Navigating the Living Waters of the Gospel of John: On Wading With Children and Swimming With Elephants

Paul N. Anderson, George Fox University

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Abstract
The Fourth Gospel has been called “a stream in which a child can wade and an elephant can swim.” John has long been used as a primer for newcomers to faith, and it continues to be a favorite devotional reading for young and old alike. On the other hand, John continues to be an ongoing storm center among the finest of Bible scholars and theologians. John’s content, complete with its theological tensions, evoked three centuries of debate in the early church, and it continues to produce great torrents of diverse scholarly opinion on a great number of issues into the twenty-first century. The question I want to explore is Why? What is it that renders John so reader friendly on one hand, and so theologically puzzling on the other? Put otherwise, how does one navigate the “living waters” of the Gospel of John?

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