of His signs at the Wedding at Cana. Here we have the first indication of the idea of «καιρος» or God's time in Jesus' response of "My hour has not yet come," to His mother's statement that "They have no wine." This follows the idea of the Messianic Secret present in the Synoptic Gospels.

Also we have the first indication of the symbolism of the Wedding Banquet motif that Jesus will use throughout the Gospel of Himself as the Bridegroom and the Church as His Bride which is a predominant theme throughout the beginning of Holy Week.

13-23 A cursory look at Jesus' cleansing of the Temple could lead to an incorrect interpretation as Jesus as a revolutionary who desires to overturn the current system of Mosaic Law. This would seem to be supported by Jesus' violent acts of using a whip driving out the animals and overturning the tables of the moneychangers.

A closer look at His purpose is seen in His response to the Pharisees question of "What sign can you show us to prove your authority to do all this?" In a case of misunderstanding the Pharisees see Him as a revolutionary desiring to destroy the physical Jewish Temple whereas Jesus refers to Himself as the Temple which will be destroyed (crucifixion). Jesus was not sent to perform signs but for people to understand that faith in Him and His salvific act of death and resurrection re-establishes eternal life for Creation.

Chapter 3 Nicodemus and the Bridegroom Symbology

1-21 Begins with a conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus, a leader in the Jewish council and who will reappear in John's Gospel. John refers here to darkness (Nicodemus comes at night out of fear) but through the course of the conversation Jesus attempts to bring him into the light. This discussion differs greatly from other discussions that Jesus has with Jewish leaders is that there is a genuine desire to know Jesus as opposed to others who seek to test and ridicule Jesus.

Jesus then provides the two-fold process for baptism which is to be, “born of water” and “born of the Spirit.”

John’s purpose in presenting Nicodemus is seen in Jesus’ closing statements to Nicodemus which contrasts the chasm between light and dark, *“Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son. This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light ... But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light...”*

22-30 The fulfillment of the symbology of the bride/bridegroom motif from chapter 2 (Wedding at Cana) is seen here when John, in a debate with his disciples, John says,

*You yourselves can testify that I said, ‘I am not the Messiah but am sent ahead of him.’
The bride belongs to the bridegroom. The friend who attends the bridegroom waits and listens for him, and is full of joy when he hears the bridegroom’s voice. That joy is mine, and it is now complete. He must become greater; I must become less.”*

31-36 The chapter ends with John the Baptist declaring the supreme authority of Jesus stating that He is above all which includes the whole realm of Man pointing to the ultimate significance of Jesus as the Son of God which is salvation and judgement.

Chapter 4 Samaritan Woman and the Healing of the Royal Officer’s Son

The Samaritan Women is presented in 3 distinct sections, Jesus’ journey through Samaria, Jesus’ conversation with the Samaritan Woman, Jesus’ conversation with His disciples.

1-26 In the dialogue between Jesus and the Samaritan Woman we see Jesus, as the Master Teacher gradually develop and move a person from a worldly and literal understanding to the ultimate understanding of His Personhood as the Christ or Savior. (page 42-43)

It is also through this story of the Samaritan Women that we see a large divide between Protestant and Orthodox Theology. (Pages 43-45)

27-45 In the continuing theme of misunderstandings, Nicodemus and baptism and the Samaritan woman and living water, so now the disciples misunderstand what Jesus means about food. While Nicodemus and the Samaritan women did not grasp what Jesus was offering to them, the disciples are unable to grasp what Jesus Himself lived by, *“My food is to do the will of Him who sent me and to finish His work.”*

By saying *Behold look at the fields ready for harvest,*” Jesus is announcing to His disciples the work He has called them for when He first called His disciples (in the Synoptic Gospels), *“Follow Me and I will make you fishers of men.”*

The 2nd Sign of John’s 7 signs is not only the healing of the nobleman’s son but of the nobleman and his family (verse 53). This miracle is significant in that it shows that proximity to the miracle is not necessary and in fact Jesus makes no attempt to go see the nobleman’s son. To quote Rev. Whitelaw there is a deeper purpose of Jesus’ refusal to perform the healing in person,

The petitioner [royal official] by this request indicates the reality and extent of his faith, since he is satisfied the healing of the child is within the Savior’s power, but also its feebleness and defect inasmuch as he regards Christ’s presence as necessary for the performance of the miracle. Jesus therefore discerning both the strength and the weakness of the man’s faith and says unto him, [and to the crowd] “Unless you people see signs and wonders...”

Chapter 5 The Healing at the Pool and Authority and Witness of the Son

1-15 This is the first of the Jewish feasts which Jesus attended and also not specifically mentioned it is either Passover or Shavout. This event of the healing demonstrates how the Bible depicts people with disabilities and, more important, how the Church treats those with disabilities. While some take a simplistic approach where the Bible and the Church separate those with disabilities from the community of believers as did many previous pagan societies. In both the Synoptics and in John's Gospel however, Jesus' healings are presented mainly as a personal encounter with a specific individual for a greater purpose than the healing.

It is interesting to note that verse 6 is typically translated as Jesus asking, "Do you want to be healed," the question in Greek "Θελεις υγιης γενεσθαι can also be translated, "Do you wish to be made whole." This speaks to both the physical healing (verse 9) as well as the spiritual healing (verse 14) which Jesus wishes to accomplish.

16-47 The act of healing on the Sabbath puts Jesus squarely against the Jewish leadership who "sought all the more to kill Him." **The remaining portion of the chapter is this dialogue** much of which is the Gospel reading at Orthodox funerals.

Firstly, Jesus begins His defense against the Jewish leadership by addressing the question of work on the Sabbath by establishing that although God rested from the work of Creation (Gen 2:1-3) this was certainly not the cessation of divine work, or in the flow of divine energy, but God was, and is, the ever-constant source of energy and life for all in heaven and earth.

Secondly Jesus links Himself to the ongoing work of the Father saying "My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I too am working." And through these statements, Jesus "makes Himself equal with God." (John 5:18) It is this second part which brings about the serious charge of blasphemy.

The final accusation comes from Jesus to the Jewish leadership, "But do not think I will accuse you before the Father. Your accuser is Moses, on whom your hopes are set." (page 67)

Chapter 6 The Multiplication of the Loaves, Walking on the Water, and The Bread of Life Discourse

This entire chapter is a masterful writing by John that connects clearly prophecies of Hebrew Scripture with their fulfillment by Jesus in the New Testament.

1-14 The first miracle of the loaves, which is the 3rd sign, is recorded in all four Gospels with each offering different pieces of information that work together to form an entire narrative. However there are several points of departure between John's accounting and the Synoptics. (page 69). **These points of departure all speak to the fact that John's intention is not to provide an historical account of events but that his reader understand the Christological theology of Jesus both foreshadowed in OT events and present and active in the NT accomplishing His Father's will.**

John's audience would certainly have identified the parallels between Moses and Jesus in Jesus' **going up the mountain** (Sinai), the **distribution of the bread (manna)**, Jesus as God who is the distributor of the bread as God the Father distributed to the Israelites, Jesus as the Afikomen symbolized in the **gathering of the pieces of broken bread** so that nothing is lost.

This account ends with the people acknowledging that Jesus is truly the prophet who is to come in this world fulfilling the prophesy God gave to Moses and the Israelites, "The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your fellow Israelites. You must listen to him." (Deut. 18:15)

15-21 Jesus walking on the water draws the parallel of the miracle of the crossing of the red Sea by the Israelites.

22-59 In the Bread of Life discourse Jesus compares the bread (manna) given to the Israelites by God in the desert with the proclamation that it is He who has come down from heaven and is the Bread of (eternal) Life.

Jesus then makes the bold and difficult statement that **foreshadows the Eucharistic meal** and causes many of His followers to desert him when He says, *“Very truly I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day. For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink.”*

Chapter 7 Jesus as the Water of Life Discourse and Division Among the People

In chapter 6 Jesus spoke of Himself as the living Bread and here in chapter 7 He once again speaks of Himself as the Living Water connecting his readers with what Jesus told the Samaritan woman, *“...a fountain of water springing up into eternal life.”*

Chapter 7 centers around the feast of the Tabernacles and structurally can be broken out as follows.

- **Prior to the Feast verses 1-13**
 - **Jesus’ conversation with His brothers – It is not yet time for Jesus to reveal Himself**
 - The climate of opinion in Jerusalem – Some say He is good while others say He deceives people
- **Middle of the Feast verses 14-36**
 - **Jesus’ authority and controversy over His origin**
 - Pharisees seek to arrest Jesus
 - Jesus speaks of His departure and Jewish misunderstanding
- **End of the Feast verses 37-52**
 - **Jesus as Living Water**
 - Reactions from the people and the Pharisees
 - Nicodemus’ reaction to the call for Jesus’ arrest
 - The soldiers who failed to arrest Jesus

Chapter 8 Adulterous Woman, Jesus as the Light of the World, and continued dialogue with the Pharisees and Jewish Leaders

Except for the seemingly interruptive account of Jesus and the Adulterous woman, chapter 8 continues the (often heated) dialogue between Jesus, the Pharisees and the Jewish Elders.

Like the Bread of Life discourses in chapter 6 where Jesus, not speaking in symbolic language, states that His flesh is the bread *“which I will give for the life of the world. And whoever eats this bread will live forever.”* Jesus, here in chapter 8, Jesus claims that He literally is the light of the world . And that this light divides humanity into those who desire to live in the light and those who prefer darkness. The following is a breakdown of the sequence of events of the dialogue between Jesus and the Pharisees.

8:12-20	Jesus’ claim to be the Light of the World and dispute with the unbelievers	pages 107-109
8:21-29	Jesus’ origin from above and their (Pharisees) origin from below	pages 110-111
8:30-36	Jesus’ offers freedom and their bondage	pages 112-113
8:37-47	Descent from Abraham and their descent from the devil Understanding Jesus’ statement <i>“Which of you convicts Me of sin?”</i>	pages 113-116
8:48-59	Jesus’ union with God and precedence over Abraham	pages 116-119

Chapter 9 Healing of the Man Born Blind and Jesus as the Light of the World

Central to this chapter is the healing miracle in this chapter and is the next “sign” in John’s gospel, along with the other signs (miracles) in chapters 2, 4, 5, and 6. However equally apparent is Jesus’ continuing to point out the spiritual blindness of the Jewish rulers and the addition of the faith of the man who was healed. As with the other miracles there are several important elements to observe.

- John’s use of the spiral movement.
 - a. The chapter begins with Jesus and His disciples and then moves to Jesus and the blind man.
 - b. Jesus and His disciples then recede as the Pharisees now come forward to engage with the now healed man.
 - c. The chapter concludes with Jesus reappearing to engage both the man now healed and the Pharisees.
- John’s linking of the theological themes of chapters 8 and 9, that is Jesus as the light, 8:12 and 9:5 and will be restated in chapter 12.
- A chronological continuation of the debate between Jesus and the Pharisees from the end of chapter 8, through chapter 9 which will grow increasingly hostile in later chapters.
- The elevation of the faith of the blind man as displayed in the conversion of the Samaritan woman. (page 133)

A surface level reading of this healing miracle, as merely a retelling of Mark’s account, presents a Jesus who merely alters how the disabled should be treated placing all the reader’s attention on His commandment to “love one another.” **A deeper reading reveals John’s true intent, as it is throughout his gospel, which is a continuous Christology of Jesus as One of the Holy Trinity who has power over Creation.** John wants his readers to make the critical connection of Jesus as Revealer, Savior and God and not just another prophet in a long line of prophets.

Chapter 10 The Good Shepherd and the Feast of Dedication

The opening verses of chapter 10 (1-21) are a continuation of the discussion that Jesus was having with the Pharisees, specific to the theme of those who do and do not recognize the Son of Man. **In this chapter Jesus uses the allegory of sheep, a Shepherd, and a door.**

The sheep are the people of Israel while Jesus and the Pharisees are types of shepherds. The Pharisees claim to possess authority as God’s leaders and shepherds but accomplish this through fear, intimidation and a blind adherence to the Law without the mercy and compassion. In this way they failed in their obligation to pastor and care for their people. Jesus however is the true Shepherd to those who can truly “see with spiritual eyes” and “*follow Him because they know His voice.*”

The second part of this chapter (verses 10:22-39) has Jesus speaking to the Jews at the Feast of Dedication where they press Him once again about whether He is the Messiah. **While claiming to be the human Messiah was not in itself blasphemous, Jesus’ declaration of His divinity by stating that “I and my Father are One.” (verses 30 and 38) once again prompts the Jewish leadership seek to kill Him by stoning.**

The chapter closes with Jesus going away to return to Jordan and the place where John was baptizing thus coming full circle. The people there praised John, “*who performed no signs*” which was a feature that was expected in someone who was regarded as a prophet. And in the second half of their statement, “*and all the things John spoke about this Man were true*” indicates their belief in the authority Jesus claimed.

Chapter 11 The Raising of Lazarus and the Plot Against Jesus

The raising of Lazarus is the last of the miracles or signs performed by Jesus and, like the miracle of changing of the water into wine, is only recorded in the Gospel of John.

The raising of Lazarus can be seen as the summation of Jesus' revelations of divinity, representing his ability to conquer death itself. While this was not the first time Jesus raised someone from the dead, this is the first time that someone was resurrected after being dead for four days.

John's placement of the raising of Lazarus just prior to His triumphal entry into Jerusalem also prefigures Jesus' triumph over death through His resurrection from the dead. The raising of Lazarus prefigures the glorification Jesus will receive in his glorious resurrection and conquering of death through His death.

The raising of Lazarus from the dead, like the healing of the man born blind (9:3), is performed so that the glory of God is made manifest through the Revealer and that "the Son of God may be glorified through it."

As with other narratives in John's gospel this account has many of the hallmarks we have seen previously, mainly misunderstandings and the classic spiral movement where several characters advance and recede highlighting important and revealing dialogue between Jesus and the focal character.

The division of this chapter can be viewed as follows .

- 1-6 The illness and death of Lazarus and the sisters plea for help
- 7-16 Jesus' conversation with His disciples
- 17-27 Jesus' conversation with Martha and His revelation as the Resurrection and Life
- 28-37 Jesus' conversation with Mary and Jesus' wrath in the presence of unbelief
- 38-44 The raising of Lazarus to life
- 45-53 The Sanhedrin determines to put Jesus to death
- 54 The retreat of Jesus to Ephraim by the wilderness