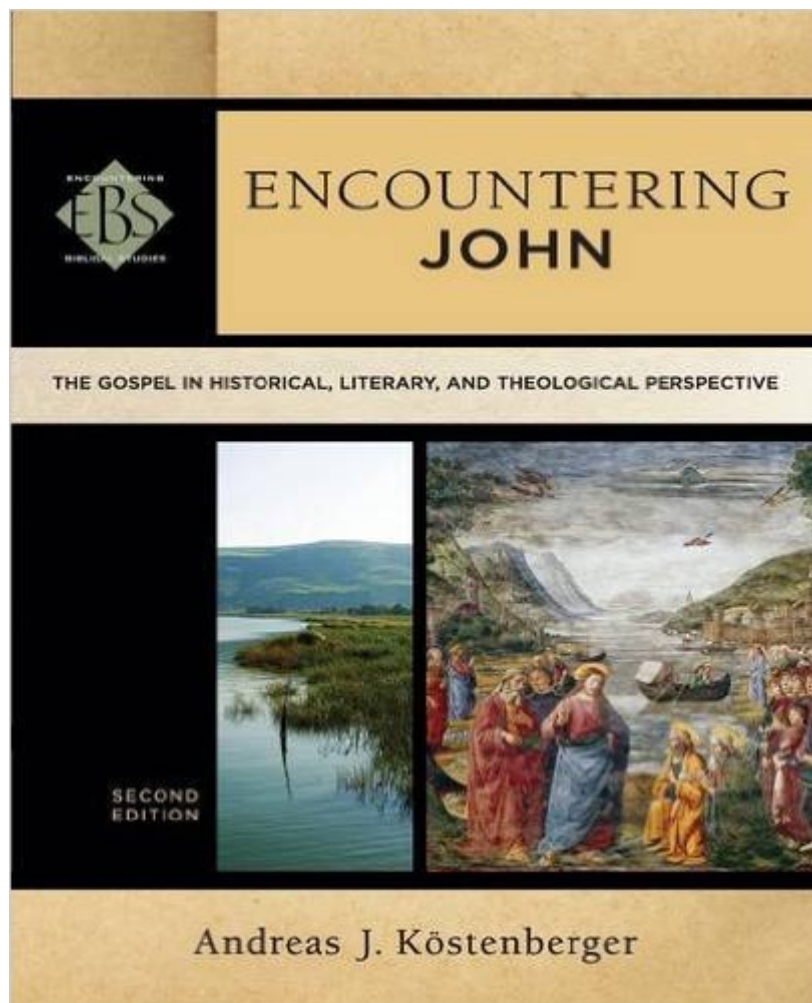


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Encountering John: The Gospel In Historical, Literary, And Theological Perspective (Encountering Biblical Studies)



Synopsis

This updated edition by a leading evangelical scholar offers a guide to John's Gospel that is informed by current scholarship but written at an accessible level.

Book Information

Series: Encountering Biblical Studies

Paperback: 304 pages

Publisher: Baker Academic; 2 edition (November 5, 2013)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0801049164

ISBN-13: 978-0801049163

Product Dimensions: 7 x 0.7 x 9.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 15.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (12 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #38,716 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #40 in [Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Bible Study & Reference > Criticism & Interpretation > New Testament](#) #99 in [Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Bible Study & Reference > Bible Study > New Testament](#) #187 in [Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Bible Study & Reference > New Testament](#)

Customer Reviews

That this is a textbook is no secret; yet, it provides something to the autodidact as well. It is an introduction and commentary. Indeed, as far as textbooks go, this is a premier one and should be included in every Johannine scholar's booklist. Written by Andreas J. Köstenberger, it provides a multi-perspective introduction to the Fourth Gospel. The book, geared to students, is divided between 5 parts, including 2 appendices and 10 excursuses. Each chapter begins with "didactic material," including a verse, an outline, objectives, and oftentimes, supplemental reading. At the end of each chapter are study questions and key words. In between the natural bookends, there are side boxes to give more detail about the examined chapter in John's Gospel, such as "Jesus's Display of Supernatural Knowledge." (p58) Further, there are other helps as well. On p59, there is a box on the appearances of "the Son of Man" in the Fourth Gospel as well as a box on the seven signs of Jesus. The information in these boxes will aid the student in connecting the whole of the Gospel to what they are reading. I am not one given to an overly redacted Fourth Gospel, so to have these boxes acting almost like cross references connect the Gospel among its "various parts," it helps to smother the need to dissect John unnaturally. On the other hand, the author's almost outright

refusal to introduce historical criticism to his students does leave me worried. While he marvelously deals with textual criticism (for instance, his discussion on John 1.18), Kästner refuses to allow a theological agenda uniquely Johannine. In discussing the "Johannine Pentecost," Kästner rails against those who would see John as offering a view different than Luke of the beginning of the Church. He writes that the view "charges John with altering historical fact in order to accommodate his particular theological bent. And while this is a serious enough offence for you and me, it is infinitely more serious for a writer of inspired Scripture." (p174) The author presupposes an unprovable, and still yet theological controversial tenet, that of inspiration. Further, he presumes an apparent monolithic orthodoxy at an early stage of Christianity, something not proven and in reality, the opposite of what we believe we know. His need to merge John with evangelical inspiration is made readily clear when he runs into Johannine disagreements with the Synoptics (for instance, his discussion on the chronology of the passion, p133). With an evangelical wind at his back, Kästner delivers a wonderful introductory textbook to facilitate deeper studies of the Fourth Gospel. While his exclusions of notable Johannine commentators, such as Rudolph Bultmann, is noticeable, his inclusion of relevant data such as Rabbinic sources and his use of literary criticism makes this book a welcomed addition to my library. Further, the ten excursuses, addressing topics ranging from the asides to the Aporias gives me pause to consider the deep majesty not just of the last canonical Gospel but of those who have taken it in their hands and attempted to extract to the last full measure the supreme mystery buried in the Gospel According to St. John.

This is one of the texts that I am reading as part of a seminary course. It is an outstanding analysis of the gospel and provides insight into the background and authenticity of the gospel. Well worth the reading IMO.

Kästner provides a nice introductory examination of John's Gospel here. It is nowhere near as thorough as most commentaries, but it is a nice quick reference to the Fourth Gospel. I just wish this was a hardcover volume.

Not a big fan of a lot of religious lit. More of a read the Bible for yourself kind of person. Found this quite helpful, however.

It's been helpful! Not a full commentary but gives a great overview of the book pointing out the

themes

Excellent source for information concerning the Gospel of John. Used as textbook.

It was easy reading! I took a class in school using this book as one of the text. I preferred this book to the other book because there was not a lot of fluff and large words. It was down to earth and very informative.

This is one of the best introductions to the Gospel of John that I have read. It is readable and enjoyable. I highly recommend this book.

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