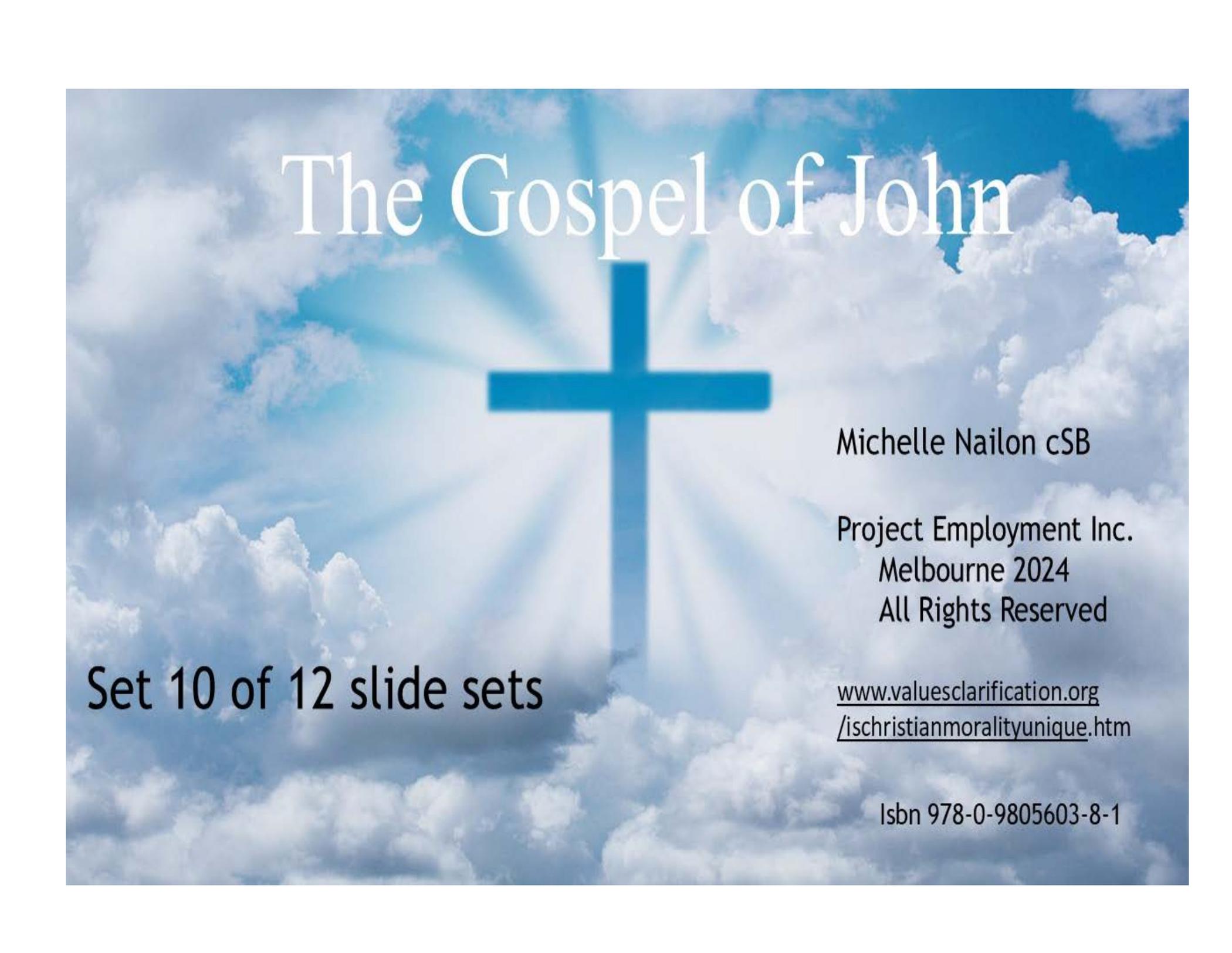


The Gospel of John



Michelle Nailon cSB

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[www.valuesclarification.org
/ischristianmoralityunique.htm](http://www.valuesclarification.org/ischristianmoralityunique.htm)

Set 10 of 12 slide sets

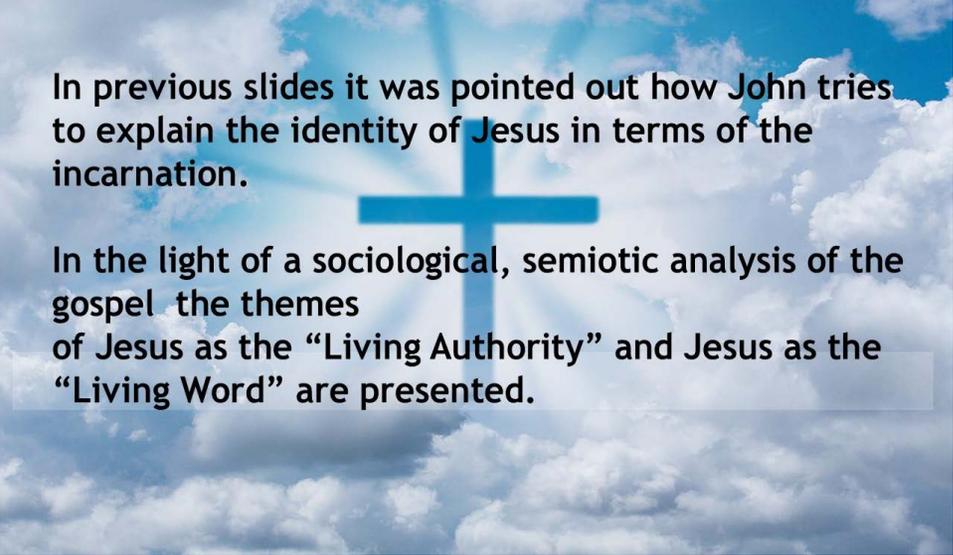
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What do you know about the gospel of John?

Academics agree that this gospel differs from the gospels of Mark, Matthew and Luke, which, because of their similarities are called the "synoptic gospels".

Academics also agree that the writer of John's gospel takes particular interest in trying to explain who Jesus is.

Do you have your own ideas about the identity of Jesus?

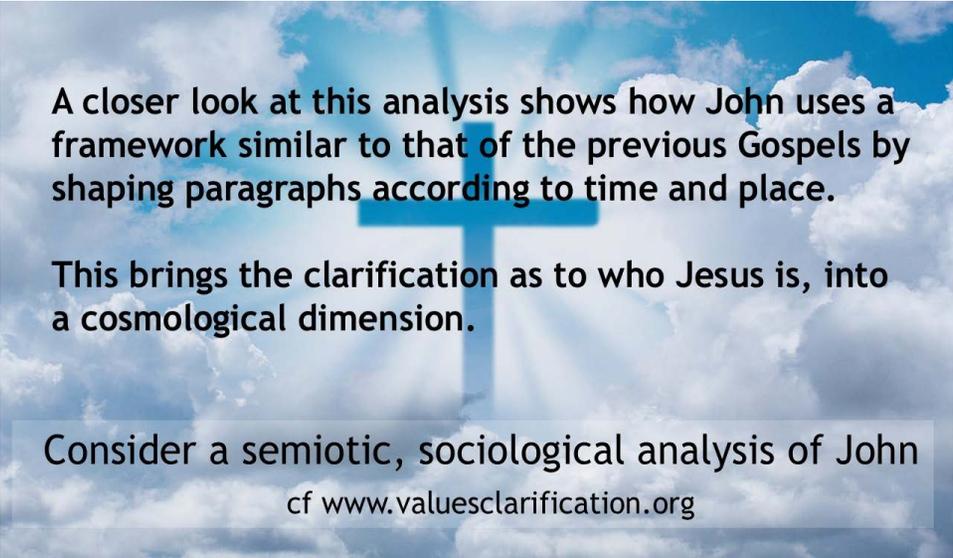


In previous slides it was pointed out how John tries to explain the identity of Jesus in terms of the incarnation.

In the light of a sociological, semiotic analysis of the gospel the themes of Jesus as the "Living Authority" and Jesus as the "Living Word" are presented.

No. 189a

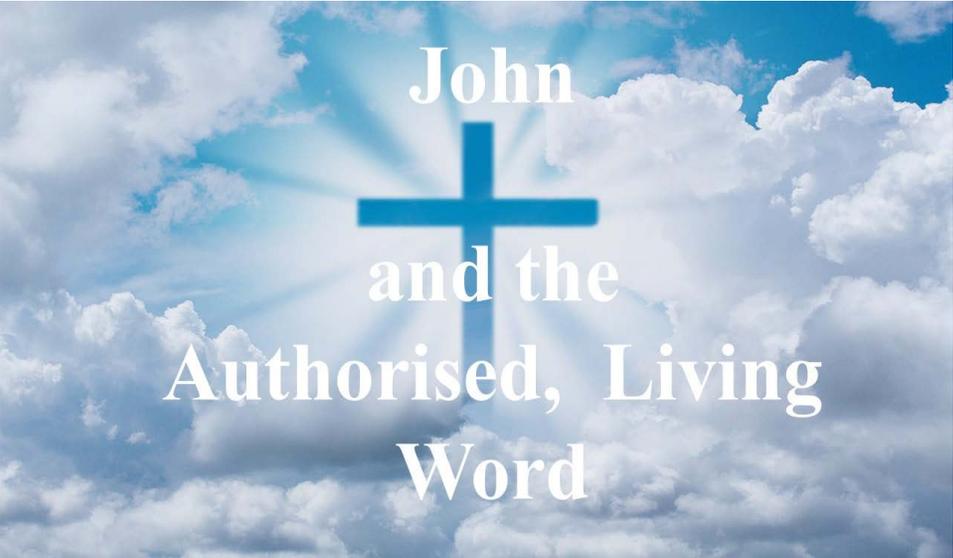
No. 191



A closer look at this analysis shows how John uses a framework similar to that of the previous Gospels by shaping paragraphs according to time and place.

This brings the clarification as to who Jesus is, into a cosmological dimension.

Consider a semiotic, sociological analysis of John
cf www.valuesclarification.org



John
and the
Authorised, Living
Word

No. 193

A sociological structure of the gospel of John (cf. *Five Pivotal Texts* www.realitysearch.com.au), shows how John develops the idea of the

“Word Unfolding” as he explains

Who is Jesus?

First, he presents Jesus as the **Word**.

No. 195

Then

▶ in his Section B, in a similar way to Mark’s Section A, John has a focus on the definition and meaning of

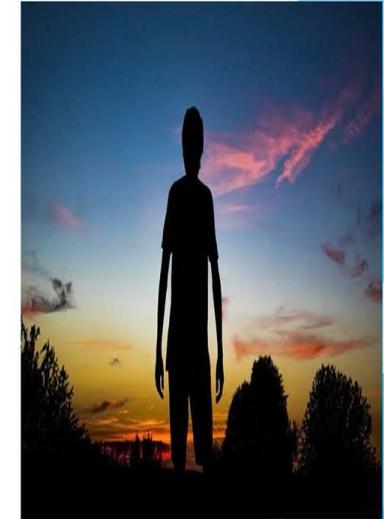
▶ **authority.**



Page 49

John states in his “Section A” that the “Word was made flesh”

The Rest of the gospel explains what this means



No. 194

No. 196

Here, in this Section B, John appears to define and explain authentic

“**Living Authority**” as being identified with Jesus.

How does he do this?



No. 197

As in the gospels of Mark and Luke,
John uses PLACE NAMES

to structure the paragraphs in his Section B
and later on in his Section C

How does he do this?

No. 198

In a way similar to that of Luke's Section B he sets
out a number of paragraph pairs.

These are structured into a consecutive
(rather than a circular) pattern and each place acts
as a "hook" for the paragraph

No. 199

Consider the paragraph "hooks" in John's Section B:

Bethany beyond the river Jordan	Judea at the river Jordan
Into Galilee	Into Galilee
Cana/Galilee	Cana/Galilee
Capernaum/Galilee	Capernaum/Galilee
Jerusalem/Temple	Jerusalem/Temple
Night	An hour

No. 200

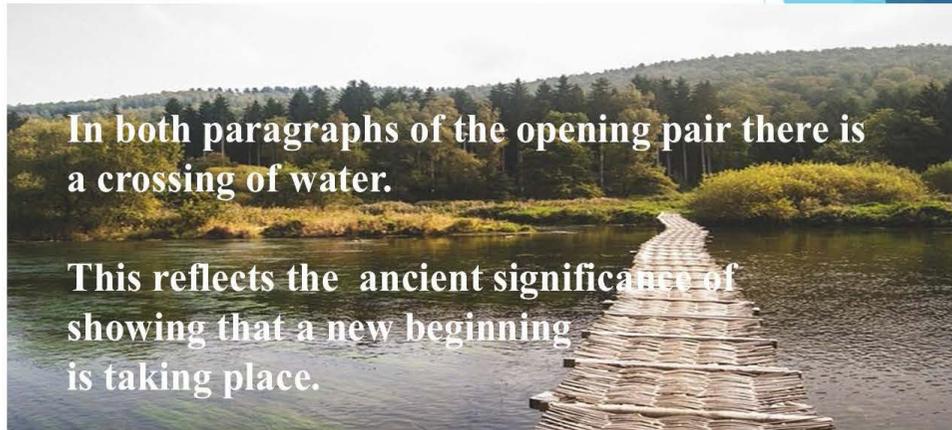
The major point in common between each
paragraph pair appears to describe
something about "living authority".

Consider:

Living authority	represents God
Living Authority	invites
Living Authority	relies on the household
Living Authority	works for the Father
Living Authority	gives witness

No. 201

A couple of comments can be made about this structure



No. 203

No. 202



No. 204

▶ A second comment, can answer the question.

▶ Why is the apparent paragraph “hook” in the last pair about **time**?



Recall the sociological structure of **Matthew's** gospel.

This was written for Jewish Christians and Matthew makes an effort to identify time as such, with Judaism and its roots within Jewish law and the authority of the law.

No. 205

Arguably John's use of time statements in his last paragraph pair in his Section B, is a gentle reminder that even though he is using place names to organize most of the material here, he also wants to connect authority and law with the sense of time.

No. 206

Authority

Law

Time

Understanding Law, e.g. the natural law, is based upon observing cause and effect. This takes place over TIME

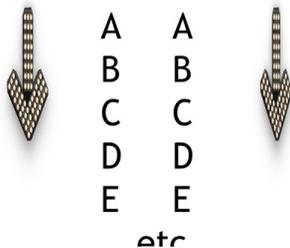


No. 207

Having described major attributes of "Living Authority" in his Section B, what does John go on to do in his Section

C ?

Here, he again sets out a structure of paragraph pairs that are based on parallel places.



No. 208

Consider the paragraph "hooks" of place in his Section C

across the sea	across the Jordan river
In the mountain alone	remained (alone) in place
sea journey	on journey to
synagogue	tomb
not Judea	not openly
Temple (cf. home)	Bethany (cf. home)
into Jerusalem	into Jerusalem
Temple	(in Temple)
Jesus hidden	Jesus hidden
porch of Solomon	(Jesus has gone)

No. 209

Again, the opening “pair” shows a crossing of water



No. 211

No. 210

As with Section B, the point in common to each paragraph pair describes an attribute of Jesus.

In this case, in Section C, the points provide a description of Jesus as the **Living Word**.

Consider:

No. 212

“The Living Word”

The Living Word	appeals to the crowd
The Living Word	is sought after
The Living Word	achieves goals
The Living Word	brings life
The living Word	is doubted and outlawed
The Living Word	is aware of death threats
The Living Word	has public witness
The Living Word	is conscious of timing
The Living Word	is the light of the world
The Living Word	speaks like a Shepherd.

- ▶ In this Section C, John shows how Jesus is being rejected by the leaders of Judaism. For example, their unbelief results in the synagogue being compared with a tomb.
- ▶ The last paragraph “pair” in this section starts in the porch of Solomon when it was winter.
- ▶ However, in fact, this paragraph does not have a match.
- ▶ In the Porch of Solomon, when the leaders tried to arrest him, “Jesus went away from their grasp”



- ▶ So, in this paragraph “pair”, Jesus has in fact gone.
- ▶ (This touches on the theme that for a sense of direction, there needs to be a focus on Jesus).



No. 213

No. 215

What about the next section in John’s gospel, his

Section D?

A comparison can be made here with the basic structure of Mark’s gospel.

In Mark’s Section C there does not appear to be any paragraph “pattern”. Rather, when dealing with the person of Jesus, especially as the “adult child” (cf. Matthew and Luke’s Section A),

the gospel writers do not appear to use a paragraph pattern.

No. 214

No. 216



The implication here is that the person of Jesus is the “arrival point”.

Jesus is the point of balance, the “still point” within and between Judaism and Hellenism, between Law and Order, and as proposed above, between Time and Place.

- ▶ **In Mark’s Section C**, which appears to be about Jesus in the context of “the Child”, Jesus invites someone to

“Go sell what you have and give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven. And come follow me”
i.e.

**IDENTIFY WITH
JESUS**



No. 217



No. 219



No. 218

► In a similar way in John's Section D (without a paragraph pattern), Jesus challenges his disciples to

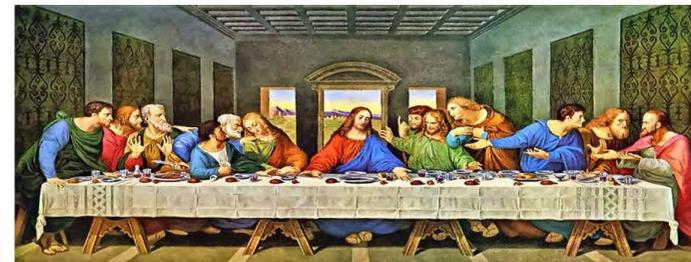
identify with him.



No. 220

Within this Section, after his betrayer has left, there is the last supper (the first Eucharist).

Also, Jesus addresses his followers as "children" and he prays for them.



No. 221

Section E



No. 223

No. 222

John's Section E includes the crucifixion story and resurrection.

In John's account there is a dimension of triumph here.

Also, it appears there is a paragraph pattern here but this is fairly loose.

The pattern appears to be organized around persons being told to do something.

In this sense the paragraph Section picks up on a sense of direction into the future.

No. 224

▶ John's Section E

▶ In a future society (in which law and order prevail in balance), the society is characterized by:

- ▶ legal rights,
- ▶ non-violence,
- ▶ credibility of witnesses,
- ▶ a philosophical base,
- ▶ stress on the humanity of Jesus,
- ▶ the fulfillment of Scripture,
- ▶ church members being respected as "children",
- ▶ recognition of the "way" of the child,
- ▶ care for the body of Jesus,
- ▶ support for Church leadership,
- ▶ the sacrament of penance,
- ▶ the priority of faith

Page 56

John's Section F is about a meeting between the risen Jesus and his disciples by the sea of Galilee.

Some may argue that this chapter has been added to the gospel later on.

However, the general setting, which is by the sea, completes a concentric circle about water which has already been threaded throughout the gospel.



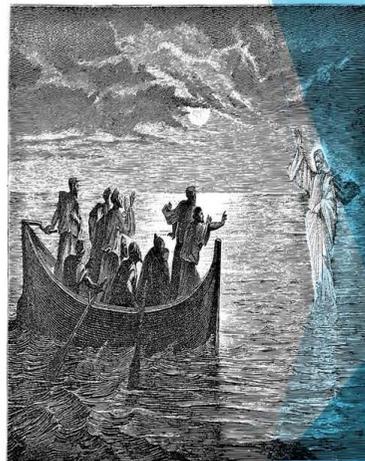
Consider this concentric water circle and weigh up whether or not you think it provides a “summary point” for the gospel

Remember John was dealing with “Jewish Christians” who were loath to accept the full identity of Jesus

Consider the concentric water circle

1. Immersion in water	1. Immersion in water
2. Jesus uses water to make wine	2. Jesus serves meal using water (to obtain fish)
3. Nicodemus taught re new birth through water	3. Water from side of Christ (symbolizes new birth of Church)
4. “I am thirsty” plea to Samaritan woman	4. “I thirst” plea on cross
5. pail mentioned for collecting water	5. bowl mentioned re vinegar
6. Pool of Bethesda sign	6. Pool of Siloam sign
7. Sea of Tiberias (cf. Emperor claim to divinity)	7. “Rivers of living water” (cf. claim re living God)
8. Jesus walks on water	

- The middle of this concentric circle of images is about Jesus walking on water.
- This scene actually matches the middle of the concentric circle in Mark’s Section B which is about what is needed for a sense of direction.
- The story also matches the middle of Matthew’s Section D.



“When the disciples took Jesus on board, they immediately reached the place where they were going”



No. 229

Here, not only are time (“immediately”) and place (“where they were going”) being mentioned. The need for a sense of direction is also included.

Also the imagery of a boat in stricken waters calls to mind the dilemma of John’s Church community.

A key theme in John’s gospel, as pointed out by scholars and mentioned above, was the difficulty of Jewish Christians in accepting Jesus as the “end point”.

No. 231

► The water circle again shows how Jesus is the “still point” within and between

Time and Place

No. 230

John asserts that when Jesus was taken on board his disciples immediately reached the place where they were headed.



The same would be true of the on-going Church.

No. 232

TIME and PLACE