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Christology and Discipleship in John 17

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Marianus Pale Hera

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Marianus Pale Hera

Director: Frank J. Matera, Ph.D.

Jesus' prayer in John 17, known as "Jesus' High Priestly Prayer," is significant for its literary context, and it is rich in theological content. It brings Jesus' farewell speech to its climax and anticipates his glorification in his death on the cross. Although historical approaches often consider this passage to be a later addition, its content is truly Johannine. It presents Jesus as the Son who is sent into the world to reveal the Father to the world. It also illumines John's understanding of authentic discipleship. Consequently, John 17 is rich in its teaching on discipleship as well as in its teaching on Christology.

The theme of discipleship in John has received significant attention in the last four decades. However, as the first chapter of this dissertation shows, the relationship between Christology and discipleship in the Johannine narrative in general, and in John 17 in particular, has not been sufficiently investigated. This dissertation explores the relationship between discipleship and Christology in John 17, i.e., how discipleship has its basis in the Gospel's Christology, and how the christological teaching of the Gospel leads to authentic discipleship.

In the second chapter, a narrative reading of selected passages from chapters 1–12 shows John's tendency to present christological teaching that leads to teaching on discipleship. The reading of these passages also identifies the elements that indicate the christological character of Johannine discipleship.

The third chapter of this dissertation deals with the literary context, the text, and the structure of John 17. This chapter shows that throughout the Farewell Discourse John presents his christological understanding of Jesus as a basis for his message about discipleship.

The exegesis of John 17 in the fourth chapter confirms that John's teaching on Christology and discipleship are intimately interrelated to each other. All the elements that indicate the christological character of discipleship are on display in John 17. The dissertation concludes that Christology, which is the center and heartbeat of John's thought, is not an end in itself but leads to discipleship. The twofold message of Christology and discipleship is a distinctive Johannine trait.

This dissertation by Marianus Pale Hera fulfills the dissertation requirement for the doctoral degree in Biblical Studies approved by Frank J. Matera, Ph.D., as Director, and by Hellen Mardaga, Ph.D., S.T.D., and Francis T. Gignac, D.Phil., as Readers.

Frank J. Matera, Ph.D., Director

Hellen Mardaga, Ph.D., S.T.D., Reader

Francis T. Gignac, D.Phil., Reader

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List of Abbreviations

AB	Anchor Bible
AnBib	Analecta biblica
<i>AusBR</i>	<i>Australian Biblical Review</i>
BBB	Bonner Biblische Beiträge
BDAG	Danker, F. W., W. Bauer, W. R. Arndt, and F. W. Gingrich. <i>Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> . 3 rd ed. Chicago, 2000.
BDF	Blass, F., A. Debrunner, and R. W. Funk. <i>A Greek Grammar of the NT</i>
BETL	Bibliotheca Ephemeridum theologicarum Lovaniensium
<i>Bib</i>	<i>Biblica</i>
<i>BiBh</i>	<i>Bible Bhashyam</i>
BIS	Biblical Interpretation Series
<i>BK</i>	<i>Bibel und Kirche</i>
<i>BSac</i>	<i>Bibliotheca Sacra</i>
<i>BT</i>	<i>Bible Translator</i>
<i>BTB</i>	<i>Biblical Theology Bulletin</i>
<i>BZ</i>	<i>Biblische Zeitschrift</i>
<i>CBQ</i>	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
<i>CEV</i>	<i>Contemporary English Version</i>
<i>EstBib</i>	<i>Estudios bíblicos</i>
<i>ET</i>	<i>Ecclesial Theology</i>
<i>ETL</i>	<i>Ephemerides theologicae Lovanienses</i>
<i>ETR</i>	<i>Études théologiques et religieuses</i>
<i>ExpTim</i>	<i>Expository Times</i>
<i>FNT</i>	<i>Filologia-Neotestamentaria</i>
<i>HALOT</i>	Brown, F., S. R. Driver, and C. A. Briggs. <i>A Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> . Peabody, 2006.
<i>Int</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
<i>ITS</i>	<i>Indian Theological Studies</i>
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>Jeev</i>	<i>Jeevadhara</i>
<i>JETS</i>	<i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
<i>JSNTSup</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Supplement Series</i>
<i>JSOT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i>
<i>JTS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
<i>JTSA</i>	<i>Journal of Theology for Southern Africa</i>
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
LD	Lectio divina
<i>LXX</i>	<i>The Septuagint</i>
<i>MT</i>	<i>The Masoretic Text</i>
NAB	<i>New American Bible</i>

<i>Neot</i>	<i>Neotestamentica</i>
<i>NET</i>	<i>New English Translation</i>
<i>NIB</i>	<i>New Interpreter's Bible</i>
<i>NovT</i>	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
<i>NRSV</i>	<i>New Revised Standard Version</i>
<i>NTD</i>	Das Neue Testament Deutsch
<i>NTL</i>	New Testament Library
<i>NTM</i>	New Testament Message
<i>NTS</i>	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
<i>RB</i>	<i>Revue biblique</i>
<i>RevScRel</i>	<i>Revue des sciences religieuses</i>
<i>SacPag</i>	Sacra Pagina
<i>SBG</i>	Studies in Biblical Greek
<i>SBS</i>	Stuttgarter Bibelstudien
<i>SBT</i>	Studies in Biblical Theology
<i>SE</i>	<i>Studia Evangelica</i>
<i>SK</i>	<i>Skrif en Kerk</i>
<i>SNTSMS</i>	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
<i>TD</i>	<i>Theology Digest</i>
<i>TDNT</i>	Kittel G. and G. Friedrich, ed. <i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i> . Translated by G. W. Bromiley. Grand Rapids, 1964-74.
<i>TynNTC</i>	Tyndale New Testament Commentaries
<i>TS</i>	<i>Theological Studies</i>
<i>TQ</i>	<i>Theologische Quartalschrift</i>
<i>WBC</i>	Word Biblical Commentary
<i>WUNT</i>	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
<i>ZNW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
<i>ZWT</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Theologie</i>

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Chapter One

Recent Scholarship on John 17 and Johannine Discipleship

The first chapter of this dissertation is tripartite. In the first section I will present recent scholarship on John 17. This will clarify a wide range of issues with which scholars deal in relation to this chapter. On the one hand, scholars question the historicity of the event described in John 17 and propose theories concerning the literary genesis of the text. These scholars often regard John 17 as a secondary addition to an original text of the Fourth Gospel. On the other hand, scholars also read John 17 synchronically within its literary context and emphasize the significance of this passage within the overall Johannine narrative.

The second section focuses on recent scholarship on the theme of discipleship. This will show that scholars have approached the theme of discipleship in the Fourth Gospel from different points of view. However, the theme of discipleship in relationship to Christology, within the Fourth Gospel in general and in John 17 in particular, receives minimal attention.

The third section provides a summary of recent scholarship on John 17 and Johannine discipleship and underlines the need for this study.

1. Recent Scholarship on John 17

This first section, which presents a history of the research on John 17 in the modern era, is arranged thematically and reflects the main issues that are the focus of scholarly concern in treating this passage. I shall begin with the titles given to John 17.

1.1. Titles Given to John 17

(1) *The High Priestly Prayer*

John 17 has often been referred to as “The High Priestly Prayer” or *Precatio Summi Sacerdotis*. The title is ascribed to David Chytraeus, a sixteenth-century German theologian¹—although the understanding of this prayer as Jesus’ priestly prayer is also found in patristic commentaries.² Even though this title often becomes the subject of criticism, modern writers continue to employ and justify its usage. Siegfried Schulz, for example, thinks that the title is justifiable since Jesus prays as a priest on behalf of his own, whom he must leave in the world.³ Gerald J. Janzen argues for this title as he compares the role of the priest in Exodus 28 with Jesus’ role as a priest who prays on behalf of all of his disciples and followers.⁴ Raymond E. Brown agrees that here Jesus fulfills his role as the high priest who stands before God to make intercession for the people, as described in Hebrews and Romans

¹ David Cytraeus (1531-1600) is known as the last of the “Fathers of the Lutheran Church.” See Philip Schaff, et al., *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge* (vol. 7; Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2010) s.v. “Chytraeus, David.”

² Cyril of Alexandria, for example, in his commentary on John 17:8 (LF 48:506-7), writes, “Christ, who manifested himself in the last times above the types and figures of the Law, at once our high priest and mediator, prays for us as man. . . . For he, being a holy high priest, blameless and undefiled, offered himself—not for his own weakness, . . . but rather for the salvation of our souls.” Cited from, Joel C. Elowsky, ed., *John 11-21* (Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture, New Testament, 4b; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2007) 240.

³ Siegfried Schulz, *Das Evangelium nach Johannes* (NTD 4; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1975) 213.

⁴ Gerald J. Janzen, “The Scope of Jesus’ High Priestly Prayer in John 17,” *Encounter* 67 (2006) 1-26. For a more popular article, see Edwin Gordon, “Our Lord’s Priestly Prayer,” *Homiletic and Pastoral Review* 92 (1992) 17-21.

(8:34).⁵ Thus, scholars generally affirm this title inasmuch as they see Jesus as fulfilling the mediatorial role of a priest as portrayed in the OT as well as in other NT texts.

The primary argument against the title “High Priestly Prayer” is that it inadequately represents the context and the content of the prayer. The priestly task closely relates to the offering of sacrifice, but as Daniel A. Carson notes, the sacrificial language is not strong in this passage. Moreover, Christ’s high priestly ministry is often thought of in terms of his post-ascension intercession (see Rom 8:34; Heb 7:25; 1 John 2:1), while the context of this prayer shows that Jesus is on the way to the cross.⁶ Andreas J. Köstenberger agrees with Carson that this label hardly fits Johannine thought, since John does not picture Jesus as a high priest.⁷

(2) The Prayer of Consecration

Edwyn C. Hoskyns and others employ the title, “The Prayer of Consecration.” They view John 17 as a prayer of consecration of Jesus to his death and his disciples to their mission.⁸ C. K. Barrett, however, thinks that this title, like the title “High Priestly Prayer,” does not do justice to the content of the passage which, on the one hand, emphasizes the

⁵ Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel according to John* (AB 29A; New York: Doubleday, 1966) 747.

⁶ Daniel A. Carson, *The Gospel according to John* (Leicester: InterVarsity, 1991) 553.

⁷ Andreas J. Köstenberger, *John* (BECNT. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004) 482.

⁸ Edwyn C. Hoskyns (*The Fourth Gospel* [ed. F. N. Davey. London: Faber and Faber, 1947] 494) agrees with Westcott’s use of this title. See Arthur Westcott, *The Gospel according to St. John: The Greek Text with Introduction and Notes* (London: Murray, 1908).

union of the Son with the Father, and on the other hand, reveals the nature and meaning of the Christian life in relation to God and to the world.⁹

(3) The Last Testament of Jesus

Ernst Käseman refers to John 17 as “The Last Testament of Jesus,” emphasizing the testamentary character of the passage.¹⁰ But, as Craig S. Keener notes, the testament as a whole begins in chapter 13, and it includes the entire Farewell Discourse.¹¹

(4) Other Titles

Many scholars prefer generic titles. Some of these titles, such as “The Prayer of the Departing Redeemer” (Schnackenburg), “The Farewell Prayer” (Ridderbos), “Jesus’ Parting Prayer” (Köstenberger), are based on the farewell context of the prayer. Others, such as “Jesus’ Prayer to the Father for the Believers” (Schnelle), “Jesus’ Prayer to the Father” (Thyen), “Jesus’ Prayer for the Disciples” (Keener), are based on the scope of the prayer. These titles, however, are not without their difficulties. The title “Farewell or Parting Prayer” is adequate within the context of Jesus’ farewell speech before his passion and death. However, this title misses the point of what Jesus says and the tenses of the verbs, particularly in verse 11, which suggests that Jesus is looking to his return to the Father as a

⁹ C. K. Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John—An Introduction with Commentary and Notes on the Greek Text* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1978) 500.

¹⁰ Ernst Käsemann, *The Testament of Jesus: A Study of the Gospel of John in the Light of Chapter 17* (translated by G. Krodel; NTL; London: SCM, 1968) 4.

¹¹ Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary* (2 vols.; Peabody: Hendrickson, 2003) 2. 1050.

past event. As for those titles which are based on the scope of Jesus' prayer, these are so broad that they say nothing about the content of the prayer. Francis J. Moloney entitles John 17 "The Prayer of Jesus' Hour," employing a typically Johannine term. This title does not say much about the whole content of the prayer. However, it fits better into Johannine thought, taking into account the importance of the concept of the "hour" within the Fourth Gospel.¹²

A general tendency emerges here. Modern scholars who read John 17 in light of other scriptural passages justify the usage of the commonly known title "The High Priestly Prayer." Despite the absence of a theology of Jesus as a high priest in the Johannine writings, other scriptural texts, both OT and NT, which speak about Jesus' role as high priest are employed to interpret the content and the context of this passage. Meanwhile, scholars who read the passage within the context of the Gospel of John tend to think that titles such as "High Priestly Prayer" and "Prayer of Consecration" do not fit into Johannine thought. Thus, they suggest more generic titles which are not without their flaws. In conclusion, there is no one title upon which scholars agree. On the one hand, this is the result of different methodological procedure. On the other hand, it reflects the complexity of the context and content of this magnificent chapter.

¹² Francis J. Moloney ("John 17: The Prayer of Jesus' Hour," *Clergy Review* 67 [1982] 83) thinks that this is the most appropriate title if we "allow the prayer to speak to us from its place in John's Gospel as a whole." However, in his commentary, Moloney (*The Gospel of John* [SacPag 4; Minneapolis: The Liturgical Press, 1997] 458) employs the title "Jesus' Final Prayer."

1.2. Historicity of John 17

Before proceeding further, it is necessary to state that here I am dealing with the historicity of the prayer and not with the history of the text. The former deals with the question whether Jesus, during the meal with the disciples in which he delivered his farewell speech, uttered this form of prayer, whereas the latter deals with the question of how the passage came to its present form.¹³ I will deal with the second issue in the sections on the source and redaction criticism.

Keener notes that “even generally conservative commentators usually will not claim that the chapter was intended as a verbatim recollection.”¹⁴ Keener is right in the sense that we find hardly any modern scholars who argue systematically that John 17 is a verbatim recollection of Jesus’ words during the farewell meal. Scholars are aware of the problems present in the text, particularly the retrospective character of Jesus’ words which do not seem to fit the occasion.¹⁵ This leads a few scholars to argue that Jesus uttered the prayer, not during his farewell meal on the eve of his passion and death, but on a different occasion.

¹³ Both are related in the sense that the possible answer for the former will determine the possible answer for the latter. Each, however, is dealt with in different sections for the sake of clarity.

¹⁴ Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1051.

¹⁵ For example, in v. 4 Jesus says that he has accomplished the work that was given to him, but that happened only in his passion and death. In v. 11, Jesus says that he is no longer in the world. This contradicts verse 13, in which Jesus indicates that he is still in the world. J. N. Sanders and B. A. Mastin (*A Commentary on the Gospel according to St John* [London: Black, 1985] 366) note that the “exalted style” of Jesus’ speech does not fit the actual situation in the Upper Room. Moreover, the speech presupposes the disciples’ full comprehension of Jesus, which they did not then possess.

W. J. Peter Boyd suggests that the original context of John 14–17 is post-resurrectional.¹⁶ Boyd identifies these chapters as belonging to a particular genre called “Conversation between Jesus and his disciples after the resurrection.”¹⁷ John 17, in Boyd’s view, goes back to the resurrected Christ who said the prayer on the occasion of his ascension, not at the end of his farewell address.¹⁸ I. Hammer similarly suggests that Jesus uttered this prayer when he, as the risen Lord, made his final appearance to the disciples and other believers before he ascended into heaven.¹⁹ Brown agrees that some parts of the discourse have a “post-resurrectional air,” but he thinks that these proposals are oversimplified and unable to solve the problem.²⁰

Meanwhile, a few scholars maintain the historicity of Jesus’ prayer in John 17 within the Farewell Discourse because they regard the account as based on the testimony of an eyewitness. Among these scholars, Alfred Plummer thinks that John 17 came from the pen of the Evangelist, John the Apostle, who witnessed most of the events he relates.²¹ In the same line of thought, M.-J. Lagrange believes that in John 17 the Beloved Disciples, John the Son of Zebedee, recounts his master’s own words when Jesus is about to face his

¹⁶ W. J. Peter Boyd, “The Ascension according to St. John,” *Theology* 70 (1967) 207-11.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 208. For other apocryphal literature which belongs to this category, see Wilhelm Schneemelcher, *New Testament Apocrypha* (2 vols.; trans. R. McL. Wilson; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1963) 1. 188-230.

¹⁸ Boyd (“The Ascension,” 208-12) presents ten instances in the prayer which support his view that it must have been uttered during Jesus’ ascension.

¹⁹ I. Hammer, “Eine klare Stellung zu Joh 14, 31b,” *BK* 14 (1950) 33-40. See particularly pp. 38-40.

²⁰ Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2. 584-85.

²¹ Alfred Plummer, *The Gospel according to St. John* (Cambridge: University Press, 1923) 19-32, 306.

passion.²² Hans H. Wendt agrees with C. H. Weiss that John 17, as the rest of the Farewell Discourse, comes from written memoir of the Apostle John, who is an eyewitness.²³

Hoskyns, while he gives credit to the evangelist for the literary form of the prayer, also maintains the historicity of John 17. He asserts that “the origin and prime significance of the prayer lie in the historic situation in the Upper Room.” Thus, according to Hoskyns, John 17 is not the evangelist’s “free invention.”²⁴

The majority of modern scholars, nonetheless, generally do not regard John 17 as a verbatim recollection of Jesus’ words. Consequently, they propose various suggestions for the literary genesis of the passage, as we shall see later. Here it is sufficient to note that there is a strong tendency among modern scholars to think that John 17, as the rest of the Farewell Discourse, does not belong to the *Sitz im Leben Jesu* but to that of the church. Consequently, they are inclined to ascribe the chapter to the evangelist or to a later redactor rather than take it as the *ipsissima verba* of Jesus.²⁵ Now, before discussing the scholarly

²² M.-J. Lagrange, *Évangile selon Saint Jean* (3rd ed.; Paris: J. Gabalda, 1927) 437.

²³ Hans H. Wendt, *The Gospel according to St. John* (translated by Edward Lummis; New York: T&T Clark, 1902) 52.

²⁴ Hoskyns, *The Fourth Gospel*, 495. In the same line of thought, S. Agourides (“The ‘High Priestly Prayer’ of Jesus,” in *SE 4: Papers Presented to the Third International Congress on New Testament Studies Held at Christ Church, Oxford, 1965* [ed. F. L. Cross; Berlin: Akademie, 1968] 141) thinks that the prayer, as also the rest of the Farewell Discourse, is “the Evangelist’s recollections of an essential historic truth about Jesus’ concern for the circle of His disciples before the Passion and about the grounding of His work in them.” Köstenberger (John, 485) agrees with Agourides and asserts that “it is therefore reasonable to assume that Jesus uttered the prayer recorded in John 17 within the hearing of at least some of his disciples.”

²⁵ Herman N. Ridderbos (*The Gospel according to John: A Theological Commentary* [translated by John Vriend; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997] 546) summarizes the stance of modern scholars on this issue saying that “expositors agree that . . . in this prayer we have not a document taken verbatim from the lips of Jesus but a composition of the Evangelist.” In answering the question, “Who utters the prayer?” Bultmann states, “To speak in historical terms, not Jesus, but the community.” See Anthony T. Hanson, *The Prophetic Gospel: A Study of John and the Old Testament* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1991) 16.

proposals on the source and redactional process of John 17, I shall first discuss the genre of this chapter.

1.3. The Genre of John 17

Scholars find difficulty in classifying the genre of John 17 because of the lack of a comparable form within the gospel.²⁶ In order to understand the literary form or the genre of John 17, scholars point to the biblical as well as other Judeo-Christian and Graeco-Roman literature, which have some similarities with John 17.

Dodd finds a parallel between John 17 and the Hermetic writings. He notices in the Hermetic texts some dialogues which conclude with a prayer or hymn. A few of the texts (he mentions particularly *Poimandres* and *De Regeneratione*) contain dialogues concerning knowledge of God that leads to eternal life. These dialogues, like the Farewell Discourse, end with a prayer directed to God who is regarded as Father.²⁷ Yet, despite the similarities, Dodd admits that there are significant differences in form and content among the prayers.²⁸ Schnackenburg is also aware of the linguistic and stylistic similarities between John 17 and

²⁶ Robert Kysar, *The Fourth Evangelist and His Gospel* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1975) 11. The application of form criticism to a passage of the Fourth Gospel is far more difficult than to the Synoptics. This, as Kysar notes, is “due in part to the peculiar style of the Fourth Gospel.” He adds that “the entire document is pervaded by a distinctiveness which make analysis of passages in terms of pre-literary history most difficult (and some would say, unnecessary).”

²⁷ C. H. Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953) 419-23.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 422-23.

the Hermetic writings. However, he thinks that the literary genre of John 17 is different from that of the concluding prayers of the Hermetic texts.²⁹

Bultmann suggests that John 17 shows a resemblance to texts from Gnostic literature, in which the Gnostic messenger speaks when he is about to depart from the world.³⁰ However, as Schnackenburg points out, the prayer in the Gnostic literature is more a conversation, aimed to give instruction on how to liberate oneself from the lower world, rather than a prayer of “the Son” for “his own” who remain in the world.³¹

Scholars who favor a eucharistic interpretation, such as Oscar Cullmann and André Feuillet, point to the similarities between John 17 and the *Didache* 9–10. According to Cullmann, the prayer in John 17 is a typical eucharistic prayer. It differs from other eucharistic prayers “in that only Christ himself . . . can utter it.”³² Feuillet points out some similarities between John 17 and the *Didache* and concludes that Jesus’ farewell prayer is “basically oriented toward Christian worship and the Eucharist.”³³ Brown, however, asserts

²⁹ Rudolf Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St. John* (3 vols.; trans. Kevin Smyth; New York: Crossroad, 1982) 3. 199. Schnackenburg mentions some verbal reminiscences such as “holy is God,” “the man who belongs to God helps the Father in the work of sanctification,” “because you have given him full power,” etc.

³⁰ Rudolf Bultmann, *The Gospel of John* (trans. G. Beasley-Murray; Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1971) 489.

³¹ Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 3. 199. Schnackenburg mentions the prayer of Anōš-Uthra to the Great Life, his father, for his disciples and their children, as found in the Mandaean *Book of John*. He also refers to the prayer of the Mandaeans for themselves and their friends in the *Mand. Lit.*, 140.

³² Oscar Cullmann, *Early Christian Worship* (SBT 10; London: SCM, 1962) 111.

³³ André Feuillet (*The Priesthood of Christ and His Ministers* [trans. M. J. O’Connell; New York: Doubleday, 1975] 27) mentions the similarity in the invocation of Father, the theme of glory, knowledge, etc.

that since the evangelist never mentions bread and wine in John 17, it cannot be taken as a eucharistic prayer.³⁴

Anthony T. Hanson compares the prayer in the Qumran *Hymns of Thanksgiving* (*Hadayoth*) with John 17. He finds that the prayer in *Hadayoth* 15 resembles Jesus' prayer in John 17. In both prayers a leader addresses God on behalf of a religious community. Both prayers function as a means of edification for the community. Moreover, the theme of eternal life appears in both prayers.³⁵ Despite the similarity, Hanson thinks that the *Gattung* of *Hadayoth* 15 is a hymn of thanksgiving (*Danklied*), whereas Jesus' prayer is not a thanksgiving hymn.³⁶

Schnackenburg suggests that the most important parallels are found in the biblical and Jewish traditions. He mentions Moses' hymn of praise to God in Deuteronomy 32, Moses' prayer in *Jub* 1:19-21, Noah's prayer in *Jub* 10:3-6, etc. Within the apocalyptic literature Schnackenburg refers to *1 Enoch* 91, *4 Esdr* 8:20-36, *2 Apoc. Bar.* 84-85, etc. He agrees with Brown that among these texts, Deuteronomy 32, which describes Moses' last speech to the people of Israel, provides a significant parallel. By ending Jesus' farewell

³⁴ Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2. 747.

³⁵ Anthony T. Hanson, "Hadayoth XV and John 17: A Comparison of Content and Form," *Hermathena* 118 (1974) 51-52.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 56. Yet, in Hanson's view, in pre-Christian literature the Qumran thanksgiving prayer is the nearest parallel to John 17. B. W. de Wet ("Unity in John 17 and in 1QS I-IX: A Comparative Study," *SK* 18 [1997] 35-51) argues for the similarity between John 17 and the Qumran literature (1QS 1-9). He focuses on the theme of unity which, in his view, is a typical contemporary Jewish idea. John reinterprets this idea in light of the events surrounding Christ. See particularly p. 46.

speech with a prayer, the Fourth Evangelist proves to be faithful to the genre of the farewell address.³⁷

Despite these parallels, Schnackenburg thinks that it remains difficult to classify John 17 into a particular literary genre. Yet scholars agree on one thing: for the author of the Fourth Gospel there is no form that fits this occasion better than a prayer. By speaking at the very end of the farewell speech in the form of a prayer, on the one hand, the Johannine Jesus gives witness to his unity with the Father.³⁸ On the other hand, through prayer the disciples are privileged to share in what Moloney calls “a most intimate moment” in Jesus’ relationship with the Father.³⁹ By praying in a manner that the disciples can hear, the Johannine Jesus allows them to capture the inmost conscience of Jesus. John 17 then becomes for the disciples an address, admonition, consolation, and revelation as well as a prayer.⁴⁰

³⁷ Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2. 744. The farewell speech of Moses ends with two hymns.

³⁸ Käsemann (*The Testament of Jesus*, 5) notes that Jesus “lives in royal freedom and in the certainty of his immediacy to the Father.” Barrett (*The Gospel according to St. John*, 500) also emphasizes that the prayer shows most clearly the unity of Jesus with the Father.

³⁹ Moloney, “The Prayer,” 79.

⁴⁰ Scholars generally agree on this point. See, e.g., Käsemann, *The Testament of Jesus*, 5; Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2. 748; Agourides, “The ‘High Priestly Prayer’ of Jesus,” 137; Carson, *The Gospel according to John*, 552; Ernst Haenchen, *A Commentary on the Gospel of John* (Hermeneia; 2 vols.; trans. R. W. Funk; ed. R. W. Funk and U. Busse; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1984) 2. 158-59. Hyo Joong Lee (“Assurance of the Word: A Real Readers’ Reading of John 17” [Ph.D. diss., Vanderbilt University, 2005] 250) characterizes the genre of John 17 as “a prayer whose function is to assure the fragile believers.”

1.4. The Source and Redaction of John 17

When scholars apply source and redaction criticism to a passage of the Fourth Gospel, they generally deal with the following issues: (1) the passage's relationship to the Synoptic accounts; (2) the possibility of a literary source; and (3) the development of the text and its redactional process.⁴¹ I shall first focus on the issue of John 17 and the Synoptics before going further to present the theories concerning source and redactional process of John 17.

1.4.1. John 17 and the Synoptics

The Synoptics, although they have no account of Jesus praying at the Last Supper, portray Jesus praying on various occasions.⁴² Yet they rarely describe the content of his prayer. Apart from what is known as "The Lord's Prayer" (Matt 6:9-13; Luke 11:2-4), the Synoptics report the content of Jesus' prayer only on the occasions that involve his passion: in Gethsemane (Mark 14:32-39 // Matt 26:36-44; Luke 22:40-44) and on the cross (Mark 15:34; Matt 27:46; Luke 23:46).⁴³

The prayer in John 17 is also closely related to Jesus' passion in its sequence as well as in its content. In John, the prayer takes place at the end of Jesus' farewell meal, just before he is arrested. The content of the prayer hints at the Johannine understanding of

⁴¹ Daniel A. Carson, "Current Source Criticism of the Fourth Gospel: Some Methodological Questions," *JBL* 97 (1978) 411-29. See particularly page 411.

⁴² Mark 1:35; 6:46; 14:32-39; 15:34; Matt 14:23; 19:13; 26:36-44; 27:46. Luke 3:21; 5:16; 6:12; 9:18, 28; 22:39-46; 23:34, 47.

⁴³ Carson, *The Gospel according to John*, 552.

Jesus' passion and resurrection as his return to his glory (17:1). This leads scholars to seek some kind of relationship between John 17 and the Synoptics, particularly with the prayer in Gethsemane.

The proximity of the occasion of both prayers—one just before Jesus goes to Gethsemane, and the other when Jesus is in the garden—leads Lindars to assume that the Fourth Evangelist was aware of a Gethsemane tradition. According to Lindars, “John had removed the prayer from the Gethsemane account, as he wished to use it as the basis of a theological explanation of the meaning of the Passion.”⁴⁴ In other words, the evangelist creates a new occasion that works better to serve his purpose, despite his knowledge of the tradition. Lindars also notice some similarities in prayer style, but he thinks that there is no precise allusion that can be traced to secure their relationship.

Carson thinks that a more sympathetic reading both of the Synoptics and of John leads to several “compelling points of connection” and suggests that if one puts the prayer in John 12:27-28, which portrays Jesus' agony, together with the prayer in John 17, the theme of “Jesus' obedience and his suffering coalesce.”⁴⁵ Both themes are found in the Synoptics. Luke, for instance, describes the anguish of the prayer in Gethsemane (22:41-45). He also writes, “As the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for

⁴⁴ Barnabas Lindars, *The Gospel of John* (Greenwood: Attic, 1977) 515. In suggesting John's awareness of the tradition, Lindars does not seem to imply the Fourth Evangelist's dependence on the Synoptics. Instead, it shows the evangelist's freedom to create an occasion that best serves his theological and literary agenda.

⁴⁵ Carson, *The Gospel according to John*, 552.

Jerusalem” (9:51). In Carson’s view, “both resolution and horror, both filial obedience and personal agony” are found in the Johannine prayers and in the Synoptic accounts.⁴⁶

While Carson underlines the connection of themes, William O. Walker, Jr., argues that the prayer in John 17 is a literary adaptation of the Lord’s Prayer, particularly of the Matthean formula (Matt 6:9-13). According to Walker, the prayer can be understood as a reworking and an expansion of the basic themes of the Lord’s Prayer in terms that fit into Johannine theology.⁴⁷ He further suggests a literary relationship between them, based on the assumption that both Matthew and the Fourth Gospel came from the Syrian region.⁴⁸ However, as Köstenberger points out, “The evidence set forth by Walker at best warrants only the conclusion that both prayers likely were prayed by the same individual, and not that there is in fact only one prayer, of which the Synoptics provide the original, and John a theological adaptation.”⁴⁹

Scholars who assume John’s dependence on the Synoptics suggest that John made use of the Synoptics in John 17. Oscar Holzmann suggests that John employed Mark 14:12-21, Matt 26:17-35, Luke 22:3-38 to write John 17 and the whole Farewell

⁴⁶ Carson (ibid., 552) further emphasizes the theme of obedience in the Synoptics. He writes, “The Synoptics, after all, are the ones who report Jesus’ determined ‘not as I will, but as you will’ (Matt 26:39; Mark 14:36; Luke 22:42).”

⁴⁷ William O. Walker, Jr., “The Lord’s Prayer in Matthew and in John,” *NTS* 28 (1982) 237-56. Walker regards John 17:1-8 as a midrashic expansion of the first three petitions that relate to God (“you” petitions). Verses 9-19 develop the last three petitions that relate to the disciples’ own need (“we” petitions). Verses 20-26 recapitulate the major themes of the prayer.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 248.

⁴⁹ Köstenberger, *John*, 482. Brown (*The Gospel according to John*, 2. 747) also notices the parallels with the Lord’s Prayer. But he maintains that John 17 “is a special prayer, and Jesus is no ordinary suppliant.”

Discourse.⁵⁰ Heinrich J. Holtzmann points out that John 17:1 clearly echoes the language of Luke 6:20 and John 17:2 echoes that of Matt 11:27.⁵¹ Barrett, who thinks that John knows the Synoptics, at least Mark, suggests that Jesus' prayer in John 17 "falls into roughly the same place in the story as the Gethsemane prayer" portrayed in the Synoptics.⁵²

Other scholars, meanwhile, underline the contrast between John 17 and the Synoptic accounts of the prayer in Gethsemane. John C. Fenton observes the motive of obedience in both prayers. However, he asserts that in Gethsemane Jesus speaks of his sorrow and asks that the cup, which is his suffering, may be removed (Mark 14:36). Accordingly, in the Synoptics, Jesus accepts the passion "in obedience to the Father, but at great cost to himself."⁵³ John 17 maintains the motive of Jesus' obedience to the Father. However, there is no hint at all of Jesus' personal sorrow and suffering.⁵⁴

Brown also underlines the difference between both prayers. The prayer in Gethsemane, in which a troubled and sorrowful Jesus begs to have the chalice of suffering pass from him, is "a human prayer occupied with the present time." On the contrary, the

⁵⁰ Oscar Holtzmann, *Das Johannesevangelium* (Darmstadt: Verlag von Johannes Waitz, 1887) 8.

⁵¹ Heinrich J. Holtzmann, "Die schriftstellerische Verhältniss des Johannes zu den Syoptikern," *ZWT* 12 (1869) 73, 174. Josef Blinzler (*Johannes und die Synoptiker* [Stuttgarter Bibelstudien 5; Stuttgart: Katholisches Bebelwerk, 1965] 12) also notes that John 17:2 clearly echoes Jesus' word in Matt 11:27 and Luke 10:22.

⁵² Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 500.

⁵³ John C. Fenton, *The Gospel according to John with Introduction and Commentary* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1970) 172.

⁵⁴ Ibid. Mark Edwards (*John through the Centuries* [Blackwell Bible Commentaries; Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004] 157) also underlines the difference in the character of both prayers: John 17 is intercessory, whereas the Gethsemane prayer is supplicatory.

prayer in John 17 is marked by divinity and timelessness. Moreover, the Johannine Jesus does not ask anything for himself. Even the glory, for which Jesus asks the Father in vv. 1 and 5 is, in Brown's view, for the sake of the disciples. The prayer therefore lacks the characteristic of a prayer of petition as found in the Gethsemane prayer.⁵⁵

To sum up, some scholars suggest the Fourth Evangelist's knowledge of the Synoptics or of the traditions behind it. They see the connection of themes, particularly with the Lord's Prayer and the prayer in Gethsemane. Meanwhile, others underline the strong contrast with the Synoptic accounts (although they acknowledge some possible allusion). In any case, there is no clear evidence to propose any kind of literary dependence. John 17 clearly stands apart from any prayer described in the Synoptics.

1.4.2. The Source of John 17 and Its Redaction

In addition to scholars who think that John 17 is an account of an eyewitness and those who argue for Johannine dependence on the Synoptics, some scholars suggest that John 17 came from particular written sources other than the Synoptics. Others propose oral tradition as the source of this chapter. Still others assign it to the evangelist or a later redactor. I shall briefly discuss a few proposals concerning the source and redaction of John 17.

⁵⁵ Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2. 748. Sanders and Mastin (*A Commentary on the Gospel according to St John*, 366-37) similarly think that the tone of serene confidence of the Son in the Father in this prayer contrasts strongly with the Synoptics narrative of the Agony in the Garden.

(1) *Non-Synoptic Sources*

Bultmann is one of a few scholars who suggest a particular source in John 17. By noting stylistic differences among passages, Bultmann claims to be able to detect early written sources that the evangelist weaves together in the Fourth Gospel.⁵⁶ In John 17, according to Bultmann, the evangelist supposedly employs one of the sources, namely, the revelatory discourses, a written source similar to texts in Gnostic literature, as the basis of the prayer (vv. 1, 4-6, 9-17, 20-23). The evangelist then makes some additions in which he comments and expands upon the text (vv. 2-3, 7-8, 18-19, 24-26). Since John 14:25-31 appears to be the end of Jesus' discourse, Bultmann explains that the order of material within the discourse, as we now have it, is incorrect "partly due to accident, and partly to puzzled attempts [by an ecclesiastical redactor] to arrange the disordered material as well as possible."⁵⁷ Bultmann therefore rearranges the order of the farewell discourse and places chapter 17 after John 13:30, which he thinks is the prayer's original location.

Howard M. Teeple is among those who adopt Bultmann's proposal concerning the presence of revelatory discourses.⁵⁸ According to Teeple, in John 17 an editor makes use of

⁵⁶ The three sources identified by Bultmann are revelatory discourses (*Offenbarungsreden*), a signs source (*Semeia-Quelle*), and a passion source (*Passions-Quelle*). An ecclesiastical redactor makes some interpolations and additions to the work of the evangelist. See Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 6-7; D. Moody Smith, *The Composition and Order of the Fourth Gospel: Bultmann's Literary Theory* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965) xiii, 15-51; Gilbert Van Belle, *Signs Source in the Fourth Gospel: Historical Survey and Critical Evaluation of the Semeia Hypothesis* (BETL 116; Leuven: Peeters, 1994) 24-34.

⁵⁷ Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 459. Bultmann suggests a rearrangement of chapters 13-17 in his attempt to solve the problem prompted by the observation that John 14:25-31 is the end of the discourse.

⁵⁸ Teeple identifies two main written sources in the Fourth Gospel. One is a signs source and the other is a semi-Gnostic text, as Bultmann proposes. An editor interwove and expanded the sources and a later redactor then inserted and added more material. See Howard M. Teeple, *The Literary Origin of the Gospel of John* (Evanston: Religion and Ethics Institute, 1974); Van Belle, *Signs Source*, 180-83.

the text from the revelatory discourse (vv. 1b, 2, 4, 13b, 14, 17, 19, 21b, 23a, 24ac, 25a) and adds comments on it (vv. 1a, 5-12a, 13, 15, 16, 18, 20, 21ac, 22, 23b, 24b, 25b, 26). The text is then expanded again by a redactor (v. 12b) and by a later copyist (v. 3).⁵⁹

(2) Oral Tradition

Instead of arguing for a particular written source, some scholars suggest that the evangelist made use of oral tradition in John 17. Brown, for example, thinks that the prayer in John 17 was probably an elaboration of traditional sayings of Jesus. The prayer likely originated in the circle from which the prologue comes. This is due to the similarities in their poetic quality and careful structure.⁶⁰ A redactor, who added chapters 15-16, is responsible for adding the prayer by seamlessly weaving it into its present setting.⁶¹

Lindars, as we have seen, presupposes the evangelist's knowledge of a Gethsemane tradition that he employs to meet his theological purpose.⁶² He suggests that John 17, and the second part of the farewell speech (chaps 15-16), are the evangelist's own addition to the first edition of the gospel in order to reinforce the theme of discipleship. The evangelist aimed at encouraging the fidelity of believers facing the threat of the Jewish persecution.⁶³

⁵⁹ The detail of Teeple's reconstruction of John 17, see Teeple, *The Literary Origin*, 230-32.

⁶⁰ Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2. 745.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 587.

⁶² See pp. 12-13.

⁶³ Barnabas Lindars, *Behind the Fourth Gospel* (Studies in Creative Criticism 3; London: S.P.C.K, 1971) 76.

In addition to Brown and Lindars, Sanders and Mastin similarly assert that John 17 comes from the evangelist, who might have incorporated traditional material.⁶⁴

(3) John 17 Comes from the Evangelist or A Later Redactor

Some scholars, who also argue for the presence of an earlier written source in the Fourth Gospel, suggest that John 17 does not come from the source. It is, instead, a secondary addition made by the evangelist or a later redactor. Wellhausen, who posits an original *Grundschrift* into which an editor made additions and expansions, regards John 15–17 as a secondary interpolation.⁶⁵ Fortna, who presupposes the presence of a signs source, assigns John 17 and the rest of the Farewell Discourse (chaps. 14–16) to the evangelist. According to Fortna, although the evangelist may have use some earlier material, the concept and the content of this section of John is “undoubtedly the work of the evangelist.”⁶⁶ Georg Richter, who is also a proponent of a signs source, thinks that John 17 does not come from the source. It is the evangelist who is responsible for the part of the prayer that is christological and soteriological in its content (vv. 1–5). The rest of the prayer, which is paranaetic in its content, is a latter addition by a redactor (vv. 6–26).⁶⁷

⁶⁴ Sanders-Mastin, *A Commentary on the Gospel according to St John*, 366.

⁶⁵ See L. Scott Kellum, *The Unity of the Farewell Discourse* (JSNTSup 256; New York: T&T Clark, 2004) 37.

⁶⁶ Robert T. Fortna, *The Gospel of Signs: A Reconstruction of the Narrative Source Underlying the Fourth Gospel* (SNTSMS 11; Cambridge: University Press, 1970) 157. Since he does not think that the chapter comes from the source, Fortna does not treat John 17 and the whole Farewell Discourse in his second monograph on the source and redaction criticism of the Fourth Gospel, *The Fourth Gospel and Its Predecessor* (New York: T&T Clark, 2004).

⁶⁷ Georg Richter, *Studien zum Johannesevangelium* (ed. Josef Hainz; Gensburg: Friedrich Pustet, 1977) 68, 385.

In conclusion, scholars posit various theories concerning the source of John 17 and its redaction. Yet there is no agreement among scholars concerning the source that the evangelist may have used to compose the prayer of Jesus in John 17. Bultmann and Teeple think that a revelatory discourse was the source. However, they disagree regarding which verses are from the source and which are the evangelist's expansions. Fortna assigns the whole chapter to the evangelist, whereas Richter ascribes to the evangelist only a part of the chapter (vv. 1-5). Brown thinks that the chapter comes from an oral tradition within the circle from which the prologue comes, whereas Lindars presupposes the evangelist's knowledge of a Gethsemane tradition. One therefore can agree with Carson that the effort to identify sources in the Fourth Gospel—therefore also in John 17—is an “extremely problematic endeavor,” if not a lost cause.⁶⁸

Moreover, source and redaction criticism—which dominated the Johannine studies for a good part of the last century (at least, since Bultmann until the 1980s)—has led scholars to suggest that John 17 is a later addition by the evangelist or a later redactor.⁶⁹ This is beneficial as far as it helps to explain the problems that arise from the text. However, an overemphasis on this notion can be misleading, since the significance of this chapter within the Fourth Gospel, as we shall see in the next section, is not of secondary value.

⁶⁸ Carson (*The Gospel according to John*, 41-42) makes this statement. Carson (“Current Source Criticism,” 428) warns the critics of the limits of source analysis. He appeals for “probing agnosticism” regarding the sources of John. For a summary of the source theories in the Fourth Gospel, see Kysar, *The Fourth Evangelist*, 14-37.

⁶⁹ In his introduction to the Fourth Gospel Paul N. Anderson (*The Riddles of the Fourth Gospel* [Minneapolis: Fortress, 2011] 19) notes, “The priestly prayer of Jesus in John 17 is the least original chapter in the entire Gospel of John.”

1.5. The Significance of John 17 within Its Literary Context

The setting of Jesus' prayer in John 17—sandwiched between the rest of the Farewell Discourse and the passion story—opens the possibility for scholars to emphasize the significance of the chapter in relation to one or the other section of the narrative. Some emphasize its significance in relation to the rest of the Farewell Discourse and the passages that come before it. Others underline the connections between the prayer with the Passion Narrative that follows it. Still others highlight its importance to both: as a summary of the Farewell Discourse and the entire Johannine gospel as well as its role in anticipating Jesus' death and resurrection.

Among those who underline the significance of the prayer within the Farewell Discourse is Dodd. He suggests that the prayer gathers up and echoes what has been said up to this point of the gospel, particularly in Jesus' farewell speech.⁷⁰ In Dodd's view, the central theme of the speech is "what it means to be united with Christ."⁷¹ Yet, the relationship between Jesus and his followers is solely grounded in the relationship between Jesus and the Father. It is in this prayer that Jesus fulfills what Dodd calls his *spiritual ascent (anabasis)* into union with God. It is through prayer that Jesus brings together all those whom he includes in it, into the sphere of eternal life.⁷²

⁷⁰ C. H. Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, 417. He writes, "The prayer gathers up much of what has been said, both in the Book of Signs and in the Farewell Discourses, and presupposes everywhere the total picture of Christ and His work with which the reader should by this time be amply acquainted."

⁷¹ Ibid., 418.

⁷² For Dodd (ibid., 419-23) this is possible because the ascent of Christ is "neither a physical movement in space, such as a bodily ascension to heaven, nor a physical act of dying," but it is a spiritual

Bultmann, like Dodd, agrees that the prayer is closely connected to the rest of the Farewell Discourse. However, since Bultmann rearranges the Farewell Discourse and puts chapter 17 at the end of John 13:30, he argues that the farewell speech that follows is a commentary on the ideas that are expressed in the prayer.⁷³ Brown agrees that chapters 13 and 17 are closely related. However, contrary to Bultmann, he notes that they are related by way of inclusion rather than by direct sequence. The majestic moment of the prayer, according to Brown, is an appropriate climax of the Farewell Discourse.⁷⁴ Thus, the significance of the prayer to bring the Farewell Discourse to its culmination is widely accepted.

Scholars also underline the relationship between John 17 and the Passion Narrative which follows it. Hoskyns is among those who emphasize the significance of John 17 to deepen the understanding of Jesus' sacrificial death as portrayed in the Johannine passion story. As we have seen, Hoskyns calls John 17 "the prayer of consecration." He believes that through the prayer that Jesus uttered in the presence of his disciples, he "consecrated Himself to death as the effective sacrifice upon which their [the disciples'] sanctification was to depend." At the same time, through the prayer, "He dedicated them to the mission

ascent (*anabasis*) that happens in true prayer. Dodd, therefore, sees the similarity between the Farewell Discourse and the Hermetic texts, as we have seen above (Section 1.3. in p. 9).

⁷³ Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 461.

⁷⁴ Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2. 744.

which was to be the effective result of His death and resurrection.”⁷⁵ Hoskyns thus reads the prayer prospectively.⁷⁶

Petrus Maritz, more recently, underlines the unity between the prayer and Jesus’ passion through the analysis of the words δόξα/δοξάζω in chap. 17 and σταυρός/σταυρόω in chap. 19. Employing the stylistic technique of euphemism as a guide, he comes to the conclusion that, although the word “glory” is absent in the crucifixion scene, John makes use of the inscription placed on the cross (19:19) as “a climactic point connecting the death of Jesus, . . . , and the manifestation of his glory.”⁷⁷

Although certain scholars emphasize the significance of the prayer in relation to one or other section of the narrative, scholars agree that John 17 is crucial to tie together both parts of the narrative: it echoes Jesus’ farewell speech and the entire Johannine thought as well as prepares for the climax of Jesus’ salvific act of his death and resurrection. Barrett, for example, believes that the prayer summarizes the main themes of Jesus’ farewell speech and, at the same time, it brings forward and anticipates Jesus’ lifting up on the cross.⁷⁸ Sanders and Mastin think that “the prayer forms a fitting culmination (in Johannine terms) to

⁷⁵ Hoskyns, *The Fourth Gospel*, 495.

⁷⁶ Oscar Cullmann (*Early Christian Worship*, 110-14) also recognizes the sacrificial language in the prayer which foreshadows Jesus’ sacrificial death on the cross. However, his emphasis is on the eucharistic character of the prayer that reflects the community’s Eucharist celebration in the evangelist’s day.

⁷⁷ Petrus Maritz, “The Glorious and Horrific Death of Jesus in John 17: Repetition and Variation of Imagery Related to John’s Portrayal of the Crucifixion,” in *The Death of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel* (BETL 200; ed. Gilbert Van Belle; Leuven: University Press, 2007) 693-710, here 708.

⁷⁸ Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 499.

Jesus' earthly ministry and leads on to the cross."⁷⁹ Carson agrees that in this chapter the evangelist summarizes the principal themes of Jesus' farewell speech in a form of prayer that also anticipates his being lifted up on the cross.⁸⁰

Käsemann, who takes John 17 as the center of his argument on Johannine theology, regards the chapter as "a summary of the Johannine discourse" and "the counterpart of the Prologue."⁸¹ He identifies the motif of the "glory" of Jesus in John 17 as the key word of the whole gospel. Although he is criticized for undermining the theology of the cross in John,⁸² Käsemann convincingly argues that the glory motif controls both passion and incarnation. In his view, the prayer binds them together: the former "as a projection of the glory of Jesus' preexistence," and the latter "as a return to that glory 'which was his before the world began.'"⁸³

In summary, the significance of this chapter, in its present setting, is not disputed. As Schnackenburg puts it, "In the present configuration of the gospel, there is no more suitable

⁷⁹ Sanders and Mastin, *A Commentary on the Gospel according to St John*, 367.

⁸⁰ Carson, *The Gospel according to John*, 551.

⁸¹ Käsemann, *The Testament of Jesus*, 3.

⁸² See, e.g., Günther Bornkamm, "Towards the Interpretation of John's Gospel," in *Interpretation of John* (Issues in Religious Theology 9; ed. John Aston; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986) 79-98, especially 86-89.

⁸³ Käsemann, *The Testament of Jesus*, 20. Joseph F. Matos's study on the function of John 17 ("John 17: Its Structure, Style, Theme, and Function in the Fourth Gospel" [Ph.D. diss., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2003] 176-79) affirms the function of John 17 as a summary of the Gospel of John. He argues that the prayer both looks backward to the earthly ministry of Jesus and forward to the passion and resurrection narrative.

place for this prayer and there would also be no better place in a possible original form of the gospel.”⁸⁴

1.6. The Structure of John 17

Scholars structure John 17 in various ways and justify their proposals with a range of arguments.⁸⁵ Some argue on the basis of content, others on grammatical or verbal clues, and still others apply a certain method to clarify the structure of this passage. Some divide the passage into two parts (Bultmann, Feuillet, Ridderbos), others into three parts (Brown, Morris, Moloney, Tolmie, Thyen, Köstenberger, etc.), four parts (Schulz, Lindars, Carson), five parts (Becker, Malatesta, Boyle), six parts (Laurentin, Schnackenburg), twelve parts (Appold), or more. Various suggestions concerning the structure of John 17 can be seen in this table.

<i>Scholar</i>	<i>Basic Structure</i>	<i>Omitted verses</i> ⁸⁶
Bultmann	1 - 5 / 6 - 26	
Feuillet	1-19 / 20-26	
Ridderbos	1 - 5 / 6 - 26	
Brown	1 - 8 / 9 - 19 / 20 - 26	
Morris	1 - 5 / 6 - 19 / 20 - 26	
Moloney	1 - 8 / 9 - 19 / 20 - 26	
Tolmie	1 - 5 / 6 - 24 / 25 - 26	
Thyen	1 - 8 / 9 - 19 / 20 - 26	
Köstenberger	1 - 5 / 6 - 19 / 20 - 26	

⁸⁴ Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 3. 167.

⁸⁵ For summaries on the structure of John 17, see W. B. Hunter, “Prayers of Jesus in the Gospel of John” (Ph.D. diss., University of Aberdeen, 1979) 312-22; Feuillet, *The Priesthood of Christ*, 52-62; D. F. Tolmie, “A Discourse Analysis of John 17:1-26,” *Neot* 27 (1993) 406-7; Matos, “John 17: Its Structure, Style, Theme, and Function in the Fourth Gospel,” 15-26.

⁸⁶ Scholars generally treat the passage as a whole. Becker and Schnackenburg, however, omit a few verses, which they do not regard as original part of the chapter.

<i>Scholar</i>	<i>Basic Structure</i>	<i>Ommited verses</i>
Schulz	1 - 5 / 6 - 19 / 20 - 23 / 24-26	
Lindars	1 - 5 / 6 - 19 / 20 - 23 / 24-26	
Carson	1 - 5 / 6 - 19 / 20 - 23 / 24-26	
Becker	1 - 2 / 4 - 5 / 6 - 13 / 14 - 19 / 22 - 26	3, 12b, 16, 20-21
Malatesta	1 - 5 / 6 - 8 / 9 - 19 / 20 - 24 / 25 - 26	
Boyle	1 - 3 / 4 - 8 / 9 - 19 / 20 - 23 / 24 - 26.	
Laurentin	1 - 4 / 5 - 6 / 7 - 12 / 13 - 23 / 24 / 25 - 26	
Schnackenburg	1 - 5 / 6-11a/ 11b-16 / 17 - 19 / 20-23 / 24 - 26	3, 7-8, 12cd, 16, 20-21
Appold	1-3/4/5/6-8/9-11/12-14/15-17/18-19/10-21/22-23/24/25-26	

Here I will summarize only some important studies on the structure of John 17.

A. Laurentin proposes a structure of Jesus' prayer in John 17 based on the usage of words καὶ νῦν, which often represent the Hebrew expression *וְעַתָּה*.⁸⁷ Both expressions often function as the signal for a change in the flow of thought. Laurentin observes that in John 17 the words καὶ νῦν appear in v. 5, and the word νῦν appears in vv. 7 and 13. He notices also that v. 5 is related to v. 24 by way of inclusion. Both verses contain similar expressions: *πρὸ τοῦ τὸν κόσμον εἶναι* (v. 5) and *πρὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου* (v. 24). Furthermore, the prayer begins (vv. 1-4) and ends (vv. 25-26) with the theme of glory. Based on this observation, Laurentin proposes a sixfold structure (1-4 / 5-6 / 7-12 / 13-23 / 24 / 25-26) in which the key words are taken as signals for new sections. Brown appreciates Laurentin's proposal as "less subjective," for it is clearly based on literary clues.⁸⁸ However, this structure is criticized for not taking into account the development of thought within the prayer.⁸⁹

⁸⁷ A. Laurentin, "We 'attah – Kai nun: Formule caractéristique des textes juridiques et liturgiques (à propos de Jean 17, 5)," *Bib* 45 (1964) 168-97.

⁸⁸ Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2. 749.

⁸⁹ Feuillet, *The Priesthood of Christ*, 54.

Jürgen Becker finds that Jesus' prayer contains four literary categories which he calls *Gattungselemente*.⁹⁰ The elements are: a statement about what Jesus has done (4-5, 6-8, 14, 22-23), an introduction to the petition (9-11a, 15-16), a petition (1b, 5, 11b, 17, 24), and a motivation or reason for the petition (2, 12a, 13, 18-19, 25-26). Becker then proposes a fivefold structure (1-2 / 4-5 / 6-13 / 14-19 / 22-26). He maintains that the four elements are found rather consistently within each of the five units. Becker regards a few verses, which are not part of the *Gattungselemente* (3, 12b, 16, 20, 21), as later additions. Appold criticizes Becker's proposal, particularly for the inconsistency in the occurrence of the elements that Becker claims to be present within each unit. He thinks that this proposal is untenable.⁹¹

Edward Malatesta makes an elaborate structural analysis of the prayer by taking into account the repetition of themes (such as glory, eternal life, knowledge, etc.), the number of lines, words, and syllables.⁹² His division into lines and strophes is based on considerations of grammatical units, parallelism, and rhythm. Employing this method, Malatesta divides the prayer into five small units: 1-5 / 6-8 / 9-19 / 20-24 / 25-26. Each unit is concentric (chiastic) and the strophes of each unit follow a triptych pattern. The first two units

⁹⁰ Jürgen Becker, "Aufbau, Schichtung und theologiegeschichtliche Stellung des Gebetes in Johannes 17," *ZNW* 60 (1969) 56-83.

⁹¹ Mark L Appold (*The Oneness Motif in the Fourth Gospel: Motif Analysis and Exegetical Probe into the Theology of John* [WUNT 2/1; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1976] 217-23) discusses Becker's proposal in details. For his evaluation of Becker, see p. 223.

⁹² Edward Malatesta, "The Literary Structure of John 17," *Bib* 52 (1971) 190-214.

correspond to each of the last two units.⁹³ The third is the central and the longest unit. The theme of glory becomes the hinge word that joins the central unit (in v. 10) with the previous parts (1ef, 4a, 5ab) and the following parts (22a, 24d).

Although Malatesta's elaborate structure seems, in Schnackenburg's words, "forced and artificial,"⁹⁴ it shows that the passage, as it stands, makes sense as a whole.⁹⁵ There is no need to exclude any part of the prayer as additional. Schnackenburg makes a structural analysis of John 17 and concludes that there is an impressive unity within the prayer. However, his structure eliminates a few parts of the prayer (vv. 3, 7-8, 12cd, 16, 21-22) that he considers later additions.⁹⁶

John L. Boyle thinks that the structure and the development of the theme in the prayer follow the pattern of Jesus' farewell speech.⁹⁷ Taking John 15:11, which speaks about "joy," as the center and the pivotal verse of Jesus' farewell speech, Boyle suggests that the first part of the speech, which is characterized by the mutual indwelling of the Father, the

⁹³ Malatesta (ibid., 212-14) suggests that the first unit highlights the theme of glory, eternal life, and the knowledge of the Father and the One whom he sent. It relates to the fifth unit in which the theme of twofold knowledge appears again. The second unit describes Jesus' mission to his disciples and its result in them. This relates to the fourth unit in which Jesus prays for unity among future believers. The third unit consists of Jesus' prayer for the disciples and their mission.

⁹⁴ Rudolf Schnackenburg, "Strukturanalyse von Joh 17," *BZ* 17 (1973) 68.

⁹⁵ Hunter ("Prayers of Jesus," 314) notes that "one of the valuable results of his [Malatesta's] work is that the analysis suggests that some sort of order is inherent in the prayer as a whole." M. J. J. Menken (*Numerical Literary Techniques in John: The Fourth Evangelist's Use of Numbers of Words and Syllables* [JSNTSup 55; Leiden: Brill, 1985] 229-68) also proposes a structure of John 17 which analyses the present text as a whole. He observes a chiasmic structure of which its units are the same as those of Malatesta.

⁹⁶ Schnackenburg, "Strukturanalyse von Joh 17," 201-2.

⁹⁷ John L. Boyle, "The Last Discourse (Jn 13,31-16,33) and Prayer (Jn 17): Some Observations on Their Unity and Development," *Bib* 56 (1975) 210-22.

Son, the Spirit, and the disciples, tends to move towards interior union. Meanwhile, the second half of the discourse tends to move towards exterior expression and witness. Jesus' prayer, according to Boyle, follows the same pattern. The word "joy" in 17:13 is the center of the prayer. The first part of the prayer focuses on the interior unity among the disciples (v. 11). The second half moves outward towards the mission (v. 18). Boyle then suggests a fivefold symmetric structure: 1-3 / 4-8 / 9-19 / 20-23 / 24-26. Boyle's structure of the prayer seems to be forced to fit the pattern he finds in the discourse. There is no adequate reason to separate 1d-3 from 4-6. Moreover, Jesus explicitly prays for the interior unity of the believers (v. 21) in the second half of the prayer.

D. F. Tolmie employs a discourse analysis used in South Africa on John 17.⁹⁸

According to this method, a discourse is first broken up into syntactical units called cola, followed by an analysis of the semantic relationships between the cola. Employing this method, Tolmie divides the prayer into three parts (1-5 / 6-24 / 25-26) and breaks them further into thirty-seven cola. This proposal, although based on a clear methodology, seems too speculative. Tolmie himself admits that, in using the discourse analysis, the structure he proposes is "the result of a subjective process of interpretation."⁹⁹

⁹⁸ See Tolmie, "A Discourse Analysis of John 17:1-26," 403-18. Tolmie (*ibid.*, 403) summarizes the discourse analysis as "a methodological approach that comprises an analysis of the semantic content of language segments into its constituent units in order to restate the argument in terms of its taxonomic hierarchy. By highlighting these features of a discourse, the basic development of the train of thought in the discourse can be stated." Eenst R. Wendland ("Rhetoric of the Word. An Interactional Discourse Analysis of the Lord's Prayer of John 17 and Its Communicative Implications," *Neot* 26 [1992] 59-88) also applies a discourse analysis on John 17.

⁹⁹ Tolmie, "A Discourse Analysis," 405.

The scholars mentioned above come up with structures that are different from the so-called traditional threefold structure.¹⁰⁰ However, none of them is convincing enough to gain followers. The threefold structure continues to have more adherents. Among those who prefer this structure, there is a minor disagreement regarding whether to include vv. 6-8, in which Jesus recounts the work that he has accomplished among the disciples, into the first unit or the second unit. Morris and Köstenberger think that vv. 6-8 are part of the second unit (1-5 / 6-19 / 20-26), which focuses on the disciples. Brown, Moloney, and Thyen consider them as part of the first unit (1-8 / 9-19 / 20-26), which centers on Jesus. Whether the second unit begins in v. 6 or v. 9, these scholars generally agree that the main concerns of each of the three units are Jesus (and the Father), the disciples, and the future believers, respectively. Now, if the disciples and future believers are considered one group—as the disciples in John are often seen as representatives of all believers—the units of the prayer can be divided into two parts: Jesus and the community of believers, as some scholars suggest (Bultmann, Feuillet, Ridderbos).¹⁰¹

1.7. The General Themes of John 17

Jesus' prayer in John 17, presented in repetitive vocabulary and simple syntax, is rich in content. Scholars identify various themes that appear in this chapter. Some mention all

¹⁰⁰ Thomas Aquinas describes the threefold structure as follows, "Jesus prays first for himself (*primo pro seipso*), then for the group of apostles (*secundo pro discipulorum collegio*), and finally for the whole Christian people (*tertio pro universo fidei populo*).” See Feuillet, *The Priesthood of Christ*, 52.

¹⁰¹ Hunter ("Prayers of Jesus," 321) comes to the same conclusion. He suggests that "the content of the prayer has four major foci: The Father, Jesus, the Eleven and future believers. These may be logically reduced to the degree held appropriate by particular scholar to only two: Jesus and believers."

the themes that emerge in almost every verse, while others point out a few prominent themes of the prayer. There are also a number of scholars who read this chapter from a defined point of view, particularly from an ecumenical or evangelical point of view, and emphasize a particular theme of Jesus' prayer.

1.7.1. Various Themes in John 17

Malatesta is among the scholars who mention the numerous themes that emerge in John 17. He notes that the chapter contains at least forty-four themes, which “are woven together with such astonishing variety and subtle repetition and form such delicate combinations that it seems impossible to discern their precise pattern.”¹⁰²

Joseph F. Matos makes an analysis of the themes that emerge in every section of the prayer and concludes that “identification of the themes of the prayer amounts to the same thing as providing a summary of the contents. This is so because virtually every phrase is significant thematically.”¹⁰³ Matos notices six recurrent themes that appear in the two major sections of the prayer (1a-8 and 9-23). The themes are: the Father-Son relationship, the Son as sent from the Father, the preexistence of the Son, believing/known God, the glory of the

¹⁰² Malatesta, “The Literary Structure of John 17,” 190-91. According to Malatesta (ibid., 190) the 44 themes in John 17 are introduced in the following order: speak, Jesus, heaven, the Father, come, hour, glory, the Son, give, flesh, eternal life, know, truth, God, send, Christ, complete, do, now, have, world, manifest, name, man, word, keep, receive, come from, believe, ask, holy, unity, be-with, perish, fulfillment of Scripture, joy, fill, hate, be-from, the evil one, be-in, love, wish, and see.

¹⁰³ Matos, “John 17,” 117.

Son, and the contrast between the world and the disciples. There are also fourteen themes that appear in specific sections of the prayer.¹⁰⁴

E. R. Wendland claims that his paradigmatic-topical analysis of John 17 provides an indication of thirteen major themes of the prayer. According to Wendland's analysis, the principal themes in this chapter are: glory, life, giving, sending, word, sanctifying, unity, believing/knowing, keeping, world, truth, love, and work.¹⁰⁵ He suggests, however, that the theme of unity prevails throughout the prayer. "Jesus prays that the 'fellowship' which exists between the heavenly Father and himself might be manifested among all those 'believers' who have been 'given' to him and whom he has, in turn, 'commissioned' to carry on his ministry."¹⁰⁶

Some scholars focus on a few major themes of Jesus' prayer. Carson, for instance, identifies six principal themes of John 17 that include "Jesus' obedience to his Father, the glorification of his Father through his death/exaltation, the revelation of God in Christ Jesus, the choosing of the disciples out of the world, the mission to the world, their unity modeled

¹⁰⁴ According to Matos (*ibid.*, 118-19) the themes that appear only in vv.1a-8 are: the coming of the hour, the authority of the Son to give eternal life, eternal life, Jesus as the Christ, the Father as the only true God, and the response of the disciples. In vv. 9-23: Jesus as intercessor, Jesus' returning to the Father, the disciples left in the hostile world having been protected and in need of future protection, the son of "lostness," the joy of the disciples, the disciples not belonging to the world but being sanctified in the truth for mission into the world, the unity of the disciples patterned after the unity of the Godhead, and the love of the Father for the disciples. In vv. 24-26: the disciples being where Jesus is, the righteous Father, and the continuing revelation of God's name by the Son.

¹⁰⁵ Wendland, "Rhetoric of the World," 71-72. Wendland presents these major themes in a complicated chart on pp. 80-83.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 72.

in the presence of the Father and the Son.”¹⁰⁷ Beda Rigaux summarizes four major themes in the prayer, namely, glory, sanctification, unity, and perfection.¹⁰⁸ Käsemann identifies three main themes in John 17: the glory of Christ, the community under the Word, and Christian unity. He suggests that these themes are closely interwoven throughout John 17 as well as throughout the Gospel.¹⁰⁹

1.7.2. The Themes of John 17 from a Defined Point of View

(1) John 17 as a Prayer for Unity

Some scholars read Jesus’ prayer in John 17 from the point of view of the contemporary ecumenical movement. These scholars regard unity as the central theme of Jesus’ prayer. Jean Cadier, for instance, suggests that John 17 contains Jesus’ prayer for the unity of the church *now*, since “this is also a prayer for today.”¹¹⁰ According to Cadier, every part of the prayer contains elements which provide the basis for the unity of the church, for which Jesus prays. Verses 1-3 provide the purpose of the church to manifest eternal life for the glory of God; vv. 6-10 clarify the origin of the church which is the election of God; vv. 11-19 explain the privilege of the church as a flock which is set apart

¹⁰⁷ Carson, *The Gospel according to John*, 551.

¹⁰⁸ Beda Rigaux, “Die Jünger Jesu in Johannes 17,” *TQ* 150 (1970) 202-13. See particularly pp. 206-11.

¹⁰⁹ Käsemann, *The Testament of Jesus*, 3.

¹¹⁰ Jean Cadier, “The Unity of the Church: An Exposition of John 17,” *Int* 11 (1957) 166-76, here 167.

and protected from evil; and finally, in vv. 20-26, Jesus prays for the unity of the church, which has its origin, privilege, and purpose in the supreme reality of God.¹¹¹

David Alan Black, basing himself on his analysis of the stylistic features of John 17, concludes that the underlying theme of the prayer is unity. In Black's view, unity is a theme of great importance that was close to Jesus' heart as he prepared to leave his disciples.¹¹² The nature of unity, for which Jesus prays, rests on the unity of the Son with the Father. However, the unity of the church does not simply follow the pattern of Father-Son unity by way of analogy, as L. Morris suggests,¹¹³ but, according to Black, it dynamically, effectively, and epistemologically depends upon the oneness and unity of God. The 'oneness' is "not only the attributive of God" but also "an attitude of the unified people of God."¹¹⁴ Therefore, the church, in Black's view, can testify to the oneness of God if it is able to prove its unity within the diversity of the churches.¹¹⁵ In addition to scholarly arguments on the significance of the theme of unity in John 17, church documents concerning ecumenism often cited the passage of John 17:21 as the scriptural basis for the ecumenical movement.¹¹⁶

¹¹¹ Ibid., 167.

¹¹² David Alan Black, "On the Style and Significance of John 17," *Criswell Theological Review* 3 (1988) 154-55.

¹¹³ Leon Morris, *The Gospel according to John* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1971) 734.

¹¹⁴ Black, "On the Style and Significance of John 17," 155-56.

¹¹⁵ Black (ibid., 156-57) warns of two possible pitfalls in the interpretation of John 17. One is "to regard denominationalism as something inherently wrong." The other is "to regard the unity of the church as a purely social and organizational phenomenon."

¹¹⁶ For church ecumenical documents that cite John 17:21, see, e.g., Hellen Mardaga, "Reflection on the Meaning of John 17:21 for Ecumenical Dialogue," *ET* 34 (2005) 148-52. See also Wolfgang A. Bienert, ed., *Einheit als Gabe und Verpflichtung: Eine Studie des Deutschen Ökumenischen Studienausschusses*

(2) John 17 as a Prayer for Mission

Other scholars see the prayer from the evangelical perspective; thus they regard mission as the central theme of the prayer. Clinton D. Morrison, for example, thinks that the main concern of Jesus' prayer is mission.¹¹⁷ Through the prayer Jesus consecrates the disciples in order that they may participate in his mission for the glory of the Father. Jesus prays for the disciples that, although they are the objects of the world's hatred, they may remain faithful to the mission in the world, whose purpose is to bring eternal life to those who believe. Since the disciples take part in the mission of Jesus, they share also the unity of the Son and the Father. Thus, according to Morrison, the unity that the disciples share among themselves and with the Father and the Son is not a "pantheistic or mystical homogenization" but "a unity of mission."¹¹⁸

Thomas Vallianipuram thinks that the theme of mission runs throughout the prayer.¹¹⁹ The first section of the prayer (vv. 1-5) emphasizes the recurring theme of Jesus who is sent as a missionary to fulfill the divine purpose, namely, to give eternal life to all who believe. The section also contains the dogmatic content of the mission, "so that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent (v. 3)." He notices

(DÖSTA) zu *Johannes 17 Vers 21* (Frankfurt: Lembeck, 2002); Thomas Söding, "Die Einheit der Liebe: Joh 17 auf dem Ökumenischen Kirchentag in Berlin," *BK* 58 (2003) 119-26.

¹¹⁷ Clinton D. Morrison, "Mission and Ethic: An Interpretation of John 17," *Int* 19 (1965) 259-73.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 264. Morrison further emphasizes the church's task for mission. He writes, "The church hears also the testimony of John that there is no error more fundamental or grave than the loss of its mission. Although it may perform many good works to justify its existence, when the church abandons its mission it forsakes the one thing needful and renders every good work a disobedience" (p. 271).

¹¹⁹ Thomas Vallianipuram, "John 17 as a Mission Prayer," *ITS* 41 (2004) 5-30.

that some missionary vocabulary, such as *ergon*, *teleiōsas*, *doxa*, and *didōmi*, appears in this section. In the second section of the prayer (vv. 6-19), Jesus reviews his mission among the disciples (vv. 6-8), he prays for the protection of the disciples from evil in their mission in the world (vv. 9-16), and he sanctifies the disciples for mission (vv. 17-19). Thus, the first two sections of the prayer center on the theme of Jesus as a missionary and the calling of the disciples to take part in his mission. The mission of the disciples, therefore, has its source in the mission of Jesus. The third section (vv. 20-23) speaks about unity and mission. It is through its unity, which follows the pattern of Trinitarian communion, that the Christian community fulfills its missionary witness. The last section (vv. 24-26) concludes with the eschatological dimension of the mission. Jesus promises his followers the glory that the Father has given him. Vallianipuram concludes that John 17 is a mission prayer.¹²⁰

(3) John 17 as a Prayer for Unity and Mission

Paul S. Minear attempts to reconcile the tension between the ecumenical (unity) and evangelical (mission) perspectives of John 17. He begins by analyzing the Johannine usage of the word *kosmos* and concludes that “the world is a massive, cohesive reality that becomes manifest in hostility to Christ and his disciples.”¹²¹ He then analyzes the two parallel sentences in vv. 20-21 and vv. 22-23 and asserts, “It is by oneness in the love of

¹²⁰ Ibid., 27. Other scholars who emphasize the theme of mission in John 17 are J. S. Ukpong, “Jesus’ Prayer for His Followers (Jn 17) in Mission Perspective,” *African Theological Journal* 18 (1989) 49-60; Dirk G. Van der Merwe, “The Protection Believers Can Expect from God in the Fulfillment of Their Mission,” *SK* 21 (2000) 135-55; Paul Lwanga Makoboza, “Mission in John 17:17-19: An Exegetical-Theological Study of the ‘Mission of the Disciples’ as Participation in the ‘Mission of Christ’” (Ph.D. diss., Pontifical University of Saint Thomas Aquinas Rome, 2003).

¹²¹ Paul S. Minear, “Evangelism, Ecumenism, and John Seventeen,” *Theology Today* 35 (1978) 5-13.

Jesus for the world that this world of hostility can be brought to belief and knowledge.”¹²²

In other words, the disciples fulfill the mission in the world through unity with Jesus in his sacrificial love on the cross.

There is no doubt that Jesus’ prayer in John 17 is rich in its content. The prayer contains and echoes various Johannine themes. However, the prayer can also be seen from a specific perspective, and its focus can be directed to a certain theme. In any case, the themes of Jesus’ prayer in John 17 center around Jesus (in his relationship with the Father) and the disciples (including the future believers). On the one hand, the prayer reveals and echoes Jesus’ identity: his preexistence, his glory, his union with the Father, his mission of bringing eternal life. On the other hand, the prayer speaks about the identity of the disciples: their calling from the world, their mission, their unity among themselves and with Jesus and the Father, their partaking in the eternal life and in the love of the Father and the Son. The prayer therefore exhibits a christological message as well as the message about discipleship, and both messages are interrelated. The theme of unity and mission illustrates this relationship. The unity of the disciples follows the pattern of the unity between Jesus with the Father. Similarly, the mission of the disciples has its source in the mission of Jesus, as the one sent by the Father.

Thus, the relationship between Christology and discipleship is distinctive. Nonetheless, within the Johannine studies, the theme of discipleship in relationship to Christology receives minimal attention. I shall highlight this in the following section.

¹²² Ibid., 12.

2. Recent Scholarship on Discipleship in John 17

2.1. Overview on Johannine Discipleship

The theme of discipleship emerged as a specific category in NT studies in the 1950s through the work of Eduard Schweizer.¹²³ Since then many scholars have studied the theme of discipleship. They broadly understand discipleship as the self-understanding of Christians as followers of Jesus and its consequences.¹²⁴ Scholars initially dealt with the topic without paying much attention to the characteristics of discipleship in each of the NT writings. However, in the last four decades there has been a tendency to study the topic within individual texts and to examine the characteristics of discipleship as described by a particular NT author.¹²⁵

¹²³ Eduard Schweizer, *Lordship and Discipleship* (Naperville IL: Alec Allenson, 1960). Schweizer's work was originally published in German under the title *Erniedrigung und Erhöhung bei Jesus und seinen Nachfolgern* (Zürich: Zwingli, 1955). His work is followed by Anselm Schulz, *Nachfolgen und Nachahmen: Studien über das Verhältnis der neutestamentlichen Jüngerschaft zur urchristlichen Vorbildethik* (Munich: Kösel, 1962) and Hans Dieter Betz, *Nachfolge und Nachahmung Jesu Christi im Neuen Testament* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1967).

¹²⁴ As Fernando F. Segovia (*Discipleship in the New Testament* [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985] 2) suggests, the term "discipleship" in a narrow sense points to the "teacher-disciple" relationship. In a broader sense, the term is understood more generally in terms of the existence and identity of Christians. Here, Segovia emphasizes the self-understanding of the early Christian believers of their identity.

¹²⁵ August Strobel ("Discipleship in the Light of the Easter-Event," in *The Beginnings of the Church in the New Testament* [trans. Iain and Ute Nicol; Edinburgh: The Saint Andrew Press, 1970]) 69-70) notes the different emphasis on the understanding of discipleship in each gospel. According to Strobel, Mark views "discipleship under the eschatological sign of the cross, which is itself the sign of the mystery of the suffering of the Son of Man." Matthew sees discipleship as "a commitment to follow the Word of Jesus, the Messiah." Luke shows "how the disciples are introduced to the mystery of his suffering and resurrection by the living Lord himself." Meanwhile, John describes discipleship as "a relationship based upon new knowledge and upon a new revelation." He thinks that John provides the most profound understanding of discipleship (see particularly p.76). For a more comprehensive analysis of the concept of discipleship in the NT writings, see the articles in Segovia, *Discipleship in the New Testament*. See also Ernest Best, *Following Jesus: Discipleship in the Gospel of Mark* (JSNTSup 4; Sheffield: JSOT, 1981); Dennis M. Sweetland, *Our Journey with Jesus: Discipleship according to Luke-Acts* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1990); Stephen C. Barton, *Discipleship and Family Ties in Mark and Matthew* (SNTSMS 80; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994); Richard N. Longenecker, ed., *Patterns of Discipleship in the New Testament* (McMaster New

Scholars have approached the theme of discipleship in the Fourth Gospel from different points of view (trinitarian, ecclesiological, eschatological, etc.), employing a range of methodologies to emphasize different aspects of discipleship in John.

(1) Discipleship in Relationship to Father-Son-Holy Spirit

Ramon Moreno (1971) focuses on the term μαθητής to show the significance of the Father-Son-Holy Spirit in relationship to the Johannine concept of discipleship.¹²⁶ Moreno examines how John employs the term μαθητής (1) in relation to the Twelve and other distinct characters (“many who believe,” “many of his disciples,” Joseph Arimathea); (2) in relation to the sayings in three Johannine passages (8:31; 13:35; 15:8); and (3) in relation to the Beloved Disciple. He then presents a Trinitarian concept of discipleship by underlining the relationship of disciples with the Father, which is the source and ultimate end of their faith; with Jesus, in whom the disciples have faith and love; and with the Holy Spirit, that is the disciples’ advocate and consoler.¹²⁷ Moreno provides a comprehensive study of the term

Testament Studies; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996); Daniel Patte, *The Challenge of Discipleship: A Critical Study of the Sermon on the Mount as Scripture* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 1999); Walter Brueggemann, *The Word That Redescribes the World: The Bible and Discipleship* (ed. Patrick D. Miller; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2006); Suzanne W. Henderson, *Christology and Discipleship in the Gospel of Mark* (SNTSMS 135; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

¹²⁶ Ramon Moreno, “El Discípulo de Jesucristo, según el evangelio de S. Juan,” *EstBíb* 30 (1971) 269-311. This article contains the second and the third part of Moreno’s thesis. A summary of Moreno’s complete thesis is found in Mary M. Pazdan, “Discipleship as the Appropriation of Eschatological Salvation in the Fourth Gospel” (Ph.D. diss., University of Michael’s College, 1982) 32-41.

¹²⁷ Moreno, “El Discípulo de Jesucristo,” 288-311.

μαθητής in the Fourth Gospel. He is criticized, however, for employing a later Trinitarian dogma in his reading of the Johannine texts.¹²⁸

(2) Discipleship in Relationship to Ecclesiology

Schnackenburg (1975) approaches discipleship in John from the ecclesiological perspective.¹²⁹ He focuses on the question whether the Fourth Gospel provides a concept of “disciples” (the believing community) that is exclusive and limited or one that is inclusive and universal. He observes that John employs the term μαθητής rather loosely. Throughout the gospel John describes the disciples as representatives of (1) those who believe through Jesus’ word and sign; (2) the later community in contrast to the unbelieving Jews; and (3) the later believers whose faith is inadequate. Schnackenburg believes that the concepts of disciples and discipleship in John shift from the intimate companions of Jesus to include all believers.¹³⁰ The Johannine images of sheep and shepherd, as well as of the vine and branches, confirm this notion. According to Schnackenburg, the inclusion of the later believers as disciples is a key to understanding Johannine ecclesiology.

¹²⁸ Rekha M. Chennattu, *Johannine Discipleship as a Covenant Relationship* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2006) 5.

¹²⁹ Rudolf Schnackenburg, “Exkurs 17: Jünger, Gemeinde, Kirche in Johannesevangelium,” in *Das Johannesevangelium* (3 vols.; HTKNT 4; Freiburg: Herder, 1967-75) 231-45. I refer to the English translation in *The Gospel according to St. John*, 3. 203-17.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 208.

(3) Discipleship in Relationship to the Holy Spirit

Marinus de Jonge (1977) explores Johannine discipleship in relation to the role of the Holy Spirit for the disciples.¹³¹ He maintains that in the Fourth Gospel the true nature of discipleship includes following, remaining, listening, and believing in Jesus. However, in John the disciples often show a lack of understanding and faith in Jesus. Nevertheless, de Jonge notices that the Fourth Gospel portrays a progression in the disciples' understanding of Jesus after his departure to the Father.¹³² It is only "when Jesus had been raised from the dead" that the disciples remembered what he has said and believed the Scripture and the word he had spoken (2:22). According to de Jonge, the hermeneutical key to understanding this progression is the gift of the Spirit. Jesus' departure to the Father makes way for the Spirit to come and work through the disciples. De Jonge concludes: "The Fourth Gospel presents itself as the result of the teaching and the recalling activity of the Spirit within the community of disciples leading to a deeper and fuller insight into all that Jesus as the Son revealed during his stay on earth."¹³³

¹³¹ Marinus de Jonge, *Jesus: Stranger from Heaven and Son of God* (Trans. and ed. John E. Steely; Missoula: Scholars Press, 1977) 387-88.

¹³² Ibid., 7. Charles H. Talbert (*Reading John: A Literary and Theological Commentary on the Fourth Gospel and the Johannine Epistles* [London: SPCK, 1992] 86-87) also suggests a progression from an understanding of pre- to post-Easter discipleship in John. He thinks that the passage in John 1:19–2:11 portrays discipleship before Easter, while chaps. 12, 13–17, and 20–21, describe post-Easter discipleship.

¹³³ de Jonge, *Jesus: Stranger from Heaven and Son of God*, 12.

(4) Discipleship in Relationship to Eschatology

Mary M. Pazdan (1984) emphasizes the eschatological aspect of discipleship. Pazdan examines six pairs of verbs (πιστεύω εἰς - ἔρχομαι πρὸς, οἶδα - γινώσκω, ἀγαπάω - φιλέω, μένω ἐν - εἶναι ἐν, ἀκούω - τηρέω, ζητέω - εὐρίσκω). These pairs constitute (1) the basis for discipleship (believing in Jesus); (2) the heart of discipleship (mutuality of relationship); (3) the tasks of discipleship (hearing and keeping Jesus' word, seeking and finding him). She concludes that "discipleship is a communion of life with Jesus and the Father: mutual knowing, loving, and abiding."¹³⁴ In their participation in the mutual life of Jesus and the Father the disciples attain the eschatological salvation brought through Jesus' hour. "The dominance of realized eschatology in the Gospel suggests that the possession of eternal life is a present but limited experience of the disciple."¹³⁵ Thus, Pazdan views the discipleship as the appropriation of eschatological salvation.

(5) Process of Becoming a Disciple

Matthew Vellanickal (1980) focuses on the process of becoming a disciple.¹³⁶ His analysis of discipleship in John centers on the narrative of Jesus' first disciples in John 1:35-42, which he regards as the occasion for the evangelist "to summarize discipleship in its process of development."¹³⁷ According to him, the process begins with "election and call,"

¹³⁴ Pazdan, "Discipleship as the Appropriation of Eschatological Salvation," 308-9.

¹³⁵ Ibid., 309.

¹³⁶ Matthew Vellanickal, "Discipleship according to the Gospel of John," *Jeev* 10 (1980) 131-47.

¹³⁷ Ibid., 141.

followed by “hearing,” “following and seeking,” “finding,” “coming and seeing.” The process culminates in “remaining with Jesus” and leads to “missionary sharing.” The conditions of discipleship, in his view, include remaining in the Word, hating one’s life, and serving Jesus. Yet, the distinctive character of discipleship is “brotherly love,” because “the circle of the disciples of Jesus who love one another forms a new world within the world.”¹³⁸

(6) Discipleship in Relationship to Mission

Köstenberger (1998) emphasizes discipleship in relationship to mission.¹³⁹ He defines the word “mission” as a specific task which, in the process of achieving it, involves various modes of movements. He then examines John’s portrait of Jesus: his person, his task, and his mission. Jesus’ mission includes the movement of ‘sending’ (Jesus the Sent Son), ‘ascending-descending’ (Jesus the Coming and Returning One), and ‘following and gathering’ (Jesus the Eschatological Shepherd-Teacher).¹⁴⁰ Köstenberger goes further and explores the Johannine depiction of the disciples and their task as well as their mission. He notices that the mission of the disciples involves the movement of ‘coming’ to Jesus, ‘following’ him, and ‘being sent’ into the world. The mission of the disciples thus relates to the mission of Jesus. The sending of Jesus into the world is parallel to the sending of the disciples into the world (17:18; 20:21). Moreover, “Jesus’ role as the shepherd-teacher who

¹³⁸ Ibid., 146.

¹³⁹ Andreas J. Köstenberger, *The Mission of Jesus and the Disciples according to the Fourth Gospel: With Implications for the Fourth Gospel’s Purpose and the Mission of the Contemporary Church* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998).

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 45-140. See particularly his conclusions of this section on pages 138-40.

calls followers to gather his eschatological harvest corresponds to the disciples' following Jesus."¹⁴¹ In Köstenberger's view, in the Fourth Gospel "the believing response of the first disciples to Jesus functions as a model for the discipleship of later generations of believers."¹⁴² The mission of the disciples, therefore, is the mission of the church of all time.

(7) Discipleship as a Covenant Relationship

Rekha M. Chennattu (2006) attempts to understand Johannine discipleship in light of the OT covenant relationship.¹⁴³ She examines the narrative of Jesus' first followers in 1:35-51 and suggests that "the evangelist uses the occasion of the call stories to present a paradigm of discipleship as a covenant relationship."¹⁴⁴ She finds that chaps. 1-12, which contain a call to decision for or against Jesus, serve as "hortatory preparation" for the renewal of the covenant in the Farewell Discourse (chapters 13-17).¹⁴⁵ Chennattu then analyzes the Farewell Discourses by paying particular attention to the OT covenant themes and motifs (election, intimate abiding, indwelling presence of God, keeping God's commandments, and knowledge of God) as the central message of the Johannine

¹⁴¹ Ibid., 197. However, Köstenberger warns that one should not force the parallel to fit exactly. Certain aspects of Jesus' mission, for example Jesus descent-ascent motif as well as his messianic signs, have no parallel in the mission of the disciples.

¹⁴² Ibid., 149.

¹⁴³ Chennattu, *Johannine Discipleship as a Covenant Relationship*.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 49.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 88.

discipleship. Chapters 20–21, according to Chennattu, confirm the notion that the Fourth Gospel presents discipleship as a covenant relationship. She suggests that, in the Gospel's historical context, the paradigm of discipleship as a covenant relationship helps the community to redefine its identity as a distinct social and religious group.¹⁴⁶

(8) *Paradigms for Discipleship*

Fernando F. Segovia, Raymond Collins, and W. Hulitt Gloer focus on the disciples and other individual characters as paradigms for discipleship.¹⁴⁷ R. Alan Culpepper and Jeffrey S. Siker-Gieseler propose that it is the Beloved Disciple who functions as the model of discipleship.¹⁴⁸ David R. Beck thinks that John portrays the anonymous characters (Jesus' mother, the Samaritan woman, the official, the lame man, the man born blind, the woman caught in adultery, and the Beloved Disciple) as models of discipleship.¹⁴⁹ Meanwhile, commentators such as Bultmann, Dodd, Kasemann, and Keener underline various aspects of discipleship, such as seeking, following, remaining, keeping, abiding,

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 205-11.

¹⁴⁷ Fernando F. Segovia, "'Peace I Leave with You; My Peace I Give to You': Discipleship in the Fourth Gospel," in *Discipleship in the New Testament* (ed. Fernando F. Segovia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985) 76-102; Raymond Collins, "Discipleship in John's Gospel," *Emmanuel* 91 (1985) 248-55; W. Hulitt Gloer, "'Come and See': Disciples and Discipleship in the Fourth Gospel," in *Perspectives on John: Methods and Interpretation in the Fourth Gospel* (National Association of Baptist Professors of Religion Special Studies 11; ed. R. B. Sloan and M. C. Parsons; Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen, 1993) 271-76.

¹⁴⁸ R. Alan Culpepper (*Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel* [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983] 121, 123) calls the Beloved Disciple "the paradigm of discipleship" and "the epitome of the ideal disciple." J. S. Siker-Gieseler ("Disciples and Discipleship in the Fourth Gospel: A Canonical Approach," SBT 10 [1980] 222) thinks that John portrays discipleship in the characters of the Samaritan woman (4:7-30), the Capernaum royal official (4:46-54), the man born blind (9:1-41), and Martha (11:1-44). However, in his view, it is the Beloved Disciple who plays a special function as the model of discipleship.

¹⁴⁹ David R. Beck, *The Discipleship Paradigm: Readers and Anonymous Characters in the Fourth Gospel* (BIS 27; New York: Brill, 1997).

faith, love, as essential in the disciples' relationship with Jesus.¹⁵⁰ Nicolas Farelly recently (2010) deals with the disciples in John with the focus on their faith and understanding.¹⁵¹

As this short review shows, although scholars have approach the theme of discipleship in the Fourth Gospel from different point of views, the theme of discipleship in relationship to the Christology has not been sufficiently studied. Craig R. Koester notices the relationship and suggests that there is movement from Christology to discipleship in the Fourth Gospel.¹⁵² He mentions a few examples from the "I am" sayings and Jesus' symbolic actions to show this movement. However, he limits his analysis within Johannine symbolism, and he does not treat John 17.

2.2. Discipleship in John 17

A few scholars and commentators have highlighted the theme of discipleship in John 17. Barrett implicitly affirms the significance of discipleship when he writes that the prayer of Jesus in John 17 not only reveals the relationship between Jesus and the Father, but also "the nature and meaning of Christian life."¹⁵³ Käsemann asserts that through Jesus' prayer John underlines the centrality of faith that can only be verified through discipleship:

¹⁵⁰ Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 2. 81-82; Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, 397-98; Käsemann, *The Testament of Jesus*, 46; Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1. 467-70.

¹⁵¹ Nicolas Farelly, *The Disciples in the Fourth Gospel: A Narrative Analysis of Their Faith and Understanding* (WUNT II 290; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010). Studies on the characters in the Fourth Gospel are recently been done by Cornelis Bennema (*Encountering Jesus: Character Studies in the Gospel of John*. [Colorado Springs: Paternoster, 2009]) and S. E. Hylen (*Imperfect Believers: Ambiguous Characters in the Gospel of John* [Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2009]).

¹⁵² Craig R. Koester, *Symbolism in the Fourth Gospel: Meaning, Mystery, Community* (2nd ed. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003) 13.

¹⁵³ Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 500.

“following that way which is Jesus himself.”¹⁵⁴ Lindars, as we have seen, suggests that the evangelist added John 17, and the second part of the farewell speech (chaps. 15–16), to the first edition of the gospel in order to reinforce the theme of discipleship. None of these scholars, however, provides an exegetical analysis of how the message of discipleship is weaved into this heavily christological passage. Chennattu underlines the significance of John 17 within the context of Johannine discipleship as a covenant relationship. Her emphasis is on how John 17 functions as “a prayer consecrating the covenant community of the disciples.”¹⁵⁵

So far there are two articles that focus on the theme of discipleship in John 17: one by Beda Rigaux (1970) and another by Dirk G. van der Merwe (1998).

(1) Beda Rigaux

In “Die Jünger Jesu in Johannes 17,” Rigaux highlights the identity of the disciples, for whom Jesus prays.¹⁵⁶ He examines four key words in John 17 (δοξάζειν, ἀγιάζειν, ἔν, and τελειοῦν) in order to clarify the characteristic of the community of disciples and the nature of true discipleship. He makes the following points. First, the “glory,” which is the common heavenly possession (*gemeinsamen himmlischen Güter*) of the Father and the Son, has been conferred on the disciples through Jesus’ work and word. The disciples have a share in this glory now, in the eschatological present, through their faith in Jesus and fidelity

¹⁵⁴ Käsemann, *The Testament of Jesus*, 25.

¹⁵⁵ Chennattu, *Johannine Discipleship as a Covenant Relationship*, 130-37.

¹⁵⁶ Rigaux, “Die Jünger Jesu in Johannes 17,” 202-13.

to his word. Second, the “holiness” belongs to the Father and the Son, who is sent to the world as the Revealer of truth. Jesus prays that the disciples be made holy before they become the instruments of revelation. Third, the “unity” among the disciples refers to the unity of the Father and the Son. It is a unity as a community of faith and love. Fourth, “perfection” is fulfilled through the disciples’ participation in the unity of the Father and the Son. Although perfection in unity has an eschatological value, in John it is present and actual. Rigaux asserts that “when they receive the glory, sanctified in truth, and are granted the divine unity, the disciples will be made perfect.”¹⁵⁷

Rigaux makes an important point when he suggests that these characteristics of discipleship include participation and integration into the divine sphere (*göttliche Sphäre*). Unfortunately, his analysis focuses only on the four keywords that he regards as the main themes in John 17.¹⁵⁸ He neither treats John 17 as a whole, nor does he take into account the literary context of the chapter. Instead he turns his attention to the historical context of the text. He suggests that the *Sitz im Leben* of John 17 is a group of disciples of Jesus (Christians) who, in their time of adversity, are seeking to be renewed and strengthened through the ever-living presence of Jesus and through his word and work.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 211.

¹⁵⁸ He first notes the usage of these terms in LXX and the NT literature before he examines their usage in the Johannine text.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 212.

(2) *Dirk G. van der Merwe*

In “John 17: Jesus Assigns His Mission to His Disciples,” van der Merwe approaches the chapter from the perspective of Jesus’ mission and discipleship.¹⁶⁰ His purpose is to provide “a hermeneutical, structural, theological and historical discussion of chapter 17 from the perspective of Jesus’ mission and discipleship.”¹⁶¹ First, he breaks up the chapter into forty-seven units and groups them into nine clusters.¹⁶² He then divides the chapter into five blocks, which form a chiastic structure. The first and the fifth block, A (vv. 1-8) and A’ (vv. 24-26), are concerned with the mission of Jesus. The second and the fourth block, B (vv. 9-16) and B’ (vv. 20-23), relate to the mission of the disciples. The third block, C (vv. 17-19), which is the central unit, contains the essence of discipleship, namely, the sending of the disciples to continue Jesus’ mission. This central unit holds the other units together in a coherent whole.

Next, van der Merwe makes a historical analysis of the prayer from an agency perspective. As Jesus, the agent from heaven, is about to return to the Father who sent him, he must report his mission and appoint others as agents. Thus, van der Merwe thinks that vv. 1-8 contain the report of the agent, vv. 9-16 the return of the agent, vv. 17-19 the appointment of the disciples as new agents, vv. 20-23 the commission of the disciples, and

¹⁶⁰ Dirk G. Van der Merwe, “John 17: Jesus Assigns His Mission to His Disciples,” *SK* 19 (1998) 115-27.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 115.

¹⁶² Unfortunately, van der Merwe does not provide any explanation for the division into the small units and clusters.

vv. 24-26 the continuation of revelation. He concludes that Jesus' departure gives the disciples an opportunity to take his place and continue his mission in the world.¹⁶³

Van der Merwe treats John 17 as a coherent unit and approaches the prayer within the context of Jesus' return to the Father. He also makes an important point that the commission of the disciples "must be interpreted from the perspective of the consecration of Jesus."¹⁶⁴ This, in his view, implies that the theme of mission in this prayer must be approached from a christological perspective. While he is aware of this very critical point—which I will take up further in this study, van der Merwe unfortunately limits the content of discipleship in John 17 to the framework of mission.

Thus, both articles attempt to clarify the meaning and the content of discipleship in John 17, yet they oversimplify this abundantly rich passage by limiting their analysis on certain aspects of this chapter. Moreover, although both scholars seem to be aware of relationship between discipleship and Christology, they neither emphasize nor argue for the relationship.

3. The Rationale for This Study

This overview of modern scholarship on John 17, as well as of Johannine discipleship, clarifies the following two points:

First, John 17 has been the focus of many studies. Some approach the chapter diachronically by evaluating the historicity of the prayer and posing various theories

¹⁶³ Ibid., 125.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., 123-24.

concerning the literary genesis of the chapter as well as the community behind the text.

These scholars generally agree that the chapter is not a verbatim recollection of Jesus' words. However, the fact that neither do they agree on the source employed in this chapter, nor on the redactional process of the text, proves the limit of the historical approach.

Meanwhile, scholars also approach the text synchronically by reading John 17 as a coherent unity. Some underline the significance of the chapter within its literary context. Others attempt to unravel the underlying structure of the passage for the purpose of clarifying the meaning of the text. Despite differences in methods and perspectives, scholars agree on the general context and content of the prayer:

1. Within the context of the Johannine narrative, John 17 plays a significant role as the bridge between the rest of the Farewell Discourse and the Passion Narrative. John 17 brings Jesus' farewell with his disciples to its culmination. At the same time, the prayer prepares for the climax of Jesus' glorification in his death and resurrection.

2. John 17, expressed in repetitive vocabulary and simple syntax, is rich in its content. The prayer is primarily christological, i.e., it confirms Jesus' identity in his relationship to the Father. At the same time, the prayer, which is directed to the Father, is uttered in the presence of the disciples for their benefit. Being a prayer of Jesus in its form, John 17 functions as an address and admonition to the disciples, like the rest of Jesus' farewell discourse. It portrays how John views the true identity of the disciples of Jesus. John 17 therefore exhibits not only a christological teaching but a teaching about discipleship as well.

Second, scholars have approached the theme of discipleship in the Fourth Gospel in relation to the Johannine Trinitarian theology, pneumatology, ecclesiology, eschatology, etc. Many of these studies focus on the disciples and other Johannine characters as models of discipleship. Some scholars pursue the meaning of discipleship through the analysis of key words in the Fourth Gospel. However, scholars have not sufficiently addressed the relationship between discipleship and Christology within the Fourth Gospel in general and in John 17 in particular.

My study will provide an exegetical analysis to show that Johannine discipleship has its basis in the Gospel's Christology and that the Johannine christological message leads to the teaching of authentic discipleship. In other words, if the message of Christology in the Fourth Gospel is, in Brown's word, "the *center* or the *heartbeat* of John's thought,"¹⁶⁵ the message of discipleship is what flows naturally out of it. I will argue that, for John, it is Jesus himself who is the prime model of authentic discipleship.

My analysis of the theme of discipleship, therefore, does not focus on the disciples and other figures in the Fourth Gospel. Nor is it merely a study of words that are often considered as clarifying the meaning of discipleship. These are certainly important and will be taken into consideration. Rather, my literary-exegetical analysis will pay particular attention to how John, throughout the Gospel as a whole and in John 17 in particular, portrays Jesus (Christology) in a way that leads the audience to a better understanding of their own identity as the disciples and followers of Jesus (discipleship). The literary analysis

¹⁶⁵ Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, 249.

of John 17, in turn, clarifies the characteristic of Johannine discipleship, which is closely related to and flows from the Gospel's Christology.

Chapter Two

The Christological Character of Johannine Discipleship (John 1–12)

The second chapter of this dissertation explores the nature of discipleship in its relationship to the Christology within the first twelve chapters of the Gospel of John.¹ I will deal with selected passages from this section of John (the prologue, Jesus' first disciples, the signs narrative, and the "I am" sayings) in order to clarify the christological character of the Johannine discipleship.

For this purpose, I will employ a narrative-critical approach to the text to examine how the author communicates his message to the audience.² Here the author and the audience refer to the "implied author" and "implied audience," i.e., the author and the audience as implied in the narrative, the author and the audience that emerge in the reading of the narrative.³ The implied audience possesses some knowledge that the implied author presupposes that the implied audience has when it listens to the narrative. This includes a

¹ In exploring the message of discipleship in relationship to Christology in John, I agree with Brown (*The Gospel according to John*, 1. 62) and others that chaps. 1–12 and 13–21 are the two major sections in the Johannine Gospel. Brown calls the two major sections "The Book of Signs" and "The Book of Glory," respectively. In chapter 1–12, John recounts Jesus' public ministry, in which Jesus speaks not only to his disciples but also to the crowds. As John begins to narrate Jesus' final meal (chaps. 13–17), the Johannine Jesus no longer speaks to the crowd but only to his disciples. From 18:1, when he "turns" to the world in order to lay down his life, Jesus speaks a few words to the soldiers and guards who come to arrest him (18:4-8) and to the high priest and Pilate who examine him (18:19-20, 34-37; 19:11). But apart from these scenes, Jesus' words in the second half of the Fourth Gospel are addressed to his disciples and to those who believe in him.

² On the use of narrative criticism as a method for reading of biblical texts, see James L. Resseguie, *Narrative Criticism of the New Testament: An Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005); Mark Allan Powell, *What is Narrative Criticism?* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990). For the applications of this method to the Fourth Gospel, see Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel*; Mark W. G. Stibbe, *John as Storyteller: Narrative Criticism and the Fourth Gospel* (SNTSMS 73; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

³ Consequently, when I speak of "John" or "the author," I have the implied author in view.

knowledge of Greek, a knowledge of the Scripture (OT) and Judaism, a knowledge of certain events, and a knowledge of some of the characters and places.⁴ The implied author controls the communication process by making use of the audience's presupposed knowledge and by employing various literary strategies to convey his message, values, and concerns to the audience.

Approaching the text from this point of view, I will examine how the implied author, using various literary tools, conveys the message of discipleship based on his christological teaching. The analysis proceeds in two steps. First, I will present a narrative reading of a selected passage. My purpose is not to provide a thorough exegesis of the passage but rather to show how the communication process between the implied author (hereafter, John)—who speaks through a narrator—with the implied audience progresses within the narrative. Second, I will examine the movement from the christological teaching to the teaching about discipleship within the narrative. Here I will pay particular attention to the literary elements (tenses, sentence structure, verbal clues, characters, narrative flow, etc.) which John employs to convey his message. This will clarify the christological character of Johannine discipleship: that the message concerning discipleship in the Fourth Gospel has its basis in Christology and that the Johannine christological message leads to a teaching of authentic discipleship. The result of this examination will benefit the further exploration of the theme of discipleship in its relationship to Christology within the Farewell Discourse in general and particularly in John 17.

⁴ Culpepper (*Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel*, 212-23) categorizes the presupposed knowledge of the implied audience into five categories: persons (characters), places, languages, Judaism, and events.

1. The Prologue (1:1-18)

The opening section of John's testimony, known as the prologue (1:1-18), unique in its literary form,⁵ plays a significant role in the Fourth Gospel, both literarily and theologically. Literarily, the prologue prepares the audience to enter into the narrative, introduces the main character, and sets the plot of the narrative. Theologically, the prologue provides the audience with "a synthesis of the author's Christology and theology."⁶ It introduces the identity of Jesus, which John further develops in the narrative. At the same time, the prologue portrays the negative and positive responses to the coming of the Word. The allusions to the audience's experience of the Word indicate how John intends the audience to respond to the testimony about Jesus' identity. The opening passage of the Fourth Gospel hints that for John the answer to the question "who is Jesus" leads to an understanding of "who the disciples are."

1.1. A Narrative Reading of John 1:1-18

In presenting the narrative reading of the prologue, I divide the passage into three narrative units.⁷ In each unit the narrator introduces the identity of the Word, Jesus Christ.

⁵ The poetic style of the prologue differs from the prose style of the rest of the Gospel and has led scholars to question its authenticity, i.e. whether it came from the Evangelist or from another source. Most scholars think that the prologue was originally a hymn that was adapted by the Evangelist or a later redactor. However, there is no agreement which parts are the original hymn and which are later additions. For a discussion concerning the source and redactional problems of the prologue, see Brown, *Gospel according to John*, 1. 18-23; Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 1. 221-81.

⁶ Moloney, *The Gospel of John*, 34.

⁷ Scholars find many ways to structure the prologue. Some see the passage as consisting of a few parallel units, while others consider the units to be chiasmic. Among those who see a parallel structure, Brown divides the prologue into four poetic strophes (1-2, 3-5, 10-12b, 14+16). He regards the rest (2-6, 12c-13, 15,

In the first unit (vv. 1-5) the Word is introduced in relation to God (vv. 1-2) and to creation (vv. 3-4). This unit includes the failed attempt of the power of darkness to overcome the Light (v. 5). The appearance of John in v. 6 marks the beginning of the second unit (vv. 6-14). In this unit the narrator reveals the identity of the Word in relation to John (vv. 6-9) and describes the negative (vv. 10-11) and the positive responses (vv. 12-13) to the Word. This unit concludes with the statement about the incarnation of the Word in the midst of the audience (v. 14). The reappearance of John in the narrative in v. 15 marks the beginning of the third unit (vv. 15-18). Here the narrator underlines that the Word, identified as Jesus Christ, is superior not only to John (vv. 15-16) but also to Moses (v. 17). The unique relationship between the Word and God in the opening verse (v. 1) reappears in the last verse (v. 18), thereby creating a thematic *inclusio*.

(1) Verses 1-5

The Fourth Gospel opens with the words ἐν ἀρχῇ (“in the beginning”), the same words that open the LXX version of Gen 1:1. The narrator reminds the audience, which is familiar with the Scripture, of “the beginning” when God created the heavens and the earth.⁸ But here instead of God the Creator, the narrator proclaims:

17-18) as a later addition. Köstenberger divides the passage into five units (1-5, 6-8, 9-14, 15, 16-18). Moloney and Michaels divide it into three units but differently (Moloney 1-5, 6-14, 15-18, while Michaels 1-5, 6-13, 14-18). Among the chiasmic structures, the one by Culpepper is best known. See R. Alan Culpepper, “The Pivot of John’s Prologue” *NTS* 27 (1980-81) 1-31. Here I divide the passage into three parallel units as suggested by Moloney, *The Gospel of John*, 34.

⁸ Scholars generally agree in relating ἐν ἀρχῇ in John 1:1 to Gen 1:1 of the LXX. Keener (*The Gospel of John*, 1. 365) concludes that “John intends an allusion to Genesis 1 may be regarded as certain.”

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος,
καὶ ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν,
καὶ θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος⁹

Within the three phrases, which are connected by a καί paratactic, λόγος is mentioned repeatedly as the subject. This is sufficient to make the audience aware of the centrality of the “the Word” as the main character and the hero in the narrative that the audience is about to hear. In this opening verse the narrator draws the audience’s attention to the Word in its relationship with God. The repetition of λόγος-λόγος-θεός-θεός-λόγος helps to focus the audience’s attention on the relationship.¹⁰

The narrator does not explain who or what the Word might be. Neither does he explicitly relate the Word with the Jewish personalized preexistent wisdom, nor does he refer it to the Greek rational principle that guides the universe.¹¹ By saying nothing about it, the narrator seemingly assumes the audience possesses some idea of ὁ λόγος. Alluding to the audience’s presupposed knowledge, the narrator brings the audience’s understanding of the Word to a new level that exceeds what it may have known. Making use of the imperfect ἦν, the narrator underlines the divinity of the Word: that it existed (ἦν) in the beginning (ἐν

⁹ Notice the poetic structure called staircase parallelism (the last word of phrase in one line begins the next line) in this opening verse. This structure can be observed in vv. 1-5 of the prologue. See Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1. 19.

¹⁰ J. Ramsey Michaels, *The Gospel of John* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2010) 47.

¹¹ Wisdom literature often depicts the preexistence of Wisdom and its participation in creation. See Sir 1: 4; 24:9; 51:10 and especially Prov 8:22-31. The Logos is also often related to the OT notion of God’s Word (Hebrew דְּבָר), with which the heavens and the earth were created (Gen 1:3; Ps 33:6). In Greek philosophy *logos* is often thought of as the impersonal principle that governs the universe. See the discussion by Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1. 341-47. Keener (ibid., 1. 369) asserts that in employing the term *logos* “John utilizes the closest concept available from his milieu, but modifies it to fit his Christology rather than his Christology to fit beliefs about divine Wisdom.”

ἀρχῇ) ‘before time.’ Yet “it does not preexist for its own sake but in a relationship with God (πρὸς τὸν θεόν).”¹² Within its unique relationship with God, the Word shares the same nature as God. What God was the Word was; thus the Word was God (θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος).¹³

The phrase “he was in the beginning with God” (οὗτος ἦν ἐν ἀρχῇ πρὸς τὸν θεόν, v. 2) recapitulates the content of the opening verse in order to reinforce the statement about the divinity of the Word. The Word is God because it (οὗτος) existed with God “in the beginning.” Here by using the personal pronoun οὗτος (“this one,” “this man”), referring to the masculine ὁ λόγος, the narrator heightens the suspense concerning the identity of the Word. A question thus arises, who might “this man” be? Yet instead of identifying “this man,” the narrator provides further explanation about the Word in terms of its relationship with creation. It is through him that *everything* came into being (πάντα δι’ αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο) and without him *nothing* came into being (χωρὶς αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο οὐδὲ ἓν). The emphatic position of πάντα, the force of the aorist tense ἐγένετο,¹⁴ and the addition of the negative οὐδὲ ἓν in v. 3a underline the supremacy of the Word as God’s one and only agent of creation.

¹² Moloney, *The Gospel of John*, 35. Moloney says, “The preposition *pros* means more than the static ‘with.’ It has a sense of motion toward the person or thing that follows.” Thus he suggests that the phrase has the nuance of “The Word was *turned toward* God.”

¹³ The phrase θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος, on the one hand, underlines the divine nature of the Logos. What is said about God can also be said about the Word. On the other hand, the phrase indicates that both are different in person. See Morris, *The Gospel according to John*, 75-77; Moloney, *The Gospel of John*, 37; Köstenberger, *John*, 28-29.

¹⁴ John employs ἐγένετο for everything in creation, whereas he reserves ἦν for the Logos.

This is followed by a statement in vv. 3b-4 that everything that came to be through him is life (ὃ γέγονεν ἐν αὐτῷ ζωὴ ἦν), and that this life is the light for all human beings (ἡ ζωὴ ἦν τὸ φῶς τῶν ἀνθρώπων). The narrator switches from the aorist ἐγένετο and employs the perfect tense γέγονεν to bring out that what did happen came through the Word. The significance of God's one-time act of creation through the agency of the Word continues to the present time of the audience as the source of life (ζωή) and light (φῶς).¹⁵ Verse 5 concludes this section by saying that the light shines in the darkness (τὸ φῶς ἐν τῇ σκοτίᾳ φαίνει), and the darkness has not overcome it (ἡ σκοτία αὐτὸ οὐ κατέλαβεν). The aorist κατέλαβεν refers to a certain past event in which the force of darkness attempted to overcome the light.¹⁶

To this point in the narrative the audience realizes that the Word is now involved in the life of the human race (ἄνθρωπος) and thus in the life of the audience, as the light that is shining (φαίνει) in the darkness. The present tense φαίνει confirms, on the one hand, the actuality of the Word among the people. On the other hand, it provides a hint of what the audience might expect to be the end of the Johannine narrative: that the light of the Word continues to shine despite the attempt of the power of darkness to overcome (κατέλαβεν) it.

¹⁵ Francis J. Moloney, *Belief in the Word: Reading the Fourth Gospel, John 1–4* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993) 32.

¹⁶ Moloney (ibid., 34) suggests that "the implied reader, reading the Johannine story for the first time, does not yet understand Jesus' death as a clash between light and darkness." However, as Lindars (*The Gospel of John*, 87) notes, "To the Christian reader the verse already contains a hint of the Passion and Resurrection of Jesus." The implied audience, which supposedly knows some events related to Jesus, can relate the certain past event in which the darkness fails to overcome the light to Jesus' death and resurrection.

(2) Verses 6-14

The narrator continues to reveal the identity of the Word in v. 6. Here the identity of ὁ λόγος is explained in relationship to a certain man (ἄνθρωπος), a historical person who appeared (ἐγένετο) as part of creation. This man's name is John.¹⁷ His task, as explained in v. 7, is to bear witness to light. The reliability and the authenticity of his testimony is unquestionable because he was sent from God (ἀπεσταλμένος παρὰ θεοῦ). Using two ἵνα clauses, the narrator underlines the significance of John's coming as well as the purpose of his testimony. John came "*in order to* bear witness to the light" (ἵνα μαρτυρήσῃ περὶ τοῦ φωτός) "*so that* all might believe through him" (ἵνα πάντες πιστεύσωσιν δι' αὐτοῦ). On the one hand, the audience is aware of John's role as the one who testifies to the light. On the other, they are told that the goal of his testimony is to bring all people to believe. No matter how important John's role may have been, he is not the light (v. 8).¹⁸ Yet, his testimony is substantial in bringing faith.

Verse 9 further clarifies the identity of the Word. John was not the light, "for the true light which enlightens everyone was coming into the world." John's testimony is authentic, for he was sent from God. But it is only the Word that is the authentic and perfect

¹⁷ I call John, who is mentioned here in v. 1:6, "John the Witness" to avoid confusion with John the author of the Fourth Gospel. At the same time this is to avoid using John the Baptist, which is a misnomer in the Fourth Gospel. The Fourth Gospel, unlike the Synoptics, does not regard John as the Baptist (Ἰωάννης ὁ βαπτιστής, cf. Matt 3:1; 14:2; Luke 7:20, 33). John is said to be "baptizing" (βαπτίζων, 1:28, 31; 3:23; 10:40), but he is not called "the Baptist" (ὁ βαπτίζων, cf. Mark 1:6; 6:14).

¹⁸ The historical approach often takes the phrase "he is not the light" in v. 8 as an indication of an anti-John the Baptist movement. See, Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1. 28.

revelation of God, to which John testifies.¹⁹ He comes into the world and *now* continues to enlighten the human race (implied in the present tense φωτίζει). The presence of the Word in the world is underlined in v. 10a: “the Word was in the world” (ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ἦν). The next phrase, “the world came into being through him” (ὁ κόσμος δι’ αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο, v. 10b), recalls v. 4 that all things came into being through him (πάντα δι’ αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο). The narrator reminds the audience of the relationship between the Word and the world in order to prepare for the tragic fact that, despite this profound relationship, the world did not know him (ὁ κόσμος αὐτὸν οὐκ ἔγνω, v. 10c). The world (ὁ κόσμος) is not only the material universe; it is all that came into being through the Word, yet it does not know its origin.²⁰

The ignorance of the world is not simply an intellectual inability to recognize the Word. It is an active rejection of the Word. In v. 11 the narrator says that the Word came to his own (εἰς τὰ ἴδια ἦλθεν) yet his own people did not receive him (οἱ ἴδιοι αὐτὸν οὐ παρέλαβον). For John, “knowing” and “receiving” are verbs with closely related meaning, to know the Word also means to receive him.²¹ The failure to know the Word means the rejection of him by those who are his “own” (οἱ ἴδιοι). The narrator does not explicitly

¹⁹ Moloney (*Belief in the Word*, 36) agrees with Yu Ibuki (*Die Wahrheit im Johannesevangelium* [BBB 39; Bonn: Peter Hanstein, 1972] 186-87) that the Word, the true light, is “the uniquely authentic and perfect revelation of God.”

²⁰ The meaning of ὁ κόσμος in this verse as well as within the Fourth Gospel is often debated. See N. H. Cassem, “A Grammatical and Contextual Inventory of the Use of κόσμος in the Johannine Corpus with Some Implications for a Johannine Cosmic Theology,” *NTS* 19 (1972-73) 81-91. Moloney (*Belief in the Word*, 37) thinks that here John understands the world in three ways: the world as material reality, theological reality, and the power of evil.

²¹ Johannes P. Louw and Eugene A. Nida (*Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* [New York: United Bible Societies, 1989] 369, 372) place the verbs γινώσκω and λαμβάνω into the same semantic domain of “hold a view, believe, trust.”

identify τὰ ἴδια in v. 11. The audience may understand τὰ ἴδια as particularly referring to Israel, that belongs to Yahweh (Exod 19:5). But instead of confirming what the audience may have understood by τὰ ἴδια the narrator is more concerned to clarify the true meaning of οἱ ἴδιοι, namely, those who truly belong to God.

Employing the adversative δέ, the narrator contrasts the rejection in vv. 10-11 with the positive response from those who receive the Word in vv. 12-13. In v. 11 the narrator has employed οὐ παρέλαβον to express the rejection of the light. Similarly in v. 5 κατέλαβεν was used to describe the attempt to overcome the light. Here in v. 12, the narrator uses ἔλαβον, which is the root verb of these cognates (κατέλαβεν and παρέλαβον), to express the acceptance of the Word. “To those who received him” (ὅσοι δὲ ἔλαβον αὐτόν), “he gave the power to become children of God” (ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς ἐξουσίαν τέκνα θεοῦ γενέσθαι), namely, “to those who believe in his name” (τοῖς πιστεύουσιν εἰς τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ). Here the main verb (ἔδωκεν), which describes the action of the unexpressed main subject (τὸ φῶς, v. 9), is found in the second clause. The first and the third clause describe the active response on the part of a human being. Both clauses are parallel to each other. Those who receive the Word are those who believe in his name, and vice versa. Only to those who give positive response, by receiving and believing the Word, does the Word grant the privilege of becoming the children of God. Thus the audience learns that the status as “children of God” is not an exclusive prerogative of a certain group of people but of all who believe in the one who bears the divine name.²²

²² Köstenberger, *John*, 39; Ridderbos, *The Gospel according to John*, 46. Culpepper (“The Pivot of John’s Prologue”) suggests a chiasmic structure of the prologue and he regards v. 12b (“he gave them authority

Verse 13 explains further the identity of the children of God. The children of God are not those who are born of blood (ἐξ αἱμάτων), i.e., born from intermingling of a women's blood with the male seed. Nor are they born of the will of the flesh (ἐκ θελήματος σαρκός), i.e., born as the result of human desire. Nor are they born of the will of a man (ἐκ θελήματος ἀνδρός), i.e., born of a husband's (ἀνὴρ) desire to have a child like him.²³ Instead the children of God are those born of God (ἐκ θεοῦ ἐγεννήθησαν). The audience, familiar with the Scriptures, knows that God gave birth to his people Israel (Deut 32:18). Thus, on the one hand, the narrator confirms that being the children of God is a matter of divine sovereignty. On the other hand, he emphasizes the true meaning of being the children of God, those who truly belong to God. It has nothing to do with natural procreation or human desire. Rather, being children of God is a privilege given by the Father's only Son (v. 14) to those who receive and believe in the one who bears the divine name. Verses 12-13 therefore create a balance between human responsibility and divine sovereignty in being children of God.²⁴

In v. 14 the narrator returns to the expression ὁ λόγος that he mentioned in v. 1. Here he says that "the Word became flesh and pitched his tent among us" (ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο καὶ ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν, v. 14a). The Word, which was in the beginning with God and was God (v. 1), appeared in flesh at a certain time and space within human history (as

to become the children of God") as the pivot of the prologue. He concludes (ibid., 31) that "the designation τέκνα θεοῦ has emerged as a reflection of the community's self-understanding and a significant integrating theme for much of the Gospel of John."

²³ See Moloney, *Belief in the Word*, 40.

²⁴ Köstenberger, *John*, 38.

implied in the aorist ἐγένετο). The audience at this point of the narrative understands that the preexistent Logos has become the “enfleshed Logos,” the “incarnate Logos.”²⁵ This opens the possibility for human beings to see it and to testify to it because the Word has pitched his tent (ἐσκήνωσεν) among “us.”²⁶ The Word has become part of the audience’s own experience.

The narrator then continues that “we,” including the audience, “have seen his glory (τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ), the glory as of the Father’s only Son, full of grace and truth” (v. 14b). The narrator, while portraying the glory of the Word, shifts the emphasis to the audience’s own experience of the glory. The word δόξα alludes to כְּבוֹד which was often used to describe the manifestation of Yahweh to his people (Exod 33:22; Deut 5:21; 1 Kings 8:11; Isa 10:1). However, in saying that “we have seen the glory” (ἐθεασάμεθα τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ) John does not refer to past events but to the audience’s present experience of that glory, which is the glory as of the Father’s only Son, the incarnate Logos.

The audience has heard in vv. 12-13 that those who believe in the one who bears the divine name are granted the status of *children* of God. Here in v. 14 they are told that the giver of the privilege is the only *Son* of the Father (μονογενοῦς παρὰ πατρός). The audience thus learns that the status as children of God, which is granted to those who believe, has its

²⁵ Brown (*The Gospel according to John*, 1. 32) explains that “the Word made flesh” in v. 14 means that “in becoming flesh the Word does not cease to be the Word, but exercises its function as Word to the full.” On the significance of “flesh” in John, see Marianne Meye Thompson, *The Humanity of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988) 39-49.

²⁶ Michaels (*The Gospel of John*, 78) thinks that the point of the metaphor “pitching a tent” is not that the presence of the Logos on earth is temporary as Käsemann (*The Testament of Jesus*, 10) suggests, but that the world is not the proper home of the Logos who is God (v. 1).

basis in the unique Father-Son relationship of the Word and God.²⁷ It is not a surprise therefore for the audience to hear that the quality “full of grace and truth” (πλήρης χάριτος καὶ ἀληθείας), which in the OT is used to describe God’s covenant faithfulness to his people (Exod 34:6), becomes the attribute of the Son as well.

(3) Verses 15-18

In v. 15 the narrator brings John the Witness back into the narrative. The audience has heard about John’s role to testify to the light (vv. 6-8). Here the narrator specifies the content of John’s witness to the superiority of the Word: “the one who is coming after me ranks ahead of me” (ὁ ὀπίσω μου ἐρχόμενος ἔμπροσθέν μου γέγονεν).²⁸ The narrator still postpones mentioning the name of the one who is superior to John. But the emphatic οὗτος in the phrase οὗτος ἦν ὃν εἶπον (“this was the man of whom I said”), implies that John the Witness points to “this man” who is a historical figure whom the audience knows.

John’s words of testimony are followed by three ὅτι clauses that support his statement concerning the superiority of “this man.” The first clause, which is the voice of John, alludes to the preexistence of the Word that the audience has heard in vv. 1-2. This man, who is the incarnate Logos, is superior to John “because he existed before me” (ὅτι

²⁷ John distinguishes the children (τέκνα) of God and the unique sonship of the Son (υἱός) of God. See Ridderbos, *The Gospel according to John*, 46.

²⁸ Luke describes John the Baptist as older than Jesus (Luke 1:24, 26) and began his ministry before Jesus did (Luke 3:1-20). See Köstenberger, *John*, 45.

πρῶτός μου ἦν). The imperfect ἦν, which has been employed to refer to the Word (vv. 1-2, 9-10), helps the audience to recall the preexistence of “this man.”²⁹

The second ὅτι clause (v. 16), which is the voice of the narrator, appeals to the audience’s experience, as in vv. 12 and 14. The audience, which has seen the glory of the only Son who is full (πλήρης) of grace and truth (χάριτος καὶ ἀληθείας, v. 14), has received from his fullness (πληρώματος) grace upon grace (χάριν ἀντὶ χάριτος). John indicates that the audience has received (ἔλαβον) the light (v. 12); therefore “we (including the audience) received” (ἐλάβομεν) grace upon grace. Although the subject of the clause is “we” who receive, the emphasis is on the superiority of the one who gives, as clarified in the third clause.

The third ὅτι clause (v. 17) explains the previous clause (v. 16) by emphasizing the superiority of “the man” over Moses, “because while the law was given through Moses, grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.” For the narrator, this is the right time to identify the man, the incarnate Word, the one who was before John: he is Jesus Christ. The audience knows that the Law, which the narrator refers to as the former gift, was given (passive form ἐδόθη) through Moses. It is God who is the giver. However, the later gift, grace and truth, are given not only from his fullness (v. 16) but came into being (middle form ἐγένετο) “through Jesus Christ,” just as all things came into being (ἐγένετο) “through him” (vv. 3, 10).³⁰ By identifying the Word as Jesus Christ, the narrator indicates that everything that

²⁹ Moloney, *Belief in God*, 45-46.

³⁰ Michael, *The Gospel of John*, 90-91.

has been said about the Word is applied to Jesus, a historical figure that he presupposes is known to the audience. The audience is thus ready to hear more about Jesus who is not only greater than John the Witness but Moses as well.

The narrator concludes the prologue by declaring that no one has ever seen God (Θεὸν οὐδεὶς ἑώρακεν πώποτε). The emphasis here is on God, which comes first in the clause, although God is not the subject. The clause literally means “God has never been visible to anyone.”³¹ Once again the narrator alludes to the audience’s knowledge of the Scriptures that no one shall see God and live (Exod 33:32). This is to prepare for the last statement of the prologue about the exception to the scriptural principle. “The only Son, God, who is at the Father’s side, has revealed him.”³² The audience has heard that the Word was God (v. 1), and here the narrator confirms that the only Son (μονογενής) himself is God. He is right beside (κόλπον, literally means “bosom”) the Father. He is the one (emphatic ἐκεῖνος) who has seen God and can speak about God. Thus, the concluding words of the prologue, like the opening verse (v. 1), emphasize the divine nature of Jesus in relationship with God. At the same time, they prepare the audience to learn, in the narrative that follows, how Jesus reveals God.

³¹ This paraphrase is suggested by Michael (ibid., 91) in order to show the emphasis on God.

³² I agree with some of the earlier witnesses (ⱼ⁷⁶, Ɀ*, B, C*, L) that read μονογενής θεός rather than μονογενής υἱός (A, C³, Q, Y). It is also the more difficult reading. See Bruce M. Metzger, *Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (2nd ed.; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1994) 169-70.

1.2. The Movement from Christology to Discipleship

The narrative reading of the prologue clarifies the literary as well as the theological significance of the opening passage of John. Literarily, the prologue introduces the main character of the Johannine narrative, namely, the Word who is identified as Jesus Christ. It introduces John the Witness as a protagonist whose role is to witness to the coming of the Word. In the narrative John's witness to Jesus opens Jesus' public ministry (1:29-36). The prologue also sets the plot of the Johannine story of Jesus by portraying the responses, both negative and positive, to the coming of the Word. The Johannine narrative depicts Jesus' public ministry, which is marked by both rejection and acceptance.³³ Theologically, throughout the prologue John argues for the divinity of the Word, which will be developed in the narrative.³⁴ The prologue therefore is a theology of the Word. Yet by identifying ὁ λόγος as Jesus Christ, John shows that "the theology of the Word becomes the theology of Jesus Christ,"³⁵ a Christology.

³³ Brown (*The Gospel according to John*, 1. 19) regards John 1:11-12 as the summary of the two main sections of the Johannine narrative. "Verse 11 covers the Book of Signs (chaps. 1-12), which tells how Jesus came to his own land through a ministry in Galilee and Jerusalem and yet his own people did not receive him. Verse 12 covers the Book of Glory (chaps. 13-20), which contains Jesus' words to those who did receive him and tells how he returned to his Father in order to give them the gift of life and make them God's children." Culpepper (*Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel*, 87) agrees that the prologue not only introduces Jesus as the divine Logos but also provides clues to the Gospel's plot, particularly in vv. 11-12.

³⁴ For the thematic connections between the prologue with the rest of the Gospel, see the table provided by Carson, *The Gospel according to John*, 111. However, there are also theological concepts and terms in the prologue that have no echo in the Gospel. Scholars generally think that this is so because the prologue was originally an independent poem. Taking into account the thematic connections and the difference between the prologue and the rest of the Gospel, Brown (*The Gospel according to John*, 1. 19-20) posits that the prologue was composed within the Johannine circles.

³⁵ Moloney, *Belief in the Word*, 52.

However, being a christological passage, the purpose of the prologue is not to explain the abstract concept of the Logos as found in Greek philosophy. Nor does John show any interest in metaphysical speculation about the relationship within God as debated in Trinitarian theology.³⁶ In other words, John does not argue for Jesus' divinity for its own sake. Rather he emphasizes the divine identity of Jesus in relationship to the human response to his coming. The presence of the divine Logos in the world naturally provokes the world's response, rejection, and acceptance. In the prologue the narrator draws the audience into the narrative by appealing to the audience's experience of the Word in order to prepare them to give their response to the incarnate Word by believing, so that they may have eternal life (20:31). If the Gospel's testimony of the divine identity of Jesus is Christology and the message concerning the acceptance of Jesus in faith is called discipleship, then the movement from Christology to discipleship is apparent and can be traced in the opening passage of John:

First, in the first section of the narrative (vv. 1-5) John opens the prologue by depicting the existence of the Word with God in the time 'before time.' John retraces the story of Jesus to its origin to indicate Jesus' divinity (vv. 1-2). Next John underlines the divine character of the Word as God's one and only agent of creation (v. 3a). Then John clarifies the role of the Word in relationship to creation as source of life and light that is shining in the darkness (vv. 3b-5a). The force of the perfect tense *γέγονεν* (v. 3b) and the present tense *φαίνει* (v. 5a), as we have seen, reminds the audience of the actuality of the

³⁶ Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1. 23.

Word among the people, thus also among the audience. The inability of the power of darkness to overcome the light (v. 5b) confirms the superiority of the Word. By ensuring that the light prevails over the darkness, John prepares the audience to dissociate themselves from the power of darkness (cf. 8:12; 12:25, 46). Thus, although the opening section of the prologue is clearly focused on Christology, John, using the force of the verb tenses, brings the audience into the narrative and prepares the ground on which he will call the audience to give a positive response to Jesus, who is the source of life and light.

Second, the christological message concerning the divinity of the Word remains John's main concern in the second section of the prologue (vv. 6-14). However, this section also clarifies the purpose of the testimony about the true identity of Jesus. The narrator does it by shifting the attention from the light (Jesus) to the witness to the light (John the Witness), and to the recipient of the light (the believers). The focus on the light at the end of the first section (vv. 4-5) shifts to a new character identified as John, who is sent from God (v. 6). His role is described in a *ἵνα* clause as "in order to testify to the light." Here Jesus' divinity is explained in relation to John. However, the author's intention is not merely to prove Jesus' superiority over John. Otherwise the argument would suffice without the second *ἵνα* clause which describes the purpose of John's testimony. It is enough to say that "He came for testimony, in order to testify to the light. He was not the light" In inserting the second *ἵνα* clause "so that all might believe through him," the narrator spells out the goal of the testimony about Jesus, not only of John the Witness but also of John, the implied author of the Fourth Gospel. Believing in Jesus is what John wants to be the audience's response to the testimony about the divinity of Jesus (20:31). Just as all things (*πάντα*) came into being

through him (v. 3), the goal of the testimony is that all (πάντες) might believe.³⁷ Thus the narrator shifts the attention to John the Witness not only to underline the superiority of Jesus but also to introduce to the audience, for the first time, the verb “to believe” (πιστεύω), which is the goal of the witness about Jesus. Here we find that the Johannine message concerning the acceptance of Jesus in faith (discipleship) flows from the Gospel’s christological teaching. The witness about the true identity of Jesus leads to faith, which is the correct response of all who receive the light.

Third, in vv. 9-10 the narrator shifts the attention back to Jesus, who is portrayed as “the true light.” He underlines that the Word, the authentic and perfect revelation of God, is in the world and the world came into being through him. As we have seen, this christological insertion is purposeful. It prepares for the ironic rejection of Jesus by those who are his own (v. 11). The parallel between v. 4a (πάντα δι’ αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο) and v. 10b (ὁ κόσμος δι’ αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο) is striking. The narrator reminds the audience that the world that does not know the Word is the world that was created through him. It is reasonable therefore to think that John begins the prologue with an allusion to creation in order to prepare the ground for the ironic rejection of Jesus.³⁸ Yet rejection is not the only response that is given to Jesus. There is also a positive response to the light as clarified in vv. 12-13. Here John shifts the attention from the giver to the recipient of the light by framing the main

³⁷ The object of belief is not mentioned, but the audience can understand that it is the light. The inclusive πάντα is also significant. In 12:32 Jesus promises that “when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all (πάντας) to myself.” See Michaels, *The Gospel of John*, 60.

³⁸ Michaels (ibid., 65) writes, “It is natural to ask if perhaps the reason—or at least one reason—for beginning with creation in the first place was to lay the basis for this supreme irony in the story of Jesus.”

clause concerning Jesus (ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς ἐξουσίαν τέκνα θεοῦ γενέσθαι, “he gave the power to become children of God”) with two relative clauses concerning the believers (ὅσοι δὲ ἔλαβον αὐτόν “those who received him” and τοῖς πιστεύουσιν εἰς τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ “those who believed in his name”). This structure hints that believing, which is paralleled to *receiving* the light, is directly related to the *giving* of the power to become the children of God. The former is the act of the believers, the latter is the act of Jesus. The receivers are the *children* of God, the giver is the only *Son* of the Father (vv. 14, 18).³⁹ Thus, by framing the main clause concerning Jesus with relative clauses concerning the believers John hints at the profound relationship of both. What is expected from the believers relates to what Jesus is capable of giving.

Fourth, in v. 15 the narrator brings in John the Witness for the second time into the prologue. Here the superiority of Jesus over John is explained not only in terms of the preexistence of the Logos but also in terms of the audience’s experience of his fullness of grace. The narrator first alludes to the audience’s experience of receiving the fullness of grace (v. 16), and then he explains the giving of the grace and truth that came into being through Jesus Christ (v. 17). In the narrative order, the description concerning those who receive the gift precedes the account about the source of the gift. However, the force of the conjunction ὅτι in v. 17, with its primary function to explain the superior gift through Jesus over that given through Moses, also helps to maintain the christological basis for the identity

³⁹ Ibid., 68-69.

of the believers. For John the reason why the believers receive grace upon grace lies not in Moses but in Jesus.

Fifth, the prologue ends in v. 18 with a christological statement about the unique relationship between Jesus and the Father. Jesus is the only Son, God, who is in the “bosom” of the Father and therefore the only one who can reveal God. This clarifies that the privilege to become children of God (v. 12), which involves seeing the glory as of the only Son (v. 14), benefits from the unique relationship between Jesus and the Father. The Johannine usage of the word “κόλπος” hints that the relationship between Jesus and believers follows the pattern of Jesus’ unique Father-Son relationship with God.⁴⁰ Just as Jesus is forever at the “bosom” of the Father (v. 18), so believers are to be always with Jesus (12:26; 14:3; 17:24), as represented by the Beloved Disciple who is at the “bosom” of Jesus (13:23). Thus the Johannine portrait of Jesus’ true disciple—which we shall see includes all who believe—depends upon the Johannine understanding of Jesus’ identity.⁴¹

⁴⁰ Keener (*The Gospel of John*, 1. 369) notes that “John repeatedly emphasizes Jesus’ intimacy with the Father, sometimes in the language of him being with the Father (3:2; 8:29; cf. 8:38; 16:32) as Jesus also is with his disciples (cf. 11:4; 13:33; 14:9, 17, 25; 15:27; 16:4; 17:12).”

⁴¹ In the Fourth Gospel the concepts of disciples and discipleship in John shift from the intimate companions of Jesus to include all believers. Being a believer is synonymous with being a disciple. See Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1. 512; Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 3. 208.

2. Jesus' First Disciples (1:35-51)⁴²

John 1:35-51 depicts the beginning of Jesus' active ministry as well as the beginning of the disciples' journey with Jesus. This section of the narrative tells the story of the disciples' first encounter with Jesus and their following of him. The passage is therefore significant for an understanding of Johannine discipleship. As our narrative reading will show, it not only depicts the significant aspects of discipleship (following, remaining or abiding, testifying, believing, etc.), it also helps to clarify the christological character of Johannine discipleship. The presence of many christological titles, which John introduces as a motivating force for the disciples' coming to Jesus and following him, demonstrates the profound relationship between Christology and discipleship in the Fourth Gospel.

2.1. A Narrative Reading of John 1:35-51

John arranges the story of the disciples' following of Jesus by using τῇ ἐπαύριον ("the following day") in v. 35 and v. 43 as a marker for the sequence of events.⁴³ The events that take place on the τῇ ἐπαύριον in v. 35 involve two disciples of John and Simon Peter

⁴² Instead of using the widely known title "the call narrative," which is synoptic terminology, I use the title "Jesus first disciples" for this passage. In John, the disciples find Jesus and follow him. Philip is the only disciple who is "called" to follow Jesus.

⁴³ Prior to 1:35, 42, τῇ ἐπαύριον appears in 1:29. It means that the events in 1:19-51 occur in four consecutive days. John the Witness' testimony of himself takes place on day one (vv. 19-28). His witness of Jesus takes place of day two (vv. 29-34). The disciples' following of Jesus takes place on day three (vv. 35-41) and day four (vv. 42-51).

(vv. 35-42). The events on the τῇ ἐπαύριον in v. 43 involve Philip and Nathanael (vv. 43-51).⁴⁴ Thus, the entire passage can be divided into two sections:

(1) Verses 35-42

After recounting John's testimony on the previous days, the narrator relates the events that take place on "the following day" (τῇ ἐπαύριον, v. 35). On that particular day John the Witness "was there" (εἰστήκει)⁴⁵ with two new characters. They are introduced as "his disciples" (μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ). One of them is later identified as Andrew (v. 43); the other remains unnamed.⁴⁶ Whereas in 1:29 John saw Jesus "coming to him," here he sees Jesus "walking by" (περιπατοῦντι). Jesus is on the move for a purpose that is not identified.⁴⁷

In the presence of the two disciples, John points to Jesus saying, "Behold, the Lamb of God" (ἴδε ὁ ἀμνὸς τοῦ θεοῦ, v. 36). On the previous day John identified Jesus as "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (1:29). Here John simply repeats the title "the Lamb of God" to introduce Jesus to the two disciples. When the two disciples hear

⁴⁴ Brown (*The Gospel according to John*, 1. 84-85) sees the parallel between the call of the first two disciples (vv. 35-39) and the call of Philip (vv. 43-44) as well as between the call of Simon (vv. 40-42) and the call of Nathanael (vv. 45-50).

⁴⁵ The verb εἰστήκει means "was standing" but here the emphasis is not on standing but on being or existing. See BDAG, 482; Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1. 73.

⁴⁶ Scholars attempt to identify the unnamed disciple in 1:35. M.-É. Boismard (*Du Baptême à Cana (Jean 1:19-2:11)* [LD 18; Paris: Cerf, 1956] 72) suggests Philip, but Brown (*The Gospel according to John*, 1. 73-74) disagrees. Others think that the unnamed disciple is the Beloved Disciple. See the discussion in James H. Charlesworth, *The Beloved Disciple: Whose Witness Validates the Gospel of John?* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1995). However, Frans Neirynck ("The Anonymous Disciples in John 1," *ETL* 66 [1990] 5-37) argues that John makes no reference to the Beloved Disciple here.

⁴⁷ John uses the verb περιπατέω to describe Jesus' travels in his ministry (6:19; 6:66; 7:1; 10:23; 11:54). Jesus is not just wandering around but walks with a purpose. The verb of motion (περιπατοῦντι) also prepares for the movement of the disciples following him. See Michaels, *The Gospel of John*, 118.

John's pronouncement, they follow Jesus (v. 37). The movement of the two disciples away from John toward Jesus marks a change of the focus within the narrative. John, who has been on center stage up to this point of the narrative, fades away and Jesus takes the center stage. This confirms what the audience has learned about John. John's mission is to testify to Jesus, the true light (1:7-8), for the one who comes after him is superior to him (1:15, 30). In testifying about Jesus in the presence of his disciples, John fulfills his mission.

The two disciples respond to John's testimony by following Jesus. Yet it is Jesus who takes the initiative to turn around and asks them, "What are you looking for?" (τί ζητεῖτε; v. 38).⁴⁸ John's disciples, who followed Jesus on hearing their master introduce Jesus as the Lamb of God, addresses Jesus as "Rabbi." The narrator explains that the address means "teacher" (διδάσκαλος). This may indicate that some of the audience require the translation of the Hebrew word "Rabbi."⁴⁹ In any case, the comment clarifies the kind of relationship between the two disciples and Jesus. They were John's "disciples," but now they are following (ἀκολουθοῦντας, v. 38) Jesus as "teacher." Their question, "Where do you live?" exhibits the disciples' understanding of a Rabbi who does not "wander" but

⁴⁸ Jesus asks the same question to the soldiers who came to arrest him (18:4, 7) and to Mary Magdalene (20:15).

⁴⁹ Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 181; Lindars, *The Gospel of John*, 113. The editorial comments, such as translation of certain term, explanation of time or place, etc., are important features in the Fourth Gospel. They are known as "asides" or "parentheses." On the narrative asides in John, see M. C. Tenney, "The Footnotes of John's Gospel," *BSac* 117 (1960) 350-64; Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel*, 15-49; Gilbert van Belle, *Les Parenthèses dans l'Évangile de Jean* (Leuven: Peeters, 1985); C. W. Hedrick, "Authorial Presence and Narrator in John," in *Gospel Origins and Christian Beginnings* (Sonoma, CA: Polebridge, 1990) 75-93; Tom Thatcher, "A New Look at Asides in the Fourth Gospel," *BSac* 151 (1995) 428-39.

gathers and teaches students in a certain place.⁵⁰ The address and the question hint that they will act as disciples and followers of Jesus. Thus, their “following” is not only to be taken in the literal sense, “walking behind someone,” but also metaphorically as the first step to discipleship.⁵¹

Jesus responds to their question with an invitation and a promise, “Come and you shall see” (ἔρχεσθε καὶ ὄψεσθε, v. 39). The invitation poses a challenge to the disciples. The future tense of ὄψεσθε implies that the disciples can only find the answer to their question if they “come” to Jesus.⁵² Yet the narrator tells the audience that the two disciples of John not only come and see the place where Jesus is staying, they also stayed (ἔμειναν) with him that day. The two confirm their commitment as disciples of Jesus by staying or abiding with him.⁵³ The narrator notes that this happened about the tenth hour (about four p.m.).⁵⁴ The time may explain why the disciples stay with Jesus.⁵⁵

⁵⁰ Moloney (*Belief in the Word*, 68) argues that the question “Where do you live?” is a logical one, since a “Rabbi” does not wander but teaches in a certain place.

⁵¹ Schnackenburg (*The Gospel according to St. John*, 1. 308) asserts that the disciples’ act of “following” of Jesus is “the first step to the faith.”

⁵² In the Fourth Gospel the theme “coming to Jesus” (3:21; 5:40; 6:35, 37, 44, 45, 65) and “seeing Jesus” (6:40) are used to describe faith. See Chennattu, *Johannine Discipleship*, 31.

⁵³ “Staying” or “abiding” with Jesus is an important aspect of discipleship which is developed further in 15:1-17.

⁵⁴ This is to follow the Jewish time reckoning in which the daylight hours begin at 6 a.m. See Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1. 75. I would agree with Michaels (*The Gospel of John*, 121) that “while ‘tenth’ is not symbolic, ‘hour’ may very well be, for John will soon begin to speak of another decisive ‘hour’ (2:4).”

⁵⁵ Thatcher (“A New Look at Asides,” 434) classifies the authorial comment (aside) in 1:39 in column R (Reason). The narrator’s note concerning the time when the disciples encounter Jesus provides a reason or motive for the disciples to stay with Jesus on that day. It is too late to travel. See, Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1.470-71.

In v. 40 the narrator mentions that one of the two disciples who followed Jesus was Andrew. He is identified in relation to his brother Simon Peter. The audience presumably knows who Simon Peter is (cf. 6:8). “The first thing” (πρῶτον) that Andrew does after his encounter with Jesus is to find his brother Simon and testify “We have found the Messiah” (εὐρήκαμεν τὸν Μεσσίαν, v. 41). The two disciples address Jesus as “Rabbi” (teacher) and look for the place where Jesus stays. What they discover is not only the place where he lives but the knowledge of Jesus’ identity as “the Messiah,” which the narrator translates as “the Anointed” (χριστός).

The narrator does not describe how the disciples come to the knowledge that Jesus is the Messiah. Neither does he indicate whether Andrew’s testimony is an adequate faith to be a disciple of Jesus. The story line implies that Andrew’s testimony to Jesus’ identity as the Messiah becomes the motive for bringing his brother to Jesus—just as John’s witness to Jesus as the Lamb of God led the two disciples to follow Jesus. The audience, which has been told much more about the true identity of Jesus, recognizes that Jesus is not only the Messiah as the Jewish leaders expect John to be but the Son of God (1:19-20, 24-25). Yet, unlike the Jewish leaders, the disciples’ initial knowledge of Jesus will lead them to know the truth about Jesus because they “come,” “see,” and “stay” with him.

When Andrew brings his brother Simon to Jesus, Jesus looks at him and affirms, “You are Simon, son of John.” Jesus takes the initiative in his encounter with Simon not only by revealing his identity but by promising him a new name, “you will be called Kephas.” The narrator then adds that Κηφᾶς (Aramaic כִּפְיָ) is translated “Peter.” The

audience thus learns that the name Peter, with which they are familiar, is given by Jesus in his first encounter with Simon.

(2) *Verses 43-51*

The narrative continues with a series of events that happen on “the next day” (τῇ ἐπαύριον, v 43), after Jesus’ encounter with the two disciples of John and with Simon Peter. The event on that day begins with Jesus’ decision to go to Galilee (ἠθέλησεν ἐξελθεῖν εἰς τὴν Γαλιλαίαν). The subject of the verb ἠθέλησεν (“he decided”) is not clearly specified.⁵⁶ However, the context of the narrative helps the audience to understand that it is Jesus who made the decision. “Not only was Jesus speaking at the end of the preceding verse, but in the larger context Jesus was the leader and John’s disciples the followers.”⁵⁷ Having decided to go to Galilee, Jesus finds Philip and says to him “Follow me” (ἀκολούθει μοι, v. 43).⁵⁸ The direct invitation to Philip reminds the audience of two things: first, Jesus is on a journey and Philip is invited to join him; second, it is Jesus who takes the initiative in calling new disciples.⁵⁹ The narrator then explains that Philip is from Bethsaida, the town of

⁵⁶ The unspecified subject opens a few possibilities. Peter is the last mentioned, thus he can be the one who decided. Andrew can also be the subject. After finding his brother Simon, he decided to go to Galilee and found Philip (v. 43). However, as Brown (*The Gospel according to John*, 1. 81) points out, “In the present sequence Jesus is probably meant to be the subject.”

⁵⁷ Michaels, *The Gospel of John*, 125.

⁵⁸ The calling of Philip resembles the calling of disciples in the Synoptics. See Mark 2:14; Matt 9:9; Luke 5:27.

⁵⁹ Moloney (*Belief in the Word*, 68) underlines the primacy of Jesus as the one who seeks and finds disciples.

Andrew and Peter (v. 44).⁶⁰ This information helps the audience to understand the relationship between the two brothers with Philip within the Johannine narrative.⁶¹

The pattern of the events of the previous days is repeated. Just as Andrew found his brother Simon and told him “We have found (εὐρήκαμεν) the Messiah” (v. 41), so Philip finds Nathanael and tells him “We have found (εὐρήκαμεν) the one. . .” (v. 45). The audience may think that Philip is mistaken, because it was Jesus who found him and invited him to follow.⁶² But, that is not the point of the narrative. The repetition of Andrew’s words by Philip hints that, on the one hand, Philip, like Andrew and other disciples, followed Jesus because of some knowledge he possesses concerning Jesus’ identity. On the other hand, in saying that he found Jesus, Philip provides the motive for Nathanael to come to Jesus. Philip reveals his understanding of Jesus as “the one of whom Moses wrote in the law, and also the prophets.” In other words, he found the one who is the fulfillment of Scripture.⁶³ Philip then clarifies that he is speaking about “Jesus, son of Joseph, from Nazareth.” Philip testifies to Nathanael about Jesus’ human identity, which is true but not the whole truth about Jesus.⁶⁴ Jesus, after all, is the Son of God. Nonetheless, Philip’s

⁶⁰ That the home town of Andrew and Peter is Bethsaida does not agree with Mark 1:21, 29, which indicate that the two brothers are from Capernaum. See Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1. 82.

⁶¹ That they came from the same town helps to explain why Andrew and Philip often appear together in the Fourth Gospel. Andrew never appears without Philip (6:5-9; 12:21-23), and Philip appears only once without Andrew (14:8-10).

⁶² Moloney, *Belief in the Word*, 70.

⁶³ The Law written by Moses refers to the Torah. John 5:39 says that the Scriptures testify on Jesus’ behalf. John 5:46 says that Moses wrote about him (Jesus). See Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1. 86.

⁶⁴ Barrett (*The Gospel according to St. John*, 184) thinks that John uses irony here to emphasize the ignorance of the characters concerning the truth about Jesus.

testimony about Jesus' human origin confirms what the audience learned from the prologue about Jesus. As "the Word made flesh" (1:14) Jesus is the son of Joseph, from Nazareth.

Hearing that the one who fulfills the Scripture is from Nazareth, Nathanael poses a rhetorical question, "Can anything good come from Nazareth?" (v. 46).⁶⁵ This question implies that as far as Nathanael is concerned, Scripture says nothing about Nazareth, a Galilean town, as the place from where the one who fulfills the Law and the prophets comes. Despite Nathanael's skepticism, Philip encourages him to "come and behold" (ἔρχου καὶ ἴδε) Jesus. Philip's words echo the invitation of Jesus to the two disciples of John in v. 39: "Come and you shall see" (ἔρχεσθε καὶ ὄψεσθε). Nathanael, like the two disciples, comes to Jesus. For the audience, who knows the truth about Jesus' identity more than the characters in the narrative do, the rhetorical question posed by Nathanael and his willingness to come and see Jesus are encouraging. Nathanael's question points toward the truth. Nazareth cannot be the true origin of Jesus. Furthermore, by coming and seeing Jesus, the true light, the possibility is open for Nathanael to know more about Jesus' true identity.

The similarity with the events on the previous day continues. Just as John sees Jesus walk by and says, "Behold the lamb of God" (ἴδε ὁ ἀμνὸς τοῦ θεοῦ, v. 36), Jesus sees Nathanael coming to him and says, "Behold a true Israelite" (ἴδε ἀληθῶς Ἰσραηλῖτης, v. 47). The audience may conclude that "because of Nathanael's willingness to come to the light,

⁶⁵ Barrett (ibid.) suggests that Nathanael's rhetorical question indicates a rivalry between two neighboring towns Nazareth and Cana from where Nathanael comes. Brown (*The Gospel according to John*, 1. 83) thinks that it is probably a local proverb that reflects the rivalry.

Jesus hails him as one truly representative of Israel.”⁶⁶ Nathanael represents Israel, to whom Jesus is to be revealed (cf. 1:31). The notion of genuineness, which is introduced by the adverb ἀληθῶς, is reinforced by the negative explanation, “in whom there is no deceit” (ὃ δόλος οὐκ ἔστιν).⁶⁷ The narrator gives no explanation why Jesus makes such a statement concerning Nathanael. But, at least in the dialogue between Nathanael and Jesus, that follows this statement, the audience finds Nathanael to be someone who is open to receive the revelation of Jesus, about whom Moses and the prophets wrote. His straightforwardness in confronting Jesus leads to the pronouncement of a deeper truth about Jesus’ identity.

Nathanael’s response to Jesus, “How do you know me?” (v. 48) implies that he agrees with Jesus’ statement that he is a true Israelite. This confirms Jesus’ view of Nathanael’s character as a man without deceit. “A more guileful man would have ‘modestly’ asserted his unworthiness.”⁶⁸ Nathanael is stunned by Jesus’ knowledge of him and asks for the source of the knowledge. Jesus answers that “before Philip called you, I saw you under the fig tree.” Instead of answering how he knows Nathanael’s character, Jesus stuns Nathanael by telling him details about his immediate past. Jesus wants to make the point that he had already found Nathanael before Philip called him. The omniscient narrator does

⁶⁶ Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1. 86.

⁶⁷ Some scholars think that the phrase “there is no deceit” alludes to Jacob, the one who bears the name Israel, who acts deceitfully to receive the blessing from his father Isaac (Gen 32:28). Others refer to the Suffering Servant, in whose mouth there is no guile (Isa 53:9). Still others think that it refers to those who are faithful to Yhwh and serve no other god. See Boismard, *Du Baptême à Cana*, 96-103; Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1.87. The text, however, does not clarify why Jesus makes this statement.

⁶⁸ Morris, *The Gospel according to John*, 145-46. See also Michaels, *The Gospel of John*, 130.

not disclose what had happened to Nathanael or what he had done under the fig tree.⁶⁹ No matter what may have happened, Nathanael is impressed by Jesus' knowledge of him. It leads Nathanael to affirm Jesus' identity.⁷⁰

Nathanael declares, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God. You are the King of Israel" (v. 49). By calling Jesus "Rabbi," Nathanael, like the two disciples of John (v. 38), regards Jesus as a teacher.⁷¹ Nathanael heard from Philip that Jesus is "son of Joseph, from Nazareth." Now he identifies Jesus as "the Son of God" and "the King of Israel." Here Nathanael, an Israelite, speaks from his religious context. He affirms that Jesus, who is the fulfillment of the Scripture, is the Israel's anointed king, who is said to be God's son (Pss 2:7; 89:20-27; 2 Sam 7:13-14). Thus, for Nathanael, the title "King of Israel" defines what "Son of God" means.⁷² For the audience, however, it is the other way around. The audience knows that Jesus is the Father's only Son, who reveals God (1:14, 18). They know that Jesus' sonship has its basis in his preexistence and his unique relationship with God. The title "the Son of God" therefore has a more profound meaning for the audience within this context of narrative than Nathanael understands from his religious context. The audience hears the title "the King of Israel" for the first time here. Later, in the dialogue between

⁶⁹ There are many theories about what Nathanael was doing under the fig tree and about the significance of the fig tree. See the discussion by Brown (*The Gospel according to John*, 1. 83). Yet, as Brown (ibid.) admits, all the possible answers are "pure speculation."

⁷⁰ For the similar cases where Jesus' knowledge leads to some kind of confession of faith, see 4:16-20; 6:70; 9:3; 11:4, 11; 13:10-11, 38.

⁷¹ In the Fourth Gospel the title "Rabbi" is only used by the disciples and Nicodemus to address Jesus (1:38, 49; 3:2,26; 4:31; 6:25; 9:2; 11:8).

⁷² See, Michaels, *The Gospel of John*, 132.

Jesus and Pilate, the audience will learn that Jesus' kingship is not from this world (18:36) and that he is a king insofar as he testifies to the truth (18:37). Jesus' kingship therefore is defined by his identity as the Son who reveals the truth that comes from God (8:40). Jesus will soon clarify for Nathanael and the other disciples the primacy of his identity as the one who reveals the Father.

Jesus' response to Nathanael, "Because I said to you, I saw you under the fig tree, you believe (πιστεύεις)" (v. 50), can be taken as a question or affirmation.⁷³ In either case, Jesus' words are not skeptical but promising. It is here, for the first time in the narrative, that the audience hears an individual character is said to "believe" in Jesus.⁷⁴ The phrase "You will see greater things" (μείζω τούτων ὄψῃ) confirms that Jesus does not doubt Nathanael's faith. Instead, his initial faith becomes the occasion for Jesus to promise that Nathanael will see greater things.

Jesus then says to him (αὐτῷ), "Amen, amen, I say to you (ὕμῃν), you will see (ὄψεσθε) heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man" (v. 51). The third person singular αὐτῷ (to him) indicates that Jesus' statement is a follow up to the dialogue with Nathanael. However, by using the second person plural ὕμῃν (to you) and ὄψεσθε (you will see) the Johannine Jesus not only speaks to Nathanael as an individual but to the other disciples who are on the scene and to all who believe. What is true for Nathanael is true for the other disciples and all believers, including the audience.

⁷³ Edwin A. Abbot (*Johannine Grammar* [London: A. and C. Black, 1906] 196) favors the affirmative in this verse.

⁷⁴ John portrays Nathanael as a disciple who believes in Jesus even before witnessing the signs (2:11). Yet, he plays no role further in the narrative. He only reappears briefly in 21:2.

The audience may relate the content of Jesus' promise to the story of Jacob in Gen 28:12, but here the angels do not ascend and descend upon the ladder as they do in the Jacob story but upon the Son of Man.⁷⁵ This means that Jesus is the connection or "the point of contact between heaven and earth."⁷⁶ It is through Jesus that God (and the heavenly reality) is revealed to the disciples and all who believe. Jesus is above all the Son of Man, the Revealer of the Father.

2.2. The Movement from Christology to Discipleship

The narrative about Jesus' first followers is rich in Christology. Thus, some scholars regard the passage as a "narrative Christology."⁷⁷ The passage contains many christological titles: Lamb of God, Messiah, the one of whom Moses in the Law and also the prophets wrote, Son of God, King of Israel, and Son of Man. Yet, inasmuch as the narrative is concerned, these titles come from the mouth of various characters without much information on how these characters arrive at this knowledge. One could accuse John of simply piling up, as many titles as possible, that are applicable to Jesus. Some scholars suggest that the titles express the community's faith or reflect the disciples' understanding of Jesus after the resurrection.⁷⁸ Others suggest that the Johannine usage of the titles indicates a gradual

⁷⁵ On the Johannine usage of the Son of Man, see Mary M. Pazdan, *The Son of Man: A Metaphor for Jesus in the Fourth Gospel* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1991); J. Harold Ellens, *The Son of Man in the Gospel of John* (NTM 28; Phoenix: Sheffield, 2010).

⁷⁶ Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1. 91.

⁷⁷ Stibbe (*John*, 37) notes that John 1:35-51 is an example of "narrative Christology," namely, "christological belief expressed through the medium of story."

⁷⁸ Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1. 91.

deepening of the disciples' understanding of Jesus: as a human figure, as the Messiah, and finally as the Revealer of God.⁷⁹

While some progression in the understanding of Jesus' identity can be seen within this passage, the narrative flow of the passage suggests that the use of these titles is much more in order to explain why the disciples come to Jesus and believe in him rather than *why* Jesus is called "Rabbi," "Messiah," or "Son of God." The narrative pays particular attention to how the disciples, based on their understanding of Jesus' identity, come to him, stay with him, follow him, testify about him, and believe in him. In other words, the christological titles serve as the basis of the call for discipleship.⁸⁰ Thus, the narrative about Jesus' first followers, in which the term μαθητής⁸¹ appears for the first time in John (vv. 35, 37), is not only a "narrative Christology," it is also a narrative concerning discipleship.⁸² That John places within this richly christological passage the story about the calling of the disciples indicates the profound relationship between Christology and discipleship. The dynamic of the relationship is therefore apparent in this passage:

⁷⁹ Koester, *Symbolism in the Fourth Gospel*, 39-41. Brown (*The Gospel according to John*, 1. 78) thinks that this passage is "a synopsis of the gradual increase of understanding that took place throughout the ministry of Jesus and after the resurrection."

⁸⁰ Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 180.

⁸¹ The word μαθητής is a very important term in the Fourth Gospel. It appears in John seventy-eight times, more than in the Gospel of Matthew (seventy-two times) which is often considered as the Gospel that presents Jesus as a teacher and legislator. See Hellen Mardaga, "Note sur la triple mention des disciples en Jn 18, 1-2," *FNT* 31-32 (2003) 125-26.

⁸² Brown (*The Gospel according to John*, 1. 78) regards the narrative about Jesus' first disciples as "a summary of discipleship in its whole development."

First, the coming of the two disciples of John to Jesus begins with John's testimony of Jesus as "the Lamb of God" (v. 36). Although John leaves out the crucial interpretative part of the title, "who takes away the sin of the world" (v. 29), this does not mean that the disciples follow Jesus based on rash judgment. The exclusion does not aim to emphasize the disciples' insufficient knowledge of Jesus when they first follow him, as some would argue.⁸³ The exclusion simply indicates the narrator has no concern to clarify in this scene what might be the "work" of "the Lamb of God." In any case, the audience already knows the salvific task of Jesus because they have heard John's testimony in 1:29. Here the title "the Lamb of God" is employed to provide the reason for the two disciples of John to follow Jesus. The emphatic position of the verb ἤκουσαν in v. 37 indicates that the two disciples follow Jesus on hearing what John says (λαλοῦντος) about Jesus' identity. The disciples' knowledge of Jesus' identity—even though only partially—becomes the motive for their act of discipleship: following Jesus.

Second, Jesus takes the initiative in the encounter with the disciples: first he asks them "What are you looking for?" (v. 38), then he invites them to "come and behold" (v. 39). John has not yet described Jesus' teaching, yet the disciples immediately address Jesus as "Rabbi" and so hints that they are open to a new teacher-disciple relationship with him. Once they regard Jesus as "teacher," they move from being disciples of John to being disciples of Jesus. Their commitment to be disciples is confirmed in their coming and abiding with Jesus. The mention of a particular time, "It was about four o'clock (literally,

⁸³ J. D. Staley, *The Print's First Kiss: A Rhetorical Investigation of the Implied Reader in the Fourth Gospel* (Atlanta: Scholars, 1988) 80.

the tenth hour),” (v. 39) when the event takes place, may explain why the disciples stay with Jesus on that day. It was too late. At the same time, John probably specifies the hour in order to underline the importance of the event that is taking place.⁸⁴ Here, John emphasizes the significance of the act of discipleship, “coming and abiding” with Jesus. Later, John speaks about Jesus’ “hour,” which is the hour of glorification: the hour when Jesus fulfills his salvific act as the Lamb in his death and resurrection. Here, it is the disciples’ “hour,” which is the decisive moment for them to be the followers of the Lamb.

Third, the coming of Simon Peter to Jesus begins with Andrew’s testimony about the identity of Jesus. Andrew tells his brother Simon, “We have found the Messiah” (v. 41). The narrator does not recount how Andrew comes to this knowledge. Instead he narrates that Andrew brought Simon to Jesus after telling him that we have found the Messiah. The narrative flow therefore suggests that Jesus’ identity as the Messiah becomes the motive for Andrew to bring his brother Simon to Jesus—just as John the Witness’s testimony of Jesus as the Lamb of God becomes the motive for the two disciples to follow Jesus. Thus, in the case of Simon Peter, as in the case of the first two disciples, John employs the christological title “the Messiah” as the motivating force that leads Peter to Jesus.

Fourth, the call of Philip is similar to the typical pattern of the call narratives in the Synoptics, in which Jesus directly calls his disciples (Mark 1:16-20; Matt 4:18-22; Luke 5:8-11, 27-28). Philip does not come to Jesus on hearing anyone’s testimony about Jesus. The

⁸⁴ Whenever John specifies the time when an event takes place, the event always involves an encounter with Jesus that leads to faith. In 1:39, it involves two disciples who come and stay with Jesus. In 4:6, it involves the Samaritan woman who, after having a conversation with Jesus, believes in him. In 5:52-53, it involves the royal official who believes after Jesus heals his son. Apart from these passages, John employs the word “hour” in relation to Jesus’ hour.

christological title, which becomes the motive for the first two disciples to follow Jesus and for Peter to come to Jesus, is absent in the call of Philip. Yet, the narrator immediately confirms Philip's knowledge of the Jesus' identity. Employing the same pattern of event and the repetition of words used previously by other characters, John hints that Philip follows Jesus when he learns who Jesus is. Just as Andrew found his brother Simon and told him "We have found (εὕρηκαμεν) the Messiah" (v. 41), so Philip finds Nathanael and testifies to him, "We have found (εὕρηκαμεν) the one of whom Moses wrote in the Law, and also the prophets, Jesus, son of Joseph, from Nazareth" (v. 45)—although it is Jesus who finds him. In telling Nathanael that "we" have found Jesus, Philip is not lying since this confirms that for John, the disciples follow Jesus on the basis of the knowledge they possess concerning Jesus. Philip follows Jesus because he has discovered who Jesus is.

Fifth, Philip's testimony about Jesus at first triggers Nathanael's skepticism. Philip, repeating the words of Jesus to the first two disciples (v. 39), invites Nathanael to "come and behold" Jesus (v. 46). When he saw Nathanael, Jesus, echoing the words of John the Witness "behold (ἴδε) the Lamb of God" (v. 36), says of Nathanael, "behold (ἴδε) a true Israelite" (v. 47). The words of Jesus are repeated by a disciple, and the way John testifies to Jesus echoes the way Jesus testifies to a disciple. This interchangeable usage of language indicates the profound relationship between Jesus and the disciples. Because of his willingness to come to Jesus, the "true (ἀληθινόν) light" (1:9), Nathanael is given the title "true (ἀληθῶς) Israelite." "The purity of the true disciple mirrors the purity of the Lamb

himself.”⁸⁵ Nathanael’s straightforwardness in encountering Jesus and his confession of faith leads to Jesus’ self-disclosure as the Son of Man, who is the Revealer of the Father.

Thus, John does not simply pile up christological titles in the narrative about Jesus’ first disciples. Rather he arranges them in a way that indicates the profound relationship between the christological understanding of Jesus and discipleship. The narrative shows that for John the knowledge of Jesus’ identity is the prime force that underlies the acts of discipleship: following, coming, remaining, abiding, testifying, and believing in Jesus.

3. The First Sign at Cana (2:1-11)

The narrative concerning the first followers of Jesus is immediately followed by the story of Jesus’ first sign at Cana which marks the beginning of the so-called “Cana cycle” (2:1–4:54). Whereas the narrative about Jesus’ first followers is marked by a series of christological titles, the story about Jesus’ first sign is often characterized by its symbolic overtones. Commentators have pointed out various symbolic meanings that can be derived from this passage. For instance, the timing of the event on the third day has been related to the resurrection;⁸⁶ the six jars used for the purification of the Jews is taken as a symbol of the inadequacy of the Law; the setting of a wedding symbolizes the eschatological banquet;

⁸⁵ Michaels, *The Gospel of John*, 129.

⁸⁶ See Dodd, *Interpretation*, 300.

the abundance and the superiority of the wine signal the abundance of the messianic age; wine and marriage are often seen as symbols of the Eucharist, etc.⁸⁷

Although these symbolic overtones are possible, John does not provide any explanation of the symbolic meaning of the sign.⁸⁸ Instead, as our narrative reading will confirm, the passage indicates that John's main concern is to clarify the significance of the sign and its impact on the part of the disciples. The sign functions as the revelation of Jesus' identity and it results in discipleship: believing in Jesus. The narrative concerning Jesus' first sign at Cana, as we shall see, confirms the christological character of Johannine discipleship: namely, discipleship is a response to, or a result of, the revelation of Jesus' identity.

3.1. A Narrative Reading of John 2:1-11

The narrative concerning the wedding at Cana begins with the narrator's introduction of the time, the place, the occasion, and the characters that are involved in the story (vv. 1-2). This is followed by the narrator's account of a series of episodes that take place during the wedding feast (vv. 3-10): a brief exchange between Jesus and his mother concerning the

⁸⁷ For the various possibilities of the symbolic meaning of this passage see Lindars, *The Gospel of John*, 123-25. Scholars attempt to explain the literary background of this passage. A few think that the author used a signs source. See Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 113-15; Fortna, *The Gospel of Signs*, 29-38. Others think that the author used a parable of Jesus to write the story. See Lindars, *The Gospel of John*, 127. Still others see the influence of the cult of the Greek wine god Dionysus in the story. See Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 120. However, the pursuit for the origins of this passage remains inconclusive.

⁸⁸ Schnackenburg (*The Gospel according to St. John*, 1.324) warns against the tendency to read into the text what is not the author's underlying thought. He notes that the narrative of Jesus' first sign is "so brief and sparing of words." There is no explanation of the symbolic meaning of the sign—as in the Bread of Life discourse (6:22-59) or in the discourse about the light of the word (8:12-19). He suggests that one has to "weigh the text exactly and try to note where the evangelist has placed special emphasis."

lack of wine (vv. 3-5), the setting of the scene that leads to the miraculous act—the presence of the six jars (v. 7), Jesus’ command to the servers to fill the jars and to bring the water from the jars to the headwaiter (vv. 8-9), and the reaction of the headwaiter when he tastes the water-turned-to-wine (v. 10). The narrator sums up the story by commenting on the significance of the event and its result (v. 11). The whole passage therefore can be divided into three sections:

(1) Verses 1-2

The narrator sets the stage by introducing the time, the place, the occasion, and the characters of the story. “On the third day there was a wedding in Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there” (v. 1). To this point in the narrative, the narrator has signaled the change of time by using the expression *τῇ ἐπαύριον*, (the following day; 1:29, 35, and 43). Here he says that a wedding (*γάμος*) takes place on “the third day” (*τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ τρίτῃ*). The expression *τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ τρίτῃ* in Greek is used to indicate “the day after tomorrow.”⁸⁹ The audience, therefore, understands that the wedding happens very soon after the day when Jesus decided to go to Galilee (1:43), the day when he calls Philip (1:43) and promises Nathanael that he will see greater things (1:50-51).⁹⁰

⁸⁹ Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 158.

⁹⁰ Some scholars attempt to connect the expression “the third day” with Jesus’ resurrection. However, throughout the Fourth Gospel John does not relate “the third day” to the resurrection. Meanwhile, some scholars count “the third day” with the successive days that John describes since chapter one (1:29, 35, 43). This brings the total of six days or seven days (for those who assign 1:40-42 to a separate day). These scholars associate the Johannine story with the Genesis story of creation. See Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 114; Carson, *The Gospel according to John*, 167. Moloney (*Belief in the Word*, 50-51) finds the relationship with the Jewish midrash *Mek. Exodus* which describes the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai “on the third day,” preceded by four days of preparation. Ridderbos (*The Gospel of John*, 103), however, thinks that “there is no

The narrator recounts that the wedding takes place in Cana, in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there.⁹¹ The introduction of a new character, Jesus' mother, "hints that she may have an important role to play in the narrative that follows."⁹² The narrator then adds that not only Jesus' mother but Jesus and his disciples were also there because they had been invited to the wedding (v. 2). The presence of Jesus and his mother at the wedding prepares for the brief exchange that will take place between them (vv. 3-5). Meanwhile, the presence of the disciples, whom the narrator refers to for the first time as "his disciples" (οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ), appears to be insignificant. The singular of ἐκλήθη suggests that it is Jesus who was invited to the wedding, and the disciples were there because of Jesus.⁹³ It becomes clear as the narrative unfolds that they have no active role in the episode. However, their presence is crucial because, in the end, the significance of the miraculous event has to do with how they respond to the event.

sufficient ground to ascribe to "the third day" any other meaning than that it serves to establish a direct historical and material connection between the story that follows and what has taken place two days earlier between Jesus and Nathanael." From the point of view of the implied audience, I agree with Schnackenburg (*The Gospel according to St. John*, 1. 325-26) who suggests that the primary meaning of the expression is that it brings out the nuance of proximity in time between Jesus' promise to Nathanael in 1:50-51 and its fulfillment.

⁹¹ In 21:2, Cana is said to be the town of Nathanael, who is one of Jesus' first disciples (1:45-51). In saying "Cana in Galilee," John seems to presuppose the presence of another Cana which is not in Galilee; probably the Cana in Lebanon mentioned in Josh 19:28. See Köstenberger, *John*, 92. It is possible that John mentions Galilee to indicate that Jesus now fulfills his plan to go to Galilee (1:43). Within the context of the Johannine narrative in which John presents Jesus' public ministry in an almost constant movement of back and forth between Judea and Galilee, John may have mentioned Galilee to underline the significance of Galilee—in opposition to Judea—as the place where Jesus performs the first sign.

⁹² Moloney, *The Gospel of John*, 66-67.

⁹³ The construction of a singular verb which is followed by a singular subject and a plural subject connected by a καὶ is found in the NT as well as in the classical Greek (BDF §135). If John has employed this construction, it is to underline the superiority and the initiative of Jesus. See Mardaga, "La triple mention," 125.

(2) Verses 3-10

The narrator then recounts the story at the wedding “with a remarkable economy of language.”⁹⁴ With only a few words, “when the wine ran short” (καὶ ὑστερήσαντος οἴνου, v. 3), the narrator describes the circumstances that lead to the miraculous event. The words of Jesus’ mother, “they have no wine” (οἶνον οὐκ ἔχουσιν), highlight the urgency of the situation. The words are addressed “to him” (πρὸς αὐτόν), namely, to Jesus. Jesus’ mother seems to point out the fact to Jesus without expecting him to do anything.

However, Jesus’ response to his mother, “Woman, how does your concern affect me?” (τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί, γύναι; v. 4) hints that he understands an unspoken request in his mother’s words.⁹⁵ The expression τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί conveys a sense of disengagement between Jesus and his mother.⁹⁶ Calling her, “woman,” he distances himself from her concern.⁹⁷ Jesus tells his mother that “my hour has not yet come” (οὐπω ἤκει ἡ ὥρα μου). The expression “my hour” (ἡ ὥρα μου) appears for the first time here. The audience will

⁹⁴ Michael, *The Gospel of John*, 143. See also Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 1. 324.

⁹⁵ The expression τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί appears in five other NT texts. All are found in the stories related to demonic possession: in Mark 5:7 and Luke 8:28 (τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί), and in Mark 1:24, Matt 8:29, and Luke 4:34 (τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί). In all these instances the expression carries the meaning of disengagement.

⁹⁶ Some scholars think that the expression could be read as a disengagement of both Jesus and his mother from the troubles of the wedding. Thus, they translate the expression to mean “What is that to me or to you?” In other words, “It is not our concern.” See, e.g., Michael, *The Gospel of John*, 143-44. However, as Brown (*The Gospel according to John*, 1. 99) notes, Jesus denies only his own involvement here.

⁹⁷ Schnackenburg (*The Gospel according to St. John*, 1.328) notes that “the word ‘woman’ is certainly not a disrespectful form of address, but when used towards one’s mother, at least among the Semitic peoples, it is unusual and astonishing.” John uses the expression on three other occasions: in addressing the Samaritan woman (4:21), the mother of Jesus at the crucifixion scene (19:27), and Mary Magdalene after the resurrection (20:17).

learn that the “hour” points to the time of Jesus return to the Father, the time for Jesus to be glorified in his death and resurrection (7:30; 8:20; 12:23, 27; 13:1; 16:31; 17:1). In saying “my hour has not yet come,” Jesus shows that he is in full control of the coming of the “hour.” His mother’s concern does not affect him. However, the narrator tells the audience that Jesus’ mother responds to his words by turning to the servers and telling them, “Do whatever he tells you” (ὅ τι ἂν λέγῃ ὑμῖν ποιήσατε, v. 5). This indicates that she interprets Jesus’ words as a positive signal that Jesus will take action. In having the mother of Jesus tell the servers to do what Jesus tells them, the narrator enables the story to move forward.

The narrator then establishes the setting for Jesus to act. He tells the audience about the presence of six water jars there in the scene (v. 6).⁹⁸ The phrase “for the purification rituals of the Jews” explains why the jars are there (ἐκεῖ). The audience understands that the jars contain water used for ritual washing. The audience is told as well that each jar holds two or three measures (about twenty to thirty gallons). The information about the capacity of each jar highlights the abundance of water that each one can hold.⁹⁹ Jesus tells the servers to fill the jars, and the servers obey his words. They fill the jars with water “to the brim” (ἕως ἄνω, v. 7). The servers do whatever Jesus tells them just as Jesus’ mother instructed them. When the jars are filled Jesus tells the servers, “Draw some out now and take it to the headwaiter” (v. 8). The servers who supposedly know that the jars are used for ritual washing (v. 6) and not for drink obeyed Jesus’ command.

⁹⁸ Brown (*The Gospel according to John*, 1. 100) notes that the attempt to see the symbolism of the number six (one less than seven) as symbol of Jewish imperfection is farfetched.

⁹⁹ One μετρητής is equal to about 39.39 liters. Thus, the total amount of water that the jars can contain is between 120 to 180 gallons.

The narrator then recounts that the headwaiter tasted the water that had become wine without knowing where it came from, although the servers knew (v. 9). The servers have the privilege of knowing the origin of the water turned to wine because they have done what Jesus' mother told them and what Jesus commanded them to do. Instead of verifying the origin of the wine from the servers who knew where it comes from, the headwaiter calls the groom and gives the credit to him for the superior quality of the wine saying, "Everyone serves good wine first, and then when people have drunk freely, an inferior one; but you have kept the good wine until now" (v. 10). The audience, however, realizes that the groom knows nothing more than the headwaiter about the origin of the wine and that it is Jesus who should receive the credit. Moreover, the audience, knowing that Jesus has turned the water used for ritual washing into wine of a superior quality, begins to realize the symbolic meaning of Jesus' act. Jesus is replacing the Jewish religious custom with something greater. Yet, the narrator gives the audience no further hints at this point.¹⁰⁰ The episode concerning the miracle ends abruptly with the headwaiter's compliment to the groom.¹⁰¹

(3) Verses 11

The narrator concludes the story at the wedding with a summary on the significance of the event that has just taken place. He tells the audience that what Jesus did (ἐποίησεν) in

¹⁰⁰ The theme of replacement becomes more explicit in Jesus' teaching concerning his body as the real temple (2:19-21), worship in Spirit instead of at Jerusalem (4:20-24), and his body and blood as the food of eternal life instead of the manna (6:30-35), etc.

¹⁰¹ It is significant to note that in 3:29, where the word νυμφίος (groom) appears again, the word is applied to Jesus. See Moloney, *Belief in the Word*, 87. One may ask whether the headwaiter unknowingly gives credit to Jesus, but there is no indication that John intends to make such a connection here.

Cana in Galilee was the “beginning of his signs” (ἀρχὴν τῶν σημείων). Although Jesus only gave the command to the servers and they did everything he told them, the narrator gives the credit—which the headwaiter unknowingly gave to the bridegroom—to Jesus. It is Jesus who did (ἐποίησεν) the act. Moreover, the narrator clarifies that Jesus’ act of turning water into wine is not simply an extraordinary miracle. He views the water turned to wine as a “sign” (σημεῖον) through which Jesus reveals his glory (ἐφάνερωσεν τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ), which has been defined for the audience in the prologue (1:14) as “the glory as of the Father’s only Son” (δόξαν ὡς μονογενοῦς παρὰ πατρός). That this is the “beginning” (ἀρχὴν) of his signs implies that the audience can expect to hear of more signs as the narrative unfolds.¹⁰²

Finally, the narrator tells the audience that the disciples, who play no active role in the narrative, began to believe in Jesus. The disciples have come to Jesus and followed him. They have also applied various christological titles to him (1:35-51). However, it is only when they see the sign that the disciples as a group are said to begin to believe in him (ἐπίστευσαν εἰς αὐτόν).¹⁰³ At the end of this narrative, the narrator focuses on the disciples. He says nothing about the other characters (the mother of Jesus, the servers, the headwaiter, the bridegroom), who played roles in the miraculous event.

¹⁰² Later, John describes the second sign that Jesus did in Cana (4:54). Many scholars see the material between the first sign in Cana and the second sign in Cana as a narrative unit known as “the Cana cycle.” See Moloney, *The Gospel of John*, 63-64.

¹⁰³ Nathanael is the exception. He is said to have believed in Jesus prior to seeing Jesus’ first sign (1:50).

3.2. The Movement from Christology to Discipleship

The narrative reading of Jesus' first sign in Cana confirms that John, as Brown puts it, "does not put *primary* emphasis on the replacing of the water for Jewish purifications, nor on the action of changing water to wine (which is not described in detail), nor even on the resultant wine. John does not put primary emphasis on Mary or her intercession, nor on why she pursued her request, nor on the reaction of the headwaiter or of the groom."¹⁰⁴ Instead, John's interest is on the theological significance of the sign as the locus of the revelation of Jesus' glory as well as on the theological impact of the sign for the faith of the disciples, for whom the revelation bears fruit.¹⁰⁵ The narrative of Jesus' first sign in Cana therefore not only demonstrates the centrality of Christology; it also shows that believing in Jesus (discipleship) is the outcome of the revelation of Jesus' glory. The relationship between Christology and discipleship within this passage can be summarized in few points:

First, the narrator opens the narrative by introducing some characters. Apart from Jesus and the mother of Jesus, the narrator recounts that Jesus' disciples are also with him at the wedding. Here for the first time the words "his disciples" (οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ) are applied to Jesus' disciples rather than to the disciples of John (1:35, 37). The narrative so far only introduced four (or perhaps five) individuals as Jesus' follower: Andrew, Simon Peter, Philip, Nathanael and the unnamed disciple. Therefore, as far as the preceding narrative is concerned, the audience may understand "his disciples" as referring to this initial group of

¹⁰⁴ Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1. 103.

¹⁰⁵ Schnackenburg (*The Gospel according to St. John*, 1. 323) emphasizes the theological impact of the sign for the disciples.

Jesus' followers. However, John seems to have no concern for identifying who the disciples at the wedding are. Instead, his concern is to portray a distinct group called "his disciples" being with Jesus at the scene where Jesus' first sign will soon take place so that they may see the revelation of Jesus' glory, which has been promised to them (1:51). They must be present at the wedding because it is their response to the sign that defines their identity as "his disciples."

Second, the brief exchange between Jesus and his mother is puzzling. The exchange begins with her report concerning the lack of wine. Jesus replies to his mother by calling her "woman," thereby disengaging himself from her concerns, and telling her that his "hour" is not yet come. Jesus' reply is a rebuff,¹⁰⁶ yet the mother tells the servers to do whatever Jesus tells them. In addition to the negative tone of Jesus' response, his mother, as far as the narrative is concerned, supposedly knows nothing of her son's extraordinary ability since, as v. 11 reports, this is Jesus' first sign. Yet she seems to expect him to do something as if she knows about Jesus' extraordinary power. This seemingly incongruent dialogue serves John's purpose. On the one hand, by having Jesus speak about the coming "hour" he clarifies the deeper significance of the event that is going to take place: that it initiates a series of events that culminate in the coming of the hour in which the revelation of Jesus' identity reaches a climax.¹⁰⁷ On the other hand, by having Jesus' mother tell the servers, "Do whatever he tells you," John not only opens the possibility for the narrative to move

¹⁰⁶ Keener (*The Gospel of John*, 1. 506) asserts that "the primary reason for the rebuff must be that his mother does not understand what this sign will cost Jesus: it starts him on the road to his hour, the cross."

¹⁰⁷ Stibbe (*John*, 47) asserts, "Mentioning of the hour as early as 2.4 is important because it establishes the goal in the mind of the reader, and helps to create a sense of anticipation and suspense."

forward but also highlights the need to do what Jesus commands (13:17; 15:14)—which is an appropriate act of discipleship.¹⁰⁸

Third, the episode in which the sign takes place involves two active characters: Jesus and the servers. Jesus is the primary character who causes the servers to act. By his words, “Fill the jars with water,” and “Draw some out now and take it to the headwaiter,” Jesus did (ἐποίησεν) his first sign (v. 11). It is a sign that happens through Jesus’ speech.¹⁰⁹ Meanwhile, the servers, obeying the words of Jesus’ mother “Do (ποιήσατε) whatever he tells you,” take part in the sign by silently obeying what Jesus tells them. It is Jesus who accomplishes the sign, but the servers who obey Jesus’ words by filling the jars “to the top” (ἕως ἄνω, v.7), thereby contributing to the abundance of the wine. Like the disciples, they are given the privilege of knowing the source of the better wine that, according to the headwaiter, has been kept until now (v. 9-10).¹¹⁰ The appearances of ποιέω in this passage—one applied to the servers (v. 5), who do whatever Jesus tells them, and another applied to Jesus, who did the sign that reveals his glory—indicates the relationship between Jesus’ act and the act of those who do what Jesus tells them, between Christology and

¹⁰⁸ This is to follow the example of Jesus who does what the Father tells him (4:34; 14:31; 17:4). I agree with Bennema (*Encountering Jesus: Character Studies in the Gospel of John* [Colorado Springs: Paternoster, 2009] 72) that “when she [Jesus’ mother] tells the servants to do whatever Jesus says, it is in fact a directive to obey Jesus’ word, In the Johannine narrative, people are encouraged to trust Jesus’ word (above miraculous signs) (4:48-50; 6:68; cf. 20:29), as well as to adhere continually to his word (15:7). Thus, while Jesus’ mother may not have understood the mission of her son and hence the true meaning of his replay in 2:4, her directive in 2:5 is a true Johannine command.”

¹⁰⁹ Moloney, *Belief in the Word*, 86.

¹¹⁰ The narrator needs to pause to highlight the servers’ knowledge of the source of the wine, “but the servers knew” (v. 9).

discipleship. Discipleship is a partaking in doing what Jesus does in order to reveal his glory.

Fourth, the summary statement of the story at the wedding in Cana clarifies John's emphasis in the narrative. By calling the miraculous act a "sign" (σημεῖον) he hints that the focus of the narrative is not so much on the extraordinary power of Jesus to change water into wine but on the significance of the act as the locus of revelation.¹¹¹ The miraculous act is, above all, a "sign" through which Jesus reveals his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son (1:14). The glory is manifested through the replacement of the previous religious custom with something greater, which is symbolized in the change of Jewish purification water into abundant and superior wine. Yet the revelation of the glory is not for its own sake. It is for the sake of believing in Jesus—which is what John intends to be the response of all disciples, including the audience (20:31). This explains why the narrative says nothing about the impact of the sign on the headwaiter and the groom—they are left in ignorance about the origin of the wine. Nor does the narrative confirm the reaction of the mother of Jesus who seemed to have predicted the outcome of her request to her son. Nor does it say anything about the reaction of the servers who knew the origin of the superior wine. Instead, John reminds the audience of the disciples: that they begin to believe in (ἐπίστευσαν εἰς) Jesus. By presenting Jesus with his disciples at the wedding and highlighting their response to the revelation of Jesus' glory, John defines the discipleship as

¹¹¹ Lindars, *The Gospel of John*, 132.

“the believing witnesses of the sign.”¹¹² Thus, the narrative of Jesus’ first sign at the wedding in Cana clarifies the christological character of Johannine discipleship. For John, it is the disciples’ response to the revelation of Jesus’ identity as the only “way” to the Father that defines their own identity as a believing community.

4. The Man Born Blind (Chap. 9)

The story of the healing of the man born blind is typically Johannine.¹¹³ John skillfully places the narrative within the context of the growing tension between Jesus and the Jews. The content of the narrative develops the theme of the Light of the Word that is mentioned in the previous chapter (8:12). It reveals the identity of Jesus as the one who brings light to those who believe. The narrative, therefore, is christologically oriented.¹¹⁴ John carefully develops the dialogue between the characters so that it highlights the significance of the healing as the revelation of the God’s work in Jesus. The focus of the narrative is not on the healing per se, which is briefly recounted in two verses, but in the controversy about the identity of Jesus.¹¹⁵

¹¹² Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 1. 326.

¹¹³ In the Synoptics there are few stories of the healing of the blind (Mark 8:22-26; 10:46-52; Matt 9:27-31; Luke 18:35-43. Yet, as Schneiders (*Written That You May Believe* [2nd ed. New York: Crossroad, 2003] 151) points out, there are significant differences between the Synoptics and the Johannine account of the healing of the blind man.

¹¹⁴ See Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 2. 257. Some scholars see sacramental symbolism in this passage. That the man, who was blind from birth, was cured after he washed in the water of Siloam is viewed as an indication that John intends the healing as a symbol for a new birth in the water of baptism. See Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1. 380. However, some scholars think that John does not intend the healing as a symbol of baptism. See Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 2. 257-58.

¹¹⁵ John 9 consists of seven dialogues: the dialogue between Jesus and the disciples which is followed by Jesus curing of the blind man (vv. 1-7), the dialogue between the blind man and his neighbors (vv. 8-12),

The narrative of the healing of the man born blind also portrays the revelation of Jesus' identity as an act of discipleship. The revelation of Jesus' true identity in John 9 is seen in the growing faith of the healed man who regards himself as a disciple of Jesus and confesses his faith in him. Thus, as in the passages we have seen thus far, this chapter exhibits the profound relationship between Christology and discipleship. I will now present a narrative reading of 9:24-38, since this section is particularly helpful in clarifying the christological character of Johannine discipleship.¹¹⁶

4.1. A Narrative Reading of John 9:24-38

John 9:24-38 consists of two dialogues: the dialogue between the Pharisees and the blind man (vv. 24-34) and the dialogue between Jesus and the blind man (vv. 35-38). Both dialogues center on the question of Jesus' identity. The first leads to the expulsion of the blind man by the Pharisees, whereas the second leads to his confession of faith in Jesus.

(1) Verses 24-34

The narrator has told the audience about the first encounter between the Pharisees and the blind man who was healed (vv. 13-17). On that occasion the Pharisees questioned the man as to how he received his sight. He told them what Jesus had done for him—which

the dialogue between the Pharisees and the blind man (vv. 13-17), the dialogue between the Jews and the blind man's parents (vv. 18-23), the second dialogue between the Pharisees and the blind man (vv. 24-34), the dialogue between the Jesus and the blind man (vv. 35-38), and the dialogue between Jesus and the Pharisees, which allows Jesus to conclude the narrative. Paul D. Duke (*Irony in the Fourth Gospel* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1985) 118) places the seven dialogues in a chiasmic structure, with v. 22 as the center of the structure.

¹¹⁶ Brown (*The Gospel according to John*, 1. 377) asserts that "The blind man's confutation of the Pharisees in vss. 24-34 is one of the most cleverly written dialogues in the NT."

according to the narrator took place on a Sabbath (v. 14). This led to a division among the Pharisees concerning the identity and character of Jesus, whether he is from God or whether he is a sinful man (v. 16). The dialogue ends with the blind man's statement that Jesus is a prophet (v. 17).

Despite this previous questioning, the Pharisees, taking the advice of the man's parents who are afraid of being expelled from the synagogue (vv. 21-22), summon the man to question him "for the second time" (ἐκ δευτέρου, v. 24). They urged him to speak the truth, saying "Give glory to God" (δὸς δόξαν τῷ θεῷ). This expression, when used in a trial context, can mean, "Give glory to God by confessing your wrong" (Josh 7:19; 1 Esd 9:8).¹¹⁷ Here the audience will learn that the blind man gives glory to God by telling the truth about what Jesus has done for him. But the Pharisees presume that the man was wrong to regard Jesus as a prophet. They tell him, "We know that this man is a sinner" (ἡμεῖς οἶδαμεν ὅτι οὗτος ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἁμαρτωλός ἐστιν). The Pharisees, who were divided among themselves about Jesus' identity (v. 16), now agree. Their emphatic "we" (ἡμεῖς) underlines the unanimity and certainty of their judgment about Jesus, whom they claim is a sinner (ἁμαρτωλός).

The blind man, echoing what the Pharisees claim they know about Jesus, shrewdly refutes their statement. His response, "If he is a sinner, I do not know," is not as much an admission of ignorance but a challenge to what the Pharisees claim to know about Jesus. He disowns their statement and insists on the one thing that he certainly knows, namely, that "I

¹¹⁷ Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1. 790.

was blind and now I see” (v. 25). The blind man is retelling for the third time (as in vv. 11 and 15) what has happened to him; this time more briefly than before, yet unchanged.¹¹⁸ In doing so he is compelling the Pharisees to see the basic truth that contradicts their claim about Jesus, since they know that a sinner cannot do such signs (v. 16).

The Pharisees then ask the man once more what Jesus has done to him and how he opened his eyes (v. 26).¹¹⁹ The audience knows that the Pharisees have already asked the same question before and that the man told them, “He put clay on my eyes, and I washed and I see” (v. 15). The man, as the audience expects, answers them, “I told you already and you did not listen” (v. 27). Yet the man does not stop there, he goes on the offensive. He questions the motive of the Pharisees, he asks whether they too (καί) want to become “his disciples” (αὐτοῦ μαθηταί). This statement shows that, on the one hand, the man now considers himself to be a disciple of Jesus. On the other hand, the form of his question, which expects a negative answer,¹²⁰ indicates that he knows that becoming disciples of Jesus is not the motive of the Pharisees. The audience can sense the irony and sarcasm in the question.¹²¹

The Pharisees respond to the ironical remarks by ridiculing him (ἐλοιδόρησαν αὐτόν) and saying to him, “You are that man’s disciple; we are disciples of Moses” (v. 28). The

¹¹⁸ Michaels, *The Gospel of John*, 558.

¹¹⁹ Ridderbos (*The Gospel of John*, 345) thinks that the Pharisees ask the question hoping to find that the man contradicting his previous testimony.

¹²⁰ A question that begins with μή expects a negative answer. See James Hope Moulton, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek* (Vol. 1; 2nd ed.; Edinburgh: T&T Clark: 1906) 170, 193.

¹²¹ Lindars (*The Gospel of John*, 348) agrees that the question is meant to be ironical.

emphatic “you” (σύ) and “we” (ἡμεῖς) not only heightens the contrast between them and the blind man, it also indicates their feeling of superiority as disciples of Moses compared to the blind man who is a disciple of “that man” (ἐκείνου). They then explained the reason for their claim, saying, “We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he is from” (v. 29). The audience knows that, on the one hand, the Pharisees are correct in saying that God has spoken to Moses (1:17). On the other hand, they are wrong when they presume that their ignorance of Jesus’ origin means that he is lesser than Moses. The audience realizes that the Pharisees contradict what some of the inhabitants of Jerusalem have acknowledged previously: “When the Messiah comes, no one will know where he is from” (7:27), even though Jesus has repeatedly told them that he comes from above, from the Father (3:13; 6:33, 38, 42, 51, 58, 62). Moreover, they are wrong when they presume that being a disciple of Moses and being a disciple of Jesus are mutually exclusive since Jesus has told the Jews, “If you had believed Moses, you would have believed me, for he wrote about me” (5:46).¹²²

The blind man responds to them with a longer speech. “This is what is so amazing,” he begins, “that you do not know where he is from, yet he opened my eyes” (v. 30). He expresses his amazement (τὸ θαυμαστόν), which is an “ironical surprise,”¹²³ that the Pharisees, who claimed to be disciples of Moses, cannot recognize Jesus’ origin despite the healing that clearly indicates his heavenly origin. Then he continues, “We know that God

¹²² See Frances Taylor Gench, *Encounters with Jesus: Studies in the Gospel of John* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2007) 70.

¹²³ Lindars (*The Gospel of John*, 348) notes that the man’s ironical surprise resembles that of Jesus in 3:10.

does not listen to sinners, but if one is devout and does his will, he listens to him” (9:31).

The blind man underscores what is considered to be the general truth that “we,” the blind man as well as the Pharisees, agree upon, namely, that God listens to the prayer of those who do his will (τὸ θέλημα αὐτοῦ ποιῇ). The audience, privileged to hear what Jesus said to his disciples, “My food is to do the will of the one who sent me” (ποιήσω τὸ θέλημα τοῦ πέμψαντός με, 4:34), knows that the blind man is unknowingly referring to Jesus, who does the work of his Father (v. 4).

The blind man adds, “It is unheard of that anyone ever opened the eyes of a person born blind” (v. 32). He emphasizes not only the magnitude of the work that “the man” has done for him but the exceptionality of “the man” who does what no one has “ever” (ἐκ τοῦ αἰῶνος) done.¹²⁴ Finally, he leads them to an undeniable conclusion that he puts in a contrary-to-fact condition, “If this man were not from God, he would not be able to do anything” (v. 33). Jesus has done this work, which is the work of the one who sent him (v. 4). In this way the blind man forces the Pharisees to admit that their claim, “This man is not from God” (v. 16), cannot be true.

Unable to refute the blind man’s statement, the Pharisees answer him, “You were born entirely in sin, and are you trying to teach us?” (v. 34). The audience knows that the Pharisees are correct to say that the blind man, like Jesus (7:14; 8:20), is trying to teach them. His statement clearly shows that he is standing in defense of Jesus, and he sounds very much

¹²⁴ The term ἐκ τοῦ αἰῶνος which is used redundantly with the negative οὐκ ἤκούσθη can be translated as “never ever.” See Michaels, *The Gospel of John*, 563. In the book of Tobit (11:12-13), Tobias’s sight was restored, but he was not born blind.

like Jesus.¹²⁵ But they are incorrect in accusing him of being “one born entirely in sin” (ἐν ἁμαρτίαις ἐγεννήθη), because the audience has been told that his blindness is not because of anybody’s sin, but “so that the works of God might be made visible through him” (v. 3). Moreover, the man born blind is no longer blind, “for he has been reborn at the hands of Jesus and in the waters of Siloam (vv. 6-7).”¹²⁶ Yet, the Pharisees do not listen to the man whom they say was born in “sin” (ἐν ἁμαρτίαις), inasmuch as they do not listen to Jesus (8:43, 47), whom they regard as a “sinner” (ἁμαρτωλός, v. 24). As a result, “they drove him out.” The narrator does not specify where they drove him from. But the audience can conclude that the Pharisees drove him out of the synagogue, the fate that his parents were trying to avoid (v. 22). If this is the case, it means that the Pharisees have interpreted his statement as a confession that Jesus is the Messiah.¹²⁷

(2) Verses 35-38

The narrator brings Jesus, who was the center of controversy when he was off stage, back onto the stage. The narrator tells the audience, “When Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, he found him” (v. 35). Jesus found (εὗρόν) the man as he found (εὕρισκε) his disciples (1:41, 43, 45). Then Jesus asks him, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” (σὺ πιστεύεις εἰς τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου;). The emphatic “you” (σύ) heightens the contrast between the Pharisees, who have thrown the blind man out, and the man, whom Jesus found.

¹²⁵ Stibbe, *John*, 111.

¹²⁶ Michaels, *The Gospel of John*, 564.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

The former refuse to acknowledge Jesus as from God and remain in sin (v. 41); the latter is now given the opportunity to express his faith in the Son of Man. The audience, which has the privilege of hearing the Johannine narrative from the beginning, knows that “the Son of Man” (τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου) refers to Jesus (1:51; 3:13, 14; 6:27, 53, 62; 8:28). The blind man knows only that the one who opened his eyes is the “man” named Jesus (ὁ ἄνθρωπος ὁ λεγόμενος Ἰησοῦς, v. 11), whom he regards as a prophet (v. 17) and a man “from God” (παρὰ θεοῦ, v. 33). But he does not yet know who the Son of Man is. Thus he says to Jesus, “Who is he, sir, that I may believe in him? (v. 36). The use of “Sir” (κύριε) and the tone of the request indicate the eagerness of the blind man, who regards himself as a disciple of Jesus, to receive direction from Jesus. In asking “Who is he,” he is not so much asking about the identity of the Son of Man (because for the blind man “the Son of Man” must be the *man* named Jesus, the *man* from God, who opened his eyes but whom he has never seen)¹²⁸ as he is asking Jesus to show him where the Son of Man is, as can be seen from Jesus’ response.¹²⁹

Jesus then reveals his identity to the man in the third person. Instead of saying, “I am he, the one who is speaking with you,” as in 4:26, Jesus says, “You have seen him and the one speaking with you is he” (v. 37). In saying, “you have *seen* (έώρακας) him” (“him” refers to the Son of Man), Jesus highlights the gift of *sight* that the man receives. He is not only physically able to see, he has also been given the ability to see the Son of Man. On

¹²⁸ According to the narrative, this is the first time the man met Jesus after his eyes were opened.

¹²⁹ I agree with Michaels (*The Gospel of John*, 567) who thinks that it is as if the blind man asks Jesus “Where is he, sir, that I might believe in him?”

hearing Jesus' self-revelation, the man cries out, "I do believe, Lord," and he worshiped him (v. 38).¹³⁰ The man finally has the opportunity to express, in a most personal way, his faith in Jesus whom he regards as a prophet and a man from God. His act of worshiping Jesus, therefore, is not simply a gesture of respect for the man who has given him sight but an expression of his faith in the one whom he now calls "Lord" (κύριε).¹³¹

4.2. The Movement from Christology to Discipleship

The narrative of the healing of the man born blind in John 9 in general, and the section that we have just seen in particular, is centered on the argument concerning the identity of Jesus. The Pharisees refuse to acknowledge the unavoidable conclusion about Jesus' origin. They prove themselves to be blind and remain in their sin (v. 39-41). Meanwhile the blind man first recognizes his healer as a man named Jesus (v. 11), then as a prophet (v. 17), as a man from God (v. 33), and finally he is given the opportunity to see the Son of Man and worship him (v. 38).¹³² That Jesus' identity is revealed through the growing faith of the healed man, who regards himself a disciple of Jesus, proves the author's tendency to present discipleship as the result of a christological quest. The relationship between Christology and discipleship therefore can be seen in this passage:

¹³⁰ Although some witnesses (P⁷⁵, N*, W, it^b, cop^{ach}) do not read the phrase ὁ δὲ ἔφη· πιστεύω, κύριε· καὶ προσεκύνησεν αὐτῷ καὶ εἶπεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς (vv. 38-39a), "the overwhelming preponderance of external attestation in favor of the longer text." See Metzger, *A Textual Commentary*, 195.

¹³¹ Moloney (*Signs and Shadows*, 129) notes that whereas κύριε in v. 36 is a title of respect, the usage of the title in v. 38 has the "full christological meaning."

¹³² Scholars generally agree about the growing faith of the blind man. See J. Louis Martyn, *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel* (3rd ed.; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2003) 122-25; Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1. 377; Stibbe, *John*, 106; Schneiders, *Written That You May Believe*, 164.

First, the controversy about who possesses true knowledge of Jesus' identity dominates the dialogue between the Pharisees and the blind man. The verb to "know" (οἶδα) appears seven times in this section of the narrative. It is used three times by the Pharisees (vv. 24, 29 [2x]) and four times by the blind man (vv. 25 [2x], 30, and 31). The Pharisees claim to *know* that Jesus is a sinner (v. 24) and that God spoke through Moses (v. 29), but they do not *know* where Jesus comes from (v. 29). The blind man does not *know* if Jesus is a sinner (v. 25), but he is amazed that the Pharisees do not *know* where Jesus is from (v. 30), for he *knows* that he was blind and now he has sight because of the man named Jesus (v. 25), and that God listens to those who obey him (v. 31). Amid the dispute about the knowledge of Jesus' identity, when the Pharisees want to hear a second time about Jesus, the blind man gives an answer the audience expects, "I told you already and you did not listen." This answer should suffice because the blind man has indeed told them how Jesus cured him (v. 15). However, the blind man goes further and asks, "Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to be his disciples too?" (v. 27). This ironical question not only implies that he now considers himself one of Jesus' disciples; it also suggests that for the blind man, so also for the implied author, wanting to know more about Jesus is the attitude of a disciple. In other words, for John the christological quest is a process that naturally leads to discipleship.

Second, in response to the blind man's ironical question, the Pharisees ridicule (ἐλοιδορήσαν) him, saying, "You are that man's disciple; we are disciples of Moses" (v. 28). Then they add, "We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he is from" (v. 29). This statement indicates that the Pharisees regard

themselves as Moses' disciples based on their claim that "they know" that God spoke through Moses. At the same time, they reject any allegiance to Jesus because "they do not know" his origin, which means they do not know who he is.¹³³ In making this statement, the Pharisees become the victim of irony¹³⁴ for two reasons: first, the audience knows that they are wrong in assuming that being a disciple of Moses and of Jesus are mutually exclusive; second, they are wrong in speaking as if Moses is superior to Jesus. The audience knows that Jesus has told the Jews that the one who believes Moses believes in Jesus, for Moses wrote about Jesus (5:46-47). Consequently, as true disciples of Moses the Pharisees are to believe in Jesus. Thus John employs the irony in the dialogue in order to show that the ultimate commitment of all disciples must lead to Jesus. As the disciples of John (1:35) have become "his disciples" (οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ, 2:2), those who claim to be disciples of Moses have to become "his disciples" (αὐτοῦ μαθηταί) too.

Third, after Jesus hears that the Pharisees have expelled the man, he finds him (v. 35). Jesus' act of finding the man resembles the finding of the first disciples (1:41, 43, 45) and the finding of the man whom Jesus cured in the portico of Solomon (5:14).¹³⁵ In every instance "finding" leads to the revelation of Jesus' identity and opens the possibility for an

¹³³ Schneider (*Written That You May Believe*, 162) notes that "To know where Jesus comes from is to know *who* he is."

¹³⁴ The dialogue between the Pharisees and the blind man (vv. 24-34) in particular and John 9 as a whole is full of irony. Dodd (*Interpretation*, 357) describes John 9 as "rich in the tragic irony of which the evangelist is master." Culpepper (*Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel*, 175) asserts that "The evangelist's power and craft as an ironist are fully displaced in the delightful figures woven into the carpet of chapter 9."

¹³⁵ Hoskyns (*The Fourth Gospel*, 359) notes that the word "find" in the Fourth Gospel is used to describe "an action of the Christ which is a definite and conscious fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy (7:14), or a meeting that issues in discipleship (1:41, 43, 54; 5:14), it is never descriptive of a merely a fortuitous meeting."

act of discipleship.¹³⁶ Here, when Jesus finds the man, he offers him the possibility to confirm his commitment as a disciple by asking, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” By having Jesus introduced himself in the third person, John accomplishes two purposes: first, he creates the opportunity for Jesus to reveal his identity as the Son of Man;¹³⁷ second, he prepares the setting for the man to pose the question, “Who is he, sir, that I may believe in (πιστεύσω εἰς) him?” This confirms what we have seen so far: the act of discipleship is the result of one’s knowledge of Jesus’ identity. In asking “who is he,” the man shows his eagerness to know Jesus and find him in order to confirm his commitment as his disciple because for the blind man, as implied in his question to the Pharisees (v. 27), a willingness to know more about Jesus is a process that ultimately leads to discipleship. Thus, on the one hand, the Johannine Jesus finds the man so that he may disclose his identity as the Son of Man, who is the Revealer of the Father (1:51; 3:13-14; 5:27; 6:27, 53, 62; 8:28). On the other hand, the blind man shows his eagerness to find and to see the one who gave him sight, both physically and spiritually, so that he may confirm his faith and commitment as a disciple by worshipping Jesus (cf. 2:18:22; 4:21-24).

Fourth, on the basic level of the narrative plot John portrays the blind man as the recipient of the healing, the victim of the Pharisees’ hostility, and a man who opens himself

¹³⁶ The first disciples respond positively to the revelation of Jesus’ identity by following Jesus (1:37, 38, 40, 43) and later confirm their faith in Jesus (2:11). Meanwhile, the paralytic in John 5 says nothing in reply to Jesus’ advice not to sin anymore. Neither does he express any gesture of thanks, nor does he make any commitment to stop sinning. Instead he “goes away” (ἀπῆλθεν) and report to the Jews that it was Jesus who made him well (5:14-15). There is no indication that he responds positively to the possibility for discipleship that is given to him when Jesus finds him.

¹³⁷ For various opinions on why Jesus spoke in the third person, see Francis J. Moloney, *Johannine Son of Man* (Biblioteca di Scienze Religiose 14; Roma: LAS, 1976) 149-54.

to faith in Jesus. Yet on a deeper level John presents the blind man as “a narrative hero with some of the characteristics of Jesus.”¹³⁸ The man plays the role that is identical to that of Jesus. He was “rightly” accused by the Pharisees of trying to teach (διδάσκεις) them (v. 34). The man acts like Jesus who was teaching the people in the synagogue and in the temple area (6:59; 7:14, 28; 8:2, 20; 18:20). He also follows Jesus’ rhetorical tactic, especially that which Jesus used in the dialogue with Nicodemus. His statement to the Pharisees, “You do not know where he is from, yet he opened my eyes” (v. 30), echoes the sarcasm of Jesus to Nicodemus, “You are the teacher of Israel and you do not understand this?” (3:10).¹³⁹ Like Jesus who is accused as “sinner” (ἁματωλός, v. 24), the man is accused of having been born entirely “in sin” (ἐν ἁμαρτίαις, v. 34). Furthermore, John has the blind man use the phrase “ἐγώ εἰμι” (v. 9), which in the Fourth Gospel is used by Jesus as a form of self-identification (4:26, 6:20; 8:24, etc.). Although the usage of this expression by the blind man simply means that he is indeed the man in question, it shows the Johannine tendency to apply to a disciple what belongs to Jesus. In portraying the man like Jesus, John indicates that Jesus is the prime model of discipleship for the unnamed blind man, with whom the audience can identify itself.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁸ Stibbe, *John*, 111.

¹³⁹ The blind man also follows the way Jesus’ echoes the words of Nicodemus. Jesus’ answer to Nicodemus, “We speak what we know” (3:11), echoes the previous words of Nicodemus, “We know that you are a teacher who has come from God (3:2). In a similar way the blind man’s words, “We know that God does not listen to sinners” (v. 31), echoes the words of the Pharisees, “We know that this man is a sinner” (v. 24). See Stibbe, *ibid.*, 111-12.

¹⁴⁰ Within the same line of thought, Schneider (*Written That You May Believe*, 164) asserts that “Coming to believe is not so much purification from sin as identification with the Lord.”

5. The 'I Am' Sayings

The christological character of Johannine discipleship can be seen as well in the so-called 'I Am' Sayings. Scholars have generally pointed out that the sayings are primarily christological.¹⁴¹ Both the absolute use of ἐγώ εἰμι and the usage with a predicate nominative disclose the divine identity of Jesus.¹⁴² Whereas the absolute usage addresses Jesus' divinity in itself, in the predicate nominative usage, as Brown asserts, "the predicate is not an essential definition or description of Jesus in himself; it is more a description of what he is in relation to man."¹⁴³ In this type of the 'I Am' sayings, a metaphorical expression that describes Jesus' identity is immediately followed by an invitation or promise for believers. The movement from Christology to discipleship, therefore, is apparent in the sayings.¹⁴⁴ The sayings not only exhibit the identity of Jesus, they also explain the identity of believers or disciples in relation to Jesus.

¹⁴¹ Schnackenburg (*The Gospel according to St. John*, 2. 88) summarizes, "The Johannine ἐγώ εἰμι sayings are completely and utterly expressions of John's Christology and doctrine of salvation." See also David Mark Ball, *'I Am' in John's Gospel: Literary Function, Background, and Theological Implications* (JSNTSup 124; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996) 276-83.

¹⁴² The absolute use of the ἐγώ εἰμι can be found in 4:26; 6:20; 8:19, 24, 28, 58; 13:19; 18:5, 6, 8. Scholars generally agree that the Johannine usage of the expression has its background in the OT, particularly Deutero-Isaiah, and in rabbinic Judaism. See Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1. 536-38; Ball, *'I Am' in John's Gospel*, 177-201. In the use with the predicate nominative, Jesus speaks of himself figuratively as the bread of life (6:35, 51), the light of the world (8:12), the gate for the sheep (10:7, 9), the good shepherd (10:11, 14), the resurrection and the life (11:25), the way, the truth, and the life (14:6), the vine (15:1, 5).

¹⁴³ Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1. 534.

¹⁴⁴ Koester, *Symbolism in the Fourth Gospel*, 13-14. As Michaels (*The Gospel of John*, 631-32) notes, the invitation or promise which, in most case, immediately follows the predicate nominative is introduced by a relative or conditional or participial clause. See also p. 374.

Here I will examine the five predicate nominative uses of ἐγώ εἰμι in the Book of Signs. I will briefly highlight the narrative context in which the sayings are found and show how the christological content of each saying forms the basis of a message concerning discipleship.

5.1. Bread of Life (6:35)

After the narrator recounts the feeding of the five thousand (6:1-14) and the walking on the water (vv.15-21), in which Jesus declares to his disciples, “I am (ἐγώ εἰμι), do not be afraid” (6:20), he recounts Jesus’ discourse on the bread of life (vv. 26-59). The discourse takes place on “the next day” (τῇ ἐπαύριον, v. 22) in the synagogue at Capernaum (v. 59). The main audience of the discourse is the crowd and the Jews who misunderstood Jesus’ statement and pose questions that allow Jesus to explain the meaning of his words. When they hear Jesus speaking about the bread of God (ὁ ἄρτος τοῦ θεοῦ) which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world (v. 33), the crowd says, “Sir, give us this bread always” (v. 34). In answer to their request for the bread, Jesus says, “I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me will never hunger, and whoever believes in me will never thirst” (v. 35).

The saying, “I am the bread of life” (ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ἄρτος τῆς ζωῆς), speaks of Jesus’ identity. “Bread of life” explains who Jesus is in relation to all human beings. He is the bread that comes down from heaven, from God (v. 33) and becomes the source of life for

those who eat it (v. 51).¹⁴⁵ The saying is immediately followed by a double invitation and a double promise: “Whoever comes to me will never hunger, and whoever believes in me will never thirst.” Whereas the predicate nominative “I am the bread of life” focuses on Jesus in relation to human persons, the relative clauses, “whoever comes to me” (ὁ ἐρχόμενος πρὸς ἐμέ) and “whoever believes in me” (ὁ πιστεύων εἰς ἐμέ), shift the attention to the believers in relation to Jesus. The clauses imply the invitation to come and believe in Jesus as the precondition to attain the promises of “never hunger” (οὐ μὴ πεινάσῃ) and “never ever thirst” (οὐ μὴ διψήσῃ πώποτε).¹⁴⁶ Both the invitation and the promise relate to Jesus’ identity as the bread of life.¹⁴⁷ The relationship between Jesus and the believers follows the model of the relationship between Jesus and the Father. Just as (καθώς) Jesus lives because of the living Father, those who eat the bread of life live because of Jesus (6:56-57). The saying thus indicates that for John the revelation of Jesus’ identity as the bread of life (Christology) bears consequences in the acts of discipleship: coming and believing in Jesus.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁵ The repetition of the saying in v. 51 shows how John introduces the theme and returns to it again in order to clarify its meaning. See Jean Zumstein, “„Ich bin das Brot des Lebens“: Wiederholung und Variation eines johanneischen Ego-Eimi-Wortes in Joh 6,” in *Repetitions and Variations in the Fourth Gospel: Style, Text, Interpretation* (BETL 223; edited by Gilbert Van Belle, Michael Labahn, and Petrus Maritz; Leuven: Peeters, 2009) 435-52.

¹⁴⁶ οὐ μὴ expresses an emphatic negation. It is normally used with the aorist subjunctive as in the phrase οὐ μὴ πεινάσῃ. Its usage with the future indicative in the phrase οὐ μὴ πεινάσῃ is to emphasize the duration. See Abbott, *Johannine Grammar*, 205; Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 468.

¹⁴⁷ The promise to “never ever thirst” echoes Jesus’ claim to be the source of the living water in 4:14.

¹⁴⁸ The theme of coming to Jesus and believing in him dominates the discourse. Jesus tells the crowds that all whom the Father gives him (v. 37) and all who listen and learn from the Father will come to him (v. 45), and anyone who comes to him will never be driven away (v. 37), but that one can only come to Jesus if it is granted from above, from the Father (vv. 44, 65).

The significance of the message of discipleship in the Bread of Life Discourse is confirmed in the shifting of the narrator's attention to Jesus' disciples at the end of the discourse. Instead of recounting the reaction of the crowd and the Jews, who are the main audience of the discourse, the narrator relates the reaction of the disciples to Jesus' words. On the one hand, the narrator says that many of "his disciples" (τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ) turned back and no longer walk with Jesus (6:60-66). On the other hand, he focuses attention on Peter, who, on behalf of the Twelve (δώδεκα), confirms their commitment to believe in Jesus (vv. 68-69). It is also important to note that here, for the first time, the narrator introduces the character of Judas to confirm that discipleship is a gift granted from above, from the Father (vv. 44, 65). Although Judas is chosen by Jesus, he is not worthy of the gift. John begins to depict Judas as a negative example of discipleship. In the farewell meal Jesus gives Judas a morsel and he takes it, but he then goes into the darkness of night (13:26-30).

5.2. Light of the World (8:12)

The saying about Jesus as the light of the world takes place within the context of the conflict between Jesus and his opponents during the Feast of Tabernacles. The conflict becomes the opportunity for Jesus to speak about his identity as the Messiah (7:26-31, 40-44), his origin and his destiny (7:27-29, 52; 8:18-20), his authority and his teaching (7:16-19). After the Pharisees refute Nicodemus's suggestion to speak with Jesus (7:50-52) and

the incident concerning the woman caught in adultery (7:53-8:11),¹⁴⁹ Jesus again speaks to them (αὐτοῖς) saying, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life” (8:12).

The first part of the saying, “I am the light of the world” (ἐγὼ εἰμι τὸ φῶς τοῦ κόσμου), focuses on Jesus’ identity in relation to the world.¹⁵⁰ That Jesus is the light of the world confirms what the audience already knows about Jesus from the prologue: “What came to be through him was life, and the life was the light of humans” (1:3b-4), and that the true light was coming into the world (1:9). The Pharisees in the narrative, however, only pay attention to the fact that Jesus testifies to himself but not to the content of his testimony. For them the real issue is not Jesus’ claim to be the light of the world but his testimony on his own behalf that he is the light of the world.¹⁵¹ Thus they insist that his testimony is not valid (8:13).¹⁵²

“I am the light of the world” is followed by the statement, “Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life” (8:12). Here the focus shifts to believers. The relative clause, “whoever follows me” (ὁ ἀκολουθῶν ἐμοί), implies an invitation to “follow” Jesus in order to receive the promise to “never walk in darkness” (οὐ

¹⁴⁹ The text of 7:53–8:11 is generally regarded as a later insertion on the basis of the external evidence. See Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, 187-89.

¹⁵⁰ The phrase “the light of the world” appears in Matt 5:14, but it is applied to the disciples, not to Jesus.

¹⁵¹ Ridderbos, *The Gospel of John*, 293.

¹⁵² This leads to the debate about Jesus’ relationship with the Father and with Abraham, which gives Jesus an opportunity to disclose that “before Abraham was, I Am (ἐγὼ εἰμι)” (8:58). It is only then, in the story of the healing of the man born blind, that the narrator picks up the theme of Jesus as the light and presents him as the source of light for those who believe, as we have seen in the previous section.

μὴ περιπατήσῃ ἐν τῇ σκοτίᾳ) but to “have the light of life” (ἔξει τὸ φῶς τῆς ζωῆς).

Following Jesus, which is the characteristic of a disciple (1:37, 38, 40, 43), is the prerequisite to attain the promise, which is related to Jesus’ identity as the light of the world. Thus, the character of true discipleship is alluded to in the statement, although the disciples are not portrayed as the audience of the saying.¹⁵³ The audience of this saying is expressed vaguely in the third person plural αὐτοῖς (8:12), which, as far as the narrative is concerned, can refer to the Jews (7:15, 35) or the crowd (7:20, 40), or the Pharisees who respond to Jesus’ saying (8:13). As Ball asserts, the audience of the saying is “ill-defined” indicates that “the narrator is not primarily interested in the precise identification of Jesus’ opponents.”¹⁵⁴ Rather, he employs these characters to enable the Johannine Jesus to reveal his identity and invite those who believe in him (τοὺς πεπιστευκότας αὐτῷ) to become “truly my disciples” (ἀληθῶς μαθηταί μου) by remaining in his words and knowing the truth that will set them free (8:31-32), as portrayed in the figure of the blind man who regards himself Jesus’ disciple (9:27).

5.3. The Gate for the Sheep (10:7) and The Good Shepherd (10:11)

The conflict about Jesus’ identity during the Feast of Tabernacles continues to be the setting of the narrative in the first half of chap. 10 (vv. 1-21) in which the sayings about the gate for the sheep and the good shepherd are found. Although the narrative context does not

¹⁵³ Lindars (*The Gospel of John*, 515) agrees that the phrase “whoever follows me” (ὁ ἀκολουθῶν ἐμοί) is “a phrase from the vocabulary of discipleship, and so the whole of the second half of the verse forms a promise to the faithful disciple.”

¹⁵⁴ Ball, *‘I Am’ in John’s Gospel*, 83.

change, a new theme is developed in this section. Jesus' comment that the Pharisees are guilty because they claim to see (9:41) leads to the usage of the metaphors of shepherd, sheep, and gate to highlight Jesus' identity in relation to his followers (10:1-5). Jesus' audience in the narrative is expressed in the third person plural αὐτοῖς (v. 6), which could refer to the Pharisees (9:40) or to the Jews (vv. 19-21).¹⁵⁵ In response to the incomprehension of the audience (vv. 1-5), Jesus not only reveals his identity in the "I am" sayings of the gate and the good shepherd, he also contrasts himself with his opponents. Thus, "I am the gate for the sheep" (v. 7) is immediately contrasted with the thieves and the robbers, to whom the sheep do not listen (v. 8). "I am the good shepherd" (v. 11) is contrasted with the hired man who runs away when the wolf comes to attack the sheep (vv. 12-13).¹⁵⁶

The metaphors of "the gate for the sheep" (ἡ θύρα τῶν προβάτων) and "the good shepherd" (ὁ ποιμὴν ὁ καλός) disclose Jesus' identity in relation to believers. Jesus is different from others who claim to be leaders and shepherds of the people because he is the gate for the sheep and the good shepherd. As the gate of the sheep, he is "the legal access to the sheepfold" as well as "the door through which the sheep enter the sheepfold."¹⁵⁷ As the

¹⁵⁵ As in the saying about the Bread of Life (6:35) and the Light of the World (8:12), the audience of the sayings in this section is unspecified. As Ball (ibid., 97) asserts, "The unspecified nature of Jesus' narrative audience shows that their role is primarily as a foil to Jesus' words."

¹⁵⁶ Within this narrative context, thieves, robbers, and the hired man include the Pharisees, who are known as the teacher (διδάσκαλος, 3:10) and rulers (ἄρχοντες, 3:1; 7:26, 48) of the people, but they are "blind" (9:40-41). They throw out the blind man (9:35) and repeatedly try to do away with Jesus (5:16, 18; 7:1, 32; 8:59; 10:31; 11:53).

¹⁵⁷ Ridderbos, *The Gospel of John*, 356-57.

good shepherd, Jesus knows his sheep (v. 14) and lays down his life for them (vv. 11, 15, 17, 18).

John remains consistent in imparting the message of discipleship on the basis of the christological teaching. In v. 9 Jesus repeats the saying, “I am the gate” and continues, “Whoever enters through me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture” (v. 9). Here the relative clause, “whoever enters through me” (δι’ ἐμοῦ ἐάν τις εἰσέλθῃ), implies an invitation to enter the sheepfold through Jesus in order to be saved and to have the freedom of access in and out of it. Similarly, in v. 14 Jesus repeats the saying, “I am the good shepherd” and continues, “I know mine and mine know me” (γινώσκω τὰ ἐμὰ καὶ γινώσκουσίν με τὰ ἐμὰ). Here the statement underlines the mutual knowledge of the good shepherd and the sheep. The audience has learnt the importance of knowledge about Jesus for discipleship. Knowledge of Jesus moves the first disciples to come to Jesus. Here they learn that this is not a one-sided knowledge but a mutual knowledge that follows the pattern of the knowledge of Jesus and the Father. Jesus knows his sheep, and they know him, “just as” (καθώς) the Father knows him and he knows the Father (v. 15). Jesus’ relationship with the Father becomes the model for his relationship with the disciples.

5.4. Resurrection and Life (11:25-26)

John 11, in which the saying about resurrection and life is found, is set between references to the Feast of Dedication (10:22) and the week before the Passover (12:1). The chapter recounts the raising of Lazarus, which is the sign that brings Jesus’ public ministry to its climax. The audience of the saying is Martha, the sister of Lazarus. When she meets

Jesus and confirms her faith in the resurrection of the dead on the last day (v. 24), Jesus tells her, “I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live” (v. 25).

The saying, “I am the resurrection and the life” (ἐγώ εἰμι ἡ ἀνάστασις καὶ ἡ ζωή), explains who Jesus is in relationship to all human beings. He is the guarantee of the resurrection and the life of those who believe in him. The truth of Jesus’ words is illustrated by his raising of Lazarus. The saying, which precedes the event, clarifies the significance of Jesus’ act. As Ball asserts, “Without the claim to be the Resurrection and the Life, the raising of Lazarus would be no more than a spectacular miracle (cf. 4.46-54).”¹⁵⁸ The saying brings the miraculous act “to a higher plane where the restoration of physical life is not as important as the promise of eternal life. . . .”¹⁵⁹ The raising of Lazarus thus becomes a sign that reveals the truth about Jesus’ identity. This last sign that Jesus did during his public ministry is unique because it points to Jesus’ own death and resurrection that is the ultimate proof of his claim to be the resurrection and the life. At the same time the event allows Jesus’ enemies to bring forward their plan to do away with him (11:47-57), thus enabling the hour of Jesus’ glorification to come (12:23, 27; 13:1).

“I am the resurrection and the life” is followed by “Whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die” (vv. 25b-26). The relative clauses, “whoever believes in me” (ὁ πιστεύων εἰς ἐμέ) and “everyone who

¹⁵⁸ Ball, *I Am’ in John’s Gospel*, 103.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 104.

lives and believes in me” (παῖς ὁ ζῶν καὶ πιστεύων εἰς ἐμέ), imply an invitation to believe in Jesus as the prerequisite for the promise of life. The issue at stake here is not the nature or the timing of resurrection (whether it will take place now or on the last day) but faith in Jesus.¹⁶⁰ This is confirmed in the dialogue which follows the saying. Jesus asks Martha, “Do you believe this?” (v. 26b). “This” (τοῦτο), within this context, refers to the saying. But instead of replying that she believes in what Jesus has just said, Martha answers, “Yes, Lord. I have come to believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one who is coming into the world” (v. 27). This indicates that Martha understands Jesus’ question as if he asked her, “Do you believe in me?” Martha’s confession of faith recalls that of Peter: “We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God” (6:69). It also echoes, almost word for word, what John aims to be the purpose of the testimony of Jesus, namely, “that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name (20:31).”¹⁶¹ The revelation of Jesus identity as the resurrection and life therefore leads Martha to confirm her faith in Jesus, whom she calls “teacher” (11:28).¹⁶² By doing so, she confirms a teacher-disciple relationship with Jesus.

¹⁶⁰ Michael, *The Gospel of John*, 632.

¹⁶¹ Ibid., 632-33.

¹⁶² Bennema (*Encountering Jesus*, 145) notes, “Martha’s addressing Jesus as ‘Teacher’ (11:28) and ‘Lord’ (11, 21) reflects the teacher-disciple relationship mentioned in 13:13, showing that she probably consider herself a disciple of Jesus.”

6. Conclusion

A narrative reading of selected passages in the Book of Signs and an analysis of the movement from christological teaching to the teaching about discipleship reveal the christological character of Johannine discipleship: it is related to and flows from the Gospel's Christology. A few points can be made to clarify and establish this conclusion.

First, the narrative flow indicates that John intends to impart a christological teaching not for its own sake but to prepare the audience for the message of discipleship he wants to communicate. In the prologue he introduces the divine identity of the Word in its relationship to God (1:1-2) and creation (1:3-4) and so prepares the ground for the rejection of the world (1:5, 10-11) and encourages the audience to receive the Word and believe in him (1:12-13). In the narrative concerning the first disciples John employs various christological titles to provide the basis for the disciples' following and believing in Jesus. He calls Jesus' miraculous act at Cana a "sign" (σημεῖον) through which Jesus' glory is revealed so that the disciples may believe in him (2:11, cf. 20:31). He depicts the story of the man born blind in a way that the argument about Jesus' identity leads to the blind man's confession of faith (9:38). He has Jesus reveal his identity through the 'I Am' sayings which are followed by an invitation to discipleship as a prerequisite to attain Jesus' promises. In the Fourth Gospel the christological content of the narrative leads to discipleship, and the teaching about discipleship flows from the Gospel's Christology, which is the heartbeat and the center of the Johannine thought.¹⁶³

¹⁶³ Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, 249.

Second, discipleship is the result of knowledge about Jesus. For John, the prime force that leads the protagonists to discipleship is their knowledge of him. The first two disciples follow Jesus and stay with him on hearing John's witness to Jesus as the Lamb of God (1:35-37). Andrew brings his brother Simon Peter to Jesus because of his knowledge of Jesus as the Messiah (1:41-42). In his testimony to Nathanael, Philip indicates that he follows Jesus because he knows that Jesus, son of Joseph from Nazareth, is the fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets (1:45). Nathanael recognizes Jesus as the Son of God and the King of Israel and this brings him to a confession of faith (1:49-50). The blind man's knowledge of the man named Jesus (9:11), who is a prophet (9:17) and a man from God (9:33), brings him to faith in the Son of Man (9:35-38).¹⁶⁴ Thus, John portrays discipleship (coming, following, abiding, testifying, and believing in Jesus) as the ultimate result of one's knowledge of Jesus' identity. In the Johannine context, to know Jesus means to believe in him and become his disciple.¹⁶⁵ This explains why John portrays the world's ignorance of

¹⁶⁴ We may add as well the Samaritan woman and the people of Samaria who believe because they know that Jesus is truly the savior of the world (4:4-42) and the royal official who realizes the truth of Jesus' words concerning his son's healing and believes in Jesus (4:46-54).

¹⁶⁵ For the significance relationship between faith and knowledge in the Fourth Gospel, see Rudolf Bultmann, *Faith and Understanding* (trans. L. P. Smith; New York: Harper & Row, 1969). Pazdan (*Discipleship as the Appropriation of the Eschatological Salvation*, 158) asserts that "It is characteristic of the Fourth Gospel . . . that the disciples' knowledge of Jesus is a criterion which separates them from those who do not know him because they do not believe in him." Despite the disciples' knowledge of Jesus, the author of the Fourth Gospel portrays their lack of understanding of who Jesus really is (4:31-38; 6:1-21; 9:1-7; 11:16; 14:5-10). Yet John depicts their misunderstanding of Jesus sympathetically, not as a complete failure in belief but as the occasion for Jesus to reveal his true identity. This indicates that the author employs the character of the disciples in order to communicate to the audience what he wants to be their response to the testimony about Jesus (cf. 20:31). See Farely, *The Disciples in the Fourth Gospel: A Narrative Analysis of Their Faith and Understanding*, 219-29.

the Word not simply as an intellectual inability to recognize him but as an active rejection of him (1:10-11), as sin (15:21-25).

Third, the interchangeable usage of language between Jesus and the protagonists indicates the profound relationship between Jesus and his followers. Jesus' word of invitation to the first two disciples, "come and you shall see" (1:39), is repeated by Philip when he invites Nathanael to "come and behold" Jesus (1:46). The way Jesus is introduced to the two disciples (1:35) echoes the way Jesus introduces Nathanael (1:48). The man born blind shares some of the characteristics of Jesus (teaching the Pharisees, accused by the Pharisees of being a sinner, similar rhetorical style, etc.). In the saying about the light of the world, those who believe in Jesus will possess the light of life just as Jesus is the light of the world (8:12). Moreover, John develops his portrait of a true disciple on the pattern of Jesus' own identity in his unique Father-Son relationship with God. As Jesus is the only Son who shares the glory of the Father (1:14) and has the privilege to reveal God (1:18), those who receive the Word and believe in him are given the status of children of God (1:12-13). Those who eat the bread of life live because of Jesus, just as (καθώς) Jesus lives because of the living Father (6:56-57). Jesus knows his sheep and they know him "just as" (καθώς) the Father knows him and he knows the Father (v. 15). In the Johannine narrative, it is Jesus who is the prime model for discipleship.

Fourth, John portrays discipleship as a gift from above which at the same time requires human responsibility. The prologue indicates that the privilege of becoming children of God has nothing to do with natural procreation or human desire but is a matter of a divine prerogative (1:13). In the narrative concerning the first disciples, it is Jesus who

takes the initiative and asks the two disciples of John, “What are you looking for?” and then invites them to see the place where he lives (1:38-39). It is Jesus who finds Philip (1:43) and who tells Nathanael about his foreknowledge of him (1:48). It is Jesus who finds the blind man and gives him the opportunity to confirm his faith. Thus, discipleship is a matter of divine initiative. It is granted from above, from the Father (6:44, 65). Yet discipleship requires human response. The prologue states that those who are called children of God are those who receive the Word and believe in his name (1:12). The first disciples, on hearing John’s witness, decide to follow Jesus (1:37). As a distinctive group of Jesus’ followers, the disciples respond to Jesus’ first sign at Cana by believing in him (2:11). The blind man shows his eagerness to see the Son of Man and confirms his faith in him (9:36-38). In the ‘I Am’ sayings, the promises to never again hunger or thirst (6:35), to possess the light of life (8:12), to be saved (10:9), and to have eternal life (11:26-27) require a positive response of coming to Jesus and believing in him. Thus, Johannine discipleship entails both divine sovereignty and human responsibility. This explains why the Jews and the Pharisees refuse to become Jesus’ disciples (9:28). Although they hear about Jesus, they do not know him (9:29), so they reject him (cf. 1:10-11). This is also why Judas, despite being one of the Twelve chosen by Jesus, is not worthy of the gift because he chooses to be in allegiance with the devil and hand Jesus over (6:70-71).

Fifth, Jesus is the ultimate goal of discipleship. The two disciples of John, on hearing the testimony about Jesus, leave their former master and follow Jesus (1:35-37). The blind man rightly expects the Pharisees, who claim to be Moses’ disciples, to become

Jesus' disciples, too (9:27). After all, being Jesus' disciple is the ultimate goal of all who claim to be disciples of any kind, since John, Moses, and the prophets all testify to Jesus.

The christological character of Johannine discipleship, which we confirmed through the reading of the selected passages in the Book of Signs, will shed light on the reading of Jesus' prayer in John 17. The constant movement from Christology to discipleship, the significance of knowledge, the depiction of Jesus in his relationship with the Father as the model for disciples, the balance of divine sovereignty and human responsibility, and the primacy of Jesus as the ultimate goal of discipleship are all displayed in John 17.

Chapter Three

The Literary Context, Text, and Structure of John 17

This chapter deals with three basic literary elements related to John 17 in order to prepare for the exegetical analysis of the passage. I shall begin with a review of the literary context of John 17. This is essential for understanding the passage since John 17 does not stand as an isolated narrative but is part of a larger narrative unit, namely, Jesus' farewell to his disciples (chaps. 13–17; hereafter: the Farewell Discourse).¹ The review of the literary context is followed by an analysis of the textual problems of John 17. Some significant textual variants will be examined in order to establish the text. There then follows an analysis of the structure of the passage, which will provide the outline for the exegesis of John 17 in the next chapter. My analysis of the literary context, text, and structure of John 17 will pay particular attention to the Johannine strategy for conveying the twofold message of Christology and discipleship.

1. Literary Context: The Johannine Farewell Discourse (Chaps. 13–17)

Within the Johannine account of Jesus' farewell to his disciples, the prayer in John 17 occurs after Jesus' farewell speech (13:31–16:33), just before he goes with his disciples to the garden across the Kidron Valley where he is arrested (18:1). The position of the prayer, which is sandwiched between Jesus' farewell speech and his passion, leads scholars to emphasize its significance, as we have seen in the first chapter of this dissertation.

¹ I use the term "farewell discourse" to include the whole section of Jesus' farewell to his disciples (John 13:1–17:26), whereas, the term "farewell speech" is used when I refer to the speech in 13:31–16:33.

Scholars generally agree that, in its present setting, John 17 is a fitting conclusion to the farewell speech, which Jesus delivers in anticipation of his death and resurrection.² The prayer, according to Brown, is the climax of the speech.³ Some scholars go further and regard the prayer as the summary not only of the farewell speech but of the entire gospel as well.⁴

Being a climactic moment of Jesus' farewell to his disciples, the prayer in John 17 exhibits the profound relationship between Christology and discipleship. Through the prayer, in which Jesus shares with the disciples his intimate relationship with the Father, he expresses his self-understanding of his unique relationship with the Father and, based on this, he prays for the disciples and all future believers. In other words, John 17 highlights key concepts of Johannine Christology in order to draw from them his teaching concerning discipleship.

In the previous chapter I highlighted the relationship of Christology and discipleship through an analysis of selected passages in the first half of the Gospel (chaps. 1–12). Here, while attempting to clarify the literary context of John 17 within the Farewell Discourse, I will pay particular attention to John's tendency to impart his teaching about discipleship in light of his christological teaching. This section will show that within the context of the coming of his "hour," which is now imminent (13:1), Jesus makes use of this occasion to

² See the section on "The significance of John 17 within Its Literary Context" in Chapter One.

³ Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2. 744.

⁴ Matos ("John 17: Its Structure, Style, Theme, and Function in the Fourth Gospel," 178) concludes that "John 17 works in many ways to summarize the themes/theology of the Gospel"

remind the disciples “who he is” in terms of his origin and destiny, his mission, and his relationship to the Father (Christology), and “how he wants the disciples to be” (discipleship) in the “world” that is hostile to them. The twofold message of Christology and discipleship repeatedly emerges in the Farewell Discourse and comes to a climax in the prayer that Jesus offers to his Father. I begin with an analysis of the opening section of the Farewell Discourse (13:1-30): the footwashing (13:1-20) and the dismissal of Judas (13:21-30).⁵

1.1. The Footwashing (13:1-20)⁶

The shift from the first part of the Johannine narrative (the so-called Book of Signs: chaps. 1–12) to the second part of the narrative (the Book of Glory: chaps. 13–21) is marked by Jesus’ awareness of the coming of the “hour” (ὥρα, 13:1). Toward the end of his public ministry, Jesus’ decision to raise Lazarus provided the opportunity for the Jews to proceed

⁵ Scholars divide the farewell discourse (John 13:1–17:26) in various ways. The main question is whether 13:31–38 belongs to what precedes (13:1–30) or to what follows (14:1–16:33). Some scholars think that it belongs together with what precedes (13:1–38). See, e.g., Lagrange, *Évangile selon Saint Jean*, 365–70; Stibbe, *John*, 144; F. J. Moloney, “The Structure and Message of John 13:1–38,” *ABR* 34 (1986) 1–16; George Mlakuzhyil, *The Christological Literary Structure of the Fourth Gospel* (AnBib 117; Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1987) 228. The majority of scholars, however, regard it as part of what follows (13:31–16:33). See Kellum, *The Unity of the Farewell Discourse*, 150.

Here I divide the farewell discourse (chaps. 13–17) as follow: (1) 13:1–30 is the opening section, which includes the footwashing (13:1–20) and the dismissal of Judas (13:21–30); (2) 13:31–16:33 is the farewell speech, which consists of the first part of the speech (13:31–14:31) and the second part of the speech (15:1–16:33); (3) 17:1–26 is Jesus’ prayer for the disciples, which concludes the speech as well as the whole farewell discourse.

⁶ The Johannine account of the footwashing (13:1–20) begins with an introductory statement which establishes the setting of the event (vv. 1), followed by the beginning of the washing and the dialogue with Peter (vv. 3–10a), the end of the washing and Jesus’ monologue (vv. 12–17), and a concluding remark (vv. 18–20). The theme of the one who hand Jesus over emerges between each scene (vv. 2, 10b–11, 18). I proposed this triple sandwich structure of the footwashing in my licentiate thesis, “The Footwashing: Reading John 13:1–20 as a Literary Unity,” CUA, 2009, 67–68.

with their plan to do away with Jesus, thus enabling the “hour” of Jesus’ glorification through his death and resurrection to come (11:4). When Jesus is told by Philip and Andrew that the Greeks have come to see him, he proclaims the coming of the “hour” (12:23, 27). It is in full awareness of the coming of the “hour” that Jesus washes the disciples’ feet and delivers his farewell speech.

John opens the account of Jesus’ farewell with an introduction that begins with a prepositional phrase: “and before the feast of Passover” (πρὸ δὲ τῆς ἑορτῆς τοῦ πάσχα, v. 1). This phrase sets the chronological and theological setting for the footwashing scene as well as the whole scene of Jesus’ farewell discourse and the passion narrative. The phrase is followed by two consecutive participial constructions that begin with εἰδώς (“*he knew* that his hour had come to pass from this world to the Father”) and ἀγαπήσας (“*he loved* his own who were in the world and he loved them to the end”).⁷ The prepositional phrase and the two participial clauses clarify John’s christological point of view: Jesus died as the Passover lamb whose bones were not broken (John 19:36; Exod 12:10; Num 9:12). His death is “the hour” (ὥρα) of his glorification, “the hour” of his return to the Father. At the same time, his death on the cross is a manifestation of his love for his “own” (τοὺς ἰδίους). In describing Jesus’ death as the hour of his return to the Father and the act of Jesus’ love for his own, John draws the audience’s attention not only to the unity of Jesus and the Father (10:30, 38;

⁷ Some scholars point out that this kind of construction is unusual in the Gospel of John, and they take it as a sign of editorial activity. See Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 3. 10; Michal Wojciechowski, “La source de Jean 13:1-20,” *NTS* 34 (1988) 135. Yet both verbs, οἶδα and ἀγαπάω, are key verbs in the Fourth Gospel. The verb οἶδα is used 84 times in the Fourth Gospel. The verb ἀγαπάω is used 37 times in the Gospel of John and appears 30 times in the Book of Glory. In the Synoptics the verb appears only 5 times in Mark, 7 times in Matthew, and 9 times in Luke.

14:9-11, 20)—from whom he has come and to whom he will return—but to Jesus’ unity with “his own” (τοὺς ἰδίους) who are left in the world.⁸

The term τοὺς ἰδίους in the opening verse indicates that John has a wider perspective in view concerning those who belong to Jesus.⁹ The term includes not only the disciples who are present around Jesus but all who believe in him and receive his name (1:12), who listen to his voice and for whom he cares because they belong to him (10:3, 4, 12, 27, 15:19). During the farewell meal Jesus shows his love in a symbolic act of washing the disciple’s feet and then delivers the farewell speech to the disciples around him. Yet in using the term τοὺς ἰδίους, John wants his audience to see the disciples as the representatives of all who belong to Jesus. Later in John 17 Jesus prays for those given to him (περὶ ὧν δέδωκάς μοι), the disciples and all future believers. Jesus loves them all “until the end” or “completely” (εἰς τέλος)¹⁰ in a way that surpasses all imaginable loving: dying on the cross.

During the farewell meal John focuses on Judas, who appears three times in the footwashing narrative. In v. 2 Judas is said to be under the devil’s influence to hand Jesus over. In vv. 10b-11 Jesus declares that those whose feet he washed are already clean, except one: Judas. In v. 18, Judas is alluded to in the scriptural quotation as the one who “raised his heel against me” (Ps 41:9). John brings Judas into the narrative because his presence is crucial

⁸ Schnackenburg (*The Gospel according to St. John*, 3. 15) notes, “It is described here as Jesus’ transition from this world to the Father, because attention is drawn to his disciples—‘his own, who were still in the world’—and his time of activity in the world (9:5) is coming to an end (see 17:11, 13).”

⁹ Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 459; Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 438.

¹⁰ Moloney, *The Gospel of John*, 373-74. Brown, (*The Gospel according to John*, 2. 550) suggests that εἰς τέλος has a twofold meaning, “utterly, completely” and “to the end of life.” The related word, τελέω, appears at the moment of Jesus’ death when Jesus cries out τετέλεσται (19:30).

for understanding the footwashing, the farewell speech, and the whole passion narrative. By referring to Judas, John not only invites the audience to relate the footwashing to Jesus' death, in which Judas plays an important role,¹¹ he also prepares the audience to see a figure who exemplifies the opposite of Jesus. Judas's handing over of Jesus stands in contrast to Jesus' self-giving love. Jesus, the only Son of God who is given (δίδωμι) to the world because God so loves the world (3:16), voluntarily gives himself up for the sake of his own. In contrast to Jesus, Judas cooperates with the devil to hand Jesus over (παραδίδωμι) to the authorities to be crucified.¹²

John tells the audience that while the supper was taking place (δείπνου γινομένου, v. 2), Jesus rises, lays down (τίθησιν) his clothes, and ties a towel around his waist.¹³ He pours water into the basin and begins to wash the disciples' feet and wipe them with the towel around his waist (vv. 4-5). The chain of actions (he pours water into a basin, washes the disciples' feet, and wipes them with a towel) shows that Jesus acts like a slave who washes the feet of his master. However, to see Jesus' action merely as a sign of servitude or as an expression of humility is to miss the message of the footwashing event. The disciples are in

¹¹ Brown (*The Gospel according to John*, 2. 563) rightly insists, "The betrayal is mentioned in 2 precisely so that the reader will connect the footwashing and the death of Jesus. Jesus undertook this action symbolic of his death only after the forces had been set in motion that would lead to crucifixion."

¹² R. Alan Culpepper ("The Johannine *Hypodeigma*: A Reading of John 13," *Semeia* 53 [1991] 134) suggests that in the first five verses of John 13 "Jesus' action for his own is also set in contrast to the Devil's action in relation to Judas."

¹³ In describing Jesus' action of taking off his clothes, John uses the word τίθημι, the same word used in referring to Jesus' act of laying down his life (10:11, 15, 17, 18). The Synoptics use the verb ἐκδύω to mean "to take off" or "to undress" (Matt 27:28, 31; Mark 15:20; Luke 10:30). John's word choice encourages the audience to relate the footwashing to Jesus' death. See Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2. 551.

danger of missing the whole point of Jesus' symbolic action. John, however, makes use of Peter's misunderstanding to clarify the significance of Jesus' action.

Jesus' act of washing his disciples' feet is followed by two scenes, namely, his dialogue with Peter (vv. 6-11) and his monologue (vv. 12-20). Each scene provides an explanation for the action that seems to stand in tension with the other. The former gives a christological explanation of the footwashing, whereas the latter gives a moral explanation of the same event. Some scholars have explained this tension as the result of the editorial process the text has undergone.¹⁴ However, if the passage is read as a Johannine strategy to communicate the message of Christology and discipleship, both explanations are interrelated.

The dialogue between Jesus and Peter, in which the significance of the footwashing is interpreted, is Johannine in character, particularly in its usage of "misunderstanding" as a literary strategy.¹⁵ When Jesus approaches Peter, he refuses to let Jesus wash his feet. Peter's question, "Master, are you going to wash my feet?" (v. 6), indicates that he refuses to have his feet washed by Jesus, his master. Peter's refusal is understandable in the socio-cultural context of footwashing; but in its Johannine context, his refusal is due to his

¹⁴ Some scholars argue that an earlier version of the explanation of the footwashing has been integrated with a later version, either through a revision or an addition by the evangelist or by a later hand. Among these scholars who defend a source theory, some regard the christological explanation (vv. 6-11) as the traditional or earlier version. See G. Richter, "The Washing of Feet in the Gospel of John," *TD* 14 (1966) 200-206; Brown, *The Gospel of John*, 2. 559-62. Others propose the moral interpretation (vv. 12-20) to be the earlier version. See Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 461-463; M.-E. Boismard, "Le lavement des pieds (Jn, XIII, 1-17)," *RB* 71 (1964) 5-24.

¹⁵ Throughout the Gospel, John employs dialogue between Jesus and his disciples (4:31-34; 6:7-9, 67-70; 9:2-5; 11:8-10; 14:5-10) in which the disciples show a lack of understanding of Jesus' words. Their misunderstanding leads Jesus to reveal the deeper meaning of his words. Probably the best example of misunderstanding is the dialogue between Jesus and Nicodemus (3:1-21). Jesus speaks about being reborn in Spirit, and Nicodemus understands it as reentering the womb to be born again.

inadequate understanding of Jesus' act. John uses Peter's misunderstanding as a narrative strategy to give Jesus an occasion to reveal the deeper meaning of his symbolic act.

Jesus responds to Peter, "What I am doing, you do not understand now, but you will understand after this" (v. 7). By this response Jesus indicates that the significance of his action is more than what is implicit in Peter's question. It has a deeper meaning that Peter cannot understand now but which he will understand "after this" (μετὰ ταῦτα). John leaves μετὰ ταῦτα undefined here. But John has told the audience in 12:16 that it points to the time "when Jesus had been glorified" by his death, resurrection, and the coming of the Holy Spirit.¹⁶ Yet Peter, who is unable to understand Jesus' act, refuses it saying, "You will most certainly never (οὐ μή εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα) wash my feet." This allows Jesus to reveal the deeper significance of his action. He explains to Peter, "If I do not wash you, you have no inheritance (μέρος) with me" (v. 8). The word μέρος can simply mean "part" or "share,"¹⁷ but as Brown suggests, it is better translated as "heritage, inheritance," and here it means "the μέρος for eternal life."¹⁸

¹⁶ Since μετὰ ταῦτα refers to the time after Jesus' death and resurrection, some scholars think that it contradicts Jesus' rhetorical question at the beginning of his monologue, "Do you understand what I have done for you?" (v. 12). This question implies that the disciples have understood the meaning of Jesus' symbolic action. It has led scholars to conclude that there exists an inherent contradiction between the content of the dialogue between Jesus and Peter (vv. 6-11) and Jesus' monologue (vv. 12-20). They further propose that both the dialogue and the monologue come from different literary sources. In this sense, scholars have different hypotheses with regard to the literary genesis of the footwashing passage. See Fernando F. Segovia, "John 13.1-20, The Footwashing in the Johannine Tradition," *ZNW* 73 (1982) 36-37.

¹⁷ BDAG, s.v. μέρος.

¹⁸ Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2. 564. There are some texts where μέρος appears in the context of eternal life and eternal punishment (Matt 25:51; Rev 20:6; 21:8; 22:19). They support the idea of μέρος as pointing to eternal life. John Christopher Thomas (*Footwashing in John 13 and the Johannine Community* [Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993] 93) presents the evidence of μέρος used in the sense of a share in eternal life in the works of Ignatius of Antioch (*Epistle to Polycarp* and *Martyrdom of Polycarp*).

When he hears that the footwashing brings inheritance with Jesus, Peter asks Jesus to wash his hands and his head as well (v. 9).¹⁹ Peter understands Jesus' washing at a physical level whereas Jesus is speaking at a spiritual level. He explains to Peter, "Whoever has bathed has no need [except to have his feet washed], for he is clean all over" (v. 10a).²⁰ Jesus is saying to Peter that he is wrong to understand the act on the physical level.²¹ It is not the number of body parts which are washed that matters. Peter and the disciples need only to have their feet washed by Jesus. Once Peter has received the benefit of Jesus' act of washing his feet, he will be entirely clean.

Thus, John employs the dialogue between Jesus and Peter to help the audience understand Jesus' act of washing his disciples' feet as a symbolic action. Inasmuch as the footwashing has a symbolic value it points to Jesus' death on the cross.²² Through his death on the cross the disciples are cleansed and able to have a share in eternal life with him.

¹⁹ Some commentators see a cultic reason behind Peter's request to have his hand and head washed. See Thomas, *Footwashing in John 13*, 95-96; H. Weiss, "Footwashing in the Johannine Community." *NovT* 21 (1979) 317. Others look for the symbolic meaning of the washing of hands and head based on the cultural value of each body part. See Gam S. Shae ("Why Feet, Hands, and Head?" *BT* 48 (1997) 227. However, John probably uses them to signify Peter's misunderstanding, for he thinks on the physical level.

²⁰ I agree with Brown (*The Gospel according to John*, 2. 552) that one must put the phrase "except to have his feet washed" (εἰ μὴ τοὺς πόδας νίψασθαι) in brackets because both the reading without the phrase and the reading with the phrase have their merits for clarifying the same idea, namely, the significance of the footwashing, which this verse conveys.

²¹ That Jesus does not speak on the physical level is evident in v. 10b when he adds, "You are clean, but not all of you." All the disciples have their feet washed by Jesus, but this is not a guarantee that all of them are clean, because it is not physical cleanliness that matters.

²² Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 440; Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2. 562; Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 3. 19. That the footwashing has the elements of water, cleansing, and dying indicates that it could point to the sacrament of Baptism, as some scholars suggest. See, e.g., Dodd, *The Interpretation*, 401; Sanders and Mastin, *A Commentary*, 307. However, as Brown (*The Gospel according to John*, 2. 562) notes, the reference to Baptism here is "a secondary allusion."

After the dialogue that clarifies the christological meaning of the footwashing, Jesus puts on (ἐλάβεν)²³ his clothes, reclines again, and asks the disciples: “Do you understand what I have done for you?” (v. 12). This question seems to contradict what Jesus says in the dialogue, because in v. 7 he says that the disciples can only understand the act μετὰ ταῦτα. But here Jesus speaks as if the disciples have understood everything. On the one hand, this inconsistency could be explained as the result of a shift in audience. “The real audience for this instruction is not the disciples but the readers of the narrative, who already know of Jesus’ death and resurrection.”²⁴ On the other hand, it proves the author’s consistency by not leaving such an important symbolic act without its message for discipleship.²⁵ Once John has portrayed Jesus as having put on (ἐλάβεν) again his clothes, it is time to communicate to his audience what is expected from those who have a μέρος with Jesus and are cleansed by his death, as symbolized in the footwashing. John does not offer a new interpretation of Jesus’ symbolic act but draws out the implications of the act for the life of the disciples.²⁶

²³ In v. 4 John has used τίθησιν, the word he uses for the laying down of one’s life (10:11,15,17,18), to describe Jesus taking off his clothes. Here John employs λαμβάνω, which he used in 10:17, 18 to describe the good shepherd who takes up his life after he has laid it down.

²⁴ Culpepper, “The Johannine *Hypodeigma*,” 141.

²⁵ Koester, *Symbolism*, 13-14.

²⁶ Brown, (*The Gospel according to John*, 2. 569) points out that the general context of the discourse indicates that it does not lose its association with the death of Jesus. Barrett (*The Gospel according to St. John*, 443) also agrees that the monologue does not exclude the interpretation of the dialogue but rather the monologue and the dialogue imply each other.

Thus, without considering the christological meaning of the footwashing, one can understand Jesus' "model" or "example" (ὑπόδειγμα) in v. 15 as a pattern to wash one another's feet, because in v. 14 he commands the disciples: "You ought to wash one another's feet." However the footwashing is a symbolic act, and those who merely take Jesus' metaphorical statement literally misunderstand it.²⁷ In light of the christological meaning of Jesus' symbolic act, John wants the audience not only to understand the command to follow Jesus' ὑπόδειγμα as a command to wash other people's feet as an act of humility but also to follow the example of Jesus' act of love that he manifests by dying on the cross.

In saying, "No slave is greater than his master, nor is the one who is sent greater than the one who sent him" (v. 16), Jesus reminds his disciples that they cannot expect another destiny than what their "master" and "the one who sent" them experienced. Later in 15:20, when Jesus refers back to this saying, John indicates that it should be understood in the context of willingness to follow Jesus' way: "If they persecute me, they will also persecute you. If they keep my word, they will keep yours also." Only by doing these things that they now know (οἶδατε) will they be declared "blessed" (μακάριοι, v. 17). They are ready to become Jesus' representatives, because to receive the one whom Jesus sent is to receive Jesus, and to receive Jesus is to receive the Father (v. 20).

The footwashing passage, therefore, sets the tone for the Farewell Discourse as well as the passion narrative that follows. John draws the audience's attention to Jesus who,

²⁷ Culpepper, "The Johannine *Hypodeigma*," 141-42.

aware of the imminent coming of his “hour,” washes the disciples’ feet as a symbolic act of love and explains the significance of the act. The two seemingly different explanations of the footwashing are deeply related. Jesus’ act of love, which climaxes in his death on the cross, bears the consequence of authentic discipleship. Thus, John consistently presents Jesus as the model for the disciples and the future community of believers for whom he prays to the Father.

Meanwhile, John draws the audience’s attention to the one who will hand Jesus over, Judas, as a negative example of true discipleship. In the narrative section that follows the footwashing, John presents the decisive moment when Judas shows himself to be unclean, although he is washed by Jesus (13:10b). Accordingly, he is qualified to be called “the son of destruction” (ὁ υἱὸς τῆς ἀπωλείας, 17:12).

1.2. The Dismissal of Judas (13:21-30)

The phrase “when Jesus had said this” (ταῦτα εἰπὼν [ὁ] Ἰησοῦς) in v. 21 marks a new development in the narrative.²⁸ After explaining the significance of his symbolic act of footwashing, Jesus surprises the disciples with the pronouncement, “One of you (εἷς ἐξ ὑμῶν) will hand me over.” The pronoun ὑμῶν refers to the disciples who are with Jesus at the meal. They are “his own” (τοὺς ἰδίους), whom he loved “to the end” or “completely” (εἰς τέλος), whose feet he has just washed. Yet now he tells them that one of them will hand him over (παραδίδομι).

²⁸ The phrase ταῦτα εἰπὼν [ὁ] Ἰησοῦς, at the beginning of v. 21, implies that Jesus’ monologue concerning the footwashing has ended in the previous verse (v. 20). Verse 21 introduces the theme of the announcement of the one who will hand Jesus over; thus it can be seen as the beginning of a new section.

The pronouncement, however, does not surprise the audience. The narrator has repeatedly alluded to the handing over of Jesus by one of his disciples (6:64, 71; 12:4; 13:2, 11). Jesus' own words during the footwashing signaled his awareness that one of his disciples is, despite being washed, unclean (v. 10) and will raise his heel against him (v. 18). Yet, when Jesus directly confronts the disciples with the fact that one of them will hand him over, he is troubled in spirit (ἐταράχθη τῷ πνεύματι). Jesus is emotionally moved, as in the scene of the raising of Lazarus (11:33), in the presence of the power of darkness that now works in one of his disciples.

The announcement immediately stirs up a reaction from the disciples. They look at one another, wondering of whom Jesus is speaking (v. 22). The disciples do not ask Jesus, "Is it I, Lord?" as in Mark (14:19) and Matthew (26:22).²⁹ Instead, John introduces a new character. Just as the one who will hand him over is "one of you [a disciple]" (εἷς ἐξ ὑμῶν), so the new character is also "one of his disciples" (εἷς ἐκ τῶν μαθητῶν, v. 23). However, contrary to the former who "will hand me over" (παραδώσει με), the latter is "the one whom Jesus loved" (ὃν ἠγάπα ὁ Ἰησοῦς). John presents this disciple reclining at Jesus' side, "in the bosom" (ἐν τῷ κόλπῳ) of Jesus. His closeness to Jesus resembles what John has told the audience about Jesus that he is "in the bosom" (εἰς τὸν κόλπον) of the Father (1:18).³⁰

²⁹ Despite the similarity with the corresponding synoptic accounts (Mark 14:18-21; Matt 26:21-25; Luke 22:21-23), the Johannine account in this section differs significantly from that of the Synoptics.

³⁰ See Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2. 577. According to Michael (*The Gospel of John*, 749), this interpretation is as old as Origen: "John . . . was reclining in the bosom of the Word, analogous also to the Word being in the bosom of the Father" (*Commentary on John*, 32. 264; *FC*, 89. 391).

Jesus' love characterizes the identity of this disciple, the so-called "Beloved Disciple." John has told the audience that Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus³¹ (11:3, 5, 36) and that he loved "his own" to the end or completely (13:1). He showed his love in the symbolic act of washing his disciples' feet, and he charged them to follow his *ὑπόδειγμα* (13:15). Love and intimacy, for which Jesus asks the Father in his prayer (17:23), must characterize the community of Jesus' followers (13:34-35). Thus, by introducing the disciple whom Jesus loved in relation to the one who will hand Jesus over, John fulfills two tasks: first he highlights the primacy of Jesus' love. Second, he draws a stark contrast between the two disciples: one is a negative example, the other is the perfect example of discipleship.³² One leaves Jesus and goes into the darkness, the other abides with Jesus at his side.

The Beloved Disciple is characterized not only by his intimacy with Jesus but by his close relationship with Peter as well. From now on he appears (most of the time) in association with Peter (20:2-8; 21:7, 30-23). Because the Beloved Disciple is at Jesus' side, Peter signals him to ask Jesus about the one who will hand him over (v. 24).³³ The disciple

³¹ Since Lazarus is said to be loved by Jesus, some scholars suggest that he is the Beloved Disciple. See Robert Eisler, *The Enigma of the Fourth Gospel* (London: Methuen, 1938) 190; Floyd Vivian Filson, "Who Was the Beloved Disciple," *JBL* 68 (1949) 83-88; Vernard Eller, *Beloved Disciple: His Name, His Story, His Thought* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987). However, this is unlikely since Lazarus does not enjoy the anonymity that characterizes the Beloved Disciple. See Carson, *The Gospel according to John*, 472.

³² On the Beloved Disciple as a paradigm for discipleship, see Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel*, 121, 123; Siker-Gieseler, "Disciples and Discipleship in the Fourth Gospel," 222; Paul Palatty, "Discipleship in the Fourth Gospel: An Acted Out Message of Disciples as Characters," *BiBh* 25 (1999) 296-98.

³³ The relationship between Peter and the Beloved Disciple in the Fourth Gospel is often debated. See, e.g. Arthur J. Droge, "The Status of Peter in the Fourth Gospel: A Note on John 18:10-11," *JBL* 109 (1990) 307-11; D. H. Gee, "Why Did Peter Spring into the Sea?" *JTS* 40 (1989) 481-89; Brendan Byrne, "The Faith

“leaned back against Jesus’ chest (στῆθος)” and asks, “Master, who is it?” (v. 25).³⁴ Jesus answers, “It is the one to whom I hand the morsel after I have dipped it.” Then he dips the morsel and gives it to Judas, son of Simon Iscariot (v. 26).³⁵ Jesus’ answer to the question and his gesture clearly show that the one who will hand him over is Judas Iscariot. This is confirmed by the narrator’s assertion that after Jesus gave the morsel Satan entered into Judas.³⁶ Jesus then tells Judas, “What you are going to do, do quickly” (v. 27). This confirms what John has told the audience about Judas Iscariot (6:64, 71; 13:2, 11, 18). Yet, as vv. 28-29 indicate, no one (οὐδεὶς) at the table understands (ἔγνων) Jesus’ words to Judas. But is it likely that the disciples were unable to comprehend such a clear indication?

One possible reason for the disciples’ lack of understanding is that they did not hear what Jesus said in v. 26 about the identity of the one who will hand him over since he tells only to the Beloved Disciple. In saying “no one understands,” the Beloved Disciple, acts as

of the Beloved Disciple and the Community in John 20,” in *The Johannine Writings*, 31-45 (ed. Stanley E. Porter and Craig A. Evans; Sheffield: Sheffield University Press, 1995). These scholars identify Peter as the subordinate of the Beloved Disciple. However, I agree with Blaine (*Peter in the Gospel of John: The Making of the Authentic Discipleship* [Academia Biblica 27; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2007] 187) that the pattern of their relationship is a “cooperative dynamic,” rather than a “competitive dynamic.” Blaine notes that within this passage (13:21-26), “The Evangelist designs the scene to show these two important disciples cooperating to expedite the departure of Judas, although the two set out with the simple goal of identifying the traitor.”

³⁴ Westcott (*The Gospel of John*, 194) thinks that “bosom” (κόλπος) refers to “the full fold of the robe; whereas “breast” (στῆθος) refers to Jesus’ “actual body.” Some scholars attempt to reconstruct the seating arrangement during the farewell meal based on the information in 13:23-25. See, e.g., *Brown, The Gospel of John*, 2. 574. Such attempts, as Brown admits, remain speculative and inconclusive. John’s interest here is not the exact seating arrangement but the intimacy of the Beloved Disciple with Jesus.

³⁵ Some scholars relate the giving of the morsel to Judas with the giving of the Eucharistic bread. See, e.g., Moloney, *The Gospel of John*, 384.

³⁶ Here John agrees with Luke (22:3) that Satan enters into Judas. However, in Luke this happens before the meal. In this case, the Lukan text is closer to John 13:2 in which the devil has influence over Judas before the meal began. See Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2. 578.

the eyewitness of the Gospel, simply reports the ignorance of the other disciples. He retells the story here in his capacity as an observer of the other disciples gathered around Jesus.³⁷ This makes him the only disciple privileged to share Jesus' knowledge of the one who will hand him over. His silence concerning Judas, therefore, can be seen as an exemplary act. Like Jesus, the Beloved Disciple lets Judas go so that the "hour" may come to its fulfillment.

The explanation above, while it reinforces the image of the disciple whom Jesus loved as an ideal disciple, is based on a speculative attempt to find a reason for the disciples' lack of understanding, which is a Johannine strategy to communicate his message. In saying that "no one at the table understood" (v. 28), John highlights the disciples' lack of understanding in contrast to Jesus' full knowledge of his "hour" (13:1, 3).³⁸ For John, as Moloney asserts, "not even the Beloved Disciple, who is presented in most intimate terms in 13:23 and who also does so well throughout the Gospel (see 19:25-27; 20:2-10, and especially 21:20-24) is saved from the condemnation of 'not understanding.'"³⁹

If the narrative is read within this context, there is no need to ask why the disciples remain ignorant despite the clear indication given by Jesus, or why the Beloved Disciple does nothing to stop Judas (if he is the only one who knows that Judas is the one who will hand Jesus over), or why Jesus tells Judas to do his plan and to do it quickly. For John, when the "hour" comes, Judas must play his role so that the Scriptures may be fulfilled

³⁷ Michaels, *The Gospel of John*, 751-54.

³⁸ Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 3. 30; Francis J. Moloney, "The Structure and Message of John 13:1-38," *AusBR* 34 (1986) 12.

³⁹ Moloney, "The Structure and Message of John 13:1-38," 12.

(13:18; 17:12). John highlights the disciples' lack of understanding in this very critical moment to heighten the need for Jesus to explain the significance of his departure and to pray for the needs of the disciples who are left in the world.

Despite Judas's plan, Jesus is fully aware of what is about to happen. In the Johannine narrative, Jesus takes the initiative to dip the morsel and gives it to Judas, which differs from the Synoptics' account in which Judas himself dips the morsel (Mark 14:20; Matt 26:23). Jesus' act is a gesture of honor, if not a sign of love to the end.⁴⁰ However, for Judas it is a decisive moment of lost discipleship. After the morsel, Satan enters into Judas. Instead of having Jesus in him, as Jesus wishes (14:20; 17:23), Judas has Satan in him. Judas now reaches the point of no return. But even so, it is Jesus who tells him to go to fulfill Satan's plan.

The last thing that John does to prepare the stage for Jesus to deliver his farewell speech and pray to the Father is to have Judas leave the stage as soon as possible. After receiving the morsel Judas leaves immediately (εὐθὺς), and it was night (v. 30). Judas leaves Jesus, who is the light of the world (8:12; 9:5; 12:35, 46), and he goes into the night of those who love the darkness and reject Jesus (1:5; 3:2; 8:12; 9:4; 11:10; 12:35, 46).⁴¹

⁴⁰ According to Hunter (*According to John: The New Look at the Fourth Gospel* [Philadelphia: Westminster, 1968] 137), in traditional Middle Eastern societies "it is a mark of special favour for the host to dip a piece of bread in the common sauce-dish and hand it to a guest." See also Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 2. 918-19. Moloney (*The Gospel of John*, 384) asserts that the giving of the morsel indicates that Jesus' love "reached out even to the archetype of the evil disciple."

⁴¹ Moloney, (*The Gospel of John*, 384-85) notes, "As Jesus' ministry began a leader of 'the Jews' moved from the night toward the light of Jesus (3:2). The journey of that particular character is still in progress (7:50-51), but as Jesus' life draws to a conclusion one of 'his own' whom he has loved *eis telos* (13:1; cf. v. 26) moves away from the light into the darkness (v. 30)."

With the departure of Judas, the stage is now ready for Jesus to deliver his farewell speech and offer his prayer to the Father. Yet there is only a little time left for Jesus (16:16-22). Judas will soon appear again at the garden across the Kidron Valley, where Jesus and his disciples will go after the prayer (18:1-2). Judas, who now leaves with Satan in him into the darkness of the night, will appear again with a band of soldiers and guards from the chief priests and the Pharisees with lanterns, torches, and weapons in order to arrest Jesus (18:3).

This section of the narrative is marked by Johannine Christology. John underlines Jesus' knowledge of the coming of his hour (in contrast with the disciples' lack of understanding). It is Jesus who identifies the one who will hand him over and tells him to fulfill his plan. At the same time, in presenting the exit of Judas Iscariot as the final preparation for Jesus' farewell speech, John takes the opportunity to introduce the Beloved Disciple into the narrative for the first time to provide a contrast with Judas.⁴² John intends, as Brown suggests, "to introduce him [the Beloved Disciple] as an antithesis to Judas, showing the good and bad extremes in the spectrum of discipleship."⁴³ By introducing him as "the disciple whom *Jesus loved*," John points to a more profound opposition between Jesus and Judas: Judas's act of handing Jesus over to those who do not love him is the opposite of Jesus' act of love for his "own."

⁴² Lindars (*The Gospel of John*, 457) asserts that John introduces the Beloved Disciple for the first time here because "John is preoccupied with the problem of true and false discipleship in his presentation of the Last Supper traditions."

⁴³ Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2. 577.

1.3. The Farewell Speech (13:31–16:33)

Judas's departure into the darkness becomes the occasion for Jesus to begin the farewell speech.⁴⁴ "It is almost as if, now that Judas has gone, the last barrier to the onset of the impending 'hour' has been removed, and Jesus signals the development: *God will glorify the Son . . . at once.*"⁴⁵ Judas's exit, which happened upon Jesus' request, sets in motion the 'hour' of Jesus' glorification. Judas has left to put his plan into action: handing Jesus over to his enemies. John now turns to Jesus who delivers the farewell speech to his disciples. The temporal clause, "when he [Judas] had left" (ὅτε οὖν ἐξῆλθεν), becomes the immediate context of the farewell speech as well as the prayer that follows it. The speech and the prayer take place between Judas's exit into the night (13:30-31a) and his reappearance in the garden across the Kidron Valley (18:1-3). I will treat the farewell speech in two parts:⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Most scholars think that the farewell speech begins in 13:31, although some scholars think that it begins in chap. 14. See Kellum, *The Unity of the Farewell Discourse*, 150.

⁴⁵ Carson, *The Gospel according to John*, 482.

⁴⁶ The majority of scholars agree that the phrase "Get up, let us go" in 14:31 marks a major break in the farewell speech. Thus, without going into further discussion about the overall structure of the speech, I simply divide the speech in two parts: the first part of the speech (13:31–14:31) and the second part of the speech (15:1–16:33). Recently, a few Swiss and German scholars, such as, Andreas Dettwiler (*Die Gegenwart des Erhörten* [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1995]), Jean Zumstein ("Le processus de relecture dans la littérature johannique," *ETR* 73 [1998] 161-76), Konrad Haldimann (*Rekonstruktion und Entfaltung: Exegetische Untersuchungen Zu Joh 15 Und 16* [Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2000]), and Klaus Scholtissek (*In Ihm sein und bleiben* [Freiburg: Herder, 2000]) propose the hypothesis of *relecture*, in which some suggest that the second farewell speech (chaps. 15–17) is a rereading of Jesus' original speech (chaps. 13–14).

1.3.1. The First Part of the Farewell Speech (13:31–14:31)

(1) 13:31-38

Jesus opens the speech by speaking about the significance of his death. For Jesus, his death is the moment of his glorification (12:23-24). It is through his death that Jesus, the Son of Man,⁴⁷ is glorified, and God is glorified in him (v. 31). From the narrative point of view, Jesus' glorification will take place in the "immediate" (εὐθύς) future, as implied by the future tense of δοξάσει in v. 32. This is certain because Judas has left to carry out his plan. This allows Jesus to speak as if his glorification has already taken place: "Now, the Son of Man is glorified (ἐδοξάσθη) and God is glorified (ἐδοξάσθη) in him."⁴⁸ Jesus makes the future event, whose fulfillment defines his identity, the guarantee and basis for telling "his own" the things that define their identity as his disciples.

Addressing the disciples as "children" (τεκνία),⁴⁹ Jesus repeats what he told the Jews in 7:33-34: "I will be with you only a little while longer. You will look for me," but "Where I am you cannot come." Jesus turns from the theological significance of his death as the moment of glorification to show a deep concern for his "children," the disciples, because his

⁴⁷ This is the only time the title "Son of Man" appears in the Book of Glory. In the Gospel of John the title "Son of God" is interchangeable with "Son of Man" (cf. 3:13 and 3:17; 11:4 and 12:23; 13:31 and 17:1). See Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2. 611; Michael, *The Gospel of John*, 756.

⁴⁸ The usage of the aorist in v. 31 and the future in v. 32 leads to various suggestions. From a diachronical approach to the text, I agree with Brown (*The Gospel according to John*, 2. 610) that it is probably the result of the author's mixing of "the viewpoint of the night before Jesus died and the viewpoint of the later period of Gospel composition." From a synchronical approach the aorist implies the certainty of Jesus' death because of the departure of Judas. See Michaels, *The Gospel of John*, 756.

⁴⁹ The diminutive τεκνίον is found only here in the Fourth Gospel, but it is a standard title for disciples in 1 John (2:1, 12, 28; 3:7, 18; 4:4; 5:21). Here John employs the title to underline Jesus' concern for the disciples who are left in the world. In the prologue (1:12) John uses τέκνα θεοῦ for believers.

imminent glorification at his death means departure and separation from them. Although they will follow him later (13:37) and will see him again (14:19; 16:16-22), Jesus emphasizes the impossibility of following him and heightens the need to impart the love commandment to them (vv. 34-35).

This setting of the love commandment is often considered out of place.⁵⁰ However, from the point of view of the relationship between Christology and discipleship, this is another proof of John's tendency to follow a christological message with a message concerning discipleship. For John, when Jesus has clarified the significance of his death and the imminence of his departure, it is the right time to give the disciples a "new commandment" (ἐντολὴν καινὴν): "Love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another" (v. 34). Jesus' death on the cross, which is the moment of his glorification, is an act of love that becomes a model for his disciples to follow (13:1, 15). Mutual love must become the sign of discipleship. It is by loving one another that "all will know that you are my disciples" (v. 35).

The dialogue between Jesus and Peter in vv. 36-38 underlines Peter's lack of understanding. Peter does not know where Jesus is going, and Jesus tells him that he will only follow him later (v. 36). Nevertheless, Peter promises that he will lay down his life for Jesus (v. 37). Peter attempts to prove his discipleship by showing his love and commitment to Jesus to the point of laying down his life, foreshadowing Jesus' command later in 15:13.

⁵⁰ Verses 34-35, sandwiched between vv. 33 and 36-38, interrupt the theme of the disciples' inability to follow Jesus. Thus the two verses are often regarded as a later insertion. See J. Becker, "Die Abschiedsreden Jesu im Johannesevangelium," *ZNW* 61 (1970) 220; Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 3. 53; Segovia, "The Structure, Tendenz, and Sitz im Leben of John 13:31-14:31," *JBL* 103/4 (1985) 493.

Peter declares that he is ready to follow the example of Jesus, the good shepherd, who lays down his life for his sheep (10:11). Peter indeed will fulfill his promise as the audience learns at the end of the Gospel (21:18-19). But now Jesus tells Peter that his commitment is an empty promise because “before cockcrow, you will deny me three times” (v. 38). Thus, on the one hand, Jesus’ departure is imminent. On the other hand, the disciples remain ignorant of Jesus’ destiny.⁵¹ The need for Jesus to prepare them and encourage them within the little time (v. 33) left, therefore becomes more urgent.⁵²

(2) 14:1-31

Jesus turns from Peter and begins to address all the disciples: “Do not let your hearts be troubled” (v. 1).⁵³ The negative imperative *μὴ ταρασσέσθω*, which will appear again toward the end of this chapter (14:27), characterizes this entire section of the speech. The grim warning to Peter now changes to words of comfort. This is followed by an imperative, “You believe in God; believe also in me.” Jesus then provides the reasons for the imperative in a monologue which is interrupted by the disciples’ questions.⁵⁴

⁵¹ The theme of the disciples’ lack of understanding permeates the farewell speech. The disciples pose questions that imply their ignorance (14:5, 8, 22; 16:17). On the one hand, this is a Johannine strategy to allow Jesus to explain a certain topic. On the other hand, their lack of understanding is real because all the disciples will scatter and leave Jesus alone (16:32).

⁵² Kellum (*The Unity of the Farewell Discourse*, 155) asserts that “without the abrupt interruption of Peter, the text fails to underscore the need in the disciples.”

⁵³ The imperative plural *πιστεύετε* signals the change of audience from Peter to all the disciples. The content of the speech moves from a prediction to commands. For this reason, the first part of the farewell speech can be divided into two smaller units: 13:31-38 and 14:1-31. See Kellum, *ibid.*, 156.

⁵⁴ I agree with Kellum (*The Unity of the Farewell Discourse*, 159) that in vv. 2-14 Jesus provides the reasons why the disciples should not be troubled but believe in Jesus.

The disciples must not be troubled but believe in Jesus because he goes to prepare a place for them in the Father's house (v. 2). When he has, he will return to take the disciples with him (v. 3). Here Jesus provides reassurance about his departure. At the same time, he implicitly answers Peter's question in 13:36 about his destination. He is going to his Father's house. Yet this is not explained further. Instead, Jesus turns to the topic about the "way" to reach the destination.

Jesus presumes that the disciples know the "way" (v. 4). Thomas, speaking on behalf of the disciples, tells Jesus, "Master, we do not know (οἶδαμεν) where you are going; how can we know the way?" (v. 5).⁵⁵ His statement gives Jesus the opportunity to make a clarification. Jesus does not speak about "the way" in terms of a road map to a certain destination, as Thomas presumes. For Jesus the way is a person. It is Jesus himself, and the destination is the Father. Jesus tells Thomas, "I am (ἐγώ εἰμι) the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (v. 6). On the one hand, this "I Am" saying speaks about Jesus' relationship to the Father. On the other hand, it clarifies the consequence of his identity for the disciples. In order to come to the Father the disciples must follow the way that is Jesus himself. Thus Jesus reassures the disciples that they are to believe not only in God but in him because he is the way to the Father.

The unique relationship between Jesus and the Father provides another reason to have faith in God and in Jesus. Jesus tells the disciples, "If you know me, then you will also know my Father" (v. 7). Answering Philip's request to show them the Father (v. 8), Jesus

⁵⁵ The plural οἶδαμεν indicates that he speaks on behalf of all the disciples.

tells Philip, “Whoever has seen me has seen the Father” (v. 9). As a result, the disciples have two choices: either to believe in Jesus who is in perfect union with the Father or to believe in the works that he does because of the indwelling Father (vv. 10-11). Those who believe will not only do the works that Jesus does; they will do even greater works.⁵⁶ Yet the ability to do greater works does not lie in the believer’s own strength but in Jesus: “because I will go to the Father” (v. 12). Because of his unity with the Father, Jesus will do whatever believers ask in his name “so that the Father may be glorified in the Son” (v. 13-14). Thus Jesus speaks about his mutual indwelling with the Father as the ground for the disciples’ faith in God and him. Later in the speech (14:20-21, 23; 15:4-10) and in the prayer of John 17, Jesus will explain that this mutual indwelling will include the disciples and all future believers as well.

The command to believe is followed by the command to love which is expressed in a conditional statement: “If you love me, you will keep my commandments” (ἐὰν ἀγαπᾷτέ με, τὰς ἐντολὰς τὰς ἐμὰς τηρήσετε, v. 15).⁵⁷ Here Jesus equates loving him with keeping his commandments. It is on the basis of the disciples’ love and obedience that Jesus will ask the Father for another Advocate who will be with them always.⁵⁸ Jesus tells the disciples that

⁵⁶ Michael (*The Gospel of John*, 780-81) thinks that the greater works refer to the disciples’ ability to forgive sins. Brown (*The Gospel according to John*, 2. 633) thinks that it refers to the disciples’ sharing in judgment (20:21-23).

⁵⁷ Kellum (*The Unity of the Farewell Discourse*, 161) notes that this verse has “the semantic force of a mitigated command.”

⁵⁸ “Another Advocate” (ἄλλον παράκλητον) implies that Jesus is the first Advocate (cf. 1 John 2:1). Dörmers (“The Paraclete as an Ideological Construct,” *JTSA* 67 (1990) 21) suggests that both Jesus and the Beloved Disciple are qualified as the first Advocate. Jesus is succeeded by the Spirit, whereas the Beloved Disciple is succeeded by the Evangelist.

the Advocate, which is “the Spirit of truth,” is rejected by the world (ὁ κόσμος) because of the world’s ignorance of him, but the Spirit is known to “you” (emphatic ὑμεῖς), the disciples, because of his dwelling “in you” (ἐν ὑμῖν, v. 17). Without love and obedience they will become like the world that rejects the Spirit and fails to experience its indwelling.

Love and obedience to Jesus are also related to the promise of the indwelling of Jesus described in vv. 18-21.⁵⁹ The reassurance, “I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you,” “you will see me,” “you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you,” is given only to those who love Jesus, those who keep his words. For the world, which rejects not only the Spirit but the Word made flesh (1:10), Jesus’ departure means his total absence. Those who love Jesus, however, will be loved not only by Jesus but by the Father. It is to them that Jesus reveals himself.

Jesus’ statement triggers Judas’s question, “How is it that you will reveal yourself to us, and not to the world?” (v. 22). The plural ἡμῖν indicates that Judas speaks on behalf of the disciples. By contrasting “we” (the disciples) with the “world,” his question allows Jesus to emphasize the importance of love and obedience as the principles for participation in the mutual indwelling of Jesus and the Father. Jesus tells him, “Whoever loves me will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our dwelling with him” (v. 23). Then, without mentioning “the world,” Jesus alludes to it saying,

⁵⁹ Barrett (*The Gospel according to St. John*, 461) notes that the protasis ἐὰν ἀγαπᾷτέ με in v. 15 controls the thought of vv. 15-21. See also Carson, *The Gospel according to John*, 498; Kellum, *The Unity of the Farewell Discourse*, 161.

“Whoever does not love me does not keep my words; yet the word you hear is not mine but that of the Father who sent me” (v. 24).

Interestingly the question in v. 22 is posed by a disciple named Judas, whose identity is explained by distinguishing him from Judas Iscariot, who has already gone into the darkness of the night (13:27, 30).⁶⁰ Judas Iscariot, therefore, is not included among “us” (ἡμῶν), to whom Jesus reveals himself. Yet, despite his absence, his shadow lingers as a reminder of the cost of lost discipleship. Like the world, Judas is excluded from the promise of this indwelling.

Despite the promise of the indwelling, Jesus’ departure is imminent. Thus, he reminds the disciples of the role of the Advocate, the Spirit. The Advocate not only will be with the disciples forever (v. 16), he will teach them all things and remind them of all that Jesus told them while he was with them (vv. 25-26). Jesus then encourages the disciples not to be troubled (μὴ ταρασσέσθω, cf. v. 1) and fearful but to receive the peace he gives them (v. 27). The contrary-to-fact condition in v. 28, “If you loved me, you would rejoice that I am going to the Father,” suggests that the disciples do not love Jesus as they ought and therefore are fearful.⁶¹ This should not be the case since Jesus is going to the Father, who is greater than he is.

Despite the ill-preparedness of the disciples, Jesus assures them, “Now I have told you this before it happens, so that when it happens (γένηται) you may believe” (v. 29). The

⁶⁰ John agrees with Luke (6:16; Acts 1:13) that there is another Judas among the Twelve.

⁶¹ Michaels, *The Gospel of John*, 793.

singular γένηται refers to Jesus' impending death and resurrection as a single event. That Jesus no longer speaks much (πολλά) signals the immediacy of the event, whose coming is initiated by the coming of the ruler of the world (v. 30). Although the ruler of the world has no power over Jesus, the anticipated event of his death and resurrection must take place to show the world Jesus' love and obedience to the Father. Thus, when Jesus tells the disciples, "Get up, let us go" (v. 31), he signals his readiness to fulfill the Father's will through the event that, when completed (cf. γένηται in v. 29), will bring the disciples to faith.

1.3.2. The Second Part of the Farewell Speech (15:1–16:33)

(1) 15:1–16:4a

Despite a sense of immediacy of the event, namely, Jesus' death and resurrection, the speech continues. Using the metaphor of the vine, Jesus tells the disciples, "I am (ἐγώ εἰμι) the true vine, and my Father is the vine grower" (v. 1).⁶² This saying, like the "I am" sayings that we have seen so far, is primarily christological.⁶³ It explains who Jesus is, first in his relationship with the Father, the vine grower; then in relationship with his followers, the branches. In telling the disciples that "he [the Father] takes away every branch in me that does not bear fruit, and everyone that does he prunes so that it bears more fruit" (v. 2),

⁶² I agree with Kellum (*The Unity of the Farewell Discourse*, 169) that the metaphor of the vine and the branches in chap. 15 controls the thought of Jesus' speech through 16:4a. The disciples' relationship with Jesus and their obedience to his command (15:1-17) separates them from the world and results in the hatred of the world (15:18–16:4a). Thus, I divide the second part of the farewell speech into two smaller units: 15:1–16:4a and 16:4b-33.

⁶³ As Segovia ("The Theology and Provenance of John 15:1-17," *JBL* 101 [1982] 121) observes, the metaphor of the vine has christological character. Jesus is the central figure here and throughout the passage.

Jesus underlines the importance of bearing fruit, which is possible only if one maintains a relationship with him, the vine. Although the disciples are regarded as the branches, pruned by Jesus' words (v. 3), he exhorts them: "Remain in me, as I remain in you" (v. 4). The repetition of the "I am" saying in v. 5 highlights the absolute necessity of abiding in Jesus in order to bear fruit. Otherwise they will be like branches that are thrown out, withered, and burnt (v. 6). But those who abide in Jesus are assured of an answer to their prayer (v. 7). They will become his disciples (ἐμοὶ μαθηταί) by bearing much fruit and thereby, like Jesus who glorifies God by accomplishing God's works (17:4), they will bring glory to God (v. 8).

The exhortation to abide "on the vine" (ἐν τῇ ἀμπέλῳ) or "in me" (ἐν ἐμοί), namely, "in Jesus," is explained further in the command to abide "in my love" (ἐν τῇ ἀγάπῃ τῇ ἐμῇ, v. 9).⁶⁴ Abiding in love involves obedience to Jesus' commandments, following the pattern of his relationship with the Father, for he keeps the Father's commandments and abides in his love (v. 10). Jesus then tells the disciples that he told this to them so that their joy, which is a share in his joy, may be complete (v. 11). Thus, the exhortation to abide in Jesus and in his love, which is characteristic of discipleship, is grounded in the christological

⁶⁴ Kellum (*The Unity of the Farewell Discourse*, 171) agrees with Beasley-Murray (*John*, 273) that ἐν ἐμοί, which is used six times in vv. 1-8, and ἐν τῇ ἀγάπῃ τῇ ἐμῇ in v. 9 are "functionally equivalent terms." The second is an anaphoric restatement of the first.

understanding of Jesus as the “true vine.”⁶⁵ His union with the Father becomes the pattern and source of the disciples’ relationship with him.⁶⁶

Obedience to Jesus’ commandments is summarized in the command in v. 12 to “love one another as I love you” (cf. 13:34). The repetition of the command in v. 17 indicates the significance of the disciples’ act of love. On the one hand, Jesus’ love is primary. By laying down his life on the cross, he transforms the disciples into his “friends” or “beloved” (φίλοι) to whom he tells everything he heard from the Father (vv. 13, 15). It is he who chooses and appoints them to bear fruit that lasts (v. 16). On the other hand, the disciples are required to keep his command in order to be his friends (v. 14). Their love for one another, following Jesus’ example, becomes a concrete sign of abiding in him.

The disciples’ identity as the community of love causes the world’s hatred of them (v. 18). Yet, just as Jesus’ love is prior to the disciples’ act of love, so the world’s hatred of Jesus is prior to its hatred of the disciples.⁶⁷ The reason for the hatred lies not in the disciples but in Jesus. It is because Jesus chooses them out of the world that the world hates them (v. 19). They cannot expect better treatment from the world than Jesus received because “no slave is greater than his master” (v. 20; cf. 13:16). The world hates them on account of Jesus’ name because they do not know (οὐκ οἶδασιν) the Father who sent him (v.

⁶⁵ That Jesus is the “true vine” (ἡ ἄμπελος ἡ ἀληθινή) emphasizes the superiority of Jesus over unbelieving Israel, which is often thought to be the vine of Yahweh. See John C. Huchison, “The Vine in John 15 and Old Testament Imagery in the “I Am” Statement,” *BSac* 168 (2001) 80; J. Carl Laney, “Abiding Is Believing: The Analogy of the Vine in John 15:1-6,” *BSac* 146 (1989) 56.

⁶⁶ Boyle, “The Last Discourse,” 213.

⁶⁷ Michaels, *The Gospel of John*, 819.

21). Despite hearing Jesus' words and seeing his works, the world fails to recognize the Father and the Son whom he sent. They have no excuse for their sin (vv. 21-25). Thus, if knowledge of "who Jesus is" leads to discipleship (1:36-51; 4:25-26, 42; 9:25, 30-31), ignorance of him and the Father is sin.⁶⁸

In face of opposition from the world, Jesus reassures the disciples of the promise of the Advocate (cf. 14:16, 26) who will testify to the world on Jesus' behalf (v. 26). Jesus then adds that the disciples are to testify as well because they have been with him from the beginning (v. 27). Thus the task of the Advocate, who is sent by Jesus from the Father, becomes the task of the disciples as well.

Jesus then clarifies the purpose of telling the disciples about the inevitable opposition of the world. On previous occasions, he told the disciples something beforehand so that when it happened they might believe (13:19; 14:29). Here the purpose of speaking beforehand about the world's hatred is expressed negatively in 16:1: so that the disciples might not "stumble" (σκανδαλισθῆτε), that is, "be drawn away from faith."⁶⁹ Then, in v. 4, it is expressed positively: so that they may remember that Jesus told them this. In light of 13:19 and 14:29, remembering the truth of Jesus' words implies faith. Thus, Jesus reassures the disciples that despite the opposition, which includes expulsion from the synagogues and persecution (v. 2), they are to abide in him and have faith. The opposition that awaits them is the result of not knowing (οὐκ ἔγνωσαν) the Father or him (v. 3; cf. 15:21).

⁶⁸ As Bultmann (*The Gospel of John*, 551) notes, "Sin therefore is not primarily immoral behavior; it does not consist in any particular action, but in unbelief." This will be clarified in 16:8-9. See also Segovia, "John 15:18-16:4a," 221.

⁶⁹ Ridderbos, *The Gospel of John*, 528.

(2) 16:4b-33

From the theme of abiding in love and the hatred of the world, Jesus turns to the advantages of his departure for the disciples. He is aware of the disciples' grief, which is caused by his imminent departure. Yet the fact that none of them asks "Where are you going?" indicates that they are so fixed on being left behind that they fail to comprehend the deeper implications of his departure for them (vv. 4b-6), namely, it brings advantages that outweigh the feeling of loss.⁷⁰

The first advantage is the coming of the Advocate: "For if I do not go, the Advocate will not come to you" (v. 7). Here Jesus speaks about the Advocate's role in convicting (ἐλέγξει) the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment (vv. 8-11).⁷¹ He will act as an advocate on behalf of the disciples against the world. Moreover, Jesus promises that the Advocate, which is the Spirit of truth, has a revelatory ministry among the disciples: "he will speak what he hears and will declare to you the things that are coming," and "he will guide you to all truth" (vv. 12-13). The truth that the Spirit reveals to the disciples, however, belongs to Jesus because of his perfect union with the Father. Everything that belongs to the Father belongs to Jesus as well (vv. 14-15).

⁷⁰ The question has been taken as another indication of the lack of unity in the speech since it disagrees with 13:36 and 14:5. However, as Brown (*The Gospel according to John*, 2. 710) and Ridderbos (*The Gospel of John*, 529-30) suggest, the purpose of the texts is the same: to underline the disciples' lack of understanding. In 13:36 and 14:5, by asking the question, the disciples show their lack of understanding. Here their failure to ask the question signals their lack of understanding.

⁷¹ The role of the Paraclete in John 16:8-11 has been the topic of much discussion. For a comprehensive survey, see Daniel A. Carson, "The Function of the Paraclete in John 16:1-11," *JBL* 98 (1979) 547-66. Carson's understanding of ἐλέγχω in the sense of conviction in all three clauses and the substance of the conviction as a negative condition within the world is followed by John Aloisi ("The Paraclete's Ministry of Conviction: Another Look at John 16:8-11," *JETS* 47 [2004] 55-69).

The second advantage is that the disciples' anguish or pain will be turned into joy. When hearing Jesus tell them, "A little while and you will no longer see me, and again a little while later and you will see me" (v. 16; cf. 14:19), the disciples break their silence. Yet, instead of asking Jesus what "a little while" means, they ask one another what these words mean. Knowing what they want to ask him, Jesus takes the opportunity to explain what "a little while" means for them and for the world. For the world, it will be a brief period of joy, and for the disciples a brief time of pain. But their pain will be turned into joy that no one can take from them (vv. 20-22). The reason for this complete and lasting joy lies in the assurance that they will receive whatever they ask in Jesus' name (vv. 23-24).

The third advantage of Jesus' departure is that it will result in access to God. Promising that he will no longer speak to them about the Father in "figures of speech" (παροιμίας) but "plainly" (παρησίᾳ, v. 25), Jesus reassures them that "on that day" (ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ) they will have access to the Father on the basis of their love and faith in Jesus who comes from the Father and is returning to the Father (vv. 26-28).

In response to these words, the disciples tell Jesus that they now believe in him (vv. 29-30). However, instead of confirming their faith, Jesus confronts them with a reality that seemingly denies the validity of their claim. He tells them that, like Peter (13:37-38), they will abandon him.⁷² Yet, he is not alone because the Father is with him (v. 32).

Thus, until the final moment of the farewell speech, there is a sense that the disciples are unprepared for Jesus' departure. Yet Jesus reassures them that he has told them this

⁷² Kellum, *The Unity of the Farewell Discourse*, 185.

(ταῦτα λελάληκα) so that they may have peace in him. No matter how great the trouble they will face in the world, they are to have courage because he has conquered the world. In saying “I have conquered the world” (v. 33), Jesus speaks as if his final victory over the world—his death and resurrection—has already been accomplished. He speaks of this event as if it has already happened in order to provide his disciples with encouragement. The speech ends with the pronouncement, “I have conquered the world.” Jesus then raises his eyes to heaven and offers his prayer (17:1).

Four elements should be taken into consideration in the reading of the prayer in John 17. First, the events within the Farewell Discourse take place with Jesus’ full knowledge of the coming of his ὥρα, “the hour” of his return to the Father, the hour when he is glorified in his suffering, death, and resurrection (12:23, 27; 13:1). It is in the full awareness of the coming of the “hour” that Jesus washes the disciples’ feet, delivers a farewell speech, and offers his prayer to the Father. The prayer, therefore, presupposes Jesus’ glorification in his death and resurrection as a future event whose certainty is guaranteed by Jesus’ knowledge of the Father.

Second, by having Judas go into the darkness, John sets in motion the coming of the “hour.” Judas will appear again after the prayer in order to execute Satan’s plan (18:1-3). Although there is only “a little time” (13:33; 14:19; 16:16-19) left for Jesus to be with the disciples, he delivers a long speech and offers a final prayer for the needs of the disciples. On the one hand, this confirms that Jesus is aware of what is about to take place. On the other hand, that he delivers the speech and offers the prayer without Judas present (13:30-31; 18:2-3) indicates that the message is intended only for those who are truly “his own.”

Third, in contrast to Jesus' awareness of the "hour," the disciples are ill-prepared for his departure. Although Jesus regards them as "his own" (13:1) and as branches that have been pruned through his words (15:3), their response to his words and actions indicates a lack of understanding (13:7-9, 28, 36; 14:5, 8, 22; 16:17-18). Although they declare their loyalty and claim to have believed in him, their love and faith remain inadequate (13:37-38; 14:28; 16:30-32). Through the prayer of John 17, therefore, Jesus asks for the Father's divine intervention to bring them to perfection. At the same time, by offering the prayer in their presence, Jesus explains how he wants his disciples to live as the community of his followers. Thus, John 17, as the rest of the farewell speech, functions as an admonition to the disciples.⁷³

Fourth, the Farewell Discourse indicates John's tendency to present his christological understanding of Jesus and, on the basis of it, deliver the message concerning discipleship. John depicts the footwashing as a symbolic act which points to Jesus' death and has Jesus encourage the disciples to follow his example (ὑπόδειγμα) of love (13:15). Jesus' knowledge of the hour leads to the dismissal of Judas, who is presented as a negative example of discipleship, in contrast to the Beloved Disciple who is an ideal example of discipleship (13:21-30). Jesus' clarification concerning his death as the moment of glorification is immediately followed by the giving of the new commandment to love one another, which is the sign of discipleship (13:31-35). Jesus' promise to prepare a place in

⁷³ Scholars generally agree on this point. See Käsemann, *The Testament of Jesus*, 5; Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 748; Agourides, "The 'High Priestly Prayer' of Jesus," 137; Carson, *The Gospel according to John*, 552; Haenchen, *A Commentary on the Gospel of John*, 2. 158-59.

the Father's house and to be the way to the Father becomes the basis for the disciples to believe in him (14:1-14). His assurance to ask for another Advocate and the promise to come again and dwell in them (mutual indwelling) presupposes love and obedience to Jesus' commands (14:15-31). Jesus' relationship with the Father, the mutual love and mutual indwelling of the Father and the Son, become a model for the disciples' relationship with Jesus. Even the reason for the world's hatred rests in the world's hatred of Jesus (15:20). In brief, throughout the Farewell Discourse John presents the christological understanding of Jesus as a basis for his message about discipleship.

The twofold message of Christology and discipleship in the farewell speech has echoes throughout the prayer of John 17. Yet there is a noticeable difference between the portrait of the disciples in the farewell speech and in the prayer. In the farewell speech the disciples display a lack of understanding and an inadequate love and faith in Jesus. They continue to show the same qualities later in the narrative (18:11, 19, 25, 27; 20:9). However, the prayer portrays them as an ideal community of disciples who "have kept your word," "know that everything you gave me is from you," "truly understood that I came from you," and "believed that you sent me" (17:6-8). The one exception is Judas, ὁ υἱὸς τῆς ἀπωλείας (17:12). Thus, the prayer in John 17, which is the climactic moment of the Farewell Discourse, is at the same time a climactic description of authentic discipleship. John 17 provides an ideal picture of the disciples in their relationship with Jesus and the Father, and with each other. In secular terms, John 17 is a manifesto of a Johannine "utopia."

2. The Text of John 17

The critical apparatus of Nestle-Aland (NA²⁷) notes fifty-five occasions when variant readings (omissions, insertions, replacements, and transpositions) occur in the text of John 17.⁷⁴ A number of these textual variants need to be examined in order to establish the text of John 17.

In v. 2, Codex Vaticanus (B) and some other witnesses (Ψ, 054, *f*¹³, (1), 98) read δώσει αυτοις (“he [the Son] will give them”), Codex Sinaiticus (Ⲛ*) and some other witnesses (0109, *pc*) read δώσω αυτω (“I [the Son] will give him”), Codex Freerianus (W) reads δως αυτω /(L) -τοις (“you [the Father] may give him/them”), Codex Bezae (D) reads εχη (“he [all that you gave him, namely, the believers] may have”), and Codex Sinaiticus (Ⲛ²), Alexandrinus (A), and some other witnesses (C, K, 0250, 33, *al*) read δωση αυτοις (“he [the Son] may give them”). The presence of variant readings in the aorist subjunctive (δωση, δως) and the future indicative (δωσει, δώσω) is conceivable since the use of ἵνα with a subjunctive is often interchangeable with a future indicative. In this case, as Zerwick notes, “the future seems to be a variant on that subjunctive.”⁷⁵ Thus, the aorist subjunctive δωση is to be preferred to the future δώσει and δώσω. It is also to be preferred to the aorist δως because of its stronger external witness. The aorist subjunctive εχη (without a personal

⁷⁴ Erwin Nestle and Kurt Aland, ed. *Novum Testamentum Graece* (27th ed., Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2001); hereafter: NA²⁷.

⁷⁵ Maximilian Zerwick, *Biblical Greek Illustrated by Example* (English edition adapted from the fourth Latin edition by Joseph Smith; Rome: Scripta Pontificii Instituti Biblici, 1963) 117 § 342. The construction of ἵνα with a subjunctive (or with a future indicative) is used to express an expectation and not a realized fact.

pronoun) may have been a scribal attempt to smooth out the sentence construction.⁷⁶ The change from the plural αυτοις to a singular αυτω may have been made because the personal pronoun refers back to the singular πάσης σαρκός and πᾶν.

It is important to note that, whereas the witnesses that read δώσει, δώσω, and δωση regard Jesus as the one who gives eternal life, the witness that reads the second person singular δως refers to the Father as the giver of eternal life. Meanwhile, the witness that reads εχη points to believers as the recipients of eternal life. If the change of subject was intentional, on the one hand, this exhibits the intimate relationship between the Father and the Son as the source of eternal life for believers. On the other hand, it shows that the scribes possessed a certain degree of freedom in altering the text.

In v. 7, some witnesses read the first person singular εγνων (N) or εγνωκα (W, *pc*), while others read the third person plural εγνωσαν (C, Ψ, *f*¹³, 33, 700, 1241, *al*) or εγνωκαν (A^{vid}, B, D, L, Θ, 054, 0109, *f*¹, 91). As Metzger suggests, the usage of the first person might be due to a correction of a scribe who was influenced by the first person in v. 6, or, in the case of εγνωκα, an accidental error in transcription.⁷⁷ The aorist third person plural εγνωσαν can be explained as a scribal adjustment to v. 8. The perfect εγνωκαν, which has a strong external witness and which is in accord with the frequent Johannine use of the perfect tense, is to be preferred.⁷⁸ Furthermore, it is more likely that the scribes changed the third

⁷⁶ Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 421.

⁷⁷ Metzger (*Textual Commentary*, 213) suggests that the error might be due to “loss of horizontal line over α which represents the final ν.

⁷⁸ Metzger, *ibid.*

person plural (“they [the disciples] know”) to the first person singular (“I [Jesus] know”) because the farewell speech has just depicted the disciples’ lack of faith and understanding (14:7, 9; 16:5, 18, 31).⁷⁹ For the same reason, it is less likely that a scribe changed the first person singular to the third person singular.

In v. 11, after the phrase *καὶ γὰρ πρὸς σὲ ἔρχομαι*, Codex Bezae (D), a (c), r¹ read *οὐκετι εἰμι ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ καὶ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ εἰμι* (“I am no longer in the world, yet I am in the world”). The reading might be original since it is difficult to think why a scribe would add such a redundant phrase. However, in addition to the principle “*lectio brevior lectio potior*,” the lack of external witnesses suggests the opposite. This phrase, therefore, may have been an attempt to clarify the difficulty caused by the phrase “I am no longer in the world,” which seems to contradict Jesus’ presence among his disciples.

In v. 14, *π*^{66*} and some other witnesses (D, *f*¹³, *pc*, it, sy^s) do not read the phrase *καθὼς ἐγὼ οὐκ εἰμι ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου* (“just as I do not belong to the world”). This omission is probably due to homoeoteleuton (ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου), as Metzger suggests.⁸⁰ Or the omission may have been deliberate to avoid the repetition of the same phrase in v. 16. Brown thinks that it is more plausible that the phrase is an addition in imitation of v. 16.⁸¹ However, the lack of v. 16 in some of the textual witnesses (*π*^{66c}, 33, *pc*, bo^{mss}) suggests that here the

⁷⁹ This is possible because, following the list of textual witnesses provided by Metzger (*Textual Commentary*, 212-13), some of the witnesses that read the first person singular (Σ^(*), W, it^{a, e, q}) do not read καὶ ἔγνωσαν in v. 8 as well.

⁸⁰ Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, 213.

⁸¹ Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2. 761. However, I agree with Barrett (*The Gospel according to St. John*, 425) that the phrase is omitted to avoid redundancy.

scribes are dealing with the problem of redundancy, and they have attempted to solve the problem through omission, either in v. 14 or in v. 16. The weight of the external witness (ⲡ⁶⁰, A, B, C, K, M, N, U, W, Γ, Δ^c, Θ, *f*¹, 124, 1346, 91, etc.)⁸² suggests that the reading with the phrase καθως εγω ουκ ειμι εκ του κοσμου is to be preferred.

In v. 18, the Ferrar family of minuscules (*f*¹³) reads the present tense αποστελλω (“I send”), while the rest of the textual witnesses read the aorist απεστειλα (“I sent”). The present αποστελλω is poorly attested; thus the textual witness is in favor of the aorist. The present αποστελλω may have been a scribal attempt to adjust Jesus’ words to the farewell context by altering the aorist with a futuristic use of the present tense because the sending of the disciples in John takes place latter in the narrative, after Jesus’ resurrection (20:21).⁸³

In v. 23, Codex Bezae (D) and a few other witnesses (0141, *pc*, *it*, *sy*) read the aorist first person singular ηγαπησα (“I [Jesus] loved”), while the majority of witnesses (A, B, M, Δ, Π, 91, 157, etc.)⁸⁴ read the aorist second person singular ηγαπησας (“you [the Father] loved”). The external witnesses favor the latter. The first person singular ηγαπησα may be the result of an accidental omission of -ς.⁸⁵ If the omission of -ς is deliberate, it means that

⁸² Reuben Swanson, ed., *New Testament Greek Manuscripts: Variant Readings Arranged in Horizontal Lines against Codex Vaticanus: The Gospel of John* (Sheffield: Sheffield, 1995) 233.

⁸³ For the futuristic use of the present, see BDF, 168 (§ 323).

⁸⁴ Swanson, *New Testament Greek Manuscripts*, 236.

⁸⁵ Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 428. Barrett, however, thinks that the Western reading (ηγαπησα) is probably original.

the scribes interpreted the Father's act of loving believers to be the act of Jesus. Whether it is the act of the Father or the act of Jesus, both are thoroughly Johannine.⁸⁶

The analysis of these textual variants shows that some variant readings can be explained as the result of accidental error in the transcription of the text. Others may have been deliberately made to smooth out the sentence construction or for other purposes (literarily or theologically). Among them some variants appear to be attempts to make Jesus' words fit better into the farewell context. Others show a certain degree of freedom in the transcription process of this chapter, particularly in changing the subject of verbs: from Jesus to the Father (v. 2), from the disciples to Jesus (v. 7), from the Father to Jesus (v. 23).

The variants which are not treated here would fall into the categories of either an accidental or a deliberate change of the text. There is no need to treat them here since they either do not have a significant impact on the meaning of the passage or are poorly attested. Overall, our brief analysis indicates that there is no need to modify the text of John 17 as found in NA²⁷. Thus, I will follow the text of NA²⁷ for my analysis of the structure and in my exegesis of John 17.

3. Structure of John 17

Some verbal clues help us to determine the surface structure of the prayer in John 17. First, the invocation in the vocative *πάτερ* appears at the beginning of the prayer (v. 1) and is repeated in the same formula in vv. 5, 21, 24, and with modifiers in vv. 11b and 25. Second,

⁸⁶ In John, both the Father (14:21, 23; 16:27) and Jesus (13:1; 13:34; 14:21; 15:9, 12) love the disciples (believers).

petitions which are expressed in the imperative appear in vv. 1, 5, 11b, 17. In addition to the imperatives, the usage of the present indicative ἐρωτῶ (I ask) and θέλω (I wish) to indicate a wish or an intention appear in vv. 9, 15, 20 (ἐρωτῶ) and v. 24 (θέλω).⁸⁷ These invocations and petitions tend to appear consecutively or in close proximity: v. 1: πᾶτερ + δόξασον; v. 5: δόξασον + πᾶτερ; v. 11b: πᾶτερ ἅγιε + τήρησον; v. 20: ἐρωτῶ + v. 21: πᾶτερ; v. 24: πᾶτερ + θέλω.

If we take the sentences in which an invocation and a petition are found together as boundary markers for the structure of the prayer, we note the following. First, v. 1 opens the prayer with the invocation and the imperative: πᾶτερ + δόξασον. Verse 5 repeats the invocation and the imperative in reverse order: δόξασον + πᾶτερ. Thus, vv. 1-5 is a section by way of inclusion. Second, the invocation πᾶτερ ἅγιε in v. 11b is immediately followed by the imperative τήρησον and later by the imperative ἀγίασον in v. 17. Both imperatives constitute a single section, because the modifier ἅγιε in the invocation seems to have anticipated the imperative ἀγίασον as well.⁸⁸ The petition related to the imperative ἀγίασον continues to v. 19. Thus, vv. 11b-19 form a section. Third, the occurrence of the present indicative ἐρωτῶ (v. 20) in proximity to the invocation πᾶτερ (v. 21) indicates that v. 20

⁸⁷ The verb ἐρωτάω has the meaning of “to request” or “to demand.” John employs the term particularly for the request made to God. Thus it has the meaning of “to pray” (14:16; 16:26, 30). See “ἐρωτάω,” *TDNT* 2. 686. One of the functions of the verb θέλω is to express an intention or a wish. In some cases it has the nuance of “commanding will,” when it is related to God’s will. The Johannine usage of the term in this verse has a similar nuance with its usage in 21: 22. See “θέλω,” *TDNT* 3. 46-47.

⁸⁸ Malatesta, “The Literary Structure of John 17,” 202.

should be taken as the beginning of a new section. Verses 20-21 and 22-23 are parallel.⁸⁹

Thus, vv. 20-23 form a section. Fourth, vv. 24-26 contain a doublet of invocation (in vv. 24 and 25) and the present indicative *θέλω* (v. 24), which indicates Jesus' wish or desire concerning the disciples. The doublet of invocation in this closing section (vv. 24-26) balances the double invocation in the opening section (vv. 1-5).

In light of these verbal clues I propose that vv. 1-5, 11b-20, 20-23, 24-26 are the sections that constitute the prayer of John 17. The problem is what to do with vv. 6-11a, which lacks any invocation or any particular petition. Should it be considered a section as well? Schnackenburg believes that this is the case.⁹⁰ Some scholars, however, regard vv. 6-11a as belonging with vv. 11b-19.⁹¹ Still others include vv. 6-8 in the first section (thus, vv. 1-8), and vv. 9-11a in the second section (thus, vv. 9-19).⁹² These scholars, whether they think that the second unit begins in v. 6 or in v. 9, believe that the prayer is arranged chronologically or according to the person for whom Jesus is praying: first he prays for his own glorification, then for his disciples, and finally for future believers.⁹³ Be that as it may,

⁸⁹ The parallelism in vv. 20-23 has been mentioned by scholars. See J. F. Randall, "The Theme of Unity in John xvii 20-23," *ETL* 41 (1965) 373-94; Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2. 765; Appold, *Oneness Motif*, 157-60.

⁹⁰ Schnackenburg, "Strukturanalyse von Joh 17," 76-78.

⁹¹ See, e.g., Schulz, *Das Evangelium nach Johannes*, 213; Lindars, *The Gospel of John*, 515; Carson, *The Gospel according to John*, 553.

⁹² See, e.g., Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2. 748-51; Leon Morris, *The Gospel of John*, 716.

⁹³ The threefold structure of John 17 is well defended by Brown (*The Gospel according to John*, 2. 748-51).

the lack of the verbal clues in vv. 6-11a indicates that these verses should be treated as a separate section.

Our analysis of the selected passages in the first part of the Gospel (chaps. 1–12) as well as the Farewell Discourse indicates John’s consistency in imparting the teaching of discipleship on the basis of the Gospel Christology. I propose that the twofold message of Christology and discipleship determines the structure of John 17 as well. The Johannine concern for the teaching on discipleship based on his christological teaching helps us to understand why John 17 begins with the prayer about Jesus’ glorification (vv. 1-5) followed by the prayer for the disciples (vv. 6-26). Furthermore, it helps us to understand why Jesus needs to confirm the identity of those for whom he prays before he makes any petitions for them. The prayer is offered only for those given to him (ὧν δέδωκάς μοι) by the Father, namely, all who respond to his revelation with genuine acts of discipleship, as Jesus clarifies in vv. 6-11a. When the present indicative ἐρωτῶ, which is used in v. 9 to identify those for whom Jesus prays, is repeated in v. 20 with the construction οὐ μόνον . . . ἀλλὰ καί, Jesus confirms the inclusive scope of the prayer.⁹⁴ The repetition clarifies that ὧν δέδωκάς μοι in v. 9 includes not only the disciples around him but future believers as well. What is meant for the disciples throughout the prayer is meant for believers of all time.

Thus, on the basis of the Johannine twofold message of Christology and discipleship, vv. 6-11a should be considered a self-contained section. The content of this section is distinctive: it is more descriptive than petitionary. This section describes the exemplary acts

⁹⁴ The present indicative ἐρωτῶ appears in v. 15 to confirm the petition made in v. 11; whereas in v. 20, it confirms the scope for whom Jesus prays, as in v. 9.

of discipleship that distinguish believers from the world. This provides the reason for the petition that begins in v. 11b and continues through the end of the prayer. Moreover, this section is distinctive syntactically. The *ἵνα* clause, which appears in almost every verse of vv. 1-5 and 11b-26, is not found in this section.⁹⁵ Similarly, the conjunction *καθώς*, which appears more frequently in this chapter than in any other chapters in John, is not found in this section.⁹⁶

Taking vv. 6-11a as a section, the prayer in John 17 consists of five parallel sections preceded by the narrator's introduction. In the structure of John 17 described below the indentations help to show the movement of focus back and forth from Jesus (in his relationship with the Father, the disciples, and the world) to the disciples (in their relationship with Jesus, the Father, and the world).⁹⁷ The underlined words are the verbal clues that mark the boundary of each section. The subjects of the verbs in bold alternate between Jesus and the disciples. This illustrates the movement back and forth from Jesus to the disciples. The structure of the text of John 17, therefore, is as follow:

Narrative Introduction to the Prayer (v. 1a)

^{1a} Ταῦτα ἐλάλησεν Ἰησοῦς καὶ ἐπάρας τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν εἶπεν·

1. Jesus' Glorification and the Disciples' Eternal Life (vv. 1b-5)

^{1b} πάτερ, ἐλήλυθεν ἡ ὥρα· δόξασόν σου τὸν υἱόν, ἵνα ὁ υἱὸς δοξάσῃ σέ,

² *καθώς* ἔδωκας αὐτῷ ἐξουσίαν πάσης σαρκός, ἵνα πᾶν ὃ δέδωκας αὐτῷ **δώσῃ** αὐτοῖς ζωὴν αἰώνιον.

⁹⁵ The conjunction *ἵνα* appears in vv. 1, 2, 3, 4, 11b, 13, 14, 15 (2x), 19, 21 (3x), 22, 23 (2x), 24 (2x), 26.

⁹⁶ The conjunction *καθώς* appears in v. 2, 11b, 14, 16, 18, 21, 22, 23.

⁹⁷ However, there is no clear-cut distinction between Christology and discipleship because they are interrelated.

- ³ αὕτη δέ ἐστιν ἡ αἰώνιος ζωὴ ἵνα **γινώσκωσιν** σὲ τὸν μόνον ἀληθινὸν θεὸν
καὶ ὃν ἀπέστειλας Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν.
- ⁴ ἐγὼ σε **ἐδόξασα** ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς τὸ ἔργον τελειώσας ὃ δέδωκάς μοι ἵνα **ποιήσω**.
- ⁵ καὶ νῦν **δόξασόν** με σύ, **πάτερ**, παρὰ σεαυτῷ τῇ δόξῃ ἣ εἶχον πρὸ τοῦ τὸν κόσμον εἶναι παρὰ σοί.

2. Jesus' Revelation and the Disciples' Faith and Understanding (vv. 6-11a)

- ⁶ **Ἐφανερώσά** σου τὸ ὄνομα τοῖς ἀνθρώποις οὓς ἔδωκάς μοι ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου.
σοὶ ἦσαν κάμοι αὐτοὺς ἔδωκας
καὶ τὸν λόγον σου **τετήρηκαν**.
- ⁷ νῦν **ἔγνωκαν** ὅτι πάντα ὅσα δέδωκάς μοι παρὰ σοῦ εἰσιν.
- ⁸ ὅτι τὰ ῥήματα ἃ ἔδωκάς μοι **δέδωκα** αὐτοῖς,
καὶ αὐτοὶ **ἔλαβον** καὶ **ἔγνωσαν** ἀληθῶς ὅτι παρὰ σοῦ ἐξῆλθον,
καὶ **ἐπίστευσαν** ὅτι σύ με ἀπέστειλας.
- ⁹ Ἐγὼ περὶ αὐτῶν **ἐρωτῶ**, οὐ περὶ τοῦ κόσμου ἐρωτῶ ἀλλὰ περὶ ὧν δέδωκάς μοι,
ὅτι σοί εἰσιν,
- ¹⁰ καὶ τὰ ἐμὰ πάντα σὰ ἐστίν καὶ τὰ σὰ ἐμὰ,
καὶ **δεδόξασμαι**⁹⁸ ἐν αὐτοῖς.
- ^{11a} καὶ οὐκέτι εἰμὶ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ,
καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ εἰσίν,
κἀγὼ πρὸς σὲ **ἔρχομαι**.

3. Protection and Consecration of the Disciples in Truth (vv. 11b-19)

- ^{11b} **πάτερ ἅγιε, τήρησον** αὐτοὺς ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί σου ᾧ δέδωκάς μοι,
ἵνα ὧσιν ἐν *καθῶς* ἡμεῖς.
- ¹² ὅτε ἤμην μετ' αὐτῶν ἐγὼ **ἐτήρουν** αὐτοὺς ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί σου ᾧ δέδωκάς μοι, καὶ **ἐφύλαξα**,
καὶ οὐδεὶς ἐξ αὐτῶν **ἀπώλετο** εἰ μὴ ὁ υἱὸς τῆς ἀπωλείας, ἵνα ἡ γραφὴ πληρωθῇ.
- ¹³ νῦν δὲ πρὸς σὲ ἔρχομαι καὶ ταῦτα **λαλῶ** ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ
ἵνα **ἔχωσιν** τὴν χαρὰν τὴν ἐμὴν πεπληρωμένην ἐν ἑαυτοῖς.
- ¹⁴ ἐγὼ **δέδωκα** αὐτοῖς τὸν λόγον σου

⁹⁸ The subject of δεδόξασμαι is Jesus. However, here Jesus is the beneficiary of glorification and the disciples are the giver. Thus, this phrase is indented.

καὶ ὁ κόσμος ἐμίσησεν αὐτούς,

ὅτι οὐκ εἰσὶν ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου *καθὼς* ἐγὼ οὐκ εἰμὶ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου.

¹⁵ οὐκ **ἐρωτῶ** ἵνα ἄρῃς αὐτούς ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου, ἀλλ' ἵνα τηρήσῃς αὐτούς ἐκ τοῦ πονηροῦ.

¹⁶ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου οὐκ εἰσὶν *καθὼς* ἐγὼ οὐκ εἰμὶ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου.

¹⁷ ἀγιάσον αὐτούς ἐν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ· ὁ λόγος ὁ σὸς ἀλήθειά ἐστιν.

¹⁸ *καθὼς* ἐμὲ ἀπέστειλας εἰς τὸν κόσμον, κἀγὼ **ἀπέστειλα**⁹⁹ αὐτούς εἰς τὸν κόσμον·

¹⁹ καὶ ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν ἐγὼ **ἀγιάζω** ἐμαυτόν,

ἵνα ὧσιν καὶ αὐτοὶ **ἡγιασμένοι** ἐν ἀληθείᾳ.

4. Jesus' Unity with the Father and the Unity of the Disciples (vv. 20-23)

²⁰ Οὐ περὶ τούτων δὲ **ἐρωτῶ** μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ περὶ τῶν πιστευόντων διὰ τοῦ λόγου αὐτῶν εἰς ἐμέ,

²¹ ἵνα πάντες ἔν ὧσιν, *καθὼς* σύ, πάτερ, ἐν ἐμοὶ κἀγὼ ἐν σοί,

ἵνα καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐν ἡμῖν ὧσιν,

ἵνα ὁ κόσμος πιστεύῃ ὅτι σύ με ἀπέστειλας.

²² κἀγὼ τὴν δόξαν ἣν δέδωκάς μοι **δέδωκα** αὐτοῖς,

ἵνα ὧσιν ἔν *καθὼς* ἡμεῖς ἔν· ²³ ἐγὼ ἐν αὐτοῖς καὶ σὺ ἐν ἐμοί,

ἵνα ὧσιν **τετελειωμένοι** εἰς ἓν,

ἵνα γινώσκῃ ὁ κόσμος ὅτι σύ με ἀπέστειλας καὶ ἠγάπησας αὐτούς *καθὼς* ἐμὲ ἠγάπησας.

5. Jesus' Revelation and the Disciples' Dwelling in Love (vv. 24-26)

²⁴ Πάτερ, ὃ δέδωκάς μοι, **θέλω** ἵνα ὅπου εἰμὶ ἐγὼ κἀκεῖνοι ὧσιν μετ' ἐμοῦ,

ἵνα **θεωρῶσιν** τὴν δόξαν τὴν ἐμήν, ἣν δέδωκάς μοι ὅτι ἠγάπησάς με πρὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου.

²⁵ πάτερ δίκαιε, καὶ ὁ κόσμος σε οὐκ ἔγνω, ἐγὼ δέ σε **ἔγνω**,

καὶ οὗτοι **ἔγνωσαν** ὅτι σύ με ἀπέστειλας·

²⁶ καὶ **ἐγνώρισα** αὐτοῖς τὸ ὄνομά σου καὶ **γνωρίσω**,

ἵνα ἡ ἀγάπη ἣν ἠγάπησάς με ἐν αὐτοῖς ἦ κἀγὼ ἐν αὐτοῖς.

In this structure, the twofold message of Christology and discipleship becomes the unifying thread of the whole chapter. There is movement from Christology to discipleship

⁹⁹ Although the subject of ἀπέστειλα is Jesus, v. 18 speaks about the sending of the disciples which follows the pattern of the sending of Jesus by the Father. Thus, this phrase is indented.

within the prayer as a whole as well as within each section of the prayer. The prayer begins with a petition that concerns Jesus in the first section and is followed by petitions that concerns the disciples in the rest of the prayer. The movement from Christology to discipleship is apparent in each section as well.

1. The first section (vv. 1-5) begins (v. 1-2) and ends (v. 4-5) with the petition concerning Jesus' glorification. Through his glorification Jesus gives (δῶση) eternal life to all who are given to him. Sandwiched between the petitions is the explanation of eternal life as knowing (γινώσκωσιν) the Father and the Son, which is the responsibility of believers (v. 3).
2. The second section (vv. 6-11a) describes Jesus' mission in the world to reveal (ἐφανερώσα) the Father's name and to give (δέδωκα) his words to the disciples (vv. 6a, 8a) before he returns (ἔρχομαι) to the Father (v. 11a). At the same time, this section depicts the disciples' response (τετήρηκαν, ἔγνωκαν, ἔλαβον, ἔγνωσαν, ἐπίστευσαν) to the revelation through faith and understanding (vv. 6b-7, 8b), through which Jesus is glorified (δεδοξασμαι). Their positive response to the revelation qualifies them to be the persons for whom Jesus prays (vv. 9-11a).
3. The third section (vv. 11b-19) consists of the petition for protection and consecration of the disciples. On the one hand, Jesus keeps (ἐτήρουν, ἐφύλαξα) the disciples safe, gives (λαλῶ, δέδωκα) them the Father's word, and sanctifies (ἀγιάζω) himself for the sake of the disciples. On the other hand, the disciples are protected by Jesus, sent (ἀπέστειλα) into the world, and sanctified (ἡγιασμένοι) in truth. The frequent usage of the conjunction καθώς (v. 11, 14, 16, 18) in this section indicates that Jesus presents himself as a model for the

disciples. Jesus is the model for their unity, their separation from the world, and their sending into the world.

4. The fourth section (vv. 20-23) contains the petition for the unity of the disciples. Jesus' giving (δέδωκα) of his glory to the disciples results in their unity. This unity follows the pattern of the unity of Jesus with the Father, as indicated in the usage of the conjunction καθώς in vv. 21, 22, 23.

5. The fifth section (vv. 24-26) contains Jesus' wish that the disciples may be with him so that they may see the revelation of his glory. Through Jesus' revelation (ἐγνώρισα, γνωρίσω) of the Father's name, the disciples know (ἐγνώσαν) the Father and share the dwelling in love (ἀγάπη) with the Father and the Son.

Thus, the structure of John 17 exhibits the Johannine tendency to impart the message of discipleship on the basis of his christological understanding of Jesus. There emerges in Jesus' prayer in John 17 the Johannine picture of the community of Jesus' disciples: a community that shares the glory of eternal life, a community that responds to Jesus' revelation with faith, a community that despite persecution and hatred of the world is protected and sanctified to be sent into the world, a community that lives in unity, and a community that shares the dwelling in love with Jesus and the Father.

4. Conclusion

A few points can be concluded from our examination of the literary context, textual problems, and structure of John 17 and their significance for the exegetical analysis of the passage that will follow.

First, in its literary context the prayer in John 17 takes place with Jesus' full knowledge of the coming of his ὥρα, "the hour" of his return to the Father, the hour when he is glorified in his suffering, death, and resurrection (12:23, 27; 13:1; 17:1). Jesus sets in motion the coming of his "hour" by having Judas go into the darkness of night (13:30). With Judas's exit the stage is set for Jesus to deliver the speech and pray only for those who are truly "his own." These are his disciples who respond to his words and signs with faith, yet lack an understanding of him and are ill-prepared for his departure. The prayer in John 17, therefore, is Jesus' prayer for the Father's divine intervention to bring the disciples to perfection. At the same time, it is a summation of Jesus' wish for the community of his disciples.

Second, in his farewell speech to his disciples the Johannine Jesus speaks about the coming "hour" as the moment of glorification, about his going back to the Father, about his unity (indwelling) with the Father, and about the sending of the Spirit. These christological understanding of Jesus' identity are not for their own sake. Jesus portrays a complete picture of his own identity not only to encourage the disciples prior to his imminent departure but also to provide the basis for the disciples' understanding of their own identity.

Third, our brief analysis of the textual variants shows that in the transmission process of the text of John 17 some scribes attempted to make Jesus' words fit better into the farewell context by changing their tense or adding new words or phrases. Others changed the subject of the verbs from Jesus to the Father (v. 2), from the disciples to Jesus (v. 7), from the Father to Jesus (v. 23). This illustrates the interrelationship between the Father,

Jesus, and the disciples: in some cases the action of the Father can become the action of the Son, and the action of the Son can be the action of the disciples as well.

Fourth, the twofold message of Christology and discipleship helps us to unravel the puzzling structure of John 17. It helps us to understand why the chapter begins with Jesus' prayer for his glorification followed by the prayer concerning his disciples. It helps us to see that throughout the prayer there is a constant movement of focus from Jesus to the disciples. The twofold message of Christology and discipleship functions as the unifying thread that holds the prayer in John 17 as a coherent unity. It is essential, therefore, that the exegetical analysis of this chapter of John pays attention to this characteristic of the Fourth Gospel.

Chapter Four

Christology and Discipleship in John 17

John 17 is a challenging passage in its form and content. Concerning its form, it puzzles commentators because, as Becker points out, the chapter contains “unsystematic variations in loosely connected sequence.”¹ Frequently recurring words (such as δίδωμι, ἀποστέλλω, ἵνα, καθώς, δόξα, and δοξάζω) are repeated and spread throughout the chapter.² This repetitive style hinders attempts to structure the passage on the basis of verbal clues alone. As a result, there is disagreement among scholars about the structure of the chapter.³ Concerning its content, John 17 contains such a wide range of Johannine themes that it cannot be classified simply as a “high priestly prayer” or a “prayer for consecration” or a “prayer for unity” or a “prayer for mission.”⁴

Yet, what seems to be “unsystematic variations in loosely connected sequence” serves the Johannine purpose. In light of John’s tendency to present the message of discipleship on the basis of the Gospel’s Christology, I have structured John 17 into five

¹ Becker (“Aufbau, Schichtung,” 56) summarizes what he regards as a widely held opinion among some early 20th-century German scholars (Julius Wellhausen, Friedrich Spitta, Walter Bauer, Hermann Strathmann) that “Joh 17 enthalte unsystematisch geordnete Variationen in lockerer Abfolge.”

² This has been pointed out by Peter Shiu-Chi Chang (“Repetitions and Variations in the Gospel of John,” Ph.D. diss., Strasbourg University, 1975, 173). Black (“Style and Significance of John,” 149-53) identifies the rhetorical features in John 17, and he concludes that “the great majority of the features on the microlevel of rhetorical structure are those which can be classified as repetitions.”

³ For various proposals concerning the structure of John 17, see section 1.6 of Chapter One. See also the summary by Appold, *The Oneness Motif*, 212-36. His presentation is particularly helpful concerning various proposals which are suggested by German scholars prior to Becker (Julius Wellhausen, Friedrich Spitta, Herbert Preisker, Emmanuel Hirsch).

⁴ On the various themes in John 17, see section 1.7 of Chapter One.

units (1b-5; 6-11a; 11b-19; 20-23; 24-26), as we have seen in the previous chapter. My literary exegetical reading of John 17 in this chapter follows this fivefold structure. I will show that John makes use of the final moment of Jesus' farewell with his disciples to highlight Jesus' identity as the Son who is sent into the world to reveal the Father. At the same time, through Jesus' prayer, John presents his understanding of the disciples in relationship to Jesus, the Father, and the world.

If John's testimony about Jesus is his Christology and if his message concerning the disciples' identity as Jesus' followers is about discipleship, the prayer exhibits a profound relationship between Christology and discipleship. In its present literary context John 17 is coherent with, and serves the overall purpose of, the Gospel: to bring the audience to faith in Jesus, that is, to become his disciples, so that they may share eternal life (20:30-31; 17:2-3).

My analysis of each section of Jesus' prayer in John 17 has two parts. First I present a literary exegetical reading of the section. Here I focus on the meaning of the text to show how it can be understood within the context of the overall Johannine narrative.⁵ This is followed by an analysis of the relationship between Christology and discipleship. Here, I clarify how John's view of the identity of Jesus' disciples is related to, and flows from, his christological teaching.

Before reading the first section of the prayer, however, I shall look at the narrator's introductory words to the prayer.

⁵ Consequently, intertextual references will be mentioned only as far as they help clarify the meaning of the text within the context of the Johannine narrative.

Narrative Introduction to the Prayer (v. 1a)

Ταῦτα ἐλάλησεν Ἰησοῦς καὶ ἐπάρας τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν εἶπεν·

John 17 opens with the narrator's introductory words, "After Jesus had said this" (ταῦτα ἐλάλησεν Ἰησοῦς). The phrase indicates that Jesus' farewell speech ended at 16:33. John often employs the demonstrative pronoun in the accusative plural neuter, ταῦτα, with the verb λαλέω to refer to words that Jesus speaks. Throughout the farewell speech Jesus repeatedly uses the phrase ταῦτα λελάληκα ("this I have spoken") to remind the disciples of the significance of the words he reveals to them (14:25; 15:1; 16:1, 4, 6, 33).⁶ The demonstrative pronoun ταῦτα in this opening phrase, therefore, not only points to the last words that Jesus has spoken ("I have conquered the world," ἐγὼ νενίκηκα τὸν κόσμον, 16:33) but to Jesus' words throughout the farewell speech.⁷

By raising his eyes to heaven, Jesus signals the end of his address to his disciples. Although there is no significant change in the narrative setting, there is a slight change in the addressee of Jesus' words. Jesus no longer speaks directly to the disciples but, as clarified in the invocations (vv. 1b, 5, 11b, 21, 24, 25), he speaks to the "Father" (πάτερ). John 17,

⁶ Johan Ferreira (*Johannine Ecclesiology* [JSNTSup 160; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998] 81) suggests that since the phrase ταῦτα λελάληκα has just been used in 16:33, the usage of the phrase ταῦτα ἐλάλησεν in 17:1 is verbose. He takes this as support for his suggestion that John 17 was added to the material of the Farewell Discourse. However, the fact that John uses the phrase ταῦτα λελάληκα almost consecutively in 16:1, 4, 6 weakens his argument. Eugen Ruckstuhl and Peter Dschulnigg (*Stilkritik und Verfasserfrage im Johannesevangelium: die johanneischen Sprachmerkmale auf dem Hintergrund des Neuen Testaments und des zeitgenössischen hellenistischen Schrifttums* [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1991] 88-130) consider the use of τοῦτο/ταῦτα with words of speaking as one of the stylistic characteristics of John.

⁷ Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 418; Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 3, 170.

therefore, reports direct communication between Jesus and his Father: it is a prayer. Jesus' gesture of raising his eyes to heaven is an attitude of someone praying to God.⁸

Prior to chapter 17, John recounted Jesus' prayer to his Father at the raising of Lazarus (11:41-42) and during his encounter with the crowds (12:27-30).⁹ In both scenes Jesus indicates that he makes his prayer for the sake of the people around him (11:42; 12:30). Although he knows that the Father always hears him, he prays in their hearing so that it becomes a testimony of his relationship with the Father to lead them to faith in him (11:42). In other words, Jesus' prayer in John has a didactic and paraenetic function.¹⁰ It is addressed to God, but Jesus is also concerned for the people who hear the prayer.

John 17 supposes that the disciples hear Jesus' prayer. The narrator's introductory words indicate that, despite a change in the addressee, there is no change in the setting of the farewell narrative. Jesus is with his disciples around the table for a meal (13:1-3) until he finishes the prayer and leaves with his disciples to go to a garden across the Kidron Valley

⁸ Cf. 11:41; Ps 123:1; Mark 6:41; 7:34; Matt 14:19; Luke 9:16; 18:13. As for the reason why John depicts Jesus praying at the end of his farewell speech, Brown (*The Gospel according to John*, 2. 744) notes, "It is not unusual for a speaker to close a farewell address with a prayer for his children or for the people he is leaving behind." Brown sees the similarities between Jesus' farewell address and Moses' farewell address in Deuteronomy 27-32, which ends with an address to God. Lindars (*The Gospel of John*, 517), who presupposes John's knowledge of the Gethsemane tradition, thinks that the prayer is modeled on the Gethsemane prayer. For a detailed discussion on the possible background of Jesus' prayer in John 17, see Appold, *The Oneness Motif*, 194-211.

⁹ In 6:11 John describes how Jesus gave thanks (εὐχαριστήσας) before distributing the bread to the people. However, the content of Jesus' prayer is not recounted on this occasion.

¹⁰ The didactic and paraenetic character of John 17 is underlined by Ferreira (*Johannine Ecclesiology*, 47-68). He comes to this suggestion by comparing Jewish prayers and Jesus' prayer in John 17. He thinks that John 17 has affinities with Jewish prayers, which are often serve a didactic and paraenetic function. Agourides ("The 'High Priestly Prayer' of Jesus," 144-45) underlines the consolatory and admonitory function of the prayer within the context of the imminence of Jesus' cross.

(18:1).¹¹ Thus, the narrative implies the presence of the disciples around Jesus listening to his farewell speech as well as to his prayer to the Father.¹² Although the answer to Jesus' prayer is guaranteed by his unity with the Father (11:42), Jesus makes his petitions known to his disciples. As Schnackenburg states, "The disciples are to hear his words, just as those gathered around the tomb of Lazarus were intended to hear his words (11:42)."¹³

1. Jesus' Glorification and the Disciples' Eternal Life (vv. 1b-5)

- 1b πάτερ, ἐλήλυθεν ἡ ὥρα· δόξασόν σου τὸν υἱόν, ἵνα ὁ υἱὸς δοξάσῃ σέ,
 2 καθὼς ἔδωκας αὐτῷ ἐξουσίαν πάσης σαρκός, ἵνα πᾶν ὃ δέδωκας αὐτῷ δώσῃ αὐτοῖς ζωὴν αἰώνιον.
 3 αὕτη δέ ἐστιν ἡ αἰώνιος ζωὴ ἵνα γινώσκωσιν σὲ τὸν μόνον ἀληθινὸν θεὸν
 καὶ ὃν ἀπέστειλας Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν.
 4 ἐγὼ σε ἐδόξασα ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς τὸ ἔργον τελειώσας ὃ δέδωκάς μοι ἵνα ποιήσω·
 5 καὶ νῦν δόξασόν με σύ, πάτερ, παρὰ σεαυτῷ τῇ δόξῃ ἣ εἶχον πρὸ τοῦ τὸν κόσμον εἶναι παρὰ σοί.

1.1. A Literary Exegetical Reading of vv. 1b-5

Jesus begins the prayer with an address in the vocative case *πάτερ* ("Father"). The invocation indicates a Father-Son relationship between Jesus and God. Throughout the

¹¹ Some commentators suggest that Jesus leaves the place where he has a meal with his disciples after he says "Get up, let us go" in 14:31. Consequently, Jesus delivers the second part of his speech (15:1–16:33) and the prayer of John 17 on the way to the garden. As Brown (*The Gospel according to John*, 2. 583) notes, this suggestion does not do justice to 18:1. Kellum (*The Unity of the Farewell Discourse*, 218-19) argues that 18:1 more likely describes an exit from the city rather than from the room. In any case, the narrator's introductory words in 17:1a imply that Jesus makes the prayer immediately after the speech in the presence of his disciples.

¹² Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 3. 167.

¹³ Ibid., 3. 170.

Fourth Gospel Jesus refers to God as “Father,”¹⁴ which implies a meaning of “my Father,” that is, Jesus’ Father.¹⁵ Jesus is the only Son of the Father (μονογενοῦς παρὰ πατρός, 1:14). He is in perfect union with his Father. He speaks the Father’s words and does his works (4:34; 5:19; 8:28, 38; 10:25, 32, 37, 14:10). He told the Jews, “I and my Father are one” (ἐγὼ καὶ ὁ πατήρ ἓν ἐσμεν, 10:30). Ironically, the Jews seek to kill him on the accusation that he makes himself equal to God by calling God his “Father” (5:18). By addressing God as “Father” at the final moment before his departure, Jesus confirms his unique relationship with God.

The invocation πάτερ is followed by the pronouncement, “The hour has come” (ἐλήλυθεν ἡ ὥρα). In the Johannine narrative Jesus’ activity moves towards the “hour.” At the beginning of Jesus’ public ministry when his mother told him about the lack of wine at the wedding in Cana, Jesus told her, “My hour has not yet come” (2:4). Later, the Jews try to arrest him, but they are unable to do so because his “hour” has not yet come (7:30; 8:20). As Jesus’ public ministry comes to its close, he announces the coming of the “hour” (ὥρα), which is the time for him to be glorified (δοξασθῆναι, 12:23) when he is lifted up (ὑψωθῶν) on the cross (12:31, cf. 3:14; 8:28).¹⁶ Jesus’ foreknowledge of the coming of the “hour” is

¹⁴ The word πατήρ, which is used to refer to God, appears in John more often (122 times) than in all the Synoptics combined (Mark: 4 times; Matthew: 44 times; Luke: 16 times).

¹⁵ The only exception is in 20:17, in which Jesus refers to God as “my Father and your Father.” God is the Father of the disciples as well inasmuch as they are in solidarity with Jesus, who is the Father’s only Son (1:14, 18; 3:16, 18). See Ferreira, *Johannine Ecclesiology*, 83.

¹⁶ John employs the verbs δοξάζω and ὑψόω to explain his understanding of Jesus’ death on the cross. As Schnackenburg (*The Gospel according to St. John*, 2. 408) summarizes, “He [John] has turned the process of cross followed by resurrection, humiliation followed by exaltation, into a single process in which apparent humiliation is already exaltation and the outward degradation of Jesus in reality his glorification.” For the usage of the verb ὑψόω as a *double entendre* in connection with the verb δοξάζω to point to the cross event

highlighted when the narrator sets the stage for Jesus' farewell (13:1). In telling his Father about the coming of the hour at the beginning of the prayer, Jesus situates his prayer within the context of his "hour." As Moloney puts it, the prayer "unfolds under the shadow of the hour."¹⁷

The coming of the "hour" is the basis for Jesus' first petition to his Father: "Glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you" (δοξάσόν σου τὸν υἱόν, ἵνα ὁ υἱὸς δοξάσῃ σέ). Jesus knows that his glorification, which is fulfilled when the "hour" comes, is accomplished by God, his Father. It is accomplished through a one-time event (as implied in the aorist imperative δοξάσον), namely, his death on the cross.¹⁸ In saying, "Glorify *your* Son, instead of "glorify *me*," Jesus emphasizes a Father–Son relationship with God. This relationship is so intimate that in asking the Father "Glorify your Son," there is no self-seeking because Jesus never seeks his own glory (8:50).¹⁹ Instead, the purpose of Jesus' glorification, as explained in the ἵνα clause, is the glorification of the Father by the Son (ἵνα

(crucifixion, death, resurrection, ascension), see Hellen Mardaga, "The Repetitive Use of 'ΥΨΩΩ in the Fourth Gospel," CBQ 74 (2012) 101-17.

¹⁷ Moloney, *The Gospel of John*, 461. Käsemann (*The Testament of Jesus*, 5) does not do justice to the text when he suggests that the one who speaks in the prayer is "not the one who is about to die," and that "the dying of Jesus comes into view only as the presupposition of the farewell situation" Although Jesus' dying on the cross in John lacks the elements of agony and suffering, the phrase ἐλήλυθεν ἡ ὥρα indicates Jesus' awareness of his death on the cross.

¹⁸ Maritz ("The Glorious and Horrific Death of Jesus in John 17," 709) concludes that "glory and glorification in vv. 1-2, and 'the sign' on the cross in 19,19 are used as vehicles into the multifaceted and complex net of Johannine manipulation of words and imagery and to emphasize that Jesus was glorified through his horrific death on the cross." I do not agree with Ferreira's (*Johannine Ecclesiology*, 85) statement that "The glorification of the Son was not an event that happened once for all but is continuing to happen in the history of the Johannine community." He makes this statement on the basis of the usage of the perfect tense ἐλήλυθεν in the phrase "the hour has come (ἐλήλυθεν ἡ ὥρα). I agree that the effect of Jesus' glorification continues; however, his glorification in his death takes place in an historical event that happens once and for all.

¹⁹ Morris, *The Gospel according to John*, 717; Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2. 751.

ὁ υἱὸς δοξάσῃ σέ) when he is “lifted up” on the cross. Carson writes, “God is clothed in splendor as he brings about this death/exaltation of his Son.”²⁰ The petition for glorification thus reveals Jesus’ understanding of his relationship with God, a relationship so intimate that the Father’s glory and the Son’s glory coalesce in the same act: Jesus’ death on the cross.

In order to explain the petition in v. 1b Jesus adds, “Just as you gave him authority over all people, so that he may give eternal life to all you gave him” (καθὼς ἔδωκας αὐτῷ ἐξουσίαν πάσης σαρκός, ἵνα πᾶν ὃ δέδωκας αὐτῷ δώσῃ αὐτοῖς ζωὴν αἰώνιον, v. 2). The conjunction καθὼς connects v. 2 with the petition in v. 1b by creating a parallel between δόξασον . . . ἵνα δοξάσῃ and ἔδωκας . . . ἵνα δώσῃ.²¹ Jesus’ glorification (δόξασον) is placed in parallel with the giving (ἔδωκας) of authority over all people to him. Consequently the ἵνα clause in v. 2, which is dependent on ἔδωκας in the καθὼς clause, is related as well to δόξασον in v. 1b.²² The ἵνα clauses in v. 1b (ἵνα δοξάσῃ) and in v. 2 (ἵνα δώσῃ), therefore, are parallels in relation to δόξασον. Jesus’ glorification results in the glorification of the Father as well as in the giving of eternal life to those given to him by the Father.

Jesus asks the Father to glorify him just as he gives him “authority” (ἐξουσίαν) over “all flesh” (πάσης σαρκός). The expression πάσης σαρκός, which appears only here in John,

²⁰ Carson, *The Gospel according to John*, 554.

²¹ The parallelism is highlighted by Malatesta (“The Literary Structure of John 17,” 196).

²² Thus I agree with Brown (*The Gospel according to John*, 2. 740-41) that the ἵνα clause in v. 2 can be regarded as dependent both on δόξασον in v. 1b as well as on ἔδωκας in v. 2.

is a Semitism referring to humankind in its weaknesses.²³ However, σάρξ in the Fourth Gospel gains an added nuance since John has stated in the prologue that “the Word” (λόγος), which was with God and was God (1:1), has become “flesh” (σάρξ, 1:14).²⁴ In becoming “flesh” the Son is given authority over “all flesh” so that he may give eternal life to those the Father has given to him.

Commentators have suggested that the authority (ἐξουσίαν) given to the Son relates to the power to judge as described in 5:27.²⁵ Judgment may be in view here. However, there is no mention here of condemnation, which is a fundamental aspect in the judgment (cf. 5:29). Instead, the purpose of the Father giving authority to the Son is so that the Son may give eternal life to all given to him (πάν ὁ δέδωκας αὐτῷ). The neutral singular πᾶν refers to the disciples as a community of people who are given to Jesus by the Father.²⁶ Prior to his departure, Jesus’ focus is on confirming the promise of giving eternal life to his disciples.

Jesus explains the meaning of eternal life in v. 3. After using two ἵνα clauses in vv. 1b and 2, here Jesus describes eternal life in another ἵνα clause: “that they should know you, the only true God, and the one whom you sent, Jesus Christ” (ἵνα γινώσκωσιν σὲ τὸν μόνον ἀληθινὸν θεὸν καὶ ὃν ἀπέστειλας Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν). In the ἵνα clause in v. 2 Jesus speaks of

²³ Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 418; Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2. 740; Carson, *The Gospel according to John*, 555. The term כָּל בָּשָׂר is a common Jewish way of referring to humanity.

²⁴ Hoskyns, *The Fourth Gospel*, 498.

²⁵ Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 418; Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2. 740; Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 3. 171; Köstenberger, *John*, 486.

²⁶ Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2. 741. Barrett (*The Gospel according to St. John*, 419) notes that the masculine plural αὐτοῖς which follows shows that πᾶν, although neuter singular, refers to the disciples.

eternal life as something that he, in his capacity as the Son, gives to those given to him by the Father. Now he explains eternal life as something that consists of the knowledge of the only true God and the one whom he sent, Jesus Christ.²⁷

Jesus gives no explanation of what he means by the “knowledge” of God and the one whom he sent. Yet, throughout his public ministry Jesus has revealed himself as the one sent by the Father to make the Father known (cf. 1:18) through his words and works.²⁸ During the Farewell Discourse, when the disciples ask him to show them the Father, Jesus reminds them that they know the Father because they have known and seen him (14:7-10). Now when Jesus defines eternal life, he alludes to that quality which is possessed by those given to him as the result of his revelation, namely, their knowledge of God and of him. Thus, what Jesus means by the “knowledge” of the one true God and of the one whom he sent surpasses the disciples’ understanding. The “knowledge” that results in eternal life involves the disciples’ acknowledgment or acceptance in faith of the one true God and the one whom he sent, Jesus Christ.²⁹ Jesus stands alongside God as the object of this “knowledge” because one can know God only through the Son whom he sent.³⁰

²⁷ The usage of the proper name “Jesus Christ” by Jesus to refer to himself is seen as anomalous. Moreover, the proper name “Jesus Christ” appears in John only here and in the prologue (1:17), which is thought to be an independent hymn (Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2. 741). This is one of the reasons why scholars regard v. 3 as a later addition. Another reason is that the expression αἰώνιος ζωή occurs only here in John. In other places when αἰώνιος is used to qualify ζωή, the order is always ζωή αἰώνιος (3:15, 16, 36; 4:14, 36; 5:24, 39; 6:27, 40, 47, 54, 68; 10:28; 12:25, 50, 17:2). See Barrett, 419; Brown, 2. 752; Beasley-Murray, 296; Lindars, 519. A detailed argument to regard this verse as a later addition is provided by Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 3. 172.

²⁸ 4:34; 5:19; 8:28, 38; 10:25, 32, 37.

²⁹ The prologue speaks about the world which does not know (οὐκ ἔγνω) the Word and does not receive (οὐ παρέλαβον) him (1:10-11). In 6:68-69 Peter, on behalf of the disciples, tells Jesus that they believe and know (πεπιστεύκαμεν καὶ ἐγνώκαμεν) that he is the Holy One of God. In the passage about the good

Jesus' ministry, which results in the disciples' knowledge of God and of him, now comes to its climax in the coming of the "hour." Although Jesus' death is yet to occur, its completion is guaranteed by his knowledge of the Father. Thus in v. 4 Jesus is able to tell his Father, "I glorified you on earth by accomplishing the work that you gave me to do (ἐγώ σε ἐδόξασα ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς τὸ ἔργον τελειώσας ὃ δέδωκάς μοι ἵνα ποιήσω). During his ministry Jesus indicates that his food is to do God's will and accomplish God's work (ἔργον, 4:34),³¹ and that he seeks the glory of the one who sent him (7:18). Before he cures the blind man Jesus clarifies that the man was blind so that the works of God might be revealed through his act of healing (9:3). Similarly, Jesus insists that Lazarus's sickness is not for death but for the glory of God (11:3), which is manifested through his act of raising Lazarus. At the beginning of his farewell speech Jesus tells the disciples, "Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in him" (13:31). Jesus realizes that his work on earth, which will be completed in his death on the cross (cf. 19:30), will glorify God.

At the opening of his prayer (vv. 1b) Jesus makes the petition, "Glorify your Son," and then completes it with the purpose clause, "so that the Son may glorify you." The Father's glorification by the Son is the motive of the petition. Here, after telling the Father

shepherd, the sheep know (γινώσκουσιν) the shepherd (10:14), listen to (ἀκούουσιν) his voice (10:16), follow (ἀκολουθοῦσιν) him (10:27), and are given eternal life (10:28). Thus, John speaks about knowing Jesus in relation to receiving him, believing in him, and following him.

³⁰ Or, in Bultmann's (*The Gospel of John*, 495) words, "because the Father is only known as the one who has sent the Son, and because there can be no knowledge of the one without the other."

³¹ John uses the word ἔργον both in the singular (4:34 and 17:4) and in the plural (5:20, 36; 7:3; 9:3, 4; 10:25, 32, 37, 38; 14:10, 11, 12; 15:24) to refer to the works that Jesus does on behalf of his Father. The usage in the singular in 4:34 and 17:4 refers to the works as a whole.

that his work on earth glorified the Father (v. 4), Jesus makes the petition in v. 5, “Now glorify me, Father, with you, with the glory that I had with you before the world began” (καὶ νῦν δόξασόν με σύ, πάτερ, παρὰ σεαυτῷ τῇ δόξῃ ἣ εἶχον πρὸ τοῦ τὸν κόσμον εἶναι παρὰ σοί). The glorification of the Father through the Son’s works on earth becomes the motive for Jesus to ask the Father for his glorification (v. 5).

The petition for glorification in v. 5 repeats the petition in v. 1b with slight variations in word order. In v. 1b the petition follows the vocative πάτερ, whereas here the vocative πάτερ follows the petition: πάτερ + δόξασον and δόξασον + πάτερ, creating an inclusion. Another variation involves the way Jesus refers to himself. In vv. 1b-3 Jesus speaks about himself in the third person. He uses the designation “your Son,” “the Son,” “the one whom you sent, Jesus Christ” to highlight his relationship with the Father. In vv. 4-5 Jesus speaks in the first person. The relationship between Jesus and the Father is indicated by the position of the personal pronouns ἐγώ–σε (v. 4) and με–σύ side by side.³²

Another significant variation is that here Jesus defines the glory that he asks for from the Father as “the glory that I had with you before the world began” (τῇ δόξῃ ἣ εἶχον πρὸ τοῦ τὸν κόσμον εἶναι παρὰ σοί). This implies that Jesus possesses a preexistent glory which he now asks the Father to grant him. Does this mean that the incarnation involves a loss or forfeiture of that glory? Some scholars think that is the case.³³ However, there is no indication in the Johannine narrative that Jesus loses his preexistent glory. Instead, John

³² Morris, *The Gospel according to John*, 720.

³³ Haenchen, *John*, 2. 152; Beasley-Murray, *John*, 296; Carson, *The Gospel according to John*, 557.

tells the audience that Jesus reveals his “glory” in his ministry through his “signs” (cf. 2:11). Thus, the petition in v. 5 has nothing to do with reclaiming a forfeited glory, nor does Jesus ask for another glory than what he asks for in v. 1.³⁴

Instead, the petition for glorification in v. 5 clarifies that the glory that Jesus asks for from the Father is the glory that he possessed in the beginning. He possesses this glory as the preexistent Logos through whom all things came into being (1:1-3). Although the glory is revealed during Jesus’ public ministry through the signs, he now (καὶ νῦν)³⁵ asks his Father to glorify him because the glory of the incarnate Son (1:14) shines most radiantly (cf. 1:5) and is seen in its fullness (cf. 1:14, 16-17) in his death on the cross. The petitions for glorification in vv. 1b-2 and in vv. 4-5, therefore, refer to the same glory that is accomplished through the coming of the hour.³⁶ Jesus asks the Father to glorify him “now” (νῦν) because that hour has come (v. 2). The opening section of the prayer, therefore, sets the tone of the rest of prayer within the context of the hour.

³⁴ Barrett (*The Gospel according to St. John*, 421) thinks that vv. 4-5 have a different kind of glorification in view. He suggest that here Jesus prays for his exaltation and ascension, which take place after the crucifixion.

³⁵ Laurentin (“We ‘attah – Kai nun,” 425) notes that the phrase καὶ νῦν is often used to repeat a previous command.

³⁶ I agree with scholars who suggest that the glorification that Jesus asks from the Father in vv. 4-5 includes his death on the cross, as in the petition in v. 1b. See Köstenberger, *John*, 490; Ferreira, *Johannine Ecclesiology*, 94.

1.2. Christology and Discipleship in vv. 1b-5

a. *Jesus' Glorification*

The opening section of Jesus' prayer in John 17 is rich in Christology. It shows Jesus' identity: who he is. The invocation "Father" and Jesus' self-designations as "your Son," "the Son," and "the one whom you sent, Jesus Christ" reveal Jesus' understanding of his identity in relationship to God. As we have seen, these christological designations are woven into the central theme of "glory" (δόξα) and placed within the context of the "hour" (ώρα). The double invocation and petition for glorification in vv. 1b and 5 heighten the sense of immediacy of Jesus' glorification in his death on the cross.

From the point of view of the implied audience, however, these petitions may seem unexpected. John has told the audience that when Jesus did his first sign at Cana he revealed his δόξα, and his disciples believed in him (2:11). Likewise, in Jesus' last sign during his public ministry, the raising of Lazarus (11:1-44), he responded to the news of Lazarus's illness by saying, "This illness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it" (11:4). This implies that Jesus possesses the δόξα that is manifested through the signs he does. If Jesus' possesses the δόξα, an attentive audience might ask, "Why does he ask to be glorified?" Scholars explain that in the petitions for glorification in John 17 Jesus asks the Father for the completion of his glory.³⁷

I am in agreement with this assessment. In the Johannine narrative Jesus completes the

³⁷ See Ferreira, *Johannine Ecclesiology*, 92. Brown (*The Gospel according to John*, 2. 751) explains the completion of Jesus' glory in relation to the manner of revelation. The glory that is seen through the signs during Jesus' ministry is seen in reality on the cross. In Brown words, "In 'the hour' we have passed from sign to reality."

work of God (17:4; 19:30) and is glorified by being lifted up on the cross (12:23-24, 32-33; 13:1; 13:31-32). The cross remains the primary revelation of Jesus' glory, which he possesses as the only Son before the foundation of the world (v. 5; cf. 1:14).

That Jesus' glorification is the focus of this opening section of the prayer is obvious. However, one thing often eludes interpreters, namely, that the glory is explained not in terms of its content or substance but in terms of relationship.³⁸ First, it is explained in terms of Jesus' relationship with the Father. Two verbal clues help to clarify this relationship. One is the usage of the conjunction ἵνα in v. 1b: it clarifies the purpose of Jesus' glorification in relation to the glorification of the Father. The Son asks the Father to glorify him "so that" (ἵνα) he may glorify the Father. Another clue is the phrase καὶ νῦν in v. 5, which serves as linking words to emphasize that the glorification of God by the obedient Son (v. 4) becomes the motive for the Son to ask for his glorification by the Father (v. 5). Because the Son has glorified the Father, "so now" (καὶ νῦν) it is the time for the Father to glorify the Son with the glory that the Son possessed before the foundation of the world. In either case (in v. 1b and vv. 4-5) both Jesus and the Father are the agents of glory. Both are involved in the act of giving and receiving of glory within a perfect mutual relationship.³⁹

Second, the glory of Jesus is also explained in terms of his relationship with believers. This is clarified through the usage of the construction καθὼς . . . ἵνα in v. 2 and more implicitly in the mentioning of Jesus' work on earth in v. 4. As Schnackenburg has

³⁸ While scholars have dealt extensively with the theme of glory in John, their focus has generally been given to the OT background of the concept of glory (כְּבוֹד יְהוָה) in John and the meaning or the content of δόξα. For various suggestions concerning the content of δόξα, see Ferreira, *Johannine Ecclesiology*, 161.

³⁹ Maritz, "The Glorious and Horrific Death of Jesus in John, 17," 703.

pointed out, the construction καθώς . . . ἵνα in v. 2 functions as a repetition and clarification of v. 1b.⁴⁰ The Son's glorification, which is explained in relationship with the Father's glorification in v. 1b, is explained further in v. 2 in terms of the Father's giving of power over all humanity to the Son so that (ἵνα) he may give eternal life to those given to him. The conjunction καθώς helps to explain Jesus' glory in terms of his relationship with all humanity in general, and with believers in particular. Meanwhile, the mention of the "earth" (γῆς, v. 4) as the locus of the Father's glorification by the Son implies that the glorification of the Father and the Son involves believers on earth, among whom the Son completes the work the Father has given him.

Thus, on the presupposition that the text is the author's instrument to convey his message to the audience,⁴¹ I suggest that the opening section of Jesus' prayer in John 17 confirms a significant aspect of the Johannine theological interest. John employs this section of Jesus' prayer to explain Jesus' glory in terms of his mutual relationship with the Father and to clarify its result or consequence in relation to believers.⁴² In other words, the Johannine christological quest is not an end in itself but leads to a better understanding of

⁴⁰ Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 3. 171. He notices that a ἵνα clause followed by a καθώς . . . ἵνα clause is a Johannine technique used for clarification.

⁴¹ If one considers the prayer as part of the Johannine testimony of Jesus in order to lead his audience to faith (20:31), one would agree that what is in the narrative is the author's instrument to convey his message to the audience. I agree with Schnackenburg (*The Gospel according to St. John*, 2. 339) that as in 11:42, John is thinking more of his audience than of the characters in the narrative.

⁴² This tendency to explain Jesus' identity in terms of relationship can also be seen in the beginning of the prologue. The Word is explained in terms of his relationship with God (vv. 1-2) as well as in his relationship with creation (vv. 3-4). See my reading of 1:1-5 in section 1.1 of Chapter Two.

the identity of believers. On the basis of this view, I will proceed to examine the result of Jesus' glorification, namely, eternal life for the disciples and all Jesus' followers.

b. The Disciples' Eternal Life

The dominance of the theme of glory in the opening section of John 17 is thought to be disrupted by what scholars identify as a parenthesis or aside in v. 3.⁴³ It is regarded as an editorial note to explain "eternal life" (ζωὴν αἰώνιον) that appears at the end of v. 2.⁴⁴ Schnackenburg acknowledges the theological significance of v. 3, but he claims that "this verse is not essential in its present context" and that the structure of this section "is satisfactory even without it."⁴⁵ This redaction-critical observation has its own merit in the scholarly attempt to explain the genesis of the text. I agree with Malatesta, however, that "those who minimize—or even eliminate—the role of v. 3 in the structure of John 17 . . . lose sight of a major indication of the meaning of the chapter as it now exists."⁴⁶ Therefore, instead of taking it as having a secondary value or eliminating the verse altogether on the assumption that it disrupts the flow of thought, it is the task of scholars and commentators to explain the meaning of the present text in order to understand the author's purpose.

I suggest that the significance of v. 3 within this section can be understood from the point of view of the Johannine tendency to present the message of discipleship in relation to

⁴³ On the parenthesis or asides in John, see n 49 in Chapter Two.

⁴⁴ Some scholars, such as, E. Hirsch, suggest that the last words of v. 2 (ζωὴν αἰώνιον) are later addition as well. See Appold, *Oneness Motif*, 216.

⁴⁵ Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 3. 172-73.

⁴⁶ Malatesta, "The Literary Structure of John 17," 212.

Christology. In describing eternal life in relation to Jesus' glorification and defining eternal life as the disciples' knowing of God and Jesus, the text highlights significant aspects of Johannine discipleship.

First, it underlines the balance between divine sovereignty and human responsibility. The disciples' eternal life is a divine gift. The verb δίδωμι appears three times in v. 2. The subject of the verb is the Father (2x) and Jesus (1x). The Father "gives" (ἔδωκε) authority to Jesus; Jesus "gives" (δώσει) eternal life to those "given" (δέδωκε) to him by the Father. The Father is the giver in relation to Jesus, and Jesus is the giver in relation to the disciples. The disciples' eternal life, therefore, is a result of the mutual relationship of the Father and the Son. Yet, eternal life requires the disciples' responsibility. In the explanation of eternal life in v. 3 the subject of the verb γινώσκωσιν is no longer God or Jesus as in v. 2 but the disciples (πάν ὁ δέδωκε αὐτοῖς). This means that eternal life, which is a divine gift, involves an active doing on the part of the receiver. This may explain why Jesus is given the power over "all flesh" but only gives eternal life "to all you gave me."⁴⁷ The explanation of eternal life is essential to clarify that being Jesus' disciples and inheriting eternal life entail not only divine gift but human responsibility.

Second, the explanation of eternal life in v. 3 highlights the importance of knowledge. Eternal life is explained as disciples' knowing (γινώσκωσιν) God and Jesus. Here "to know" does not mean an intellectual ability to comprehend something. Rather it means

⁴⁷ Beasley-Murray (*John*, 296) in agreement with Hoskyns (*The Fourth Gospel*, 498) speaks about divine election and human responsibility in relation to v. 2. Carson (*Divine Sovereignty and Human Responsibility* [Atlanta: John Knox, 1981] 187) speaks about divine election. These scholars, however, make no mention of any relationship with v. 3.

acknowledgment or acceptance of God and Jesus in faith. That knowledge is used here in relation to faith can be seen later in the prayer when both γινώσκω and πιστεύω are used with the phrase ὅτι σύ με ἀπέστειλας (vv. 8, 21, 23, 24) to describe acceptance of Jesus as the one who is sent by the Father.⁴⁸ This indicates that the knowledge that is related to eternal life “connotes experience rather than contemplation or ecstasy.”⁴⁹ It contains the disciples’ response to their experience of God who is made known (revealed) through the one whom he sent (cf. 1:18; 14:7).

Third, the explanation of eternal life in v. 3 underscores the unique role of Jesus. Jesus is placed alongside God as the object of the disciples’ knowledge. Yet, it does not mean knowledge of two different entities.⁵⁰ The oneness of God is emphasized in the designation “the only true God” (τὸν μόνον ἀληθινὸν θεόν). But God can only be known through the one whom he sent, Jesus Christ, who was with God and is God (cf. 1:1-2, 17, 18).⁵¹ By placing Jesus alongside God, John underlines the unique role of Jesus as the only Son who reveals the Father.

Thus, the presence of v. 3 within the opening section of the prayer clarifies that the Johannine christological teaching leads to a message about discipleship. In placing the

⁴⁸ In vv. 8 and 21 the phrase ὅτι σύ με ἀπέστειλας is the object of believing (πιστεύω); whereas in vv. 23 and 25 it is the object of knowing (γινώσκω).

⁴⁹ George Eldon Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974) 261. See also Bultmann, *The Gospel according to John*, 711; Ferreira, *Johannine Ecclesiology*, 91-92.

⁵⁰ Hoskyns (*The Fourth Gospel*, 498) writes, “This knowledge of the Father and of the Son is no double knowledge (vii. 28), any more than the fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ (1 John i. 3) is a double fellowship.”

⁵¹ 1 John 5:20 provides the closest parallel to John 17:3.

theme of eternal life within the dominant theme of glory John does not destroy the line of thought; rather he makes use of it to clarify that Jesus' glorification results in eternal life.⁵² The opening section of the prayer presents the disciples as a community that, through Jesus' glorification, inherits eternal life as a divine gift. Yet, eternal life presupposes their positive response to the revelation of God through his Son whom he sent.

2. Jesus' Revelation and the Disciples' Faith and Understanding (vv. 6-11a)

6 Ἐφανερώσά σου τὸ ὄνομα τοῖς ἀνθρώποις οὓς ἔδωκάς μοι ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου.

σοὶ ἦσαν κάμοι αὐτοὺς ἔδωκας

καὶ τὸν λόγον σου τετήρηκαν.

7 νῦν ἔγνωσαν ὅτι πάντα ὅσα δέδωκάς μοι παρὰ σοῦ εἰσιν·

8 ὅτι τὰ ῥήματα ἃ ἔδωκάς μοι δέδωκα αὐτοῖς,

καὶ αὐτοὶ ἔλαβον καὶ ἔγνωσαν ἀληθῶς ὅτι παρὰ σοῦ ἐξῆλθον,

καὶ ἐπίστευσαν ὅτι σύ με ἀπέστειλας.

9 Ἐγὼ περὶ αὐτῶν ἐρωτῶ, οὐ περὶ τοῦ κόσμου ἐρωτῶ ἀλλὰ περὶ ὧν δέδωκάς μοι,

ὅτι σοὶ εἰσιν,

10 καὶ τὰ ἐμὰ πάντα σὰ ἐστὶν καὶ τὰ σὰ ἐμά,

καὶ δεδόξασμαι ἐν αὐτοῖς.

11a καὶ οὐκέτι εἰμὶ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ,

καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ εἰσίν,

καὶ γὰρ πρὸς σὲ ἔρχομαι.

⁵² Moloney ("John 17: The Prayer of Jesus' Hour," 80) writes, "In the prayer of Jn 17 we have a privileged revelation of the major consequences of the unique Father-Son relationship which the Fourth Evangelist saw as the secret of the mystery of Jesus."

2.1. A Literary Exegetical Reading of vv. 6-11a

After the petitions for his glorification, Jesus recounts his ministry among his disciples. He tells the Father, “I revealed your name to those whom you gave me out of the world” (ἐφάνέρωσά σου τὸ ὄνομα τοῖς ἀνθρώποις οὓς ἔδωκάς μοι ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου, v. 6a). In v. 4 Jesus speaks of his mission as accomplishing God’s work on earth. Here Jesus describes the content of his work in terms of revealing (ἐφάνέρωσα) God’s name. The aorist ἐφάνέρωσα summarizes Jesus’ whole ministry.⁵³ This includes his coming death on the cross. Although during his ministry Jesus never explicitly says that he reveals God’s name, he told the Jews, “When you lift up (ὑψώσητε) the Son of Man, then you will realize that I Am (ἐγώ εἰμι)” (8:28).⁵⁴ The expression ἐγώ εἰμι is often used as the divine name.⁵⁵ Jesus repeatedly employs the expression to disclose his identity.⁵⁶ Thus the “name” (τὸ ὄνομα), which is the content of Jesus’ revelation, does not stand only as “a general term for all that can be known of the reality of God.”⁵⁷ It also points to the name of God.⁵⁸ This is the

⁵³ Carson, *The Gospel according to John*, 558. Moloney (*The Gospel of John*, 462) notes that he ἐφάνέρωσα is a complexive aorist, i.e., the aorist that views the action as a whole. According to Moloney, the verb “looks back across the earlier part of the Johannine story and sums up Jesus’ ministry (cf. v. 4).”

⁵⁴ Ball (*‘I Am’ in John’s Gospel*, 143) suggests that this passage is closely linked to John 17. For the usage of the verb ὑψόω in relation to the verb δοξάζω to point to the cross event, see n 16.

⁵⁵ This is particularly used in the LXX of Deutero-Isaiah (43:25; 51:12; 52:6) and the rabbinic writings. See Dodd, *Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, 94; Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 1. 536-37.

⁵⁶ The absolute use of ἐγώ εἰμι appears in 4:26; 6:20; 8:19, 24, 28, 58; 13:19; 18:5, 6, 8. See n 142 in Chapter Two.

⁵⁷ Moloney, *The Gospel of John*, 642. Some scholars suggest that a “name” refers to the whole character of a person. Thus, σου τὸ ὄνομα points to divine revelation in general. See Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 3. 175; Beasley-Murray, *John*, 298; Carson, *The Gospel according to John*, 558.

⁵⁸ Taking into account the significance of the “I Am” sayings in the Johannine narrative, I agree with Brown (*The Gospel according to John*, 2. 754-56) that “your name” points to the particular name of God.

name that is given to Jesus and with which Jesus protects his disciples, as he clarifies later in the prayer (vv. 11, 12).

The divine name is revealed “to those whom you gave me out of the world” (τοῖς ἀνθρώποις οὓς ἔδωκάς μοι ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου). As in v. 2, Jesus refers to his disciples as a gift from the Father. They are in the world. Yet he chooses them “out the world” because they do not belong to the world (15:19). Instead, they belong to the Father, and they are given to him (σοὶ ἦσαν καὶ μοι αὐτοὺς ἔδωκας). Their separation from the world is marked not only by God’s ownership of them but also by their positive response to Jesus’ revelation. Jesus tells his Father, “They kept your word” (τὸν λόγον σου τετήρηκαν).

Although the narrative indicates Jesus’ awareness of the disciples’ lack of understanding, faith, and love in him, he gives a positive assessment about them in his prayer. He tells the Father, “Now they know that everything you gave me is from you” (νῦν ἔγνωκαν ὅτι πάντα ὅσα δέδωκάς μοι παρὰ σοῦ εἰσιν). Here Jesus seems to echo the disciples’ claim in 16:30, “Now we know” (νῦν οἶδαμεν) and “We believe that you came from God” (πιστεύομεν ὅτι ἀπὸ θεοῦ ἐξῆλθες). In 16:31-32 he challenged their claim because he was aware of their limited understanding of his words.⁵⁹ But in v. 8 he tells the Father that “they received them [his words] and truly understood that I came from you,” (αὐτοὶ ἔλαβον καὶ ἔγνωσαν ἀληθῶς ὅτι παρὰ σοῦ ἐξῆλθον) and that “they have believed that you sent me” (ἐπίστευσαν ὅτι σύ με ἀπέστειλας).

⁵⁹ For the disciples’ lack of understanding during the farewell meal, see 13:7-9, 28, 36; 14:5, 8, 22; 16:17-18, 30-32. Jesus is also aware that one of them will deny him (13:37-38; 18:16-17, 25-27).

Jesus gives a positive assessment of the disciples. However, he does not describe their response to his revelation as the result of their achievement.⁶⁰ The reason for their acceptance, knowledge, and faith lies not in their effort but in Jesus: it is because (ὅτι) he has given them the words that were given to him by the Father (ὅτι τὰ ῥήματα ἃ ἔδωκάς μοι δέδωκα αὐτοῖς).⁶¹

After this positive assessment concerning the disciples' response to his revelation, Jesus declares in v. 9, "I pray for them" (ἐγὼ περὶ αὐτῶν ἐρωτῶ). The identity of "them" (αὐτῶν) is clarified negatively, "I do not pray for the world" (οὐ περὶ τοῦ κόσμου ἐρωτῶ) and positively, "but for the ones you have given me" (ἀλλὰ περὶ ὧν δέδωκάς μοι). Those given to Jesus are the people to whom he gives eternal life (v. 2) and reveals God's name (v. 6). These are the people (ἄνθρωποις) who accept his revelation with faith and understanding (vv. 6-8). It is reasonable, therefore, that one would expect the disciples' faith and understanding to be the reason why Jesus prays for them and not for the world. However, Jesus tells the Father that he prays for them not because of their positive response to Jesus but "because they are yours" (ὅτι σοί εἰσιν). He repeats what he says to his Father in v. 6, "They are yours" (σοὶ ἦσαν). The Father's ownership of them is what characterizes them in contrast to the world.

⁶⁰ Moloney, *The Gospel of John*, 462.

⁶¹ See 3:34; 12:48-50; 14:10, 24. Although John employs two different words, λόγος (in the singular in v. 6) and ῥῆμα (in the plural in v. 8), which both mean "word," it is difficult to draw a distinction in their usage because the two words often appear interchangeably (6:60:63; 8:43, 47; 12:48-50; 14:10, 23). See Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2. 743; Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 3:177-78.

Jesus prays for them, for inasmuch as they belong to his Father they belong to him as well. He tells the Father, “Everything of mine is yours and everything of yours is mine” (τὰ ἐμὰ πάντα σὰ ἐστὶν καὶ τὰ σὰ ἐμὰ, v. 10a).⁶² He echoes what he told his disciples in the speech, “Everything that the Father has is mine” (16:15). He can make such a claim because he enjoys total communion with his Father.⁶³ Jesus’ prayer for his disciples is, therefore, grounded in his self-understanding of his identity as the Son in his relationship to the Father.

Jesus then says, “And I have been glorified in them” (καὶ δεδόξασμαι ἐν αὐτοῖς, v. 10b). This statement further explains the identity of “them” (αὐτῶν in v. 9), for whom Jesus prays. Their identity is characterized not only because they belong to God and him but because of their role in his glorification as well. In v. 2, those who are given to Jesus are those to whom he gives eternal life, which is a result of his glorification. Here, those given to Jesus for whom he prays are the locus of his glorification. Jesus has completed his work on earth among them (v. 4). They respond to his revelation with faith and understanding (vv. 6-8). They become “the living proof” that he has completed the work by which he glorifies his Father and expects the Father to glorify him (vv. 4-5).⁶⁴ Although the Father remains the primary agent of his glorification (cf. 13:31-32; vv. 1b, 5)—as implied in the passive voice

⁶² The shift from the masculine ὧν (“those whom”) in v. 9 to the neuter πάντα (“everything that”) in v. 10 has the effect of broadening the scope of what belongs to God. See Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2. 758.

⁶³ Carson (*The Farewell Discourse and the Final Prayer of Jesus: An Exposition of John 14–17* [Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1978] 188) writes, “Any mere mortal can pray to God, ‘All I have is yours’; but no mere mortal can pray, ‘All you have is mine.’” Jesus is able to claim that what belongs to the Father is his because of his unique Father–Son relationship with God.

⁶⁴ Michaels, *The Gospel of John*, 866.

δεδόξασμαι⁶⁵—here it is the disciples’ role that is emphasized. Whether one takes the preposition ἐν in the phrase δεδόξασμαι ἐν αὐτοῖς in a locative or an instrumental sense, the preposition highlights that Jesus’ glorification involves the disciples’ role.

Because of his imminent departure, Jesus is concerned about his disciples who will be left in the world. Although he is still among them, he says, “And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you” (καὶ οὐκέτι εἰμὶ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ, καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ εἰσὶν, κἀγὼ πρὸς σὲ ἔρχομαι).⁶⁶ For Jesus, inasmuch as his glorification by his death on the cross is definite, his absence from his disciples is certain.⁶⁷ This heightens the urgency of his prayer for them because he is going back to the Father, but the disciples will remain in the world to which they do not belong.

2.2. Christology and Discipleship in vv. 6-11a

a. *Jesus’ Revelation of God*

The second section of the prayer of John 17 lacks the invocation πᾶτερ and any particular petition. Compared to the rest of the prayer, this section is more descriptive than petitionary. It describes Jesus’ ministry to reveal the Father (his name and words) and how

⁶⁵ Codex Bezae reads ἐδοξάσας με (“you glorified me”) to clarify that it is God who glorifies Jesus.

⁶⁶ Concerning the difficulty caused by the phrase “I am no longer in the world” Maritz (“Some Time in John,” 123) suggests that the usage of the present indicative εἰμὶ with the adverb οὐκέτι in the phrase οὐκέτι εἰμὶ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ indicates the post-Easter point of view of the author. See Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel*, 36-37. The scribes seem to be aware that the statement does not fit the farewell context. Codex Bezae (D) attempts to solve the problem by adding the phrase, οὐκέτι εἰμὶ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ καὶ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ εἰμὶ (“I am no longer in the world, yet I am in the world”). See section 2 of Chapter Three.

⁶⁷ Schnackenburg (*The Gospel according to St. John*, 3. 179) thinks that Jesus speaks as if he is no longer in the world because of the certainty of his glorification.

the disciples respond to that revelation. Halfway through this section (v. 9) Jesus declares that he prays for those who belong to his Father. Yet, there is no mention of any particular petition for them until the second half of v. 11. Instead, Jesus continues to describe the identity of the people for whom he prays and explains the circumstances that require his need to pray for them. As some scholars have pointed out, this section provides the reason why Jesus prays only for these people, namely, for his disciples and not for the world.⁶⁸

Throughout this section Jesus gives a positive assessment of the disciples' response to his revelation. The verbs that describe the ideal attitudes of a disciple (keep, know or understand, receive, believe) appear within this section frequently. The disciples are the subjects of all these verbs. This implies that their role is essential in defining their identity in contrast to the world and qualifying them to be the people for whom Jesus prays. Yet, it is significant to note that in describing these exemplary acts of the disciples, John does it in a way that indicates the christological character of Johannine discipleship. Two points will clarify my view.

First, John emphasizes Jesus' role as the revealer of the Father. The second section of the prayer begins with the emphatic use of ἐφανέρωσα. The verb, as we have seen, summarizes the entire ministry of Jesus on earth, including his death on the cross. The completion of his mission is proved in the disciples' faith. Their faith is the result of Jesus' mission to make God known. This is clarified in the ὅτι clause in the first half of v. 8. The

⁶⁸ In addition to Schnackenburg ("Strukturanalyse von Joh 17," 76-78), a few scholars separate vv. 6-11a as a distinctive unit that provides the reason for Jesus' prayer. See Carson, *The Gospel according to John*, 557-61; Beasley-Murray, *John*, 298.

disciples' observance (τετήρηκαν) of the word and their knowledge (ἔγνωκαν) of Jesus, as described in vv. 6c-7, and their acceptance (ἔλαβον), knowledge (ἔγνωσαν), and faith (ἐπίστευσαν), as described in the second half of v. 8, are possible "because the words you gave to me I have given to them (ὅτι τὰ ῥήματα ἃ ἔδωκάς μοι δέδωκα αὐτοῖς). Thus, John describes the disciples' positive response to Jesus as the outcome of Jesus' mission to reveal the Father's name and give them his words rather than as the result of their achievements.

Second, John defines the disciples' identity on the basis of his understanding of Jesus in his relationship with the Father. He does this in two ways: *First*, he explains the disciples' identity within the context of *mutual giving and receiving* between the Father and the Son. In v. 6 John describes the disciples as "those whom you gave (ἔδωκας) me out of the world. They belonged to you and you gave (ἔδωκας) them to me." The disciples are identified as the Father's gift to Jesus. They are among "everything" (πάντα) that the Father gave (δεδωκάς) to him (v. 7). In relationship to the Father, Jesus is the receiver, the Father is the giver, and the disciples are the gift. Meanwhile, in his relationship with the disciples, Jesus is the giver and the disciples are the receivers. Jesus has given (δέδωκα) them the word that the Father gave (ἔδωκας) him (v. 8). The repetitive use of δίδωμι throughout this section, then, helps to clarify the disciples' identity within the context of a mutual act of giving and receiving between the Father and the Son. *Second*, he explains the disciples' identity within the context of, what Schnackenburg calls, "the full '*community of possession*' between Jesus and the Father."⁶⁹ The reason Jesus prays for his disciples is that they belong

⁶⁹ Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 3. 178. (The italics are mine.)

to the Father, as indicated by the ὅτι clause in v. 9 (ὅτι σοί εἰσιν). If they belong to the Father, they belong to Jesus as well since he and the Father share all things in common: “Everything of mine is yours and everything of yours is mine” (v. 10). For John, the disciples’ identity as God’s own has its basis in the shared possession between the Father and the Son.

Thus, the second section of the prayer describes the disciples’ response to Jesus in faith as the outcome of Jesus’ revelation and clarifies their identity within the context of Jesus’ relationship with the Father. This, however, does not mean that John undermines the significance of the disciples’ faith. Instead, this shows that the Johannine understanding of the disciples has its basis and flows from his understanding of Jesus. What defines the disciples’ identity is the mutual relationship between Jesus and the Father. Their faith and understanding result from the Son’s revelation of the Father.

b. The Disciples’ Faith and Understanding

Prior to Jesus’ prayer in chapter 17, John depicts the disciples as those who are eager to follow Jesus and abide with him but lack an adequate understanding of Jesus and his words.⁷⁰ They appeared to know Jesus from the beginning from the titles they applied to him (1:35-51). They then followed him and abode with him. They believed him when he revealed his glory in his first sign at Cana (2:11). When many of his disciples who were offended by his words left him (6:66), they confirmed their willingness to remain with him because he has “the words of eternal life” (6:68-69). Yet, the disciples often misunderstood

⁷⁰ Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel*, 115-19.

him. They did not understand his words about his body as the temple (2:21-22), about what sustains him (4:32-33), about the relationship between sin and suffering (9:2), about Lazarus's death (11:11-15), and about the significance of his entry into Jerusalem (12:16). Their questions during the farewell meal indicate their limited understanding of what he revealed to them. They questioned where he is going (13:36; 14:5), the way to the Father (14:5-11), and the meaning of "a little while" (16:17-18). Their lack of faith was emphasized in his statement that they will be scattered each one to his own home and leave him alone (16:31-32). Moreover, the disciples are no better after hearing Jesus' farewell words and the prayer that is offered for their sake. They continue to show a lack of faith and understanding in Jesus. Jesus faces his trials alone. Peter quietly follows him but denies him (18:11, 19, 25, 27). Thomas cannot comprehend the risen Jesus and says, "Unless I see . . . , I will not believe (20:25).

There is no trace of the disciples' lack of faith and understanding, however, in the prayer of John 17. As we have seen, the second section of the prayer portrays a completely positive picture of the disciples. Jesus portrays them as the people who "have kept your word," "know that everything you gave me is from you," "truly understood that I came from you," "believed that you sent me" (vv. 6-8), and in whom "I am glorified" (v. 9).

The disparity between the disciples' character as portrayed in the narrative prior to and after the prayer with what is portrayed in the prayer is obvious. Some scholars argue that the gap is because the prayer is written from the point of view of the evangelist rather than from the point of view of Jesus. Barrett notes that the portrait of the disciples in John 17 "can hardly refer to the period of the ministry," and he suggests that "John is looking

back (perhaps from the end of the first century) upon the work of the apostles.”⁷¹ This assessment is adequate particularly if one agrees to attribute John 17 to the evangelist or a later redactor rather than view it as the *ipsissima verba* of Jesus.

Be that as it may, the ideal picture of the disciples can be explained in terms of a need of the author of the Fourth Gospel to present the message concerning discipleship on the basis of his understanding of Jesus. John makes use of the final moment of Jesus’ farewell to present what it means to be a true disciple of Jesus. Culpepper’s view in my opinion explains John 17 better, namely, the disciples’ portrait “reflects John’s concept of discipleship rather than his characterization of the disciples.”⁷² What John attributes to them in the prayer are the qualities he wishes to be possessed by all disciples of Jesus.

Yet, as we have seen, the exemplary acts of the disciples are described not as the result of their achievement but as the outcome of Jesus’ ministry of revealing the Father. This, however, does not mean that John undermines the disciples’ faith and understanding. Instead, he regards the completion of Jesus’ mission to reveal the Father to have resulted in the faith and understanding of those who belong to the Father. When Jesus claims “I glorified you on earth by accomplishing the work that you gave me to do” (v. 4), he has in view not only the completion of his mission on the cross but also its outcome in his disciples’ faith and understanding, as he recounts to his Father in the second section of his prayer. In the language of “the vine and the branches,” his mission on earth results in the disciples’

⁷¹ Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 421. See also Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2. 743. Lindars (*The Gospel of John*, 522) suggests that in vv. 6-8 “Jesus speaks from the perspective of the Resurrection, when the disciples’ failure (16:32) is past”

⁷² Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel*, 118.

bearing “fruits” that brings glory to God (cf. 15:8). He, in turn, can ask the Father to glorify him (v. 5).

If the disciples’ faith and understanding is placed within the context of Jesus’ revelation and glorification, it is not difficult to understand why Jesus says, “I am glorified in them” (v. 10). Although he returns to the Father, his glory continues to be seen in his disciples, who remain in the world (v. 11) but are distinguished from the world because of their positive response to his revelation. The significance of the disciples’ faith and understanding, therefore, is that it is intertwined with Jesus’ revelation and his glorification. Jesus’ glorification presupposes his mission on earth to reveal the Father; and the completion of his mission to reveal the Father presupposes its result in the faith and understanding of the disciples, in whom he is glorified.

Faith and understanding, however, are not the only responses to Jesus. John has told the audience in the prologue about the ignorance of the world and its rejection of the Word (1:10-11). He depicts Jesus’ public ministry, which is marked not only by acceptance but rejection by his opponents who do not believe in him. As Jesus’ ministry comes to its end, John employs Jesus’ last moment before his return to the Father to clarify what the response of his audience to Jesus’ revelation should be. He makes use of this moment to describe the disciples in terms that make them models for his audience: models of acceptance, knowledge, and faith in Jesus. By identifying “them” (αὐτῶν in v. 9)⁷³ for whom Jesus prays in various expressions which can be applied to all believers, John opens the possibility

⁷³ I agree with Maritz (“Some Time in John,” 123) that the shift from *περὶ αὐτῶν* to *περὶ ὧν δέδωκάς μοι* in v. 9 opens the possibility for the audience to include themselves among those for whom Jesus prays.

for his audience to identify themselves among those who belong to God, who are given to Jesus, who receive, know, and believe in him, in whom he is glorified, and for whom he is now praying.

3. Protection and Consecration of the Disciples in Truth (vv. 11b-19)

11b πάτερ ἅγιε, τήρησον αὐτοὺς ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί σου ᾧ δέδωκάς μοι,
ἵνα ὧσιν ἐν καθῶς ἡμεῖς.

12 ὅτε ἤμην μετ' αὐτῶν ἐγὼ ἐτήρουν αὐτοὺς ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί σου ᾧ δέδωκάς μοι, καὶ ἐφύλαξα,
καὶ οὐδεὶς ἐξ αὐτῶν ἀπώλετο εἰ μὴ ὁ υἱὸς τῆς ἀπωλείας, ἵνα ἡ γραφὴ πληρωθῇ.

13 νῦν δὲ πρὸς σὲ ἔρχομαι καὶ ταῦτα λαλῶ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ
ἵνα ἔχωσιν τὴν χαρὰν τὴν ἐμὴν πεπληρωμένην ἐν ἑαυτοῖς.

14 ἐγὼ δέδωκα αὐτοῖς τὸν λόγον σου
καὶ ὁ κόσμος ἐμίσησεν αὐτούς,
ὅτι οὐκ εἰσὶν ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου καθὼς ἐγὼ οὐκ εἰμὶ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου.

15 οὐκ ἐρωτῶ ἵνα ἄρῃς αὐτοὺς ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου, ἀλλ' ἵνα τηρήσῃς αὐτοὺς ἐκ τοῦ πονηροῦ.

16 ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου οὐκ εἰσὶν καθὼς ἐγὼ οὐκ εἰμὶ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου.

17 ἀγιάσον αὐτοὺς ἐν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ· ὁ λόγος ὁ σὸς ἀλήθειά ἐστιν.

18 καθὼς ἐμὲ ἀπέστειλας εἰς τὸν κόσμον, καὶ ἐγὼ ἀπέστειλα αὐτοὺς εἰς τὸν κόσμον·

19 καὶ ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν ἐγὼ ἀγιάζω ἑμαυτόν,
ἵνα ὧσιν καὶ αὐτοὶ ἡγιασμένοι ἐν ἀληθείᾳ.

3.1. A Literary Exegetical Reading of vv. 11b-19

After telling the Father why he is praying for his disciples Jesus makes a specific petition for them in v. 11b. He begins with the invocation, “Holy Father” (πάτερ ἅγιε), and

asks, “Keep them in your name that you have given me” (τήρησον αὐτοὺς ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί σου ᾧ δέδωκάς μοι). Here Jesus adds the attributive ἅγιε (“holy”) to the invocation πάτερ (cf. vv. 1, 5) to highlight the holiness of his Father.⁷⁴ In doing so, he prepares for what he is going to ask him to do for his disciples, namely, that the “holy Father” protect them “from the evil one” (ἐκ τοῦ πονηροῦ, v. 15) and “make holy” or “consecrate” (ἁγιάσον, vv. 17, 19) them in truth.

Jesus asks the Father to keep the disciples in his name, that is, in God’s name. Jesus has just told the Father that the disciples have “kept” (τετήρηκαν, v. 6) his word. Now the Father, in turn, is to “keep” (τήρησον) them in his own name (ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί σου), which he explains is the name “that you have given me” (ᾧ δέδωκάς μοι).⁷⁵ This is the name that Jesus reveals to his disciples throughout his ministry that climaxes in his death on the cross (v. 6). As Jesus said in 8:28, when he is lifted up on the cross he will reveal himself by the name that the Father has given him, and thereby reveal the Father.⁷⁶ The disciples, who remain *in* the world after his departure, must be protected “*in* his name” and “*by means of*

⁷⁴ The invocation πάτερ ἅγιε appears in Didache 10:2. This leads scholars to see the relationship between John 17 and the Didache. See Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 423; Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 502; Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2. 746, 759; Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 3. 180.

⁷⁵ Codex Bezae (D¹) and some other witnesses read the relative pronoun in the accusative plural masculine οὓς, which has αὐτούς as its antecedent. However, the dative singular neuter ᾧ, which has ὀνόματι as its antecedent, has stronger external witnesses (P⁶⁰, A, B, C, Q, Y, 054, f¹³, 1, 91). Thus, it is to be preferred. See Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, 213.

⁷⁶ “God’s name” stands for all that can be known about God. However, as I have stated above, taking into account the significance of the “I Am” sayings in the Fourth Gospel, I agree with Brown (*The Gospel according to John*, 2. 755-56) that John seems to have in mind a specific name of God.

the name,” that Jesus reveals to them. The preposition ἐν in the phrase ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί σου, therefore, can be taken both in the locative and instrumental sense.⁷⁷

Jesus asks the Father to keep the disciples who have kept his word “so that they may be one just as we are” (ἵνα ὥσιν ἐν καθὼς ἡμεῖς). He echoes what he has spoken in the good shepherd discourse about his sheep who hear his voice and become “one” (μία) flock under “one” (εἷς) shepherd (10:16).⁷⁸ Their unity is to follow the pattern of the unity between Jesus and the Father, as indicated by the conjunction καθὼς. He said, “I and the Father are one (ἐν)” (10:30). The disciples’ unity is guaranteed by the Father’s protection of them because no one can take them out of the Father’s hand (10:29), nor out of Jesus’ hand (10:28).

He tells the Father, “When I was with them I protected them in your name that you have given me” (ὅτε ἡμην μετ’ αὐτῶν ἐγὼ ἐτήρουν αὐτοὺς ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί σου ᾧ δέδωκάς μοι). Jesus tells the Father what he has done to protect his disciples. This includes what he is going to do soon after the prayer in the garden across the Kidron valley. There he will reveal his identity in the divine name, “I Am” (ἐγὼ εἰμι), to those who will come to arrest him, although he will ask that his disciples be let go (18:4-9).⁷⁹

⁷⁷ Scholars are divided in this regard. Hoskyns, Bultmann, Bruce, and Köstenberger, for example, understand ἐν in an instrumental sense. Lagrange, Lindars, Schnackenburg, and Carson take it in a locative sense. I agree with Brown (*The Gospel according to John*, 2. 759) and Keener (*The Gospel according to John*, 2. 1057-58) that ἐν here has both a locative and instrumental sense.

⁷⁸ Michael (*The Gospel of John*, 868) suggests that the petition for the protection of the disciples echoes the good shepherd discourse in chap. 10.

⁷⁹ Hellen Mardaga (“The Meaning and Function of the Threefold Repetition ΕΓΩ ΕΙΜΙ in Jn 18,5-6,8: The Fulfillment of Jesus’ Protecting Love on the Eve of His Death,” in *The Death of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel*, 761-68; edited by G. Van Belle; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2007) suggests that in 18:5-6, 8

Yet, he knows that one of his disciples, Judas, will stand with his opponent (18:5).

Thus he adds, “And I guarded them and no one of them was lost except the son of destruction, in order that the Scripture might be fulfilled” (καὶ ἐφύλαξα καὶ οὐδεὶς ἐξ αὐτῶν ἀπώλετο εἰ μὴ ὁ υἱὸς τῆς ἀπωλείας, ἵνα ἡ γραφὴ πληρωθῇ). Without mentioning his name, he alludes to Judas by calling him “the son of destruction” to point to his final destiny.⁸⁰ Judas, the *son* of destruction, loses his life forever (cf. 3:36; 12:25). He stands in contrast to Jesus, the *Son* of the Father, who lays down his life for the sake of his own. Judas does not represent Jesus’ failure to protect his disciples. Rather, Judas’s failure to remain in unity with Jesus and his act of handing Jesus over (6:64, 71; 13:2, 10b-11, 18, 21, 26-30) fulfills the Scriptures, because his destiny is under the power of the divine will.⁸¹

Jesus effectively protects those who belong to him when he is with them. This, however, cannot continue any longer because of his imminent departure. He tells the Father, “But now I am coming to you” (νῦν δὲ πρὸς σὲ ἔρχομαι). He then explains the significance of the words he speaks to his disciples while he is still with them: “I speak this in the world so that they may have my joy made complete in them” (καὶ ταῦτα λαλῶ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ἵνα ἔχωσιν τὴν χαρὰν τὴν ἐμὴν πεπληρωμένην ἐν ἑαυτοῖς). It is unclear whether the demonstrative pronoun “this” (ταῦτα) in the phrase “this I speak” (ταῦτα λαλῶ) refers to

Jesus, like the Father, refers to himself as ἐγὼ εἰμι to those who come to arrest him and in doing so protects his disciples.

⁸⁰ Moloney (*The Gospel of John*, 467-68) thinks that “son of destruction” refers not to Judas but to Satan.

⁸¹ Here Jesus does not refer to a specific passage of Scripture. Within the Johannine narrative the phrase “in order that the Scripture might be fulfilled” in v. 12 recalls 13:18, in which Jesus quotes Ps 40:10 (LXX) to refer to Judas’s treachery.

Jesus' words throughout the Farewell Discourse, or only to the earlier part of this prayer, or to his petition for the protection of his disciples in vv. 11b-12. The first is more likely, especially in light of the use of the similar phrase ταῦτα ἐλάλησεν in v. 1a.⁸² Here Jesus emphasizes that the disciples, despite his departure, share his joy. Just as he is glorified "in them" (ἐν αὐτοῖς), his joy is fulfilled "in them" (ἐν ἑαυτοῖς) because of the words that he speaks to them.

The word that Jesus speaks on behalf of the Father causes the world's hatred of his disciples. He tells the Father, "I gave them your word, and the world hated them" (ἐγὼ δέδωκα αὐτοῖς τὸν λόγον σου καὶ ὁ κόσμος ἐμίσησεν αὐτούς). The world, which does not know the Word (λόγος) and rejects him (1:10-11), hates the disciples because (ὅτι), Jesus adds, "They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world" (οὐκ εἰσὶν ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου καθὼς ἐγὼ οὐκ εἰμι ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου). On the one hand, what characterizes the world is its rejection and hatred not only of Jesus and the Father but of the disciples as well (15:18-25). On the other hand, what characterizes the disciples is a share of identity with Jesus, as indicated by the conjunction καθὼς that connects the two parallel phrases. The disciples are not ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου just as (καθὼς) Jesus is not ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου.⁸³

⁸² Carson (*The Gospel according to John*, 564) thinks that ταῦτα refers to the whole Farewell Discourse. Brown (*The Gospel according to John*, 2. 761) thinks that it refers to the earlier part of the prayer. Moloney (*The Gospel of John*, 468) thinks that it refers to the petition for the protection of the disciples. I agree with Lindars (*The Gospel of John*, 526) that the verbal allusion to 15:11 and 16:24 (ταῦτα λελάληκα) indicates that ταῦτα points to the Farewell Discourse as a whole.

⁸³ For the various translations of the preposition ἐκ in John 17, see Barclay M. Newman, "The Case of the Eclectic and the Neglected Ek of John 17," *BT* 29 (1978) 339-41.

Despite the world's hatred, Jesus says, "I do not ask that you take them *out of* the world" (οὐκ ἐρωτῶ ἵνα ἄρῃς αὐτοὺς ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου).⁸⁴ He realizes that his disciples do not belong to the world, yet the disciples' place and mission are *in* the world.⁸⁵ For this reason the disciples need the Father's protection. He wants his "holy Father" to protect them "from the evil one" (ἐκ τοῦ πονηροῦ). The evil one is the power that has the world as its domain. Jesus has previously called him "the ruler of this world" (ὁ ἄρχων τοῦ κόσμου, 12:31; 14:30; 16:11).⁸⁶ He causes people to work evil deeds (πονηρά, 3:19; 7:7). He is the father of lies, the Devil, in whom there is no truth (8:44). He induces Judas to hand Jesus over (13:2; cf. 6:70), enters into him (13:27), and leads the son of destruction into the darkness.⁸⁷ Yet, he has no power over Jesus (14:31). Jesus thus repeats what he said in v. 14, "They do not belong to the world, just as (καθώς) I do not belong to the world," to highlight that his disciples, like him, do not belong to the evil one's domain. Because of their separation from the world, Jesus now asks for their consecration so that they may be sent "*into* the world" (εἰς τὸν κόσμον, vv.17-19).

Using an imperative, as he did in vv. 1b, 5, 11b, Jesus asks the Father in v. 17, "Consecrate them in the truth" (ἀγιάσον αὐτοὺς ἐν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ). Jesus wants his holy Father to "consecrate" or "make holy" his disciples as the Father has "consecrated" (ἡγίασεν) him

⁸⁴ The italic are mine to emphasize the contrast of the preposition ἐκ (out of) and εἰς (in or into).

⁸⁵ Ridderbos, *The Gospel of John*, 555.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Here in 13:27, he is called "Satan" (ὁ σατανᾶς). Keener (*The Gospel of John*, 2. 1059) notes that the substantive use of πονηρός often points to Satan. See Matt 13:19, 38; Eph 6:16; 2 Thess 3:3.

and sent him into the world (10:36). In v. 11b he asks the Father to keep them “in your name” (ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί σου). Here he asks the Father to consecrate them “in the truth” (ἐν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ), that is, “in the sphere of” or “by the means of” his word, which is truth.⁸⁸ In other words, the truth in which the Father sanctifies the disciples is “the saving truth revealed in the teaching and activity of Jesus.”⁸⁹ This is why he adds, “Your word is truth” (ὁ λόγος ὁ σὸς ἀλήθειά ἐστιν). Jesus has given the Father’s word to his disciples, and they have received and kept it (vv. 6, 8, 14). By abiding in his word they know the truth (ἀλήθειαν) and truly (ἀληθῶς) become his disciples (8:31-32). They are made clean by the word which he speaks to them (15:3) and of which, after his departure, the Holy Spirit, that he also calls “the Spirit of truth” (τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας, 14:17; 15:26; 16:13), will remind them (14:26).

Just as Jesus is consecrated by the Father and sent into the world (10:36), so the disciples are consecrated to be sent into the world. Thus after asking for their consecration, Jesus continues, “As you sent me into the world, so I sent them into the world” (καθὼς ἐμὲ ἀπέστειλας εἰς τὸν κόσμον, κἀγὼ ἀπέστειλα αὐτοὺς εἰς τὸν κόσμον). The use of the conjunction καθὼς and the striking parallel of the two phrases indicate that Jesus sees his

⁸⁸ See Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2. 761; Lindars, *The Gospel of John*, 528; Moloney, *The Gospel of John*, 471. Carson (*The Gospel according to John*, 566) takes ἐν in an instrumental sense. Schnackenburg (*The Gospel according to St. John*, 3. 185) thinks that if one takes ἐν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ in relation to the word, the preposition ἐν has an instrumental sense; whereas if ἐν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ is seen as parallel to ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί σου in v. 11b, the locative sense is more appropriate.

⁸⁹ Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 426.

sending of the disciples as equivalent to the Father's sending of him.⁹⁰ Just as he is "sent" (the aorist ἀπέστειλας), they are "sent" (the aorist ἀπέστειλα). Likewise, just as he is sent "into the world" (εἰς τὸν κόσμον), so they too are sent "into the world" (εἰς τὸν κόσμον). The world, despite its hostility toward Jesus and his disciples, remains the object of God's saving love (cf. 3:16).⁹¹

Jesus completes his petition for the consecration of his disciples in v. 19, "And for their sakes I consecrate myself" (καὶ ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν ἐγὼ ἀγιάζω ἐμαυτόν). He has just asked the Father to consecrate his disciples. To consecrate is primarily the Father's work. It is the Father who consecrated Jesus and sent him into the world (10:36). Yet, Jesus' consecration is at the same time his own voluntary act, as indicated by the use of the verb ἀγιάζω with the reflexive pronoun ἐμαυτόν.⁹² This voluntary act of self-consecration is not for Jesus' own sake but "for the sake of" or "on behalf of" (ὑπὲρ) his disciples. The significance of the preposition ὑπὲρ, which is often used in the sayings related to the giving of life (6:51; 10:11, 15; 15:13), indicates that Jesus looks ahead to his death on the cross as the moment of his consecration.⁹³ In voluntarily laying down his life on the cross (10:17-18) he consecrates

⁹⁰ Schnackenburg (*The Gospel according to St. John*, 3. 186) suggests that, although the sending of the disciples takes place after the resurrection (20:21), John uses the aorist for the sending of the disciples in order to create "the closest possible parallel between the sending of the disciples and the sending of Jesus."

⁹¹ Carson (*The Gospel according to John*, 567) writes, "The prayer that they may be kept safe in the world and sanctified by the truth so as to engage in mission to the world is ample evidence that they are the continuing locus of 3:16: 'God so love the world that he sent . . .'"

⁹² Schnackenburg (*The Gospel according to St. John*, 3. 187) notes that "this usage is unique in the Gospel of John and very rare elsewhere."

⁹³ Scholars generally agree that the preposition ὑπὲρ in v. 19 indicates that Jesus' death on the cross is in view. See Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 426; Lindars, *The Gospel of John*, 529; Carson, *The*

himself for the sake of his disciples, “so that they also may be consecrated in truth” (ἵνα ὧσιν καὶ αὐτοὶ ἡγιασμένοι ἐν ἀληθείᾳ). “Truth” (ἀλήθεια) is used here without an article. However, as in v. 17 it refers to God’s word, which is the saving truth revealed through Jesus.⁹⁴ When Jesus’ revelation reaches its climax on the cross the disciples are “firmly and lastingly” (as implied by the use of the perfect ἡγιασμένοι)⁹⁵ separated from the world and made holy to be sent into the world.

3.2. Christology and Discipleship in vv. 11b-19

a. *Jesus Protects and Consecrates*

The third section of Jesus’ prayer in John 17 focuses on the petition for protection and consecration of the disciples. Jesus, prior to his imminent departure, asks the Father to keep his disciples and consecrate them. “To keep” (vv. 11, 15) and “to consecrate” (v. 17) are the privileges of the Father. Thus, as Schnackenburg comments on v. 17, “The petition for the sanctification of the disciples was formulated in a strictly theocentric way: sanctification proceeds from God, his truth is the sphere of that sanctification and his word mediates it.”⁹⁶ The same can be said about the petition for the protection of the disciples in

Gospel according to John, 567; Morris, *The Gospel of John*, 732. Schnackenburg (*The Gospel according to St. John*, 3. 187) particularly emphasizes that there is “no doubt that Jesus’ self-offering in death is meant here.”

⁹⁴ The use of ἀλήθεια with a definite article followed by another without the definite article can be seen in 8:44.

⁹⁵ See Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 3. 188.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 187.

v. 11b. God possesses the power to keep the disciples safe in his hand and by means of his holy name.

John, however, presents the petition for protection and consecration of the disciples in a way that highlights Jesus' role. What Jesus asks the Father to do is something that he does for his disciples in his ministry, which finds its climax on the cross. John seems to tell his audience that God's power to protect and consecrate the disciples has been manifested in Jesus. To use a term that matches Schnackenburg's statement, the petition, which is *theocentric* in terms of the source of protection and consecration, is *christocentric* in terms of the medium. The disciples experience God's protective and consecrative power in Jesus. Two observations can be made to clarify this point.

First, the prayer describes that Jesus, like the Father, is involved in the protection and consecration of the disciples. The Father ultimately possesses the power to protect the disciples and consecrate them to be sent into the world. It is God, after all, who consecrated Jesus and sent him (8:36). Yet, John also portrays Jesus as protecting and guarding his disciples so that no one, except the son of destruction, was lost (v. 12). In v. 17 Jesus asks the Father to consecrate his disciples. Yet, he also tells the Father that he consecrates himself so that his disciples are consecrated in truth (v. 19). On the one hand, in relating Jesus' act to that which he asks his Father to do for his disciples John underlines Jesus' role as the agent of God's power to protect and consecrate the disciples.⁹⁷ On the other, he clarifies for his audience that the continuation of the disciples' experience of God's

⁹⁷ Bultmann (*The Gospel of John*, 502) thinks that the petition for protection is the same as the petition for holiness. Both "in your name" and "in the truth" are manifested in Jesus.

protective and consecrative power is guaranteed in Jesus. What Jesus does for the disciples when he was with them (ὅτε ἡμῶν μετ' αὐτῶν) will continue after his return to the Father by means of the Paraclete.

Second, the Father keeps the disciples and consecrates them “in the sphere of” or “by means of” something that is explained in relation to Jesus’ revelation. In v. 11b the Father keeps the disciples *in his name* (ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί σου). The name belongs to God. The name, however, is explained as the name that God has given to Jesus (ὃ δέδωκάς μοι). The phrase ὃ δέδωκάς μοι is significant because nowhere else in the Johannine narrative is God said to have given his name to Jesus.⁹⁸ In employing this explanatory phrase John places the disciples’ experience of God’s protection within the context of Jesus’ relationship with the Father. The name with which God protects the disciples after Jesus’ departure is the name that he has given to Jesus and that he has revealed to his disciples in his ministry (v. 6). Similarly, in v. 17 Jesus asks the Father to consecrate his disciples *in the truth* (ἐν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ).⁹⁹ Here the truth is explained in the phrase, “Your word is truth” (ὁ λόγος ὁ σὸς ἀλήθεια ἐστίν). As we have already seen, “your word” refers to God’s word, which is revealed through Jesus. In the Johannine narrative Jesus is both the “Word” (cf. the prologue) and the “truth” (14:6).¹⁰⁰ Thus, for the author of the Fourth Gospel, God’s power

⁹⁸ This may explain why some scribes read the relative pronoun as the accusative plural masculine οὓς, which has “them,” the disciples (αὐτούς), not “your name” (τῷ ὀνόματί σου), as its antecedent. See n 75.

⁹⁹ Malatesta (“The Literary Structure of John 17,” 204) points out the parallelism in the phrase τήρησον αὐτοὺς ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί σου and ἀγίασον αὐτοὺς ἐν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ.

¹⁰⁰ “Truth” in v. 17 is often linked with the Holy Spirit. See Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2. 776; F. F. Bruce, *The Gospel and Epistles of John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983) 334; Hanson, *The Prophetic Gospel*, 18. Haenchen (*John*, 2. 154) quotes the words of Chrysostom, in which the Church Father

to keep and consecrate the disciples continues to work after Jesus' departure "in the sphere of" and "by means of" his name and word that are revealed in Jesus.

In this sense, the petition for the protection and consecration of the disciples in the third section of the prayer (vv. 11b-19) is christocentric. Despite his departure, Jesus' role in protecting the disciples and consecrating them continues because the name, in which God keeps the disciples, and the truth, in which God consecrates them, are manifested in Jesus. On the basis of this understanding of Jesus, I will focus my attention on how this understanding of Jesus relates to the Johannine understanding of the disciples.

b. Protection and Consecration of the Disciples

The third section of the prayer of John 17 reveals not only the Johannine understanding of Jesus but of the disciples as well. What John sees as the identity of Jesus' disciples emerges in this section of the prayer: they are the people who are separated *from* the world yet consecrated to be sent *into* the world. This understanding of discipleship is related to the author's understanding of Jesus, particularly, his role of protecting and consecrating his disciples. I shall underline a few points that clarify this relationship.

First, the qualities that Jesus wishes to be possessed by the disciples are described as the goal of Jesus' act or the act of the Father. This can be seen in the use of the *ἵνα* clauses in this section, particularly those that are used to express purpose.¹⁰¹ In v. 11b Jesus asks the

relates the truth in v. 17 with the Spirit. In my view, a link between the truth and the Holy Spirit is possible in v. 17 only insofar as the Spirit's role is to remind the disciples of the word that Jesus has spoken (14:26).

¹⁰¹ The *ἵνα* clause, which is not found in the second section of the prayer, is used six times in the third section of the prayer. It is used in vv. 11b, 13, 19 to express the intention of the action of the main verb (*ἵνα*

Father to keep the disciples in his name “so that (ἵνα) they may be one.” The oneness or unity of the disciples is the purpose of the Father keeping the disciples in his name, which is the name that he has given to Jesus. In v. 13 Jesus says that he speaks this to his disciples “so that (ἵνα) they may have my joy made complete in them.” Here the fullness of joy in the disciples is the purpose of Jesus revealing God’s word to them. In v. 19 Jesus consecrates himself “so that (ἵνα) they may be consecrated in truth.” The consecration of the disciples is the purpose of Jesus’ self-consecration. These ἵνα clauses show that for John the qualities that characterize Jesus’ disciples (unity, joy, being consecrated) are the goals of Jesus’ acts in his capacity as the Son and revealer of the Father.

Second, John presents Jesus in his relationship with the Father as the model for the disciples. This is indicated in the frequent use of the conjunction καθώς within this section. In v. 11b Jesus prays that God keeps the disciples so that they may be one “just as (καθώς) we are one.”¹⁰² The unity of the disciples follows the unity of Jesus and the Father. In v. 13 Jesus says that the disciples do not belong to the world “just as (καθώς) I do not belong to the world.” Jesus becomes the model for the disciples’ separation from the world. The same formula is repeated in v. 16 to emphasize that the disciples, just as (καθώς) Jesus, do not belong to the world inasmuch as the world is the evil one’s domain. In v. 18 Jesus says

purpose clause). In v. 12 it is used to indicate “*both the intention and its sure accomplishment*” (ἵνα purpose-result clause). In v. 15 (2x) it is used substantivally (ἵνα substantival clause). See Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar: Beyond the Basics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996) 472-75.

¹⁰² The conjunction καθώς, which is often used to describe a comparison or analogy, plays a significant role in the Fourth Gospel. The conjunction appears in John thirty-one times (more than in all the Synoptics combine [twenty-eight times]). Within the Fourth Gospel the conjunction appears in ch. 17 eight times, more than in any other chapter of John.

that he sent his disciples just as (καθώς) the Father has sent him. The sending of Jesus by the Father becomes the model for the sending of the disciples by Jesus. Just as Jesus is “the sent one,” so the disciples are “the sent ones.”¹⁰³ Both Jesus and the disciples are sent “into the world.” The use of the conjunction καθώς and the aorist ἀπέστειλα in both clauses of v. 18 establish the closest possible parallel between the sending of the disciples and the sending of Jesus.¹⁰⁴ For John, Jesus is the model for the disciples. His unity with the Father, his separation from the world, and his sending into the world become the paradigm that characterizes the identity of the disciples.

Third, it is significant to note that whereas Jesus, the Son of the Father, is presented as the model for the disciples, the son of destruction (Judas) provides a negative example for the audience. By calling him the “son of destruction,” Jesus points to the destiny of Judas. Jesus lost Judas because he is no longer “one” (cf. v. 11b) with his fellow disciples. In the garden Judas stands with those who come to arrest Jesus (18:5). He proves himself to belong to the world, the domain of evil one that opposes Jesus (cf. vv. 14, 16; 13:2, 27). Consequently, he is not included among those sent by Jesus (cf. v. 18; 20:21). The audience, which is privileged to know to whom Jesus is referring, learns from Judas about the cost of lost discipleship.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³ Moloney, *The Gospel of John*, 469.

¹⁰⁴ Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 3. 186.

¹⁰⁵ Keener (*The Gospel of John*, 2. 1059) notes, “That John elsewhere emphasizes that Jesus had lost no sheep (10:11-12) and that, in fact, no one could seize them from his hand or his Father’s hand (10:28-29) suggests that this was a matter of encouragement John felt his audience needed.” See also Kenneth Hein, “Judas Iscariot: Key to the Last-Supper Narratives?” *NTS* 17 (1970-71) 227-32.

Fourth, the significance of the “word” (λόγος) in defining the disciples’ identity implies a responsibility to keep the word. In v. 13 the disciples are identified in relation to the word: “I have given them your word.” Being the recipient of the word is what separates the disciples from the world and causes its hatred of them. In v. 17 the word is connected with the truth in which the disciples are consecrated. The two appearances of λόγος in this section indicate the significance of the “word” for the disciples’ separation *from* the world and their consecration to be sent *into* the world. In v. 6 Jesus has told his Father that the disciples “have kept” his word. This implies that God’s sovereignty to keep and consecrate the disciples presuppose the disciples’ responsibility to keep the word and remain in it (cf. 8:31-32).¹⁰⁶ By keeping and abiding in the word, “their word” (λόγου αὐτῶν, v. 20) will become the medium that brings faith to future believers for whom Jesus will now pray.

4. Jesus’ Unity with the Father and the Unity of His Disciples (vv. 20-23)

20 Οὐ περὶ τούτων δὲ ἐρωτῶ μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ περὶ τῶν πιστευόντων διὰ τοῦ λόγου αὐτῶν εἰς ἐμέ,

21 ἵνα πάντες ἐν ᾧσιν, καθὼς σύ, πάτερ, ἐν ἐμοὶ καὶ γὰρ ἐν σοί,

ἵνα καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐν ἡμῖν ᾧσιν,

ἵνα ὁ κόσμος πιστεύῃ ὅτι σύ με ἀπέστειλας.

22 καὶ γὰρ τὴν δόξαν ἣν δέδωκάς μοι δέδωκα αὐτοῖς,

ἵνα ᾧσιν ἐν καθὼς ἡμεῖς ἐν· 23 ἐγὼ ἐν αὐτοῖς καὶ σὺ ἐν ἐμοί,

ἵνα ᾧσιν τετελειωμένοι εἰς ἐν,

ἵνα γινώσκῃ ὁ κόσμος ὅτι σύ με ἀπέστειλας καὶ ἠγάπησας αὐτοὺς καθὼς ἐμὲ ἠγάπησας.

¹⁰⁶ Schnackenburg (*The Gospel according to St. John*, 3. 180) points out the possibility of John’s play on the verb “to keep” (τηρέω). The verb is used in the Fourth Gospel primarily in relation to keeping God’s word or his commandment. See 8:51, 52, 55; 9:16, 14:15, 21, 23, 24; 15:10 (2x), 20 (2x); 17:6.

4. 1. A Literary Exegetical Reading of vv. 20-23

In his prayer of John 17 Jesus has in view not only his disciples who are with him at the farewell meal. In v. 20 he says, “I pray not only for them, but also for those who believe in me through their word” (οὐ περὶ τούτων δὲ ἐρωτῶ μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ περὶ τῶν πιστευόντων διὰ τοῦ λόγου αὐτῶν εἰς ἐμέ). Employing the construction οὐ μόνον . . . ἀλλὰ καί¹⁰⁷ Jesus clarifies that he is also concerned with a larger circle of disciples (believers), namely, those who have faith in him through the word of his disciples. Jesus seems to refer to future believers inasmuch as the present participle πιστευόντων in this verse can be regarded as having a future meaning.¹⁰⁸ A chronological time frame, however, does not seem to be Jesus’ main concern. What is important for Jesus is that the larger circle of his disciples includes all who *believe in him* (πιστευόντων . . . εἰς ἐμέ). He is the object of their faith, and this faith is attained *through* (διὰ) the word of his disciples. Jesus has given the disciples God’s word (λόγον σου, v. 14), and he sent them into the world (v. 18). Now “their word” (λόγου αὐτῶν), in turn, becomes the medium that evokes faith in a larger circle of followers. Inasmuch as these followers believe in him through the word of the disciples, they are Jesus’ disciples as well.

¹⁰⁷ Bultmann (*The Gospel of John*, 512) notes that the construction οὐ μόνον . . . ἀλλὰ καί shows the Evangelist’s style (cf. 11:52; 12:9; 13:9). Bultmann (ibid., 515) thus regards vv. 20-21 not as redactional glosses but the result of the Evangelist’s reworking his source. Becker (“Aufbau, Schichtung,” 74) and Schnackenburg, “Strukturanalyse von Joh 17,” 198-99) think that since the reference to future believers appears only in vv. 20-21 it is not part of the original prayer but that it came from a latter hand. These hypotheses attempt to explain the origin of the text. However, here I take the passage as it stands.

¹⁰⁸ Turner, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek III Syntax*, 87; Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2. 769.

The content of Jesus' petition for them is expressed in a ἵνα clause, "so that they may all be one" (ἵνα πάντες ἐν ᾧσιν). This is the first ἵνα clause within a series of ἵνα clauses in this section of the prayer.¹⁰⁹ Jesus is concerned about the unity of his disciples. In v. 11b he has mentioned unity as the goal of the protection that he asks from his Father. Here he explains further the nature of this unity in a καθὼς clause, "Just as you, Father, are in me and I in you" (καθὼς σύ, πάτερ, ἐν ἐμοὶ καὶ γὰρ ἐν σοί). Jesus has told his disciples about the nature of his relationship with the Father in terms of a mutual indwelling (14:10-11, 20). Here he speaks to his Father about their mutual indwelling as the model for the unity among all his disciples. For Jesus the unity of his disciples must follow the unity in his relationship with the Father.¹¹⁰

Jesus defines the unity more precisely in the second ἵνα clause in v. 21, "that they also may be in us" (ἵνα καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐν ἡμῖν ᾧσιν). The unity that he wishes for them is a unity that is grounded in the unity of the Father and the Son. Only when the disciples are "in us" (ἐν ἡμῖν) will they be truly one. The unity of the disciples, therefore, is modeled and grounded in the mutual indwelling of Jesus and the Father.

¹⁰⁹ The petition is arranged in two parallel accounts in vv. 20-21 and vv. 22-23. Each contains a main clause followed by a series of three ἵνα clauses. The first ἵνα clause is expanded with a comparative καθὼς clause, and the final ἵνα clause is expanded by a ὅτι clause. See Appold, *Oneness Motif*, 157; Randall, "The Theme of Unity in John xvii 20-23," 373-94; Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2. 765.

¹¹⁰ Scholars have tried to explain the nature of the unity in v. 21. Dillow ("Abiding Is Remaining in Fellowship: Another Look at John 15:1-6," *BSac* 147 (1990) 47) suggests that it includes the unity of purpose and fellowship; Ferreira (*Johannine Ecclesiology*, 128) suggests that it is a "unity in words and works." He also calls it a "unity in function," or a "unity in sending." Morrison ("Mission and Ethic," 254) proposes a "unity of mission." Michael (*The Gospel of John*, 875-76) thinks that the unity involves something that is visible to the outside world. He suggests that it is a "unity in love."

The third *ἵνα* clause provides the goal of the unity of the disciples.¹¹¹ Jesus tells the Father that the purpose of his disciples' unity is "so that the world may believe that you sent me" (*ἵνα ὁ κόσμος πιστεύῃ ὅτι σὺ με ἀπέστειλας*). The disciples' unity does not end in itself. It is for the sake of witness to the world.¹¹² To be in unity with Jesus and the Father will make them witnesses that will lead the world to believe in Jesus as the one whom God sent (*ὅτι σὺ με ἀπέστειλας*). Although Jesus does not pray for the world (v. 9), he has said that God sent him to save the world (3:17; 12:47). As he is about to return to the Father, he indicates that his task to convince the world to believe is now the task of the ones he sends (cf. v. 18), the disciples, who now include all believers.

Jesus' prayer for the unity of his disciples continues in vv. 22-23, which is arranged in parallel to vv. 20-21.¹¹³ In the main clause in v. 22 he says, "And I have given them the glory you gave me" (*καὶ γὰρ τὴν δόξαν ἣν δέδωκάς μοι δέδωκα αὐτοῖς*). He reintroduces the theme of glory, which is the focus of his petition in the first section of the prayer (vv. 1b-5). In that section of the prayer the Father and the Son are involved in giving and receiving of glory. Here Jesus refers to glory (*δόξα*) as something that the Father gives him, and he gives to his disciples. The purpose of his giving this glory to his disciples is explained in a *ἵνα* clause, "so that they may be one, as we are one" (*ἵνα ὧσιν ἐν καθὼς ἡμεῖς ἐν*, v. 22). For Jesus the oneness of his disciples is related to the giving of his glory. The glory belongs to

¹¹¹ Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 394; Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2. 770.

¹¹² Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 2. 1061.

¹¹³ See n 109. Verses 22-23 repeat and amplify the petition for unity in v. 21. See Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2. 769; Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 2. 1062.

the Father, and it is given to Jesus. He and the Father are one through their sharing of this glory (cf. 17:5).¹¹⁴ Jesus gives his glory to his disciples in his ministry that climaxes in his death on the cross. Thus, just as (καθώς) Jesus and the Father are one, the disciples are one for they share the same glory that Jesus gives them.

By sharing in Jesus' glory the disciples are in unity not only among themselves but with God as well. Jesus says, "I in them, and you in me" (ἐγὼ ἐν αὐτοῖς καὶ σὺ ἐν ἐμοί, v. 23). He reiterates the mediatorial role he plays in the disciples' relationship with God (cf. 14:6-7). The disciples are able to be in unity with God because the Father is in the Son (cf. 10:30, 38; 14:10-11, 20). The indwelling of the Father in (ἐν) the Son and the indwelling of the Son in (ἐν) the disciples brings the disciples' unity to perfection. Jesus clarifies this in the second ἵνα clause in v. 22, "so that they may be brought to perfection as one" (ἵνα ὥσιν τετελειωμένοι εἰς ἓν). Only when this unity is modeled and grounded in the mutual indwelling of Jesus and the Father does the unity of the disciples comes to its completion.¹¹⁵

The last ἵνα clause of v. 23 is parallel to the last ἵνα clause of v. 21. Both describe the purpose of unity in relation to the world.¹¹⁶ Jesus says that the disciples are perfected in unity "so that the world may know that you sent me, and that you loved them just as you loved me" (ἵνα γινώσκῃ ὁ κόσμος ὅτι σύ με ἀπέστειλας καὶ ἠγάπησας αὐτοὺς καθὼς ἐμὲ

¹¹⁴ For various interpretations concerning glory in v. 22, see Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 3. 192.

¹¹⁵ The participle τετελειωμένοι is probably a divine passive, and the perfect tense emphasizes the enduring or lasting quality of the unity. See Ferreira, *The Johannine Ecclesiology*, 129.

¹¹⁶ That the purpose of the unity of the disciples is related to the world indicates that although Jesus does not pray for the world, "the world does not lie in the fringe of the scope of Jesus prayer." See Janzen, "The Scope of Jesus' High Priestly Prayer in John 17," 25.

ἡγάπησας). The intended result of the disciples' unity in v. 21 is elaborated here. In v. 21 the purpose of the unity is that the world may "believe" (πιστεύῃ). Here the world's "believing" is defined as its "knowing" (γινώσκω) Jesus. The object of believing and knowing are the same: that Jesus was sent by the Father (ὅτι σὺ με ἀπέστειλας). This indicates that both verbs are interrelated (cf. v. 8). The object of the world's knowledge then is expanded. Through the disciples unity it is possible for the world to know not only that Jesus is the one God sent but that the disciples are God's beloved, just as (καθώς) Jesus is the Beloved Son of the Father.¹¹⁷

4. 2. Christology and Discipleship in vv. 20-23

a. Jesus' Unity with the Father

The fourth section of the prayer, which is focused on the petition for the unity of the disciples, is marked by a strongly christological content. The section highlights the Johannine understanding of Jesus, particularly, his unity with the Father. In having Jesus pray for the unity of his disciples, John portrays Jesus' role in bringing the disciples into perfect unity. Jesus is the point of departure from which this unity is formed as well as its goal. He is also the mediator through whom the disciples are unified with God. I will explain briefly the Johannine emphasis on the significance of Jesus as the point of departure, the mediator, and the goal of the disciples' unity, as portrayed in this section of the prayer.

¹¹⁷ Kurz ("The Beloved Disciple and Implied Readers," *BTB* 19 [1989] 102) suggests that the appearance of the Beloved Disciple for the first time in the farewell address indicates that John wants his implied readers (those for whom Jesus prays in 17:20-26) to identify themselves with this ideal disciple. He thinks that in 17:23 future believers who are said to be loved by the Father, in this sense, also become beloved disciples. See also David R. Beck, *The Discipleship Paradigm*, 132; Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 2. 1063.

At the opening verse of this section (v. 20), Jesus describes the identity of the larger circle of disciples for whom he prays as “those who believe in me” (πιστευόντων . . . εἰς ἐμέ). This means that believing in Jesus is the point of departure for attaining unity because the unity for which Jesus asks the Father is meant for those who believe in him. The content of faith in Jesus is that he is the one sent by God (ὅτι σύ με ἀπέστειλας). This can be seen in the repetition of the phrase ὅτι σύ με ἀπέστειλας throughout John 17.¹¹⁸ In this section of the prayer the phrase ὅτι σύ με ἀπέστειλας is described as the content of “believing” (πιστεύω) and “knowing” (γινώσκω), which is the goal of the unity of the disciples. Thus, for John, Jesus is not only the point of departure for unity but its goal as well. On the one hand, only when one receives Jesus in faith can one receive the glory through which all believers will be brought into one (v. 22). On the other hand, when the oneness of the disciples is brought to its perfection in God (v. 23) they become witnesses that can evoke faith in Jesus.

John also depicts Jesus as the mediator in the disciples’ unity with God. The emphasis on Jesus’ mediatorial role can be seen in the emphasis on mutual indwelling in this section of the prayer. In v. 21 Jesus says that the disciples are “in us” (ἐν ἡμῖν), namely, in Jesus and the Father. In v. 23 Jesus says that he is in the disciples, and the Father is in him. Although the Father is not said to be in the disciples, the disciples are related to the Father through Jesus because the Father is in Jesus, and Jesus is in the disciples. In other words,

¹¹⁸ See vv. 3, 8, 18, 21, 22, 25. The formulation “that you (the Father) sent me” occurs with slight variation with such regularity in John (17x) especially in ch. 17 (6x). Appold (*Oneness Motif*, 159-60) thinks that the formulation is “not only a favorite formula of the evangelist but also indicative of a standard dogmatic statement typical for John’s church.”

the disciples participate in the union of the Father and the Son through their union with Jesus. Jesus' mediatorial role can also be seen in relation to the giving of glory. The glory that Jesus gives (δέδωκα) the disciples is the glory that the Father gives (δέδωκας) him. Here the purpose of the giving of the glory is so that the disciples may be one (ἵνα ᾖσιν ἐν). Jesus thus forms the link between the disciples and the Father. His mediatorial role allows the disciples to participate in the unity of the Father and the Son and so have their unity brought to perfection.

b. The Unity of the Disciples

John understands Jesus as the point of departure, the mediator, and the goal of unity. Here we will see how this understanding of Jesus is related to John's teaching concerning the disciples' unity. I will highlight the relationship in the following points.

First, the unity of the disciples is modeled on and grounded in the unity of Jesus and the Father. That Jesus is the model for the disciples can be seen in the use of the conjunction καθώς.¹¹⁹ In addition to its use in v. 11b, the use of καθώς in v. 21 and v. 22 indicates John's intention to present Jesus' unity with the Father as the model for the disciples' unity. Jesus wishes that just as (καθώς) he and the Father are one so all his disciples will be one. The unity which characterizes Jesus' identity defines the disciples' identity as well. The nature of their unity is explained in terms of the mutual indwelling of the Father and the Son, as we have already seen. Here it is important to note that although

¹¹⁹ Five of the eight occurrences of the conjunction καθώς in John 17 are used to describe the relationship between Jesus and the Father as the model for the relationship between Jesus and the disciples. See Chang, "Repetitions and Variations in the Gospel of John," 174.

the disciples' unity is modeled on the unity of the Father and the Son, Jesus does not say that the disciples dwell in each other as the Father and the Son dwell in each other. Instead, they are to be "in us" (in Jesus and the Father), and Jesus is in them (vv. 21, 23). This means that the disciples are united with one another in Jesus, and through him they are in union with the Father. He is not only the model, he is also the locus or ground for the disciples' unity.¹²⁰

Second, the disciples share not only in Jesus' unity with the Father but in his word and his glory as well. Jesus makes known to his disciples everything that he hears from the Father (15:15). He has given them the word (λόγος or ῥῆμα) that the Father gave him (vv. 8, 14). Now "their word" (λόγου αὐτῶν) becomes the instrument through which people believe in Jesus (v. 20). The disciples also share Jesus' glory (δόξα), which is given to him by the Father (v. 22). Scholars have suggested various proposals concerning the content of δόξα, such as divine life,¹²¹ love,¹²² knowledge of the Father,¹²³ faith,¹²⁴ the glory of the incarnation, cross, and resurrection,¹²⁵ Holy Spirit,¹²⁶ mission in the world,¹²⁷ etc.¹²⁸

¹²⁰ That Jesus is the locus or ground for the disciples' unity is illustrated in the metaphor of the vine and the branches (15:1-8).

¹²¹ Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 3. 192.

¹²² Moloney, *The Gospel of John*, 474.

¹²³ Haenchen, *John*, 2. 155.

¹²⁴ Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 515.

¹²⁵ Carson, *Farewell Discourse and Final Prayer of Jesus*, 197.

¹²⁶ Ralph Allan Smith, "The Trinitarian Covenant in John 17," *Global Missiology* 3 (2005) 9.

¹²⁷ Ridderbos, *The Gospel of John*, 563; Ferreira, *Johannine Ecclesiology*, 129.

¹²⁸ Corrine Hong Sling Wong ("The DOXA of Christ and His Followers in the Fourth Gospel: An Inquiry into the Meaning and Background of DOXA in John 17:22," Ph.D. diss., University of Pretoria, 2005,

Whatever the content of δόξα, it is a shared gift. It is given by the Father to Jesus in his capacity as the only Son of the Father (μονογενοῦς παρὰ πατρός, 1:14), and is given by Jesus to the disciples in their capacity as the children of God (τέκνα θεοῦ, 1:12). God loves them just as (καθώς) he loves Jesus (v. 23). For John, therefore, Jesus is the prototype for the disciples.

Third, the unity of the disciples belongs to the sovereignty of God. It is the work of the Father and the initiative lies with him. That Jesus offers this prayer to the Father confirms that the Father is the source of this unity. At the same time, the unity of the disciples flows from the giving of the glory to the disciples, as implied in v. 22. The glory is given by Jesus, and Jesus receives the glory from the Father. It means that “unity comes down from the Father and the Son to the believers.”¹²⁹ It belongs to the divine sovereignty. However, this does not imply passivity on the part of the disciples. Instead, it presupposes their active role. So far the narrative tells us nothing about the missionary or preaching activity of the disciples. Yet, the prayer presupposes the sending of the disciples (v. 18) and the success of their mission.¹³⁰ The larger group of disciples for whom Jesus prays believes in Jesus because of the word of his first disciples (v. 20). The possibility for the world to

4-7) provides eleven categories of the content of δόξα proposed by scholars. Her own study concludes that the δόξα given to the disciples and all believers includes the following: the character of God (holy, righteous, loving), ἐξουσία (to become children of God, to do the works that Jesus did, and to judge), δόξα of exultation and honor in heaven. See p. 263.

¹²⁹ Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2. 776.

¹³⁰ This has been pointed out by Beasley-Murray (*John*, 302). Bultmann (*The Gospel of John*, 515) suggests that the community of disciples, who receives the share in Jesus’ δόξα, “receives a share in his work of revelation.” Meanwhile, Schnackenburg (*The Gospel according to St. John*, 3. 191) thinks that the desire to bring the world to faith shows the missionary concern of the Johannine community.

believe and know Jesus (vv. 21, 23) implies the disciples' witness through their unity. The purpose clause "so that the world may believe . . . and may know" is much more a statement about the significance of the disciples' witness than a promise that the whole world will come to believe in Jesus.¹³¹ In having Jesus pray to the Father in the hearing of his disciples, John hints that the unity of the disciples, with which the audience can identify itself, belongs to the divine sovereignty and at the same time presupposes their active responsibility.

Fourth, faith and understanding are interrelated in relation to unity: both are described as the goal of the disciples' unity. In v. 21 the purpose of unity is that the world "may believe" (πιστεύῃ). In v. 23 it is so that the world "may know" (γινώσκῃ). The content of believing and knowing is the same: that Jesus has been sent by the Father (ὅτι σὺ με ἀπέστειλας). Thus, although faith, not knowledge, is what is necessary to be included among those for whom Jesus prays (v. 20), that "knowing" is parallel to "believing" and that both do not differ in substance indicates the significance of knowledge in the Johannine understanding of discipleship. Knowledge of Jesus leads to faith, and faith in Jesus presupposes knowledge of him. Both are closely related to each other.¹³² The disciples' unity will open the possibility for the world to know Jesus and believe in him.

¹³¹ Concerning the parallel ἵνα clauses which speak about the goal of unity for the world (vv. 21, 23), Brown (*The Gospel according to John*, 2. 778) writes, "We contend that these statements do not mean that the world will accept Jesus; rather the Christian believers will offer to the world the same type of challenge that Jesus offered—a challenge to recognize God in Jesus."

¹³² "πιστεύω," TDNT 6. 227. Concerning the relationship between faith and understanding, Farely (*The Disciples in the Fourth Gospel*, 228) writes, "In Johannine perspective, understanding is obviously not opposed to faith (as though faith was independent of understanding), but faith may exist when the understanding is lacking (though it can never be altogether absent)."

Thus, the Johannine understanding of the unity of the disciples is related to his understanding of Jesus. Jesus' unity with the Father becomes the model as well as the locus of the unity of the disciples. What Jesus possesses (God's word, glory, and love) in his capacity as the Son of the Father is a privilege that is also shared by the disciples. The disciples' unity requires both divine sovereignty and human responsibility. Their faith, which is the prerequisite to be included among those for whom Jesus prays, entails their knowledge of him. For John the content of this knowledge is not only about Jesus (that he was sent by the Father) but about the disciples (that they share the love with which the Father loves the Son) as well. This theme of love will be highlighted further in the last section of the prayer of John 17.

5. Jesus' Revelation and the Disciples' Dwelling in Love (vv. 24-26)

- 24 Πάτερ, ὃ δέδωκάς μοι, θέλω ἵνα ὅπου εἰμι ἐγὼ καὶ κεῖνοι ὧσιν μετ' ἐμοῦ,
 ἵνα θεωρῶσιν τὴν δόξαν τὴν ἐμήν, ἣν δέδωκάς μοι ὅτι ἠγάπησάς με πρὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου.
- 25 πάτερ δίκαιε, καὶ ὁ κόσμος σε οὐκ ἔγνω, ἐγὼ δέ σε ἔγνω,
 καὶ οὗτοι ἔγνωσαν ὅτι σύ με ἀπέστειλας.
- 26 καὶ ἐγνώρισα αὐτοῖς τὸ ὄνομά σου καὶ γνωρίσω,
 ἵνα ἡ ἀγάπη ἣν ἠγάπησάς με ἐν αὐτοῖς ἥ καὶ ἐγὼ ἐν αὐτοῖς.

5.1. A Literary Exegetical Reading of vv. 24-26

Once again addressing God as “Father” (πάτερ), Jesus says, “I wish that those whom you have given me may be with me where I am” (ὃ δέδωκάς μοι, θέλω ἵνα ὅπου εἰμι ἐγὼ

κάκεῖνοι ὧσιν μετ' ἐμοῦ, v. 24). Jesus uses the verb θέλω to express his desire.¹³³ He speaks as the Son who declares to his Father what he wants.¹³⁴ Yet, what he wants is something for his disciples rather than for himself. He refers to them as a single community of “that which you have given me” (ὃ δέδωκάς μοι).¹³⁵ He wants them to be with him just as he has promised them, “Where I am, you also may be” (ὅπου εἰμι ἐγὼ καὶ ὑμεῖς ἦτε, 14:3; cf. 12:26).

The purpose of being with him, he adds, is “so that they may see my glory” (ἵνα θεωρῶσιν τὴν δόξαν τὴν ἐμήν). At the beginning of the prayer he asked the Father to glorify him (vv. 1, 5). He also told the Father that he has given them his glory (v. 22). Inasmuch as his glorification is certain, he now assures them that their experience of seeing (θεωρῶσιν) his glory is certain because his will (θέλημα) is what the Father wills (4:34; 5:30; 6:38).

How, when, and where this experience of glory will take place is not specified. What Jesus clarifies about his glory is that it is the glory “which you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world” (ἣν δέδωκάς μοι ὅτι ἠγάπησάς με πρὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου). The glory, which Jesus possesses “before the world began” (πρὸ τοῦ

¹³³ For the use of the verb θέλω, see n 87 in Chapter Three.

¹³⁴ One may notice the contrast with the prayer in Gethsemane in the Synoptics in which Jesus says, “Not what I want, but what you want” (οὐ τί ἐγὼ θέλω ἀλλὰ τί σύ). See Mark 14:36; cf. Matt 26:39; Luke 22:42.

¹³⁵ The neuter singular is often used to refer to all who belong to Jesus as a group. See 6:37, 39; 10:29; 17:2, 24. As in v. 2, the alternation of genders takes place here. The neuter singular ὃ is followed by the masculine plural κάκεῖνοι. Turner suggests that those given to Jesus are depicted first as a unity and then individually. See Turner, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek*, 21; Morris, *The Gospel of John*, 736.

τὸν κόσμον εἶναι, v. 5), is the manifestation of the Father's love that transcends time because it occurred "before the foundation of the world" (πρὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου).¹³⁶ Love is the reason (ὅτι) and the driving force that moves the Father to give the Son the glory that the Son now wishes his disciples to see.

In v. 25 Jesus once again addresses God, this time with an attributive, "Righteous Father" (πάτερ δίκαιε), and says, "Whereas the world does not know you, yet I know you, and they know that you have sent me" (καὶ ὁ κόσμος σε οὐκ ἔγνω, ἐγὼ δέ σε ἔγνω, καὶ οὗτοι ἔγνωσαν ὅτι σύ με ἀπέστειλας).¹³⁷ Jesus has used the adjective "righteous" (δίκαιος) in relation to judgment. In using this attributive he appeals to God's righteous judgment in which he and his disciples are right, whereas the world is wrong.¹³⁸ He knows (ἔγνω) the Father, whereas the world does not (οὐκ ἔγνω). His disciples share his knowledge concerning the Father. The content of their knowledge, however, is not simply "you" (σε), the Father, but "that you have sent me" (ὅτι σύ με ἀπέστειλας). In contrast to the world, which does not know the Father because it does not know who Jesus is (1:10), the disciples know the Father through the one whom he sent.

¹³⁶ The expression πρὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου is found in John only here. However the expression is common in the NT. See Matt 13:35; 25:34; Luke 11:50; Eph 1:4; Heb 4:3; 9:26; 1 Pet 1:20; Rev. 13:8; 17:8.

¹³⁷ The function of καί at the beginning of the phrase καὶ ὁ κόσμος σε οὐκ ἔγνω is puzzling. Abbott (*Johannine Grammar*, 148) suggests that the καί is coordinated with the second καί in v. 24. Thus, on the one hand, the world does not know the Father; on the other, the disciples do know the Father. The phrase concerning Jesus' knowledge of the Father (ἐγὼ δέ σε ἔγνω) is taken as a parenthesis. However, the contrast between the world's ignorance and Jesus' knowledge makes better sense because both have the same object "you" (σε). I agree with Michael (*The Gospel of John*, 881) that καί probably has an adversative force.

¹³⁸ Scholars generally point out the relationship between "righteous" in the invocation πάτερ δίκαιε and his just judgment. See Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 429; Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2. 773; Sanders-Mastin, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 379; Michael, *The Gospel of John*, 881.

In the final verse of the prayer (v. 26), Jesus recounts what he has done throughout his ministry. In v. 6 he has told the Father that he has revealed (ἐφανερώσα) his name. This results in the disciples' faith and knowledge of the Father as the one who sent him (v. 8). Here he tells the Father once more, "And I made known to them your name" (καὶ ἐγνώρισα αὐτοῖς τὸ ὄνομά σου).¹³⁹ The disciples know God because he has made him known to them. Then he adds, "and I will make it known" (καὶ γνωρίσω). He realizes that his task of revealing God's name continues. The cross, on which he will be lifted up and through which the revelation of God's name reaches its climax (8:28), lies ahead. He is ready to complete his task for the sake of his disciples, "so that the love with which you loved me may be in them, and I in them" (ἵνα ἡ ἀγάπη ἣν ἠγάπησάς με ἐν αὐτοῖς ἦ καὶ ἐν αὐτοῖς). Jesus is the manifestation of God's love (cf. 3:16), and he loves his own "to the end," "completely" (εἰς τέλος, 13:1) by dying on the cross. Jesus, therefore, enables the Father's love to indwell in and among the disciples through his death on the cross, of which he is fully aware.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁹ The verbs φανερόω in v. 6 and γνωρίζω in v. 26 seem to display no difference in meaning. See Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 430. See also Gignac ("The Use of Verbal Variety in the Fourth Gospel," in *Transcending Boundaries: Contemporary Readings of the New Testament, Essays in Honor of Francis J. Moloney* [Biblioteca di Scienze Religiose 187; ed. Rekha M. Chennattu and Mary L. Coloe; Roma: LAS, 2005] 198). He treats φανερόω and γνωρίζω as one of the pair words in John.

¹⁴⁰ The cross event in John includes the death, resurrection, and the sending of the Spirit. In the narrative sequence, all these are future events. Chronologically they will take place after Jesus' prayer. Some scholars suggest that in saying "and I will make it known" Jesus is probably referring to the coming of another Advocate, the Holy Spirit. See Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 430; Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2. 78; Beasley-Murray, *John*, 305; Michael, *The Gospel of John*, 882. The reference to the Holy Spirit is possible inasmuch as the Spirit continues Jesus' mission. The Spirit comes as a result of Jesus' returning to the Father (16:7) and will be with the disciples to remind them of what Jesus has spoken (14:17, 26; 15:26; 16:14-15; cf. 2:22; 12:16).

5.2. Christology and Discipleship in vv. 24-26

a. *Jesus Makes the Father Known*

The last section of the prayer of John 17 is focused on the petition that the disciples may be with Jesus and dwell in his love. Jesus asks this of the Father not as an ordinary petitioner but as the Son who expresses his will (*θέλω*) to the Father.¹⁴¹ This last section of John 17, like the rest of the prayer, then, is marked by a strongly christological content. John highlights Jesus' unique identity as the Son and revealer of the Father and describes what Jesus wishes for his disciples.

As we have seen, John employs *δίδωμι* throughout the prayer to describe the relationship between the Father and the Son through their act of giving and receiving.¹⁴² In v. 24 *δίδωμι* is used again twice. After the invocation "Father," Jesus refers to the disciples as "that which you have given me" (*ὃ δέδωκάς μοι*). The disciples are the gift of the Father to the Son (cf. vv. 2, 6, 9). The glory, which Jesus wants his disciples to see, is also described as the glory "which you have given me" (*ἣν δέδωκάς μοι*). Jesus has asked the Father to give him the glory (vv. 1, 5). In v. 22 the glory has been referred to as the gift from the Father to Jesus. Here in v. 24 John clarifies that the ultimate power that enables this dynamic of giving and receiving is love. The Father gives the glory to the Son because (*ὅτι*) he loves the Son. This means that what Jesus wants his disciples to see is the

¹⁴¹ Ridderbos (*The Gospel of John*, 564) notes, "Jesus does not pray here as a claimant, but as the Son, as one who knew he could rightly assume ownership over the many rooms in his Father's house (cf. 14:2, 3)."

¹⁴² The verb *δίδωμι* appears in the prayer 17 times. Thirteen times it has to do with the Father having given Jesus something: the believers (vv. 2, 6 [2x], 9, 24), authority (v. 2), the work (v. 4), the words (v. 8), the name (vv. 11, 12), the glory (vv. 22, 24), everything (v. 7).

manifestation of his Father's love. For John, the Father's love is made known in the Son (3:16).

Jesus' role as the revealer of the Father is implied in v. 25. When Jesus speaks about his knowledge of the Father he employs the personal pronoun "you" (σε) to refer to the Father, whom the world does not know but whom he knows. Yet, in describing the content of the disciples' knowledge he defines "you" in terms of a relationship with "me" (με), which points to Jesus. What the disciples know is "that you have sent me" (ὅτι σύ με ἀπέστειλας). In employing the phrase ὅτι σύ με ἀπέστειλας, which has been used repeatedly as the object of both faith and knowledge,¹⁴³ John highlights Jesus' role as the revealer of the Father. God is known through the Son whom he sent.¹⁴⁴

Jesus' role as the revealer is confirmed in v. 26. He says that he has made God's name known (ἐγνώρισα) to his disciples and insists that he will make it known (γνωρίσω). This manner of speech, "I have made known . . . and I will make it known," echoes the voice from heaven in response to Jesus in 12:28, "I have glorified it and I will glorify it again" (ἐδόξασα καὶ πάλιν δοξάσω). To make known is the act of Jesus; to glorify is the act of the Father. As Appold asserts, "At the heart of this reciprocal exchange of actions . . . lies the witness that the Father and the Son are one."¹⁴⁵ The Son is able to make the Father

¹⁴³ See n 118.

¹⁴⁴ Carson (*The Farewell Discourse*, 206) notes, "Jesus' knowledge of God is immediate; theirs [the disciples'] is mediated through Jesus."

¹⁴⁵ Appold, *Oneness Motif*, 208. He underlines the relationship between "has glorified and will glorify again" (ἐδόξασα καὶ πάλιν δοξάσω) in 12:28 and "has made known and will make known again" in v. 26 as an indication of the oneness of Jesus and the Father.

known because of his unity with the Father (cf. vv. 21-23; 14:7-11). This unity involves a dwelling in love. The prayer of John 17 ends with Jesus' wish that those given to him by the Father (the disciples and all believers, including the audience) may take part in the mutual dwelling in love with the Father and the Son.

b. The Disciples Dwell in Love with the Father and the Son

Jesus' mission to make the Father known, despite the world's ignorance, is not a failure. The disciples know (ἐγνώσαν) the Father as the result of Jesus making him known (ἐγνώρισα) to them. The centrality of Jesus' role as the revealer of the Father leads to a Johannine teaching on discipleship marked by a strong christological character. What Jesus wishes for his disciples is related to what John understands about Jesus in his relationship with the Father. Three points can be made here to confirm the christological character of Johannine discipleship as portrayed in the last section of John 17.

First, in having Jesus tell the Father that he wants his disciples to be with him "so that they may see my glory," John implies that the petition for Jesus' glorification in vv. 1 and 5, as Michael suggests, "was more than just a private transaction between the Father and the Son that had nothing to do with the disciples."¹⁴⁶ When Jesus asked the Father to glorify him, he already had in view the benefit of the glory for his disciples. The reference to eternity in the expressions πρὸ τοῦ τὸν κόσμον εἶναι (v. 5) and πρὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου (v. 24) indicate John's intention to relate Jesus' glorification and the benefit of the glory for

¹⁴⁶ Michaels, *The Gospel of John*, 880.

those who belong to Jesus.¹⁴⁷ Jesus' glorification with the glory that he has "before the world began" does not end in itself. It is not for Jesus' sake alone but for the sake of his disciples: so that they may witness the manifestation of the Father's love for the Son "before the foundation of the world."

Second, in order to see this glory Jesus wants his disciples to be with him where he is (ὅπου εἰμὶ ἐγώ). This echoes Jesus' promise to the disciples in 14:3 that once he has prepared a room in the Father's house he will come to take them with him so that where he is (ὅπου εἰμὶ ἐγώ) they also may be. Yet, being with Jesus requires a positive response to his revelation. This is why the Jews, who know and believe neither the Father nor Jesus, cannot come to the place where Jesus is going (7:34; 8:21). Meanwhile, the disciples are also told that they cannot come to the place where Jesus goes (13:33). Yet, a moment later Jesus promises Peter that he will follow Jesus later (13:36). Interestingly, John places Jesus' new commandment of love between 13:33 and 36.¹⁴⁸ On the one hand, the promise to be with Jesus is now guaranteed by the Son's will, which is also the will of the Father (4:34; 5:30; 6:38). On the other, the presence of the new commandment between 13:33 and 36 implies that the disciples, who know Jesus and believe in him, follow him to the place where he goes by following his example of love.

Third, in the final words that end the prayer of John 17 as well as the whole Farewell Discourse, John has Jesus allude to the dwelling in love as the ultimate result of his mission

¹⁴⁷ Michaels (ibid.) writes, "Already in those opening lines, Jesus was in some sense praying on their behalf as much as for himself . . ."

¹⁴⁸ Some scholars see 13:34-35 as out of place. See Chapter Three, n 50.

to make the Father known (v. 26). In the farewell speech Jesus has spoken about love in terms of keeping his commandments, which is summed up in the command to love one another (13:34-35; 14:15, 21, 23-24; 15:9-17). At the climactic moment of his prayer Jesus prays that the love which proceeds from the Father to the Son may dwell in the disciples. Although nothing is said about mutual love among disciples, here John probably intends to provide the christological basis for the teaching on mutual love. For John indwelling in the love with which the Father loves the Son is the ultimate power that enables the disciples to love one another as Jesus has loved them. The disciples are not merely passive recipients of this divine love. Having Jesus in them they will become the agents of Jesus just as Jesus was the agent of the Father. Jesus, by his death on the cross, fulfills his mission to make God known and manifests his love for his own. The disciples continue Jesus' mission through their distinguishing act of discipleship: loving one another as Jesus has loved them (13:34-35; 15:11, 17). "By this all will know that you are my disciples: if you have love for one another" (13:35).

6. Conclusion

This literary exegetical analysis leads to the following conclusions. First, John 17 is rich in Christology. Throughout the prayer John has Jesus present himself as the Son who is sent into the world to reveal the Father. Jesus' reference to himself as "your Son" at the beginning of the prayer (v. 1b) and his repeated use of the invocation "Father" throughout the prayer (vv. 1b, 5, 11b, 21, 24, 25) emphasize his identity as the Son of the Father. His unique identity as the Son is heightened by the dynamic of giving and receiving between the

Father and the Son, as seen in the constant use of δίδωμι. The verb “sounds almost like a repeated formula that rings throughout the chapter.”¹⁴⁹ Jesus also emphasizes his identity as the Sent One. He repeatedly alludes to his sending by the Father in the phrase “that you have sent me” (ὅτι σύ με ἀπέστειλας). He defines his mission in the world as revealing (φανερόω) or making the Father known (γνωρίζω). Thus John 17 presents Jesus as the Son, the Sent One, and the Revealer of the Father. In addition to these, the two references to eternity in the expressions “before the world began” (v. 5) and “before the foundation of the world” (v. 24) reflect John’s understanding of Jesus as the preexistent Logos who was with God and was God (1:1-2). There is little doubt that Jesus’ prayer of John 17 is a presentation of Christology in the form of a prayer.

Second, there emerges in John 17 an ideal picture of Jesus’ disciples. Despite the disciples’ lack of understanding and inadequate love and faith in Jesus in the rest of the Johannine narrative, the prayer portrays a positive picture of the disciples. They keep the words, know who Jesus is, and believe in him. Jesus identifies them as those given to him by the Father, and he is glorified in them. He wants them to be protected, consecrated, united, and to abide in him. This ideal picture reflects the Johannine concept of authentic discipleship. By identifying the disciples as a community of people who are given to Jesus (cf. vv. 2, 24), John wants his audience to identify itself with this ideal community. It is a community that shares the glory of eternal life, a community that responds to Jesus’ revelation with faith, a community that despite the persecution and hatred of the world is

¹⁴⁹ Chang, “Repetitions and Variations in the Gospel of John,” 173.

protected and sanctified in order to be sent into the world, a community that lives in unity, and a community that dwells in love with Jesus and the Father.

Third, there is an inherently profound relationship between John's christological teaching and his teaching on discipleship in John 17. The elements that indicate the relationship between Christology and discipleship in the Johannine narrative, as we have identified in Chapter Two, are displayed in the prayer of John 17.

(a) There is movement from Christology to discipleship. The presence of v. 3, which has often been regarded as later addition, indicates the Johannine tendency to follow up his Christological teaching with a teaching on discipleship. In the rest of the prayer there is also a movement back and forth from Jesus' revelation of the Father to the disciples' faith and understanding (vv. 6-11a), from Jesus' protection and consecration of the disciples to the disciples' being protected and consecrated (vv. 11b-19), from Jesus' unity with the Father to the unity of the believers (vv. 20-23), from Jesus' act of making known the Father to its result in the disciples' dwelling in love (vv. 24-26).

(b) There is an emphasis on the significance of knowledge. John defines eternal life as involving the knowledge of the Father and Jesus (v. 3). The disciples' response to Jesus is described as both believing and knowing Jesus as the Sent One (vv. 7, 8). To know Jesus is the purpose of the unity of the disciples (v. 23). Their knowledge is what contrasts them with the world (v. 25).

(c) Jesus is the model for the disciples. This can be seen in the frequent use of the conjunction *καθώς* throughout the prayer. With the exception of its appearance in v. 1, the use of the conjunction shows Jesus as the model for his disciples. He is the model of their

separation from the world (vv. 14, 16). His sending by the Father is the model of their being sent into the world (v. 18). His unity with the Father is the model of the unity of the disciples (vv. 11b, 21, 22).

(d) There is a balance between divine sovereignty and human responsibility. On the one hand, John describes eternal life as the result of Jesus' glorification. On the other, it involves the believers' knowing the Father and Jesus (v. 3). Jesus prays for the disciples because they belong to God (v. 9), but their identity is also characterized by their positive response to Jesus' revelation. God's sovereignty to keep and consecrate the disciples presupposes the disciples' responsibility to keep the word and remain in it. The unity of the disciples belongs to the divine sovereignty because it comes from the Father and the Son to the believers. Yet, it implies the disciples' active role because it is through the word of the disciples that the world will believe and know Jesus. The dwelling in love is the result of Jesus' act of making known the Father. To abide with Jesus, however, requires knowing and believing in him.

(e) Finally, John 17 emphasizes on the central role of Jesus. There is no doubt that the prayer portrays the Father as the source of everything. He is the one who glorifies Jesus, protects the disciples, and sanctifies them. His name and his words are the content of Jesus' revelation. Everything that the Son possesses is given to him by the Father. The Father is the only true God (v. 3). Yet, the Father is made known through his Son. By identifying Jesus as the one whom God sent and placing him alongside God as the object of the disciples' knowledge, John highlights Jesus' role as the revealer of the Father. The Son

shares a full “community of possession” with the Father.¹⁵⁰ The Father gives his name to him. The disciples experience God’s protective and consecrative power in Jesus. He is the point of departure and the goal as well as the mediator and the locus of their unity. In his perfect unity with the Father he enables the disciples to participate in the communion of the divine love, in which their love for one another finds its source.

The profound relationship between Christology and discipleship in John 17 thus confirms that the twin message of Christology and discipleship is a distinctive Johannine trait. John’s testimony to Jesus leads to his teaching on discipleship, and his teaching on discipleship is deeply rooted in the Gospel’s Christology.

¹⁵⁰ Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 3. 178.

Summary and Implications

John states the purpose of the Fourth Gospel in this way: “This is written that you may (come to) believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name” (20:31). Putting it differently, John intends his testimony of Jesus to lead his audience to become true followers of Jesus. Hence, for John Christology results in discipleship. It is on the basis of this premise that I have constructed this study on the relationship between Christology and discipleship in John 17 in particular and in the Johannine narrative in general.

I began this study in Chapter One with an overview of modern scholarship on John 17. Scholars have dealt with this passage both synchronically and diachronically. The diachronic approach questions the historicity of Jesus’ prayer described in John 17 and proposes theories concerning the literary genesis of the chapter as well as the community behind the text. The majority of these scholars think that John 17 does not belong to the *Sitz im Leben Jesu* but to that of the church. They attribute John 17 to the evangelist or a later redactor rather than view it as the *ipsissima verba* of Jesus. Yet, the fact that they do not agree on the sources employed, nor on the redactional process that the text has gone through, points to the limits of a merely historical approach. In contrast to this approach, the synchronic approach reads the text of John 17 as it stands and attempts to explain it within the context of the Farewell Discourse as well as the context of the Johannine narrative. Various structures of the passage have been suggested in an attempt to disclose the meaning of the text. In general scholars agree that the prayer, in its present setting, brings Jesus’

farewell with his disciples to its culmination and prepares for the climax of his glorification in his death and resurrection. John 17, being a prayer in form, functions as an address and admonition to the disciples, as does the rest of Jesus' farewell speech. The prayer exhibits the Johannine understanding of Jesus' identity (Christology) as well as of his teaching on authentic discipleship.

The second section of the first chapter presented an overview of recent scholarship on the theme of discipleship in the Fourth Gospel in order to determine whether the relationship of discipleship and Christology has been sufficiently explored. The last four decades have shown an increased interest among scholars in the theme of discipleship, taking into account the significance of μαθητής in the Fourth Gospel.¹ Discipleship has been studied in relation to Johannine Trinitarian theology by Ramon Moreno (1971), ecclesiology by Rudolf Schnackenburg (1975), pneumatology by Marinus de Jonge (1977), and eschatology by Mary M. Pazdan (1984). Matthew Vellanickal (1980) focuses on the process of becoming a disciple. Andreas J. Köstenberger (1998) emphasizes Johannine discipleship in relation to mission. Rekha M. Chennattu (2006) suggests an approach to Johannine discipleship in light of the OT covenant relationship. Nicolas Farely (2010) explores the faith and understanding of the disciples in John. Many scholars focus their attention on the disciples and other characters as paradigms for discipleship and underline essential aspects of discipleship (following, remaining, keeping, abiding, faith, love, etc).

¹ R. E. Brown's Presidential Address to the SBL membership in December 1977, in which he emphasizes the significance of the term μαθητής in John, is regarded as "a catalyst" that provokes more attention to the study of the Johannine community and the theme of discipleship in John. See Pazdan, "Discipleship as the Appropriation of Eschatological Salvation in the Fourth Gospel," 1.

Beda Rigaux deals with the theme of discipleship in John 17. His study focuses on four keywords that he regards as the main themes of Jesus' prayer: glory, holiness, unity, and perfection. He maintains that discipleship involves participation in the divine sphere (*göttliche Sphäre*). Dirk G. van der Merwe approaches John 17 from the perspective of Jesus' mission and discipleship. He seems to realize the significance of the christological perspective of Johannine discipleship. Yet, like Rigaux, van der Merwe does not pursue the relationship between Christology and discipleship. Moreover, his dealing with the theme of discipleship in John 17 is limited to the framework of mission. Thus, although the theme of discipleship has drawn the attention of scholars, there is still need for further study on the relationship between Christology and discipleship in John 17 in particular and in the Johannine narrative as a whole.

Chapter Two explored the nature of discipleship in its relationship to Christology. My purpose was to clarify the christological character of Johannine discipleship, i.e., that the Johannine teaching on discipleship has its basis in the Gospel's Christology and that Johannine christological teaching leads to teaching on discipleship. For this purpose, I employed a narrative-critical approach to read selected passages in chapters 1–12. I examined how the implied author, using various literary tools, conveys the message of discipleship based on his christological teaching. The passages that were selected for this purpose were the prologue (1:1-18), Jesus' first disciples (1:35-51), the first sign at Cana (2:1-11), the healing of the man born blind (chap. 9), and the "I Am" sayings: bread of life

(6:35), light of life (8:12), the gate for the sheep (10:7), the good shepherd (10:11), and the resurrection and life (11:25-26).²

My analysis of these passages confirms that there is movement from christological teaching to teaching about discipleship. These passages indicate that John imparts christological teaching not as an end in itself but to prepare the audience for his message of discipleship. For instance, in the prologue John introduces Jesus as the preexistent Logos in his relationship to God and creation. On the one hand, he anticipates the rejection of the world. On the other, he encourages the audience to give a positive response by receiving the Word and believing in him. In the story of Jesus' first disciples, John employs various christological titles to provide the basis for the disciples' following and believing in Jesus. In the story of the man born blind John describes the argument about Jesus' identity in such a way that it leads to the blind man's confession of faith. John has Jesus reveal his identity through the "I Am" sayings, which are followed by an invitation to discipleship as a prerequisite to attain Jesus' promises.

In addition to the movement from Christology to discipleship, I identified a few other elements that indicate the distinctive character of Johannine discipleship, which is deeply rooted in the Gospel's Christology. *First*, discipleship involves knowledge about Jesus. The initial followers of Jesus came to him after hearing John's testimony about Jesus, and they applied various christological titles to him. This implies that their knowledge of his identity—even though only partially—becomes the motive for their discipleship. The

² Other passages such as Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus (3:1-21), the conversation with the Samaritan woman (4:1-42), and the healing of the paralytic (5:1-18), also exhibit the Johannine teaching on discipleship.

blind man's knowledge of the man named Jesus, whom he regards as a prophet and a man from God, brings him to faith in the Son of Man. *Second*, Jesus is the prime model for discipleship. Jesus is the "Son" who shares the glory of the Father. Those who receive and believe in him are given the status of "children" of God. Those who eat the bread of life live because of Jesus, just as Jesus lives because of the living Father. They possess the light of life just as Jesus is the light of the world. *Third*, discipleship presupposes both divine sovereignty and human responsibility. The privilege of becoming children of God is a matter of divine prerogative. Discipleship is granted from above because one can come to Jesus only if the Father draws him (6:44, 65). Yet, discipleship requires human responsibility. The children of God are those who receive the Word and believe in his name. The promises that one will never again hunger or thirst, that one will possess the light of life, that one will be saved, and that one will have eternal life require a positive response of coming to Jesus and believing in him. *Fourth*, Jesus plays a central role as the ultimate goal of discipleship. The two disciples of John, on hearing the testimony about Jesus, leave their former master and follow Jesus. The blind man in chapter 9 regards himself as Jesus' disciple and he expects the Pharisees, who claim to be Moses' disciples, to become Jesus' disciples since Moses, John, and the prophets all testify to Jesus.

Chapter Three dealt with the literary context, the text, and structure of John 17. Jesus' prayer—sandwiched between the Farewell Discourse and the passion story—must be understood within the context of the coming of his ὥρα, "the hour" of his return to the Father, the hour when he is glorified in his suffering, death, and resurrection (12:23, 27;

13:1). In contrast to Jesus' awareness of his hour, the disciples are ill-prepared for his departure. This heightens the need for Jesus to pray for them.

In dealing with the structure of John 17, I divided the passage into five sections on the basis of verbal clues and the content of the prayer. The prayer opens with a petition concerning Jesus (vv. 1-5), which is followed by petitions for the disciples (vv. 6-26). Before praying for his disciples, Jesus confirms the identity of those for whom he prays. He prays (ἐρωτῶ) only for those given to him by the Father (ὃν δέδωκάς μοι), namely, those who respond to his revelation with genuine acts of discipleship. This includes future believers as well, as confirmed by the use of ἐρωτῶ with the construction οὐ μόνον . . . ἀλλὰ καί in v. 20. The macro-structure of the prayer, then, indicates the author's interest in Jesus and the disciples, in Christology and in discipleship.

The exegesis of John 17 in Chapter Four confirmed the profound relationship between Christology and discipleship. The Johannine understanding of Jesus' identity and, in relation to it, what the author envisions about authentic discipleship emerged in each section of the prayer. The disciples' eternal life is related to Jesus' glorification. Their faith and understanding is related to his revelation. Their protection and consecration is related to his act of protecting them and his self-consecration. Their unity is related to his unity with the Father, their dwelling in love is the result of his mission to make God known. Throughout John 17 there is a constant movement from Christology to discipleship. The two categories are so closely interrelated that they can hardly be distinguished by stringent structural features. The motifs of Christology and discipleship, then, have been tightly

woven into a unified prayer. This close relationship between Christology and discipleship is true for John 17 as well as for the Farewell Discourse and for the Fourth Gospel in general.

In John 17 the author's repeated use of words such as δίδωμι, δόξα and δοξάζω, ἵνα, and καθώς help to trace the relationship between Christology and discipleship. The verb δίδωμι helps to clarify the disciples' identity within the context of a mutual act of giving and receiving between the Father and the Son. The disciples are the gift of the Father to the Son. At the same time they are receivers of what the Father has given to the Son (his name, words). The δόξα of the Son is also given to them, and they become the locus of the Son's glorification. John employs the ἵνα clauses in the prayer (except in v. 1, 4, 12) to describe the qualities that characterize Jesus' disciples (having eternal life, knowledge, unity, joy, being consecrated, being with Jesus, and seeing his glory). These qualities are described either as the content of Jesus' petition or as the goal of his work in his capacity as the Son and revealer of the Father. Meanwhile, καθώς is used (except in v. 2) to describe Jesus and his relationship with the Father as the model for the disciples. He is the model for unity, separation from the world, being sent into the world, and being loved by the Father.

Being the model for his disciples, however, Jesus' identity is unique because he is the only Son of the Father. His unity with the Father is unique. He is in the Father and the Father is in him. The disciples, however, are not in the Father. It is through Jesus that they are related to the Father and united with one another. Similarly, although the sending of the Son by the Father is parallel to the sending of the disciples by the Son, they are not

equivalent in every respect.³ Believers are God's children because they are born of God (cf. 1:13); yet, only Jesus is the incarnate Son of the Father. The disciples continue Jesus' mission in the world; yet, Jesus' mission remains unique inasmuch as his incarnation is unique. Jesus is the model for the disciples; yet, he is the unique one.

The christological character of Johannine discipleship is marked by a dialectic between divine sovereignty and human responsibility. They are two sides of the same coin. On the one hand, the disciples' eternal life is the result of Jesus' glorification. On the other, eternal life involves their active knowing of the Father and the Son. The disciples' identity is defined, on the one hand, by the fact that they are God's possession and given to Jesus. On the other, their identity is characterized by their response to Jesus' revelation in faith and understanding. For John, the one who hears the words of God is of God; but only the one who is of God hears his words.⁴

The christological character of Johannine discipleship is also marked by John's emphasis on the significance of knowledge about Jesus. In John 17, as in the Fourth Gospel as a whole, knowledge is closely related to faith. The two do not differ in substance. As Bultmann notes, in John "*Faith is genuine* only insofar as it is a *knowing* faith."⁵ In the Johannine narrative the disciples are described as possessing knowledge about Jesus when they first follow him. They believe in him. Yet, they continue to struggle in their

³ Köstenberger (*The Missions of Jesus and the Disciples*, 220) notes that the two important texts that describe the parallel of the sending of Jesus and the sending of disciples (17:18 and 20:21) do not indicate that Jesus' mission and the disciples' mission "are equivalent in every respect."

⁴ See Appold, *Oneness Motif*, 235; Carson, *Divine Sovereignty and Human Responsibility*, 163-98.

⁵ Rudolf Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament* (2nd vol.; trans. Kendrick Grobel; London: SCM, 1974) 73.

understanding of him. However, in contrast to the ignorance of the world and its unbelief, the disciples' misunderstanding does not disqualify their faith. Instead, their misunderstanding gives Jesus an opportunity to reveal his identity, and this reinforces the Johannine audience's understanding of Jesus. Knowledge of Jesus leads to faith. At the same time, faith opens the possibility for knowledge to flourish. For John, it is true that faith is necessary to have eternal life: "through believing you may have life in his name" (20:31).⁶ Yet, it is equally true that eternal life consists of knowledge because for John "this is eternal life, that they should know you, the only true God, and the one whom you sent, Jesus Christ" (17:3).

The significance of knowledge, the emphasis on Jesus as the ultimate goal of discipleship, the dialectic between the divine sovereignty and human responsibility, the depiction of Jesus as the model for the disciples, and the movement from Christology to discipleship in John 17 confirms the christological character of Johannine discipleship. In John, Christology is not an end in itself but leads to discipleship, and discipleship has its basis in the Gospel's Christology. The twofold message of Christology and discipleship is a distinctive Johannine trait.

This study of the relationship of Christology and discipleship in the Fourth Gospel in general and in John 17 in particular has implications for Johannine studies in the following ways.

⁶ Farely (*The Disciples in the Fourth Gospel*, 228) concludes his study by emphasizing the priority of faith over knowledge. He quotes 20:31 and notes, "Faith, not understanding, is what is necessary to be made a partaker of eternal life. . . ." He thinks that understanding is significant only in the context of mission, because the disciples have to take on the task given them by Jesus. He underplays the dialectic of faith and understanding in John. This is probably because he overlooked the significance of 17:3.

First, the implication for the study for discipleship in John 17 is as follows. John 17 is rich in theological content. The prayer contains and echoes various Johannine themes. In general, the themes are centered around Jesus (in his relationship to the Father) and the disciples, which includes all believers. An ideal image of the community of Jesus' followers emerges from the prayer of John 17. Johan Ferreira concludes that the prayer "serves as the Gospel's mature and final description of the Johannine community's ecclesiology."⁷ It should be clear, however, that John's interest is not the church as an institution. Rather, as this study shows, what emerges from the prayer is the Johannine portrait of the distinctive characteristics of discipleship, the characteristics that make believers Jesus' disciples. Consequently, any attempt to limit John 17 to a particular theme (such as mission, unity, consecration, etc.) must bear in mind that these themes represent aspects of Johannine discipleship that are deeply rooted in the Gospel's Christology.

Second, the implication of this study for the theme of discipleship in the Fourth Gospel is as follows. Studies on discipleship in John have generally focused on various aspects of discipleship (such as seeking, following, remaining, keeping, abiding, faith, love, etc.) and on the characters who are seen as paradigms for discipleship. The emphasis on the profound relationship between Christology and discipleship and the identification of the elements that characterize Johannine discipleship provide a new way to approach the theme of discipleship in John.

Third, this study has implications for the reading of the Fourth Gospel in general. If the twofold message of Christology and discipleship is a distinctive Johannine trait, this may

⁷ Ferreira, *Johannine Ecclesiology*, 201.

say something about the composition of the Fourth Gospel. It is possible that the author's concern to deliver a teaching on Christology that leads to discipleship is one of the determining factors in his composition of the Johannine narrative and in the arrangement of his source (or sources) into the final form of the Gospel.

If this is the case, the twofold message of Christology and discipleship may help to explain some of the difficult passages in John, especially those seen as out of place or problematic from a redactional point of view. For instance, the presence of two apparently different explanations of the footwashing (one in the dialogue between Jesus and Peter in vv. 6-11 and the other in Jesus' monologue in vv. 12-20) and the presence of the new commandment of love (13:34-35) after the theme of Jesus's glorification and imminent departure, could be explained as the author's need to present a christological message followed by a message of discipleship. One could suggest that these passages were added to reinforce the theme of discipleship, as has Lindars who argues that chaps. 15-17 were added to reinforce the theme of discipleship in Jesus' farewell speech. However, that the movement from Christology to discipleship can be traced throughout the Johannine narrative suggests that the twin message of Christology and discipleship may be a unifying thread that holds the Johannine narrative together. Further studies of other passages of the Johannine narrative from this perspective will be constructive in confirming the conclusion of this study.

Finally, inasmuch as the christological teaching of each of the NT writings is unique, so are their presentations of discipleship. Future studies on the relationship between

Christology and discipleship in other NT writings will be valuable in deepening our understanding of Christian discipleship.

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