

# John Writing in ‘Third Person’

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Ancient literature often wrote in third person, which is the description of participants as "he, she, and they," rather than as "I" or "you." That was true even when someone wrote about first-hand experiences. In this case, the disciple "**whom Jesus loved**" is John, himself. This identity can be pieced together by John's other references to this person (**John 19:26; 21:7**), compared to those same events as described in other Scriptures (**John 21:2; 21:20–21; Matthew 4:21; Matthew 17:1; Mark 5:37; Luke 8:51**). John's use of the term is meant, in part, to imply his especially close friendship with Jesus. In a literary sense, it's also a sign of humility, rather than to say, "it was me—I did that!"

## Verses in the Gospel According to John where John referred to himself in ‘third person’.

*Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of His disciples, **whom Jesus loved**.  
**John 13:23***

*When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and **the disciple whom He loved** standing by, He said to His mother, "Woman, behold your son!" **John 19:26***

*Therefore, **that disciple whom Jesus loved** said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment (for he had removed it), and plunged into the sea. **John 21:7***

*This is **the disciple** who testifies of these things, and wrote these things; and we know that his testimony is true. **John 21:24***