

# “WHEN 3 X 7 = 1”

## 7 SIGNS, 7 DESCRIPTIONS & 7 STATEMENTS THAT LEAD TO 1 CONCLUSION!<sup>1</sup>

The purpose of the writing of the Gospel of John is clearly stated in Jn. 20:30-31: **“But these are written, that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.”** John wanted the readers of his gospel to understand who Jesus Christ truly was i.e. **God in human flesh!** To accomplish that John assembled an impressive array of evidences to convince any open-minded person of that truth, with the ultimate hope that they would be compelled to believe on Jesus Christ and thus obtain salvation.

The word “*believe*” is **THE** key word which runs throughout the entire book of John.<sup>2</sup> **It means far more than mere intellectual assent to a few facts.** To “*believe*” is to exclusively “*trust in,*” “*cling to,*” & “*rely on*” on someone or something. A well-known example of genuine “belief” occurred at Niagara Falls in 1860. There the tight rope walker “Blondin” challenged the large crowd who had gathered & had watched him walk across that fearful gorge safely. He asked them, **“Who believes I can return to the other side with a man on my back?”** The crowd roared their assent & many raised their hands. But when he began asking those who had raised their hands indicating they believed he could do it to get on his back & go, all declined until finally one man agreed to climb on his back and trust Blondin to carry him across safely—**which he did!** **Many said they “believed” Blondin could do it, but only one truly believed since he alone put his life on the line and was carried across!** **This is the kind of commitment or belief in Jesus Christ which John sought to produce in his readers via three powerful sets of evidences in his gospel:**

1. **SEVEN SIGNS THAT JESUS PERFORMED** i.e. Miracles that He did.
  - A. **Changing water into wine** – 2:1-11. Christ instantly created what would normally have taken an entire year (or more) to produce.<sup>3</sup>
  - B. **Healing of the royal official’s son** – 4:46-54. Power over impending death... and an example of true saving faith!
  - C. **Healing of the invalid at Bethesda** – 5:1-18. Power over physical defect/disease. (Possibly paralysis?) A clear, bold claim that He was equal with God the Father! (vv. 17-18)
  - D. **Feeding of the 5000** – 6:1-14. Power over creation. **The only miracle contained in all 4 Gospels.** The high point of his ministry, since the Jews believed that Messiah would come during Passover and that He would perform a miracle of feeding the people miraculously, like Moses did with the manna in the wilderness! The Dead Sea Scrolls even contains seating instructions for this event! (Robert Gundry)

<sup>1</sup> By Mike Edwards, January, 2011, St. Vincent, West Indies (revised May 2013 SVG & Feb., 2015 & Jan. 2021, Madison, Ohio).

<sup>2</sup> “**The one key word that clearly dominates the Gospel of John is the word “believe”** [cf. “believeth,” “believes,” “believed,” “did not believe,” “do not believe,” etc.]. The word[s] occur an amazing number of times throughout John’s gospel, appearing in every chapter except chapters 15, 18 & 21! [e.g. 1:12, 50; 2:22, 23; 3:12, 15, 16, 18 [3 times], 36 [twice]; 4:21, 39, 41, 42, 48, 50, 53; 5:24, 44, 46 [twice], 47 [twice]; 6:29, 30, 35, 36, 40, 47, 64, 69; 7:5, 38, 39, 48; 8:24, 30, 31, 45; 9:18, 35, 36, 38; 10:25, 37, 38 [3 times], 42; 11:15, 26, 27, 40, 42, 45, 48; 12:11, 36, 39, 42, 44, 46, 47; 13:19; 14:1 [twice], 10, 11 [twice], 12, 29; 16:9, 27, 30, 31; 17:8, 20, 21; 19:35; 20:8, 25, 27, 29 [twice], 31 [twice].” (excerpt taken from “*Introductory Notes on the Gospel of John*” which I wrote in July, 1999 for a graduate course I was taking at the time-*mwe*)

<sup>3</sup> Note: The word “*wine*” in Scripture refers to several different things including alcoholic wine, fresh pressed grape juice, grapes still growing on the vine & preserved non-alcoholic grape juice (btw: the ancients had several ways of doing that). So one should not jump to erroneous conclusions! **I do not believe Jesus Christ made or drank alcoholic wine!** Instead, **I am persuaded, based on the evidence contained in the Word of God as well as a consideration of His holy & divine character as God, that in this miracle Jesus created the most exquisite, fresh grape juice.** For a thorough study & review of the evidence regarding this subject, please see my paper “*Wine and Alcohol in the Bible*” (25pp) or the abridged 12 page version. -*mwe*

E. **Walking on the sea** – 6:16-21. – Power over nature!

F. **Restoration of sight** – 9:1-41. – Power over physical defects!

G. **Raising of Lazarus from the dead** – 11:1-44. – Power over DEATH! cf. Heb. 2:14-15.

2. **SEVEN DESCRIPTIONS THAT JESUS GAVE OF HIMSELF** i.e. Personifications that He gave.

A. **“I Am the Bread of Life”** – John 6:35. Key words in this passage: “Believe” “Eternal Life” “Comes” & “Bread.” vv. 1-25 are all about *physical* bread while vv. 26-65 are all about *spiritual* bread.

B. **“I Am the Light of the World”** – John 8:12. cf. background of the Feast of Tabernacles & the Feast of Lights. See Alfred Edersheim, “Jesus the Messiah” [pp. 589-ff] which explains how Christ by His actions was claiming to be God and the way to heaven.

C. **“I Am the Door of the Sheepfold”** – John 10:7, 9. Shepherds often laid down in the opening of the sheepfold and became a “living” door!

D. **“I Am the Good Shepherd”** – John 10:11, 14. Unlike a hireling or a fake, he was willing to give his very life for the sheep!

E. **“I Am the Resurrection and the Life”** – John 11:25. “I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?”

F. **“I Am the Way, the Truth and the Life”** – John 14:6. Note the context: vv. 1-5: “Let not your heart be troubled: you believe in God, believe also in me...I go to prepare a place for you...we don’t know where you’re going and how can we know the way?”

G. **“I Am the True Vine”** – John 15:1, 5. If you know Christ, we need to learn to “abide” in Him at all times.

3. **SEVEN CLAIMS THAT JESUS MADE ABOUT HIMSELF** i.e. Statements that He made.

A. **“I Am”** – John 4:26 “I that speak unto thee am he”

B. **“I Am”** – John 8:24 “If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins”

C. **“I Am”** – John 8:28 “When ye have lifted up the Son of Man, then shall ye know that I am he”

D. **“I Am”** – John 8:58 “Before Abraham was, I am”

E. **“I Am”** – John 13:19 “...that when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he”

F. **“I Am”** – John 18:5-6 “Jesus saith unto them, I am he...As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward and fell to the ground.”

G. **“I Am”** – Jn. 18:8 “Jesus answered, ‘I have told you that I am he...’