

good  
NEWS BIBLE

The Gospel according to

JOHN

Bible Society  
Trinity Business Centre  
Stonehill Green, Westlea  
Swindon SN5 7DG  
biblesociety.org.uk

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# Welcome to the Good News Bible

Welcome to this dyslexia-friendly edition of John's Gospel, using text from the Good News Bible.

If you are dyslexic, you may find most Bibles very difficult to read, with their small type, long paragraphs, and thin paper. This book has been specially designed with the British Dyslexia Association's style guide in mind, so it has the following features:

- Thicker paper, so that type does not show through
- Cream-coloured paper
- Matt paper
- Plain font
- Larger type
- Wider line spacing
- Short paragraphs
- Bold headings

The Good News Bible is a clear, easy-to read translation of the Bible. It uses ordinary, everyday language so that as many people as possible can read and understand it. This has made it a very popular translation, selling over 150 million copies in the UK alone.

## **About the Bible**

The Bible isn't one book but a collection of books, one of them being John's Gospel. These books were written at different times by different people. They include many types of writing, such as history, poetry, stories, laws, letters, visions, songs and prayers.

The Bible has two main sections, known as the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament contains the story of God's relationship with the Israelites, over hundreds of years. It was written mainly in the Hebrew language, with some parts in a language called Aramaic.

The New Testament continues the story. It tells us about Jesus Christ and how his first followers began to spread the Christian message across the world. It was written in Greek, a language spoken through most of the Roman empire.

Even the newest parts of the Bible are about 2,000 years old, and many parts are much older. This means that everyone who reads it today will find some parts of it hard to understand. It might be helpful if you try to imagine what life was like for the people who first read it. Then think about what the words might mean for us today.

If you focus on the parts you do understand, not the parts you find difficult, there will always be something interesting to learn.

## **Finding your way around John's Gospel**

The first four books in the New Testament are called Gospels, which means 'good news'. They are four different accounts of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.

The Gospel according to John is the fourth book in the New Testament, and it was probably the last of the Gospels to be written.

If you're reading John's Gospel on your own, it's a good idea to read the whole book from beginning to end. This will give you an idea of how the story of Jesus' mission and public ministry fits together. However, if you are in church or at a study group, someone might ask you to look up the reference for a verse or short passage.

References are always given in this order – book title, chapter title and verse number. For example, John 3.8 means the third chapter of John, and the eighth verse of that chapter.

In this book, the chapter numbers are in very large type on a separate line. The verse numbers are the very small numbers that you can see as you read the story.

You can also follow the chapter and verse numbers through the book by looking at the reference at the top of each page.

## **Enjoy reading!**

It is all too easy to assume that we know exactly what a Bible story says, especially if it's a famous one or we have heard it many times before. If this book helps you to read John's Gospel for yourself more easily, you might find that you understand it in a new way.

Don't be afraid to ask questions about what you are reading. What excites you? What confuses you? Which are your favourite verses or stories? Write notes for yourself, or draw pictures, or memorise the words so that you can think further about them later.

Why not get together with other people to read the Gospel of John? We all bring our own experiences and thoughts to the Bible, so it can be helpful to talk about it together and find out how other people understand it.

If you've enjoyed this book, the Gospel of Mark, the book of Psalms and Paul's letter to the Romans are also available in a dyslexia-friendly version. Go to our website, [biblesociety.org.uk](http://biblesociety.org.uk), to find out more.

# Welcome to the Good News Bible



# The Gospel according to John

## **The story of Jesus, the 'I am'**

**What's it about?** In some ways, John's Gospel is different from the other three. His is a cosmic story that starts at the beginning of time. It then tells us about Jesus' public ministry, from his baptism to his resurrection. John uses signs and symbols to show us who Jesus is.

**Who wrote it?** This Gospel is believed by many to have been written by John, the son of Zebedee, a fisherman and one of Jesus' disciples. John often refers to 'the disciple whom Jesus loved' and many people think this is John himself.

**Why read it?** John describes signs that prove that Jesus is the Messiah and the Son of God. He is God 'incarnate' – God in human form. John includes several stories that are not found in any of the other Gospels.

**What's special about it?** John is the only Gospel writer who tells the story of Jesus' meeting with Nicodemus (chapter 3) and his conversation with the Samaritan woman at the well (chapter 4). Also, if you want to read

Jesus' statements about himself, beginning with the words 'I am ...', John's Gospel is the place to look. These words emphasise Jesus' divinity.

## Chapter 1

### **The Word of Life**

<sup>1</sup>In the beginning the Word already existed; the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

<sup>2</sup>From the very beginning the Word was with God.

<sup>3</sup>Through him God made all things; not one thing in all creation was made without him.

<sup>4</sup>The Word was the source of life,<sup>a</sup> and this life brought light to humanity.

<sup>5</sup>The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has never put it out.

<sup>6</sup>God sent his messenger, a man named John, <sup>7</sup>who came to tell people about the light, so that all should hear the message and believe.

<sup>8</sup>He himself was not the light; he came to tell about the light.

<sup>9</sup>This was the real light — the light that comes into the world and shines on everyone.

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<sup>a</sup> *The Word was the source of life; or What was made had life in union with the Word.*

<sup>10</sup>The Word was in the world, and though God made the world through him, yet the world did not recognize him.

<sup>11</sup>He came to his own country, but his own people did not receive him.

<sup>12</sup>Some, however, did receive him and believed in him; so he gave them the right to become God's children.

<sup>13</sup>They did not become God's children by natural means, that is, by being born as the children of a human father; God himself was their Father.

<sup>14</sup>The Word became a human being and, full of grace and truth, lived among us. We saw his glory, the glory which he received as the Father's only Son.

<sup>15</sup>John spoke about him. He cried out, "This is the one I was talking about when I said, 'He comes after me, but he is greater than I am, because he existed before I was born.' "

<sup>16</sup>Out of the fullness of his grace he has blessed us all, giving us one blessing after another.

<sup>17</sup>God gave the Law through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

<sup>18</sup>No one has ever seen God. The only Son, who is the same as God and is at the Father's side, he has made him known.

### **John the Baptist's Message**

<sup>19</sup>The Jewish authorities in Jerusalem sent some priests and Levites to John, to ask him, "Who are you?"

<sup>20</sup> John did not refuse to answer, but spoke out openly and clearly, saying: "I am not the Messiah."

<sup>21</sup> "Who are you, then?" they asked. "Are you Elijah?"

"No, I am not," John answered.

"Are you the Prophet?"<sup>b</sup> they asked.

"No," he replied.

<sup>22</sup> "Then tell us who you are," they said. "We have to take an answer back to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?"

<sup>23</sup> John answered by quoting the prophet Isaiah:

"I am 'the voice of someone shouting in the desert:  
Make a straight path for the Lord to travel!' "

<sup>24</sup> The messengers, who had been sent by the Pharisees,  
<sup>25</sup> then<sup>c</sup> asked John, "If you are not the Messiah nor Elijah  
nor the Prophet, why do you baptize?"

<sup>26</sup> John answered, "I baptize with water, but among you  
stands the one you do not know.

<sup>27</sup> He is coming after me, but I am not good enough even  
to untie his sandals."

<sup>28</sup> All this happened in Bethany on the east side of the  
River Jordan, where John was baptizing.

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**b** *the Prophet*: The one who was expected to appear and announce the coming of the Messiah.

**c** *The messengers, who had been sent by the Pharisees,* <sup>25</sup> then; or *Those who had been sent were Pharisees; they.*