



**St Paul's**  
D O R K I N G

## **Spring Term 2022     Series on John's Gospel**

Matthew, Mark and Luke (the synoptic gospels) tell the story of Jesus in a similar way, whereas John is written differently. The Gospel of John is written theologically rather than chronologically! This means that John doesn't go through Jesus' life in the historical order in which events happen, but rather he structures his Gospel to make important points about the identity of Jesus as the Son of God. The themes of '*light*' and '*life*' come across strongly throughout the Gospel, which is why we felt these would be significant themes for our Christmas services. In fact, John summarises his whole purpose of writing his Gospel at the very end 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*'. Perhaps this can be our prayer for all those who preach and listen to this series on the Gospel of John over the coming months.

Since John has structured his Gospel in this way, we are going to follow his lead and explore the Gospel using the signposts he gives. The number '7' is theologically significant in scripture as it symbolises 'completeness' or 'perfection' because the world was created in seven days. John uses the number '7' to point to the divine identity of Jesus by recording 7 Signs, which demonstrate His divine power, and 7 'I am' Statements which were spoken declarations of Jesus' divinity. We are going to unpack these two sets of seven to deepen our understanding of who Jesus is, so that we may have life in his name!

<b>7 Signs</b>	<b>7 'I am' Statements</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Wedding in Cana</li><li>2. Healing of the Official's son</li><li>3. Healing at the pool</li><li>4. Feeding the five thousand</li><li>5. Walking on water</li><li>6. Healing the man born blind</li><li>7. Raising of Lazarus</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. I am the Bread of Life</li><li>2. I am the Light of the World</li><li>3. I am the Gate</li><li>4. I am the Good Shepherd</li><li>5. I am the Resurrection and the Life</li><li>6. I am the Way, the Truth and the Life</li><li>7. I am the True Vine</li></ol>

Generally, the 'signs' come before the 'I am statements', but there are a few occasions when John mixes them up and also links them. For example, the 'Bread of Life' comes shortly after 'Feeding of the five thousand'; and the 'Light of the World' comes just before 'Healing of the man born blind'. Therefore, we've tried to reflect these variations in the way we've broken up John's Gospel this term. We've also allowed for the first Sunday each

month to be a 'break' from the series for Café Church at the 10.30; and the 'Sovereignty of God' series at the 9am.

Date	Bible passages	Theme
02/01/22 (Epiphany)	Luke 2:21-40	Simeon's song (9am) Intro to John's Gospel (Café Church)
08/01/22	2:1-11	Sign 1: The Wedding at Cana
16/01/22	4:46-54	Sign 2: Healing of Official's son
23/01/22	5:1-15	Sign 3: Healing at the pool
30/01/22	6:1-15 6:25-40	Sign 4: Feeding the Five Thousand and 1 <sup>st</sup> 'I am': Bread of Life
06/02/22 (Café Church)		9am – Sovereignty Series 10.30am – Café Church
13/02/22	6:16-24	Sign 5: Walking on water
20/02/22	8:12-20 9:1-12	2nd 'I am': Light of the world Sign 6: Healing man born blind
27/02/22	10:1-10 10:11-21	3rd 'I am': Gate 4th 'I am': Good Shepherd
06/03/22 (Café Church)		9am – Sovereignty Series 10.30am – Café Church
13/03/22	11:17-44	Sign 7: Raising of Lazarus
20/03/22	14:1-14	6th 'I am': Way, Truth and Life
27/03/22	15:1-17	7th 'I am': True vine
03/04/22 (Café Church)		9am – Sovereignty Series 10.30am – Café Church
10/04/22 (Palm Sunday)	12:12-36	Triumphal Entry
17/04/22 (Easter Sunday)	20:1-18 11:17-27	The Empty Tomb 5 <sup>th</sup> 'I am': Resurrection and Life

John's Gospel starts with a beautiful prologue packed with imagery that points to Jesus being the Son of God. We're going to delve into this prologue during our Christmas services as we think about the '*Light and Life*' which Jesus came to earth to bring. As John takes us right back to the start of time: '*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God...*' – what an exciting journey we're about to embark on!

### Preaching plan for Series on John in Spring Term 2022

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