

So we're in John, and if you have a Bible, you could turn to the beginning of John. Who enjoys a good reset? A good reset.

You might have had a machine in your life. I've had a treadmill do this to me. Where something's not working, and you get to the point where you look up online or you look up on the manual.

How do you fix this? And it says, you've got to find that tiny hole. Anyone had to do this?

Find that tiny hole and get a pin and stand on one leg and put your tongue out to the left, and then press three other buttons all at the same time, and the thing will start again. But what happens in the end is wonderful. Fresh, new beginnings.

Of course, at the beginning of the year, we do this all the time. We do resets with our health, with our spirituality, with our friendships, with our work. Reset.

I hope today is a believe reset. A believe reset. Not a belief reset.

I think often we can have beliefs. The problem is we don't believe them. And at times in our lives as we follow Jesus, we need to reset.

And I think for me, reading the four gospels, one after the other, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, and some of you have been doing that in our reading plan for the beginning of the year, it's been a bit of a believe or a believe reset.

It's been really helpful just to see Jesus in a new way and have my heart stirred as a long time pastor. Does anyone remember this picture of believe, where that came from? Ted Lasso, I had a complete...

Who watched Ted Lasso? Two of us. Oh, good.

That's good. But it's actually quite a good series on TV. And it was a struggling footy soccer team in England.

And this was a very key part of the story. This was put up on the top of the coach's office. Believe, believe.

Do you believe that Jesus is the son of God? Do you believe that he's your saviour? Do you believe that he's going to come again?

And do you believe that faith in him will give you eternal life on a new earth? Believe. Well, that's what John has been written for.

This whole gospel, we're told in chapter 20 verse 30, Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written. Why did John write the book?

His gospel. These are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the son of God, and that by believing, you may have life in his name. My prayer, as I said, is that we would have a believe reset.

At the end of this gospel, there are four characters that we'll come to. And I think they're interesting characters because we could, different people can relate to the different characters.

There's Mary Magdalene, and she has a certain response of believing. And she has some challenges in believing at the end, in chapter 20. And then there's Thomas, who struggles to believe.

He has certain rational doubts. And you might relate to that. And then there's Peter, who's struggling to believe, coming out of a lot of shame and guilt.

And then there's John, who simply trusts and believes. And I hope by the time we get to the end of this message, you might relate to one of those four characters. We are in a big series.

We're trying to study the whole Bible, 66 different books, and over two years. And the process is to try to give a high flyover, overview of the book, easier to do in a way with a book like John.

But it will be maybe more interesting for some of the Old Testament books that we just aren't very familiar with. But do an overview and then drill in to one verse or a couple of verses that really encapsulate the whole heart of the book.

Have you noticed that John's Gospel is really different to the other three? Still, there's two people that have ever done that. I'm sorry, I won't ask of anything more surveyish of you.

They are very different. Matthew, Mark and Luke are called the Synoptic Gospels. Syn, S-Y-N meaning together and Opsus meaning view or sight.

So, Synoptic is seeing together. Matthew, Mark and Luke are very similar in many ways. You come to John and it's like a fully different genre.

I so wanted to say, who thinks that now? John has two main sections. Up to chapter 12 is his public ministry.

And then the next part, the whole second half of his gospel, is the Passover meal and the movement of Jesus toward the cross and the resurrection.

John uses the number 7, which is symbolic for perfection and completion, in Hebrew thought, to structure his whole account.

If you read through the book of John, you'll find there are 7 miraculous signs, 7 large teaching discourses, 7 I Am statements, and in chapter 1, there are 7 titles given to Jesus.

Lamb of God, Son of God, Rabbi, Jesus of Nazareth, Son of Man, Messiah, King of Israel. So, let's just have a quick look at this overview of the signs and the teachings and the I Am, and then we'll land on John 1, 14.

This book is written so that we would believe.

And so again, that's why I wanted to do a really brief overview because it's just the snippets to remind us, certainly if we've read the book before, what John chose to put in his Gospel to point us towards believing in Jesus.

John chooses seven signs. At the end of the book I just read, there are many more than seven signs, aren't there? Many, many more.

There are so many you couldn't fit them in the book, he said. But he chose especially these signs. Have you had a sign from God?

Sorry, I just cannot. Two of you have had signs from God. Sevens and twos, Lord, what is this?

Signs from God, some of us have, I think. We certainly have had them at church. When we, my family first came here, the building project was really in full swing.

We weren't sure it was going to happen, but it was very close to being shored up.

And Max McEwan and Greg Goff were looking around for somewhere to go when we knocked this building down, this old, well-loved red brick building that used to be here, had to get knocked down so we could build a tower through North Point construction

and then build a church. And so Max, when I first came, was taking us around for many months looking for places to run the church admin out of. We couldn't find anything. We would have looked at at least 12 places.

We finally found one that seemed really good and we were pretty close to putting down some money and leasing it and another church in the area actually leased it. And it was like, oh drats, what's going on? God, we don't have anywhere to go.

And then it happened that the date was set when the bulldozers were coming and we were out of this building and we had to do a big move. And out of the blue, the real estate agent rang up and said, I've got a place you haven't seen.

I think you'll like it. We went and looked at it that afternoon. And I think we'd leased it within about a day.

It was perfect at King Road. And the same thing happened with where we were going to have our worship services. We were going to be in one place.

It fell through. We didn't have anywhere to go. So we rang Hornsby South and they were so generous and they took us in.

When I spoke to the construction company, they said, this could not have happened months before. The building of that tower, nine stories, the building of this church, it couldn't have happened several months in the future.

It happened in God's perfect timing. And so when we reflected those about seven or eight years ago, when we reflected on coming into this wonderful new building, we felt like God had given us a sign. Amen.

We felt like God had said, I'm with you. I'm with you. I want you to step out in faith.

So how about you? Have you had signs from the Lord? Well, I'm going to cut this sermon down in time because it will go too long.

I'm trying to read out the seven signs. So if Nev can find it, it's a few pages along in those slides. Changing water into wine, chapter 2 verses 1 to 11.

Really important time that Jesus said, the old way is changing. It was at a wedding at Cana. Healing the nobleman's son.

This royal official just believed, went to Jesus and said, could you help my son? And the text says, when he reflected the son was healed of the life-threatening illness, just when Jesus said he would be.

And then at the end of the text, as you'd expect it says, and many people did what? Believed. Because this book is all about helping people believe, and I'm hoping we could have a believe reset.

And so the next one is healing the invalid at Bethesda.

There was a place where there was a pool, and for decades people would come who were invalid or in pain or suffering, and they would try to get into the pool when it was stirred, and they believed that the angels stirred it, and you would get in

there and get healed. And this is a story about a guy who was lame for 38 years, and Jesus comes and curiously only heals one of many people who were there. Excuse me.

And there's this wonderful moment of people believing again and seeing that Jesus loves people. Then you have feeding the 5,000 in Chapter 6.

John tells us that, as the other Gospels do, that Jesus did what Moses did, and he basically created manna from heaven and took the loaves and fish and created this incredible miracle of provision. And then he walked on the water, Chapter 6.

The water was seen as the abode of the underworld, where the evil spirits lived, and so Jesus walking on the water was a sign of his authority and power over them.

And then we have the healing, the man born blind, and it's coinciding with I am the light of the world. The healing of the man born blind, if you read it in Chapter 9, it's a really fascinating story.

Everyone is struggling to know what to make of this miracle worker. They're like, is he the Messiah? Who is he?

And there's no time to do it, but I would commend you to have a read of Chapter 9 of John's Gospel if you're a seeker, if you're not sure if you believe or not, because you might relate to the response of the crowds.

It's okay to be confronted by what Jesus did and be confused as to whether he is who he says he is. It's a very natural thing to be like, I don't know if I believe or not, but I'm sort of drawn, I'm drawn into this figure, Jesus of Nazareth.

And then the greatest miracle before his own resurrection was the raising of Lazarus from the dead after four days in John 11. And again, wonderful story to read.

And at the end, Jesus says, I'm asking this in their hearing, Lord, Father, that they might believe, that they might believe I'm the one that you have sent. So seven miraculous signs, with the final one being his actual resurrection from the dead.

John then really weaves throughout his gospel seven teaching discourses. I'm going to ask you, who knows that there were seven special teaching discourses in the gospel of John? Oh, lots of them.

Okay, great. We don't watch stream TV shows at this church, but we know our gospels. I don't think I knew that.

I'm very aware of Matthew's Sermon on the Mount and the pithy, amazing teaching there, and then Luke's Sermon on the Plain, but I don't think over all these years I've locked in that there are seven large, complex teaching discourses that Jesus

gives, and they are the new birth, John 3, a conversation with Nicodemus about being born of the Spirit, the water of life, and when he has that conversation with the Samaritan woman and he teaches about this water that will give eternal life, the

divine son, John 5, who Jesus is, and the healing on the Sabbath, the bread of life that coincides with the miracle of the feeding of the 5000 in John 6, the life-giving Spirit that he unpacks and teaches all about in John 7, he has a discourse on

the light of the world and on the good shepherd. Now, if you're a Christian and you've been following the Lord for a while, I would put it to you, I went through and copied all them and printed them out in a little booklet because I thought, I want

to try to study some of this and see why did John pick them. And you've got to be keen to learn to do that, but it's really worth doing. So John is trying to help people believe. He's got signs and then he's got Jesus unpacking the parable signs, and

then he moves into the wonderful I Am statements that Jesus says about himself, which are really his description of who he is. So the signs are what Jesus did, the teaching tells us why, and the I Ams tell us who Jesus is. And this is the I Ams.

I am the bread of life. I am the light of the world. I am the gate for the sheep.

I am the good shepherd. I am the resurrection and the life. I am the way, the truth, and the life.

I am the true vine. We could spend a very long time unpacking that. Does that mean anything to you?

Does it stir you in any way? That Jesus could be all these aspects of his identity and character. The challenge that's coming out of today's message is, do you believe?

Are you drawn to believing? What has stopped you from believing in your life? Are you at a transitory season in your life where you are reflecting on what is true?

Can I commend to you the greatest teacher of the history of the world? And consider what it means that he says, I am all of these things.

So seven signs, seven teachings, seven I am statements as a broad overview. Now we drill in and come down to John 1, 14. There's just a few verses on from what Gary read for us.

The word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only son who came from the Father full of grace and truth.

We've seen his glory, the one who is all those I am, the one who teaches like no one else, the one who can do all those miraculous signs like no one else. We've seen his glory. The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.

We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only son who came from the Father full of grace and truth. John takes us immediately, at the beginning of his gospel, back to the beginning of the Bible.

Let me just read those first five verses that Gary read. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning.

Through him all things were made. Without him nothing was made that has been made. Isn't that a line?

In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. In him was life. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

Wow, he comes out swinging in the beginning of his gospel, doesn't he? The Word is the Logos. It's a Greek idea, the creative utterance of God.

So when he says the Logos, he's saying the Logos is the pre-incarnate being of Jesus. Before Jesus had a body, he was known as the Word. At the very beginning of life on this planet, Jesus without a body as the Word of God was with God and was God.

And when God started making things over seven days, and they could be seven real days or seven periods of time, we don't know for sure, it was Jesus who was doing the creating, hallelujah.

Jesus who did the signs and did the teaching and said the I Am's. John says everything that's been made in the creation story, in the cosmos, everything that we see as human beings was made through Jesus. Do you believe it?

Do you believe that? Because that has some ramifications on whether he's actually worth listening to this Jesus. Life was in the Logos.

Light was in the Logos. And the light of life has come to earth in Jesus.

I found it really interesting for those particularly who have been part of this church the last month, that John basically wraps up our other sermons in this one verse from the other gospels.

So we have verse 14, The word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. And what that word dwelling means is tabernacle. In the Old Testament, the glory of God, the presence of God tabernacled in a tent.

And so John is connecting Jesus back to the very beginning in Genesis and then he's coming across a bit to Exodus and he's saying, you remember God's glory tabernacled? Well, this is what happened with Jesus. He has come and made his tent among us.

The glory of God is in a human being. Now, do you remember that was Matthew's message, wasn't it? Emmanuel, God with us.

Does anyone remember the three points we had from Emmanuel? God is close. Just cheat.

God is close, humble and able. He's tabernacled amongst us. That's what John says.

The word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. And then he says, we have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only son. Believe is a very significant word you'll find in the Gospel of John.

It's every page that you read. It's every about 10 to 12 verses. But also is the word glory.

Glory is so important for John. And we hear a lot about glory, but the most poignant, amazing passage about the glory of Jesus is in John 17. Let me read from verse 1.

Father, this is called the high priestly prayer. He's had the last supper, and he's there with his disciples, and he's got the cross about to come. He's about to give his life.

And he says, father, the hour has come. Glorify your son, that your son may glorify you. For you granted him authority over all people, that he might give eternal life to all those who you have given him.

Now this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God in Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do. There were seven signs, seven teachings, seven I Ams.

And now, father, now that I'm at the end, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had before you, before the world began. And what is that glory? He's gonna go to a cross.

The glory of Jesus is him being raised up and paying for the sin of the world. And of course, that's what Mark said in his gospel. The son of man came to serve, not to be served.

And we summarized it in three points. The son of man came to serve, sacrifice and satisfy God's requirements. That's the glory that John is talking about.

Do you believe that he's worthy of glory because he died on the cross for our sin? And the third, the last part of this one little text is who came from the father full of grace and truth?

And I think this is the fulfillment of Luke's message that Ben preached last week. Remember, he had inside out, upside down, now and not yet. And that's what the kingdom is like.

Jesus was full of grace and truth. He embodies the mercy and justice of the year of Jubilee. Are you with me?

Last week was on the year of Jubilee. This incredible idea that every 50 years, all the debts are canceled. That's what Jesus did.

We looked at Luke 4 last week when Ben was preaching, and he said, the Spirit of the Lord, the Sovereign Lord is upon me, and I'm here to preach good news to the poor. Set the captives free. What he was going to do was act in mercy and justice.

What do you think grace and truth means? Mercy and justice. Luke said it, John summarizes it.

Who came from the Father full of grace and truth? Do you believe? For John, this is such a significant verse.

I think it wraps up the whole Gospel of John. The Word, the pre-incarnate, Jesus, became flesh and made his dwelling among us as a human being, God, man. We have seen his glory.

He did so many amazing things, but the most glorious was that he gave his life on the cross. The glory of the one and only son who came from the Father full of grace and truth.

John has written all of this, that we might believe and have life in his name.

So John finishes with these character vignettes that I began the sermon with. Mary, Mary Magdalene. She had been forgiven a whole lot and been cleansed of spiritual pain.

Let me read to you what the story was about Mary's response, and we'll just wrap up with these four vignettes. Now, Mary stood outside the tomb crying. This is after Jesus has been crucified.

As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb, and saw two angels in white seated where Jesus' body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot. They asked her, woman, why are you crying?

They have taken my Lord away, she said, and I don't know where they have put him. At this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she didn't realize that it was Jesus. He asked her, woman, why are you crying?

Who is it you're looking for? Thinking he was the gardener, she said, Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him and I will get him. Jesus said to her, Mary.

When I read that, I see a woman who is struggling with the suffering of her life. She's in pain, she's crying, she's looking for hope. And Jesus is right there.

It took her a little while to believe, but she did believe. And I just want to encourage you and invite you to consider, do you relate to Mary?

When you think about the obstacles for you to believe in Jesus, is it because you have suffered a lot in your life and it's very hard to make meaning of it and it's hard to forgive God for what he's allowed to do to you? Things that have happened.

Can I encourage you to read the story at the end there of Mary? And know that Jesus is closer than you think to you. He's close to the broken hearted.

If you are suffering, believe again. Believe, reset. You can do it.

Believe. What about Thomas? Thomas says, I can't believe until I see the holes in his hand and the wound in his side and in his feet.

Couldn't get past his rational brain, could he? And then Jesus turned up and he did believe. But how about you?

Can you relate to Thomas? Are you a person that's very rational and you have a warmth towards Christianity? But deep down, you don't believe.

Because you're too rational. The Bible says without faith, we can't please God. Amen.

There is a gap between what we can line up and see rationally. There is faith that is required. If you can relate to Thomas, can I encourage you to do what he did?

Reset believe.

The end of the Gospel of John spends quite a big space in the narrative with the disciples are out in a boat and Jesus is cooking fish on the beach and Peter comes up to him and they have this lovely conversation where Jesus says, basically, he

reinstates Peter. He says, I want you to feed my lambs. I want you to be a leader in my church. Do you reckon that would have been easy for Peter?

I'm thinking not. Peter is the guy who said, I'll never deny you Lord. He did three times before the Christ of Christ.

He had done many times, he had failed Jesus. But with his shame and his guilt, he came and he received the grace of God in Christ. He believed.

He preached the first sermon after the Spirit was given at Pentecost and 3,000 people believed. How about you? Can you relate to shame and guilt?

Is it shame and guilt that stops you from believing? We are all sinners in need of the grace of God. Amen?

There's not a person in the room who is more worthy of Jesus' grace than you are. We are all sinners in need of grace.

And then there's John, good old John, who has had his moments, if you read the Gospel and the others, where James and John were like, Lord, can we have some glory? We want to get in there next to you on your throne.

And he says, when I come in glory and I'm crucified on that cross, you don't want to be next to me. Because that's what glory looks like for the Son of Man. So, Peter in verse 3, Peter and the other disciples started for the tomb.

Both were running, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent over and looked in at the strips of linen lying there, but did not go in. Then Simon Peter came along behind him and went straight into the tomb.

He saw the strips of linen lying there, as well as the cloth that had been wrapped around Jesus' head. The cloth was still lying in its place separated from the linen.

Finally, the other disciple who had reached the tomb first, who is John, also went inside. It's a beautiful four words, I think. He saw and believed.

He saw and believed.

You can believe. You can believe. We need to believe to find meaning in this life.

We need to believe Jesus is who he says he is. Reset. Reset involves resist.

Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Reset. Jesus is Lamb of God, Son of God, Rabbi, Jesus of Nazareth, Son of Man, Messiah, King of Israel.

Jesus is the Bread of Life, the Light of the World, the Gate for the Sheep, the Good Shepherd, the Resurrection and the Life, the Way and the Truth and the Life, the True Vine. Mary struggled in her suffering, Thomas in his doubt, Peter in his shame.

John just believed. Can you believe? Let's believe.

Lord, God, I'm not sure I did such a good job of preaching a sermon from the whole Gospel of John, but I commit the words to you and ask, Lord Holy Spirit, would you use the Scripture and even the words that have been spoken to point people to Jesus that they might find life in His Name? Amen.