The New International Commentary on the New Testament

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN
REVISED

LEON MORRIS
THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN

REVISED

LEON MORRIS

Hailed as perhaps "the best commentary on any book of the Bible by an evangelical in recent decades" by Christianity Today when it was first published in 1971, Leon Morris's Gospel according to John has become one of the enduring standard commentaries on John's Gospel.

Recognizing the central importance of the Fourth Gospel in any series on the New Testament, Morris devoted more than ten years to preparing this volume. Written with considerable acumen and a thorough knowledge of the previous scholarly work on the Johannine text, The Gospel according to John is one of the largest and most comprehensive commentaries ever to come out of the evangelical community.

This revised edition includes significant modifications and additions made in the light of more recent writings on John's Gospel. While maintaining substantially the same stance as in his original work, Morris here references important secondary sources and studies that have appeared over the last two decades. The commentary is now also based on the New International Version.

Praise for The Gospel according to John:

"Preachers will find Morris's exegetical hints helpful inasmuch as they will lead to greater accuracy in expounding the text.... The text of the exposition can be read with profit by the average layperson. ... In the footnotes students of the Word will find the most amazing and delightful array of material. It is a pleasure to recommend this perceptive and valuable treatment."

—journal of the Evangelical Theological Society
"Scholarly yet eminently readable and useful to anyone who is studying the Fourth Gospel seriously."

—Eternity
THE NEW INTERNATIONAL COMMENTARY
ON THE
NEW TESTAMENT

General Editors

NED B. STONEHOUSE
(1946 -1962)

F. F. BRUCE
(1962 -1990)

GORDON D. FEE
(1990-)

The Gospel according to
JOHN

Revised Edition

LEON MORRIS

WILLIAM B. EERDMANS PUBLISHING COMPANY
GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN
This book is for Charlie
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It is ten years and more since I accepted the invitation of the late Professor N. B. Stonehouse to write this volume. I cannot say that I have worked uninterruptedly on this commentary throughout that period. I have had a number of other commitments, and the stress of two moves, one from Australia to England and the other from England back to Australia, did not make for concentrated literary activity. Most of all the demand of the post of Principal of a College that is both a university college and a theological college have restricted the time available for writing. But through all these years the book has been constantly in my thoughts, and I have worked at it whenever I could. As it goes forth, I am conscious of its many shortcomings. But I am conscious also that I have had a great deal of assistance from many quarters.

I have tried to indicate my principal indebtedness in the footnotes. I have learned a great deal from B. F. Westcott's great commentary. And I never forget that my enthusiasm for Johannine studies was kindled in the first instance by Archbishop Bernard's two volumes in the International Critical Commentary series. Of more recent works I have learned most from the commentaries of Sir Edwyn Hoskyns and Professor C. K. Barrett. A host of friends and several classes of students have stimulated and helped me. To all, though I cannot mention them by name, I express my profound gratitude.

Let me also express my appreciation for the courtesy and helpfulness shown me by Professor Stonehouse. I greatly appreciated his invitation to contribute this volume and his understanding when its appearance was delayed. I discussed a few points with him, and this would have been a better commentary had I had opportunity of doing this more often. He was a fine Christian scholar, and I gladly acknowledge my debt to him.
Finally, I am grateful to Stonehouse's successor, Professor F. F. Bruce, for his understanding of my difficulties in completing this work, for the many valuable suggestions he made for its improvement, and for his steady encouragement.

Leon Morris
PREFACE TO THE REVISED EDITION

The call for a second edition of this commentary has given me the opportunity to work through it again in the light of more recent writings. This has enabled me to make some modifications and additions. And, of course, it is always valuable to look at the argument again after an interval of some years. This second edition takes up substantially the same position as the first edition, though it includes many minor changes. I have profited greatly from the writings on this Gospel that have appeared over the twenty years and more that have elapsed since it first saw the light of day. I trust that some of this profit will be passed on to readers of this second edition.

Leon Morris
PRINCIPAL ABBREVIATIONS

AA
Abbott
ABR
*The Australian Biblical Review*
Amplified
*The Amplified New Testament* (Grand Rapids, 1958)
ANF
AO
ARV
*The American Revised Version* (or, *The American Standard Version*)
AS
Augustine
BA
*The Biblical Archaeologist*
BAGD

Bailey


Barclay


Barrett


BDF


Beasley-Murray


Berkeley

*The Holy Bible, The Berkeley Version* (Grand Rapids, 1959)

Bernard


BJRL

*The Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*

BNT


Brown

Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel according to John* (New York, I [i-xii], 1966; II [xiii-xxi], 1970)

Bruce


BS

A. Deissmann, *Bible Studies* (Edinburgh, 1901)

BT

*The Bible Translator*

Bultmann

Calvin
(Grand Rapids, I, 1959; II, 1961)

Carson, *Friends*
D. A. Carson, *Jesus and His Friends* (Leicester, 1986)

Carson, *John*

Cassirer

CBQ
*The Catholic Biblical Quarterly*

Chrysostom
*Homilies on the Gospel of St. John and Hebrews*, Nicene and Post-
Nicene Fathers (American repr. of the Edinburgh edn.; Grand Rapids,
1956), first series vol. XIV

CQR
*The Church Quarterly Review*

Danby

Dods
Testament (London, 1897)

DSS

EB
*Encyclopaedia Biblica*, ed. T. K. Cheyne and J. S. Black (London,
1956)

ERE
(Edinburgh, 1908-21)

ExT
*The Expository Times*

FF
Ferrar Fenton, *The Holy Bible in Modern English* (London, 1922)

FG
Hugo Odeberg, *The Fourth Gospel* (Uppsala, 1929)
**FGRCI**


**Field**


**Filson**


**Findlay**


**GNB**

*Good News Bible, Today's English Version*

**GNT**


**Godet**


**Goodspeed**


**Grammatical Insights**


**GThJ**

*Grace Theological Journal*

**GT**


**Guthrie**


**Haenchen**

Hamilton

Harner

HDB

HDCG

Hendriksen
William Hendriksen, Exposition of the Gospel according to John, 2 vols. (Grand Rapids, 1953)

Hengel

HHT
John Lightfoot, Horae Hebraicae et Talmudicae (London, 1823)

Hoskyns

HTFG

HTR
The Harvard Theological Review

Hunter

IB

IBNTG

**IDB**


**IFG**

C. H. Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge, 1953)

**ISBE**


**JB**

*The Jerusalem Bible*

**JBL**

*The Journal of Biblical Literature*

**Johnston**


**JThS**

*The Journal of Theological Studies*

**KJV**

*The King James Version*

**Kleist-Lilly**


**Knox**


**Kysar**

Robert Kysar, *The Fourth Evangelist and His Gospel* (Minneapolis, 1975)

**LAE**

A. Deissmann, *Light from the Ancient East* (London, 1927)

**Lagrange**


**Law**

LB
*The Living Bible, Paraphrased* (Wheaton, 1971)

Lenski
R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. John's Gospel* (Columbus, 1956)

Lightfoot

Lindars

Loyd

LS

LT

Luther
*Luther's Works* (St. Louis, n.d.)

Lüthi

M, I

M, II

M, III

M, IV

McClymont
J. A. McClymont, *St. John*, The Century Bible (Edinburgh, 1901)

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<td>MNTE</td>
<td>The Moffatt New Testament Commentary</td>
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**NBD**
The *New Bible Dictionary*, ed. J. D. Douglas et al. (London, 1961)

**NEB**
The *New English Bible* (Oxford and Cambridge, 1970)

Newbigin
Lesslie Newbigin, *The Light Has Come* (Grand Rapids, 1982)

**New Docs.**

**NICNT**
The New International Commentary on the New Testament

**NIDNTT**

**NIV**
*New International Version*

**NovT**
*Novum Testamentum*

**NPNF**

**NRSV**
*New Revised Standard Version*

**NTS**
*New Testament Studies*

**NTT**

**ODCC**

**Phillips**

**Pilcher**
C. Venn Pilcher, *The Gospel according to St. John* (Sydney, n.d.)

**Plummer**

de la Potterie
I. de la Potterie, *The Hour of Jesus* (Middlegreen, 1989)

**Priority**

**REB**
The Revised English Bible

Reynolds

Richardson

Rieu

Robertson

**RSV**
The Revised Standard Version

**RThR**
The Reformed Theological Review

Ryle

SBk

Schnackenburg

Schonfield

SDSS
SE, I
Studia Evangelica, I, ed. K. Aland et al. (Berlin, 1959)
SE, II
Ibid., II, ed. F. L. Cross (Berlin, 1964)
SE, III
Ibid., III, ed. F. L. Cross (Berlin, 1964)
SFG
Leon Morris, Studies in the Fourth Gospel (Grand Rapids, 1969)
SJT
The Scottish Journal of Theology
SNT
Strachan
Tasker
TDNT
Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, being a translation by G. W. Bromiley of Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament (Grand Rapids, 1964-76)
Temple
Tenney
Merrill C. Tenney, John, The Gospel of Belief (Grand Rapids, 1948)
Tenney, EBC
Torrey
Turner
G. A. Turner and J. R. Mantey, The Gospel according to John, The Evangelical Commentary (Grand Rapids, n.d.)
TWBB
Twentieth Century
The Twentieth Century New Testament (London and New York, 1904)

v.l.

varia lectio (variant reading)

Westcott
Brooke Foss Westcott, The Gospel according to St. John (Grand Rapids, 1954)

Weymouth

Williams, C. B.

Williams, C. K.

Wright
C. J. Wright, Jesus the Revelation of God (London, 1950)

WThJ
The Westminster Theological Journal

Wuest

ZATW
Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft

ZNTW
Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
The Gospel According to
JOHN
I like the comparison of John's Gospel to a pool in which a child may wade and an elephant can swim. It is both simple and profound. It is for the veriest beginner in the faith and for the mature Christian. Its appeal is immediate and never failing.

It is a simple Gospel. The humblest believer can read it and understand it and profit from it. Sir Edwyn Hoskyns put his finger on something important when he wrote: "The critic may range the gospel with Philo and the Alexandrian philosophers; but, and the question is important, did the poor and the ignorant, when they lay a-dying, ever ask their Rabbis to read to them out of the voluminous writings of Philo or of those like him?" The poor and the ignorant have often found in this Gospel something that matters intensely both for life and for death.

But that is not the whole story. A little later Hoskyns writes of the critical commentator who applies himself to the close study of this book, "he will not be true to the book he is studying if, at the end, the gospel does not still remain strange, restless, and unfamiliar." There are unplumbed depths in the limpid clarity of this writing. What at first appears obvious is presently seen to pose problems. Most students would agree with Hoskyns that years of close study of this Gospel do not leave one with a feeling of having mastered it, but rather with the conviction that it is Still "strange, restless, and unfamiliar."

An Introduction to this book could accordingly be a long and complicated affair. But the book I am writing is primarily a commentary, and this introduction is not meant to be comprehensive. I propose to do little more than notice some of the important problems. There is a multitude of books on particular aspects of this Gospel for those who wish to pursue these questions further. But before proceeding to a commentary there are
some aspects of the Gospel about which it is proper to make some remarks, and we look at them accordingly.⁴

I. AUTHORSHIP⁵

Some scholars have urged that the authorship of this Gospel does not matter greatly. We do not have the information to determine the point, they say, and in any case it is of no great importance. It is not who wrote the words that counts, but what he wrote. There is something to this. It is certainly the case that the important thing is that we heed what is said, and, further, that this is more urgent than indulging in scholarly arguments about authorship. It is also true that the Gospel as it stands is anonymous. Even the most conservative among us need not feel bound to espouse any particular view of authorship. But the subject is not unimportant, for all that. If we can feel that there are good grounds for thinking of an eyewitness, and specifically of John the Apostle, as being behind this Gospel, our view of it will be one thing. But if we see it as written by a second-century Christian who had never set eyes on Jesus, it will be quite another.⁶ While complete certainty may be unattainable, the question is one that we may discuss to our profit.

Continental scholars have for the most part long since abandoned the idea that this Gospel was written by the Apostle John, whereas in Great Britain and America scholarship has been much more hospitable to the idea. Most British and American scholars have traditionally thought either that John wrote the Gospel or that he was closely associated with it in some way — for example, he may have been the witness behind it. In recent years there has been quite a shift of opinion so that most British and American scholars, other than conservative evangelicals, would not now hold that the author was the Apostle John. A large number would still maintain that his witness is behind the Gospel, but opinion is now much more akin to that on the Continent.⁷

This impressive body of opinion must be given due weight. But we must also bear in mind that much of it appears to be due more to the prevailing climate of opinion in our day than to any new evidence. It is relevant that Westcott, who held firmly to the Johannine authorship, was well aware of the three reasons that A. M. Hunter gives for rejecting it: the
use of the Synoptists by the author of this Gospel, the difference in style between this and the other three Gospels, and the improbability that the Apostle John would have called himself "the disciple whom Jesus loved." Hunter concludes: "For these and other reasons, scarcely a reputable scholar in this country nowadays is prepared to affirm that the Fourth Gospel was written by John the Apostle." Westcott long ago took notice of these (and other) arguments. But he held that other considerations outweighed them, and that the best solution to the problem on the basis of the evidence available is that John the Apostle was the author. Nobody seems to have dealt adequately with his massive argument. It is important that Westcott has not so much been confuted as bypassed. Scholars today evaluate the evidence differently. They are not necessarily wrong in this, but we should be clear that for the most part it is the same evidence. It is not the case that new discoveries have made the older view untenable. R. H. Lightfoot, indeed, reminds us that "This traditional ascription still receives support, and has never been shown to be impossible."

The basic reason for holding that the author was John the Apostle is that this appears to be the teaching of the Gospel itself. In the concluding chapter, after a reference to "the disciple whom Jesus loved," we read: "This is the disciple who testifies to these things and wrote them down" (21:24). The following words, "we know that his testimony is true," show that the statement comes from others than the author. But their commendation is quite early, for no manuscript of the Gospel is known that lacks it. We have then a statement, probably contemporary with the publication of the Gospel, that its author was the disciple whom Jesus loved. The Gospel itself seems to indicate that this man was John the Apostle.

This disciple is never named, but the Gospel itself seems to indicate that he was John the Apostle. The title itself seems to betoken an intimacy with Jesus, and this is supported by the way it is used. Thus at the Last Supper the Beloved Disciple "was reclining next to him (lit. 'in Jesus' bosom')" and, when Jesus predicted the betrayal, in response to a suggestion from Peter it was this man of whom John says, "Leaning back against Jesus, he asked him, 'Lord, who is it?' " (13:23, 25). This sense of intimacy with Jesus is strengthened by the fact that as he hung on the cross Jesus commended his mother to this man's care (19:26-27). Since he is the only male follower of Jesus said to have been at the cross, he may well be the witness who saw the water and blood that came out of Jesus' side (19:34-
35). On resurrection morning he raced Peter to the empty tomb but did not go in (20:2-5). When Peter came up and went into the tomb he followed that disciple and "he saw and believed" (20:8). He it was who recognized Jesus on the shore of the lake after the miraculous catch of fish (21:7), and finally he was the subject of Jesus' words to Peter, "If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you?" (21:20-22). It is possible that he was the unnamed disciple who, along with Andrew, went to Jesus at John the Baptist's direction (1:35-40), and again that he was the "other disciple" who was "known to the high priest" and who brought Peter into the high priest's courtyard (18:15-16). But in neither case is the evidence clear enough for us to be certain.

From the list of names given in 21:2 (Peter, Thomas, Nathanael, the sons of Zebedee, and two others) it seems that the Beloved Disciple was one of the sons of Zebedee or else one of the unnamed disciples. If the latter, he must still have been one of the Twelve, for he was present at the Last Supper and it seems that only the Twelve were present on that occasion (Matt. 26:20; Mark 14:17, 20; Luke 22:14, 30). This rules out suggestions like Lazarus and John Mark. The Beloved Disciple appears to have stood in close relationship to Peter (13:24; 20:2; 21:7). From the other Gospels we know that Peter, James, and John formed a trio (and that they were singled out as especially close to Jesus). Since James was martyred early (Acts 12:2), this leaves John.

This conjecture may be supported by the curious fact that John is not mentioned by name anywhere in this Gospel. It is not easy to think of a reason why any early Christian, other than John himself, should have completely omitted all mention of such a prominent apostle. It is also the case that in this Gospel we do not read of "John the Baptist" as in the other Gospels, but simply of "John." It is difficult to understand why any informed early Christian (who must have known that there were two Johns) should thus court confusion. But it would have been quite natural for John the Apostle to speak of his namesake simply as "John." This point is all the more significant in that in this Gospel people are consistently distinguished. Thus the Judas who asked a question at the Last Supper is expressly said to be not Judas Iscariot (14:22). Thomas is usually identified by the addition of his Greek name Didymus (11:16; 20:24; 21:2), a name not used by the Synoptists. Judas Iscariot is the son of a certain Simon who is not mentioned outside this Gospel (6:71; 13:2, 26). So we might go on. In view
of this care with other names some reason is needed for his speaking of the Baptist simply as John.

The strongest objection to this identification, in my opinion, is the contention that a man is unlikely to refer to himself as "the disciple whom Jesus loved." I agree. It does not seem a natural way of describing oneself. But then it is not a very natural way of describing someone else either. There is force in this. Why should any Christian single out one disciple as especially beloved by Jesus? While it is possible it is not very natural. And this fact means that the objection we are considering has rather less weight than at first appears. We should also bear in mind that Paul can say much the same. He writes of the Son of God "who loved me and gave himself for me" (Gal. 2:20). In fact, any devout Christian is apt to refer to the love of God for him or her in very personal terms without thereby meaning that God loves other people less. So, while we recognize the weight of the objection, it does not seem weighty enough to cancel out the arguments adduced earlier.

These arguments are reinforced by a variety of considerations that are urged to show that the author of the Gospel knew Palestine well. For example, he clearly knew of the connection of Elijah with Jewish messianic expectations (1:21), the low view held of women (4:27), the importance attaching to the religious schools (7:15), the hostility between Jews and Samaritans (4:9), and the contempt the Pharisees had for ordinary people (7:49). He knew the importance of the Sabbath, and the fact that, while it was not lawful to carry a bed on it (5:10), the need to circumcise a child overrode it (7:22-23). His topography is remarkably accurate, and he includes mention of places like Cana, which are mentioned in no earlier writing known to us. Much more of this kind of thing could be cited.

The style is that of a Jew. C. F. Burney and C. C. Torrey indeed both had the idea that the Gospel was originally written in Aramaic and that our present Gospel is a translation. Few subsequent scholars have accepted this view, but most agree that Aramaic thinking lies behind our Gospel, and often Aramaic expressions.

This view has received strong reinforcement in more recent years through the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls. These have demonstrated, by their many parallels to this Gospel both in ideas and expression, that our Fourth Gospel is essentially a Palestinian document. As A. M. Hunter says, "To put the matter in one sentence, the Scrolls have established its essential
Jewishness."24 This does not mean that John's position is essentially that of the Scrolls. There are fundamental differences, many of which stem from the fact that for John the Messiah has come. This is the essential truth. He sees all things in the light of Christ, whereas for the Scrolls the coming of Messiah (or Messiahs) is still future. But the parallels both in concepts and language enable us to say that John is at home against a Palestinian background. This assertion is reinforced by the parallels that may be adduced from the writings of the rabbis.25

We should also notice that there are touches which many have felt indicate an eyewitness.26 This is not universally agreed, but then it is difficult to know what all would agree does indicate the eyewitness. What to one is unmistakable evidence of firsthand observation is to another no more than a touch introduced to give an air of verisimilitude to the narrative. But it is difficult to think that that is an adequate explanation of all the passages adduced. Sometimes these concern the time of day at which a thing happened (1:39; 4:6, etc.), or perhaps there is a link with one of the feasts (2:13, 23, etc.). Place names are brought in very naturally, and often for no apparent reason other than that it was there that the incident happened (e.g., Cana in ch. 2). Many authors have seen the reminiscence of an eyewitness in the way the call of the disciples is described (1:35-51), or again the episode of the feetwashing (13:1-20). With this we should take information about persons not mentioned elsewhere, such as Nicodemus, Lazarus, and others. It is difficult to find a reason for introducing the name of Nicodemus into the narrative, for example other than that this was in fact the inquirer's name. And why else should we be told that the name of the high priest's servant was Malchus (18:10)? Or that he was related to one of those who accused Peter of being a follower of Jesus (18:26)? To personal knowledge again we should surely ascribe the information that Annas was father-in-law to Caiaphas (18:13). All in all the information supplied by this Gospel gives good reason for us to hold that its author knew the facts at first hand and wrote of what he knew and had seen.

It is also true that there are some claims to eyewitness testimony. The first is in 1:14: "We have seen his glory." Some scholars think this means, "we Christians," "believers generally." But in the first place this is a very unnatural way to take the words, and in the second the word "see" appears to mean "see with the outward eye."27 It is much more likely that the words refer to what the writer and his friends have seen physically. A second
appeal to witness appears in 19:35, "The man who saw it has given testimony, and his testimony is true. He knows that he tells the truth, and he testifies so that you also may believe." There is a problem as to whether the writer means that he himself has borne the witness or that someone else has done so. But there is good reason for seeing eyewitness testimony behind the statement (see the note on the passage).28

With this we should consider the controversies referred to in the Gospel. These are not the kinds of questions that Christians discussed among themselves in the second century (like episcopacy, Gnostic emanations, the date of keeping Easter, etc.), nor are they the standard disputes between Christians and Jews after they had become clearly separate. There is an authentic note about them; they are the kind of question that was in dispute in first-century Palestine. Thus we get discussions of the use and abuse of the Sabbath (ch. 5), about the Messiah and his credentials and whether he would rescue the Jews from the Romans (6:15; 11:47-50), about true and false Judaism.29 P.Borgen has made a close study of the sixth chapter, and he points out that in subject matter and method this is authentic Palestinian.30 From another angle Raymond E. Brown has discussed the concept of the Logos in this Gospel and has shown that it is not a Hellenistic philosophical idea that has strayed into a Jewish work, but that the form and content given it by John show it to be of Palestinian origin.31

The writer of this Gospel had a good knowledge of the apostolic band. He recalls words the Twelve spoke among themselves (4:33; 16:17; 20:25; 21:3, 7). He shows knowledge of their thoughts on occasion (2:11, 17, 22; 4:27; 6:19, 60-61). He knows the places they frequented (11:54; 18:2). Sometimes he speaks of mistakes they made that were later corrected (2:21-22; 11:13; 12:16). If he were one of their number, all this would fall into place.

From the above it is clear that the evidence in favor of Johannine authorship is by no means negligible. Those who disagree generally concede that the evidence shows that the author was a Palestinian Jew, perhaps also that he had some unusual knowledge of what went on in the days of Jesus. But they would reject much of the preceding, regarding it as no more than an attempt at verisimilitude. Thus whereas it has been contended that the writer knew what the apostles said on certain occasions, it would be countered that he did not really know what they said. He knew
only what they ought, in his opinion, to have said, and he said that they said it. I think that it may be fairly replied that it is difficult to do this kind of thing consistently without giving oneself away. But the writer of this Gospel does it often, and what he writes rings true.

Another point to tell against the traditional view is the curious fact that most of the action takes place in Judea, whereas we would have expected John the son of Zebedee to be more interested in Galilee. This is certainly a difficulty, but the theological interest of this writer must be borne in mind. He certainly knew some interesting things about Jesus' ministry in Galilee, for he tells us of incidents (like the wedding in Cana) that are mentioned nowhere else. But he regarded Jerusalem as the place where the Messiah must be accepted or rejected, so he put his emphasis on what took place there.

Some writers find it difficult to date the Gospel as early as John the Apostle on the grounds that it reflects Gnostic ideas. These ideas are also seen as evidence that the writer was probably not the apostle, for there is no reason to think that Jesus numbered a Jewish Gnostic among his followers. Everything here depends on the "Gnostic ideas" in John. In my opinion, they are better spoken of as "pre-Gnostic." As far as I am aware, no one has succeeded in showing that developed Gnosticism is present anywhere in John. E. F. Scott can say, "the approximations to Gnosticism in the Fourth Gospel are in many respects more apparent than real.... John was led to conclusions which bear a superficial resemblance to those of the Gnostics, but on closer analysis are radically different." On these grounds there is no objection either to an early date, or to an apostle as the author.

The omissions of this Gospel are also to be noticed. Two of the more striking are those of the Transfiguration and the Agony in Gethsemane. Some scholars go so far as to say that these omissions of incidents where John, along with Peter and James, had a special place of privilege are sufficient to show that John did not write this Gospel. This is a strong argument. But perhaps both omissions are due to the fact that our author makes the essential point otherwise. He may have found it difficult to find a place for the Transfiguration (which concentrates the manifestation of Jesus' glory into one magnificent story) in a Gospel where one of the major themes is that Jesus' glory was manifested continually in the path of lowly service, and that it was preeminently shown on the cross. Where is there a place for the Transfiguration in this scheme? The omission of the
Gethsemane story is more difficult.\textsuperscript{34} But it must be borne in mind that many have found a counterpart in the scene in which Jesus says, "Now my heart is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'?" (12:27). He may have felt that this was the essential thing. It is also possible that the writer, who clearly regarded Jesus' lowliness as all-pervasive, did not wish to concentrate it into one narrative.\textsuperscript{35} Any argument on omissions must further reckon with the fact that on any showing, this writer has some extraordinary omissions. No really satisfactory explanation has ever been produced, for example, for the surprising fact that, although his account of the events in the upper room is by far the fullest of the four we have, he says nothing about the institution of Holy Communion.\textsuperscript{36} He must have known of this and known that it was important. Yet he omits it. We need not be too surprised if he omits other things that we consider important.

The difference in style between John and the Synoptics is often urged with great confidence as proving that John did not write this Gospel. For example, W. G. Kümmel says forthrightly: "the Gnostic language of the Johannine Jesus discourses makes impossible the composition of John by an eyewitness."\textsuperscript{37} I do not think that he (or, for that matter, anyone else) has shown that the language of the discourses is Gnostic. But plainly the style is sufficient of itself to rule out for Kümmel any possibility that the author was the apostle or anyone else of his day.

But this does not follow: indeed, for many it seems simplistic. There is no reason to think that the entire apostolic band saw everything in the same way, or that they thought in the same way, or that they wrote in the same style. It is more convincing to put the objection in the form that if Jesus was as he is depicted in the Synoptic Gospels he could not be as John depicts him.\textsuperscript{38} Therefore the author could not have known the real Jesus, and accordingly he could not have been a member of the apostolic band. But this is to assume that the Synoptists have caught for us all that Jesus was. We are, however, familiar with the fact that a great man will show different aspects of his greatness to different people. The assertion that the Jesus of St. John is incompatible with the Jesus of the Synoptists may fairly be disputed.\textsuperscript{39} He who gave rise to the Christian movement was certainly no ordinary man. Through the years Christianity has made its appeal to people who find themselves at home in the matter-of-fact atmosphere of the Synoptic Gospels, but it has also attracted those who find the Fourth Gospel more congenial, and, for that matter, to those who are attracted by the Christ
who inspired the Pauline Epistles, or by the great High Priest they find in the Epistle to the Hebrews, or by the triumphant Lamb of the Apocalypse. We must face the fact that in history Jesus has proved a gigantic figure. It is not at all impossible, accordingly, that he is the sitter behind both Gospel portraits, and that the Synoptists depict him from one aspect, John from another. The fact that we are not able to put the two together to our satisfaction may mean no more than that we are not big enough to comprehend the whole Christ.

The point was made emphatically by W. F. Albright: "One of the strangest assumptions of critical New Testament scholars and theologians is that the mind of Jesus was so limited that any apparent contrast between John and the Synoptics must be due to differences between early Christian theologians. Every great thinker and personality is going to be interpreted differently by different friends and hearers, who will select what seems most congenial or useful out of what they have seen and heard. From Socrates to the most recent men of eminence there are innumerable examples. The Christian might a fortiori suppose the same to be true of his Master." Along much the same lines C. L. Mitton can say: "It is not that the Johannine portrait is right and the Synoptics wrong, but rather that in each there may be preserved a true emphasis which the other fails to do full justice to. The Fourth Gospel may therefore have its own contribution to make, not only to those who wish to grasp the eternal significance of Jesus Christ, but also to those who wish to gain a clear insight into the historical personality of Jesus of Nazareth." We must all think this through for ourselves. To some the undoubted difference is decisive. To others it simply indicates the gigantic stature of Jesus.

There is also an important point made by Riesenfeld and others in recent years. They point out that any teacher in antiquity had what we might call his public teaching, striking sayings that he caused his disciples to commit to memory, and as well teaching of a more informal kind. They suggest that behind the Synoptic Gospels lies the public teaching of Jesus, whereas the Fourth Gospel gives us rather the informal teaching of Jesus among his friends, and his equally informal encounters with his enemies. This may or may not be the case. I simply point out that in the judgment of this eminent scholar and those who think with him the problem is not insuperable. They regard the Jesus of the Synoptics and the Jesus of St. John as quite compatible.
When we turn to the external evidence we are confronted by the fact that John the son of Zebedee is not named as the author of the Gospel in the earliest days (there is no other name in the tradition either). The first person of whom we have record who definitely ascribes this Gospel to John appears to be Theophilus of Antioch (c. A.D. 180). Irenaeus also says that it was written by John the Apostle, and his source appears to have been Polycarp, who knew John personally. This is considerably later than we might have expected. Those who oppose apostolic authorship insist that it is impossible to trace the tradition much if at all behind this date. They suggest that there is a significant gap and that we must regard the tradition as of little value.

But we must not overlook the fact that there is little Christian literature before this period. Westcott could point out that Christian theological literature to all intents and purposes begins with Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, and Tertullian, all of whom consider John the Apostle to be the author. We should not miss the fact that this combines testimony from Asia Minor, Egypt, and Rome. And in considering the absence of earlier attestation we must bear in mind that this may be accounted for in part by the fact that heretics gave this Gospel a warm welcome, which may have deterred the orthodox. A Gospel that differed so much from the Three might well have perplexed the simple faithful. They were hesitant about it. And their hesitation was increased when they discovered that certain heretics made much use of it.

There can be no doubt about the Gnostic use of John; it appears to have been the favorite Gospel among the Gnostics. The first commentary on it was written by the Gnostic Heracleon. The Chenoboskion literature shows that John was widely used and highly esteemed by the Gnostics. The importance of this find for Johannine criticism does not seem always to have been realized. But these documents show conclusively that John's Gospel was accepted as authoritative in the circles from which they came in the first half of the second century. We are speaking now about the acceptance of the Gospel as authoritative, not of the explicit use of the Apostle John's name in connection with it. Our Gospel was clearly important to the writer of the "Gospel of Truth" (probably Valentinus). This writing is dated by K. Grobel "150 if not earlier," y G. Quispel "earlier than 150, say about 140," and by W. C. van Unnik "round about 140-
Its importance for our present purpose is put in a nutshell by Quispel, "the 'Gospel of Truth' has borrowed more than a little from the Gospel of St. John, as from a writing which was already old and held in high repute." Other Gnostic writings that treat John as old and authoritative include the Gospel of Philip, the Apocryphon of John, and the Gospel of Thomas. There cannot be the slightest doubt that our Fourth Gospel was regarded as authoritative from a very early time, and that in circles far removed from orthodoxy. This does not prove that John was the author but accords with it. The wide acceptance points to an author known to be authoritative.

All this adds up to a substantial body of evidence that John's Gospel was well known and regarded as authoritative in the first half of the second century. We cannot dismiss this as merely a heretical aberration, for Valentinus, most agree, wrote his Gospel of Truth at about the time of his exclusion from the church of Rome where he was so honored a member that he was seriously considered for the position of bishop. Clearly he must have acquired his essential understanding of this Gospel while a member of the Roman church in good standing. At the same time, once he and his followers came to be regarded as heretics the fact that they made such use of John may have made the orthodox suspicious of the book.

This evidence has not, of course, been known for very long. But now that it has come to light, its importance for this aspect of Johannine studies should not be overlooked. These Gnostic writings give good grounds for holding that John was known and accepted in the early part of the second century. This is all the more valuable in that some dispute the evidence of Ignatius and Justin Martyr.

The fact that, with all these heretical associations, John still became universally accepted as canonical is surely significant. Why was it included in the canon? Not because of the pressure of opinion in the church; the opponents of Johannine authorship make very effectively the point that this writing is rarely quoted in the oldest Christian writings and was clearly not widely used. If it were known to have been written by an apostle we can understand its inclusion: how could the church reject a writing that came from an apostle? But unless this was firmly believed it is difficult to understand how or why the book should ever have been accepted in the church, in the face of its sparse use by the orthodox and its popularity among the heretics.
It is true that after a time it began to dawn on some of the faithful that, far from giving aid and comfort to the Gnostics, this Gospel was the most effective refutation of their point of view. So they, too, began to use it extensively. But in view of the hesitation of very many, we can be sure that its credentials were subjected to very close scrutiny. That is what makes the fact that no other name than John has been suggested as its author so very significant. Some members of the early church would surely have been ready to have this writing rejected, and one obvious way of doing this would have been to discredit it by pointing to a heretical author. Even if a heretical origin could not be demonstrated it would have helped to have been able to draw attention to some nonapostolic Christian as the author. The fact that we have no evidence of any other name must be held to be significant.

It is also worth noting that according to a very probable reading of the evidence Marcion held the Apostle John to be the author of this Gospel. Tertullian speaks of this man as laboring "very hard to destroy the character of those Gospels which are published as genuine and under the name of apostles" by drawing attention to Paul's rebuking even of apostles (Gal. 2:13-14). It is difficult to catch the drift of Marcion's argument unless he did in fact think that John wrote this Gospel. His point apparently was not that John did not write it, but that John did write it and was wrong! Since Marcion seems to have come to Rome c. 140, this is quite early testimony.

Another feature of the external evidence for authorship is that quite often in the early church others were associated with John in the writing of the Gospel. Clement of Alexandria, for example, says that John "was urged on by his disciples, and, divinely moved by the Spirit, composed a spiritual Gospel." The Muratorian Canon says that "it was revealed to Andrew, one of the Apostles, that John should narrate all things in his own name as they remembered them." This kind of statement leads many recent writers to think of a "school" of John. For example, O. Cullmann holds that "the author had disciples who appear as redactors in the production and revision of the Gospel," and further that "even before, and during, the composition of his book he could rely on a group of like-minded people and perhaps even on their written contributions." Raymond E. Brown discerns four phases in the life of the Johannine community: "the pre-Gospel era," "the life-situation of the Johannine community at the time the Gospel was
written," "the life-situation in the now-divided Johannine communities at the time the Epistles were written," and the time of "the dissolution of the two Johannine groups after the Epistles were written." 59. But this seems to be reading quite a lot into the evidence. 60 Martin Hengel agrees that there was a Johannine school but holds that it was headed by a "towering figure" who produced the Gospel that "cannot be the work of a quarrelling collective." 61

A somewhat similar view is that, while John did not actually write the Gospel, he was the "witness" behind it, the one whose recollections are embodied in this writing. This does not necessarily mean that he dictated the book, and some who hold the view think that John's reminiscences were carried on in oral tradition for quite some time before one of the Johannine "school" (who had probably not seen Jesus) decided to write them down. This, it is held, would account for the persistence of the tradition that links the name of John with the Gospel and at the same time would fit in with that part of the evidence which leads so many recent scholars to find Johannine authorship totally unacceptable. It would probably be true to say that most recent scholarship finds some such solution to the problem. 62

Some writers find it helpful to think of a second John, usually referred to as "John the Elder," who, they suggest, wrote the Gospel. 63 But then confusion of names led people to think that it was John the Apostle who wrote it. The trouble is that, for all its popularity in some circles, there is little evidence for the existence of John the Elder. 64 It boils down to Eusebius's interpretation of one sentence in Papias and a much later traveler's tale of two tombs in Ephesus each said to be John's. The sentence in Papias does not necessarily refer to two Johns at all, so that this evidence cannot be said to be impressive. 65

Some scholars have been impressed by the evidence that the Beloved Disciple was John the Apostle, but also by the objections to seeing John as the author of this Gospel. Thus F.-M. Braun thinks that John's kerygma was crystallized in small units and when, after a lengthy period, John decided to put them into a Gospel he did so with the help of a number of secretaries. 66 Schnackenburg has a similar idea, but thinks the secretary hypothesis inadequate. He holds that "the evangelist would have been both the spokesman who transmitted the tradition and the preaching of the Apostle John, and a theologian in his own right and teacher of the readers whom he
addressed." In other words, he regards more of the Gospel as coming from "the evangelist" and less from the Apostle John.

The big weakness in all views of this type is what we might call "the disappearance of the hero." Those who hold such views affirm that the tradition embodied in this Gospel derives ultimately from the revered apostle. He is the founder of the "school" (not necessarily in any formal sense). It is his reminiscences that are brought together in this volume. He is a great and honored figure.

Why then should he be ignored so completely that his name is not so much as mentioned even once?

This appears to be a major difficulty in the way of the acceptance of any such theory, but it is rarely faced. But unless some credible reason can be given for such an extraordinary procedure it is difficult to see how the theory can stand. Why should "Johannine Christians," Christians who owe the whole shape of their Christian thinking to John, produce a Gospel that speaks of Peter and Andrew and others, but never once mentions the name of their hero? Such a procedure is surely incredible. By definition "the Johannine circle" owes its very existence to John. It is nothing short of astounding that those who argue for this "school" behind our Fourth Gospel take so calmly their idea that neither the original author of the Gospel, nor any of its various redactors, ever mentions the founder of the "school" when they are narrating the very events that brought the "school" into existence. What sort of "school" is this?

It has also to be reckoned with that on this view the actual author of the Gospel has not only allowed his hero to drop out of sight, but he has dropped some fairly broad hints that he himself was "the beloved disciple." The man who could do this has been called "a psychological monstrosity." It is, to say the least, a curious procedure. But this, too, does not seem to have been explained by those who put forward the theory.

Some archaeological evidence should be mentioned. There is first the fact that in the catacombs the raising of Lazarus appears on some quite early murals. H. P. V. Nunn speaks of one such in the Capella Graeca in the catacomb of Priscilla, which, he says, is early second century. There is also a representation of the Eucharist with the baskets connected with the miracle of the loaves and fishes on the table that is thought to show that John 6 is in mind. Nunn points out that the crypt of the Acilii Glabriones, "one of the most aristocratic families in Rome, some of the members of
which were Christians in the first century," is quite close to this. He concludes: "This is quite sound archaeological evidence that long before the middle of the second century some of the most characteristic teaching of the Fourth Gospel was well known in Rome, so well known that the most noble members of the Roman Church used representations of it to express their most cherished hopes and to decorate their tombs." This is important evidence, all the more so since no one argues that John was written in Rome. Allowing time for it to travel to that city and to be accepted as authoritative there, we cannot date the Gospel very late.

Another piece of archaeological evidence is the inscription of Abercius. This man was bishop of Hierapolis in Phrygia, He composed an inscription, to be used on his tomb, which says in part: "My name is Abercius, the disciple of the Holy Shepherd, who feeds his flocks of sheep on the hills and plains and who has great eyes that look in every place. For he taught me the faithful letters of life. . . ." The difficulty here is twofold: knowing whether this implies knowledge of the Fourth Gospel, and dating the inscription. The reference to the Shepherd recalls John 10, while the "letters of life" remind us of "the words of eternal life" (John 6:68). On the whole it seems that Abercius knew and valued our Gospel. If his death is correctly dated by Nunn c. 150, this will be important early testimony. But others date it later, perhaps near A.D. 200, when it would lose some of its force.

Stather Hunt is impressed by a very different consideration from any so far indicated, namely the difficulty of finding another author. He draws our attention to evidence that there is an eyewitness behind this Gospel, notably "the underlying intensity with which the Gospel is written." He goes on to point out that "there does not appear to be any known person of sufficient calibre to have written it except the son of Zebedee." This will not carry the same conviction to all minds, but it is a relevant point nevertheless.

A popular view in recent writing is that which discerns a number of layers in the Gospel that are usually ascribed to successive revisions and editing of an original text. There are certainly some problem areas, but we must bear in mind that this Gospel "does not have the look of a composition by committee or of a haphazard outcome of heavy-handed editing. ... It stands today as it has for two thousand years as a coherent, profound, and challenging witness." Whatever the literary history of this writing, as we have it it is possessed of a remarkable unity and offers us a portrait of Jesus that we cannot do without.
Plainly the evidence is not such as to enable us to say without the shadow of a doubt, "This is the solution." No theory so far put forward is without difficulties. It is a matter of choosing that view which presents us with the fewest. Many recent scholars make telling criticisms of the view that John the Apostle was the author. But when we turn to their own views we find little to inspire. The suggested reconstructions are often difficult to follow, sometimes bordering on the bizarre.\textsuperscript{76} There is certainly none that is free from serious objection. It is a matter, then, of accepting that solution which best accounts for the facts and which has the fewest difficulties in its way. It is for this reason that I accept the view that John the Apostle was the author of this Gospel. I agree that this view does not account for all the evidence. But then neither does any other view known to me. This one seems to account for the facts best.\textsuperscript{77}

Perhaps we should notice that Kysar makes some strong criticisms of those who view John the Apostle as the author of this Gospel. He says of Werner de Boor, Jean Colson, and myself that "In both cases — their failure to take into account the work of form and redaction criticism and their view of history — they represent critical efforts more at home in the previous century than the current one and certainly at odds with the major movements of fourth gospel criticism in the past decade."\textsuperscript{78} It is curious to find oneself consigned to the last century, but besides doubting the accuracy of this view I find myself wondering whether the scholars of that century were invariably wrong. I would prefer to have been shown to be in the wrong by the facts as we have them than by allegations that I have failed to take into account form and redaction criticism. It does not seem to occur to Kysar that the confident assertions of some redaction critics are not as convincing to all as they evidently are to him. And I wonder how he would deal with the fact that Werner, Colson, and I have been joined, among others, by I. Howard Marshall and J. A. T. Robinson in seeing the evidence as pointing to John the son of Zebedee as the author of this Gospel.\textsuperscript{79} Did Robinson belong to the nineteenth century? Did he too fail to take into account "the work of form and redaction criticism"? That such an eminent scholar, so far from conservatism, could find the evidence for authorship as pointing to John bar-Zebedee surely indicates that the testimony for this position should be taken far more seriously in Kysar's cavalier treatment.
II. DATE

Conservatives and radicals alike generally hold that the Fourth Gospel is of comparatively late date. This view goes back to ancient times, for patristic writers often regarded this Gospel as the latest of the four. It is commonly held that it was written in the last decade of the first century, though some authors prefer a date in the early second century.\(^{80}\) It cannot be late in the second century because a papyrus fragment dated in the first half of that century has been found in Egypt. Allowing for the time it would have taken for the Gospel to travel from the place of its composition to Egypt, this means that the early second century is as late as we can reasonably place it. But most writers see very little reason for putting it much earlier. It is hard to understand why there should be such a consensus, for there is very little real evidence for it.\(^{81}\)

One of the points urged by those who favor a late date is the contention that John's manner of referring to "the Jews" points to a time when they had become confirmed enemies of the church. This, it is said, is not natural, neither during the lifetime of Jesus, nor for many years afterward. We require time for the development of opposition so that the followers of Jesus and "the Jews" stand as hostile groups. This, however, does not follow. After Jesus' crucifixion and the kind of opposition the Jews consistently showed to the early Christian preachers, this kind of language is natural. It does not require a prolonged period of development. And in fact we find it in Paul (1 Thess. 2:14-15).

It is often said that John made use of some at least of the Synoptists; many critics hold that he used Mark, some would add Luke, though few think he used Matthew. If he did use the other Gospels, then John will presumably be dated toward the end of the century. But the evidence is slight.\(^{82}\) After P. Gardner-Smith's examination of the arguments it does not seem as though the case has been made out; probably most recent scholars hold that John is independent of the Synoptic Gospels. We cannot build on a hypothesis that is far from being universally accepted and is increasingly repudiated.

Some authors suggest that this Gospel gives evidence of lateness in its combination of religious ideas from a variety of sources, and in the indications in the Gospel itself that its teaching has undergone a lengthy period of development. Concerning the first, the evidence of the Qumran
scrolls shows that the point is not to be taken seriously. The scrolls show conclusively that many ideas previously regarded as Hellenistic circulated in Palestine before the time of Christ. There is nothing in John along these lines that demands a date later than the scrolls. The second point is a matter of debate. It is put forward very seriously, but the evidence for development is not apparent to all. Nor is the case helped when, as not infrequently happens, the contention of one critic is the refutation of another.

There is no reference in this Gospel to the destruction of Jerusalem. This, it is held, indicates that it was written either before that event or long enough after it for interest to have waned. Since few people think it was written before the fall of Jerusalem, this puts us somewhere near the end of the first century. But it does not exclude the possibility that the Gospel was written before A.D. 70. J. A. T. Robinson points out that with the possible exceptions of Hebrews and Revelation "the gospel of John is that in which we might most expect an allusion (however indirect, subtle or symbolic) to the doom of Jerusalem, if it had in fact already been accomplished. For the focus of the gospel is on the rejection by metropolitan Judaism of the one who comes to his own people (1.11) as the Christ and King and Shepherd of Israel." Robinson also reminds us that Caiaphas prophesied that, if they left Jesus alone, the Romans would destroy the temple and the nation (11:47-48). They did not leave him alone, but the Romans came just the same. Would not John have said something about this had it already happened?

Many writers hold that the highly developed theology of John indicates a late date; time must be allowed for the development of this full theology. But this argument will not stand up to examination. Nothing in the theology of John demands a date later than the theology of the Epistle to the Romans, but that book must have been written in the 50s. On the grounds of its theology this Gospel need not be very late.

We must be more respectful of a kindred argument, one that sees the development not so much in theology as in the evolution of the tradition. R. H. Fuller puts it concisely, "Since the evangelist stands at the end of a process of tradition, Palestinian, Hellenistic, and Jewish-heterodox-Baptist, it is impossible to accept the traditional... ascription of this gospel to John bar Zebedee." This argument is more weighty than the previous one but it falls short of demonstration. It is plain from a variety of sources that Palestine in the early first century was a place where many ideas met. From
the time of Antiochus Epiphanes Hellenism had been a keenly contested issue, and all the other strands Fuller notes were Palestinian in origin. It is difficult to ascertain why their conjunction is regarded as necessarily later than John the son of Zebedee.

Sometimes use is made of individual expressions in John. Thus there are references to excommunication (9:22; 12:42; 16:2) and it is objected that the Christians were not excluded from the synagogues until the 80s. This, however, is far from certain. What we know, as opposed to surmise, about excommunication does not allow us to say that it did not take place until the 80s. There is little definite information, but as far as our knowledge goes nothing in John on this subject demands a late date. See further the note on 9:22.

Thus none of the contentions usually brought forward is beyond dispute. The late date has not been demonstrated. And in recent years a number of critics have drawn attention to some considerations that favor an early date.

John's ignorance of the Synoptic Gospels may be important. As we have already noticed, some scholars who argue for a later date suggest that this is indicated by John's dependence on some at any rate of the Synoptic Gospels. But as it becomes increasingly clear that John did not use any of these Gospels it becomes increasingly clear that an early date for the Fourth Gospel is possible. The later we put John the more difficult it is to account for his failure to refer to the other Gospels.

Some of John's expressions look early. Thus he speaks of the immediate followers of Jesus not as "apostles" but as "disciples," and further he normally says "his disciples" rather than "the disciples." In the days of his ministry some expression was required to differentiate Jesus' disciples from those of other teachers. But when Christianity had begun to develop there was no question in Christian circles whose disciples were being referred to and "the disciples" became the standard expression. It is interesting that John makes use of this early locution.

The Muratorian fragment says that John's "fellow-disciples" urged him to write and that Andrew received a revelation to that effect with the result that this Gospel was written. It is not clear how far this piece of tradition can be accepted, but as far as it goes it points to an early date, for Andrew and other disciples were still alive and were urging John to write. Whatever
age he was when he died, there is no reason for thinking John was an old
man at the time.

G. A. Turner and J. R. Mantey similarly find John's use of "the Jews"
early. They point out that Judaism was much more powerful before the
destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 than afterward so that Christianity
tended to be on the defensive (cf. 1 Thess. 2:15-16). A century later,
however, when Justin Martyr wrote to Trypho the Jew the positions were
reversed. The Fourth Gospel reflects the earlier and not the later situation.
Such considerations "point to a possible if not probable date contemporary
with the Pauline Epistles."\(^86\)

A somewhat similar point is that in John 5:2 we read "there is," not
"there was," a pool called Bethesda. It is, of course, possible for John to use
the present tense when referring to something in the past, though we might
well ask why he should do so here where every other verb in the context is
in a past tense. The most natural reading of the passage points to a pool in
existence at the time. In that case the city had not yet been destroyed.

Another such note is that which refers to the temple as having taken
forty-six years to build (2:20). The temple was not completed until A.D. 64,
but forty-six years fits the time at which Jesus would have spoken the
words. How would a late writer have fixed the date so accurately? And
why? We should perhaps also notice Robinson's point that the correction of
the notion that the Beloved Disciple would not die (21:23) would have been
called for after the death of Peter, which he dates at 65 or before. He sees no
reason why people should wait many years before correcting the error.\(^87\)

It is constantly pointed out that the Qumran scrolls have many points of
contact with the Fourth Gospel — more, in fact, than with any other book in
the New Testament. Now the monastery at Qumran was completely
destroyed before A.D. 70 which means that any point of contact must be
quite early. This does not prove an early date for the Gospel, but it is more
consistent with an early date than with a late one.

To some authors John's concern over the followers of John the Baptist
is an argument for an early date, for the church does not seem to have been
unduly concerned with this problem in later days.\(^88\) Considerations of this
kind have convinced a number of recent scholars that this Gospel is earlier
than has customarily been thought. W. F. Albright, for example, can say,
"All the concrete arguments for a late date for the Johannine literature have
now been dissipated."\(^89\) He prefers a date in "the late 70's or early 80's."
Others think it may be earlier. C. C. Tarelli says, "To suggest a date before A.D. 70 is perhaps too daring, and yet the Palestinian atmosphere which many scholars find in the Gospel is certainly the atmosphere of Palestine before that date." In one of the most thorough examinations of the dating of this book F. Lamar Cribbs shows that there are many indications of an early date, and he argues for "the possibility that this gospel could be an interpretation of the life of Jesus written by a cultured Christian Jew of Judea during the late 50's or early 60's." His examination of the evidence is thorough, and it is not easy to understand how his conclusion can be resisted.

The dating of our Gospel is thus not easy, but while it cannot be said that an early date is proven beyond any doubt, the amount of evidence in favor of it seems to be increasing. I am impressed by the fact that, as Tarelli says, the general atmosphere of the Gospel is that of Palestine before A.D. 70, and by early locutions like "his disciples" and "there is in Jerusalem." I find the arguments of Robinson and Cribbs especially convincing.

Before leaving this subject it may be well to point out that in recent times a number of scholars have argued for an early date for part at any rate of the tradition embodied in this Gospel and a late date for its actual composition. We have considered some of the thinking behind this contention in our discussion of authorship. The thought is that there was a Johannine "school," perhaps going back to John the Apostle. This "school" passed on its traditions, some at any rate of which comprised very early accounts, possibly those of an eyewitness. The origins of this Gospel thus go back to early times. But the tradition is held to have been retained in oral tradition for a long time and finally to have been reduced to writing at around the turn of the century. This is a way of trying to get the best of both worlds. It gives a credible account of the early date of some of the material and at the same time takes note of that part of the evidence which convinces many that the Gospel is late. Such views are not, in my opinion, as probable as that the date is pre-A.D. 70. But they certainly cannot be ruled out.

III. PURPOSE
A wide variety of aims attributed to the writer of this Gospel by the scholars who have studied it. It has often been held that he wrote to supplement the Synoptic Gospels. According to this view he had these Gospels before him and was dissatisfied with some aspects, at any rate, of what they contained. Since he had further knowledge himself he decided to make it available to the Christian public. Against this are the facts that have compelled the wide-spread conviction at the present time that John is completely independent of the Synoptics. I do not see how any theory that John knew the Synoptics can be made to stand up. And if John did not know the Synoptics, then clearly he did not write to supplement them. The same objection may be urged against a somewhat different theory, namely that John was written to supersede the Synoptic Gospels. If they were not written at the time John wrote, then obviously he was not trying to supersede them.

Others have felt that John had a polemic aim. Some have thought that he was trying to combat Gnosticism. However, Gnosticism as a movement appears during the second century. A number of scholars, it is true, are impressed with "pre-Gnostic" elements in early writings, notably the Qumran scrolls. But when full allowance is made for these early appearances of individual concepts that were later important to the Gnostics, it still seems that Gnosticism in the full sense is a second-century phenomenon. If any writing sets out to combat it, then it must be of that date. Thus if we hold to a fairly early date for this writing there is no question of a combat with Gnosticism.

It is, however, quite possible that one of John's aims was to combat false teaching of a docetic type. The Docetists held that the Christ never became incarnate; everything was "seeming." That the docetic heresy did not appear in the first century seems clear, but certain elements that later were to be embodied in this heresy seem to have been quite early. In other words, while John certainly did not have before him the full-fledged docetic heresy, there seems to be nothing in the way of the view that he was confronted by false teachers of a docetic turn of mind. This is especially clear in 1 John, but it is also apparent in the Gospel. Thus we find sayings like "the Word became flesh" (1:14) and the stress on the physical death of Jesus (there is nothing docetic about death). Throughout his Gospel John is concerned to emphasize the genuine humanity of Jesus and at the same time
to bring out the fact that Jesus really came from God. But this does not mean that the principal purpose of this Gospel was to combat an early form of Docetism. The false teaching is opposed almost by the way. The main thrust of this Gospel is certainly elsewhere.

Others have held that John is concerned to write a polemic against unbelieving Jews. The one strong point in favor of this view is the way in which the term "the Jews" is used throughout the Gospel. Our Evangelist makes use of this expression far more often than does any of the others, and he certainly cannot be said to be warmly disposed toward "the Jews." However, this is but one aspect of the Gospel, and it is far from being the most prominent. It cannot be said that a case has really been made out for regarding this as the principal aim.

Others have maintained that John was writing to oppose the continuing followers of John the Baptist. He certainly makes it clear that the Baptist's place was a subordinate one, and it may well be that he had in mind some of that prophet's followers. But again this is too subdued a note for us to think of it as the dominant purpose.

Others, again, think that John was concerned with opposing Christian teachers who gave too much place to the sacraments or too little place to the sacraments. Here everything depends on how much it is held that John had the sacraments in view. It is, of course, true that he never mentions either Christian baptism or the Lord's Supper throughout the Gospel. It is quite possible to hold that he never refers, even obliquely, to either. On the other hand, some scholars have held that particularly in chapters 3 and 6 he is concerned with these two sacraments. Since precisely opposite conclusions have been drawn from this evidence, the argument clearly rests on no certain basis. And to make this the main aim of the Gospel is certainly flying in the face of the evidence.

Another view is that John's principal aim was to present to the world a kind of "Hellenized" Christianity. He was interested in making an intellectually respectable form of Christianity available to as wide a public as possible. Those who hold this view point to the use of terms like Logos and suggest that John was a Hellenist interested in commending Christianity to other Hellenists. This view has had its popularity, but it cannot be said to square with the facts, for it is becoming increasingly evident that, however this Gospel is to be understood, it is a product of
Jewish and not Hellenistic ways of thinking. Some writers have held that it was originally composed in Aramaic. Most scholars think that this is too extreme, but they point out that there are many Aramaisms in this writing and that there is evidence of Aramaic thinking behind it. It cannot be said that the view that the Gospel is a manifesto of Hellenistic Christianity has very much to commend it.

In any case, due consideration ought to be given to the fact that John tells us in so many words why he wrote: "these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name" (20:31). There seems to be no reason for ignoring this express statement. John says plainly that he is out to show Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God. And he does this not in order to give his readers some interesting new information but in order that he may bring them to a place of faith and accordingly to new life in Christ's name. Not only does John tell us this in set terms, but close examination shows that this is, in fact, what he has done. Again and again he brings before us evidence that Jesus is indeed the Christ. He does not make as extensive use of the term itself as we might possibly have expected. But the idea is often present, and the term is also found on occasion. Moreover, John constantly lets us see the challenge posed by the message of Jesus. People divide in the presence of this message. Either they commit themselves to Christ in faith and so enter life or they refuse to commit themselves and in so doing remain in darkness and a condition of lostness. There seems to be no reason why John's statement should be rejected. This is what he said he would do and this, it seems, is what he has done.

IV. HISTORY AND THEOLOGY

That the writer of the Fourth Gospel has a serious theological purpose is surely beyond doubt. As we saw in the preceding section, he tells us in set terms that his purpose in writing is to show that Jesus is the Christ, God's Son, and by writing in this strain to persuade people to believe in him and so to enter into life. The question at issue is not whether John is interested in conveying theological meaning. It is rather whether he has completely
subordinated his historical sense to this aim, or whether he has a concern for facts as well as theology.\textsuperscript{116}

It is worth noticing at the outset that interpretation does not necessarily mean distortion of the facts. Indeed, the absence of interpretation may some-times mean distortion. Thus one can say with truth, "Nicholas Ridley was executed." But if this is all one says, a wrong impression may be conveyed. It means more to say, "Bishop Nicholas Ridley was burned at the stake," and still more to say, "Bishop Nicholas Ridley was martyred." The last statement carries a fuller meaning than the earlier two. It may, of course, be disputed. That is the penalty one pays for the fuller light conveyed by the interpretative statement. There is a parallel here with John's Gospel. It is undoubtedly an interpretative document. In selecting its material it omits much that the other Gospels include and includes much that they do not. And if one does not agree with John's view of Jesus, much may be disputed (as it is by many radical scholars). But if John is right, if the Word was indeed made flesh and dwelt among us, then this interpretative document is of the utmost importance for those who want the fullest light on the facts.

Many writers assure us that there is no question of taking the history in this Gospel seriously. To some it appears so obvious that John's one interest is theology that they pay no attention to the historical information John provides unless they have corroboration from some outside source. Since so very little in this Gospel is corroborated in this way, this means that they regard it as to all intents and purposes a work of theology.\textsuperscript{117}

This attitude is becoming increasingly hard to sustain. Many recent writers have shown that there is good reason for regarding this or that story in John as authentic. C. H. Dodd in his great work \textit{Historical Tradition and the Fourth Gospel} has carried out a systematic examination as a result of which he concludes that behind this Gospel there lies a very ancient tradition, quite independent of that embodied in the Synoptic Gospels. It is difficult to go through such a sustained examination and still regard John as having little concern for history.

The fact is that John is concerned with historical information. Again and again he drops into his narrative pieces of topographical information, for example, or time notes. Theologically there appears to be no particular reason for telling us that such and such an incident happened in such and such a place, or that Jesus met such and such a person at such and such a
time. I do not deny that some exegetes have been able to read edifying meanings into some of John's notes, but I think it has never been proved that these notes are intended to be taken in that way. John apparently records this kind of information because he believes it to be accurate.

It is also the case that John is remarkably accurate in a number of areas in which he can be tested. One result of the finding of the Dead Sea Scrolls has been to convince a number of scholars that this Gospel contains reliable information. There can be no doubt that there are very many points of contact between the Scrolls and this Gospel. But on the hypothesis that John is a late theologian there is not the slightest reason why there should be such agreement. On that hypothesis he would have written at a considerable distance both in time and in place from the milieu in which the Scrolls were circulated. And if his purpose was to write theology, he would be unlikely to engage in the archaeological research that would have been necessary if he was to uncover the teaching of the Qumran community. The fact that John is in agreement with the Scrolls in many points makes it clear that he has some reliable information and has recorded it carefully.

Elsewhere I have examined some of John's teaching about John the Baptist. I have tried to show that, while John's purpose in dealing with the Baptist is clear (he depicts him always and only as a "witness" to Jesus Christ), yet he does not distort his facts. Recent research has shown that the information on the Baptist in this Gospel is remarkably accurate. Now if John can write accurately while he is setting forth the Baptist in one capacity only, ignoring all other aspects of his ministry, what reason have we for regarding him as unable to do the same thing with other people?

We must not be guided by a priori presumptions. It is simply not good enough to say, "John is a theologian; therefore we need take no notice of his historical notes," or to say, "John is invariably accurate; everything he says must be taken as factual." I see no reason why John should not have written, as many scholars suggest he did write, with a concern for theological truth only. After all, the parable is a well-attested vehicle of theological teaching in the Synoptic Gospels and no one suggests that we must take everything in a parable as literally true. Similarly, I find no reason for maintaining that John must necessarily tell a factual story. It seems to me quite clear that if he so chose John could write a theological narrative cast in the form of a series of historical anecdotes. We could then ignore the anecdotes and concentrate on the theological meaning.
This would, of course, be subject to the heavy discount involved in the question, "What is the theological meaning of something that never happened?" This question should be taken more seriously than it is by many critics who regard this as John's method of writing. It is important to be clear that there is a difference between parables and red happenings considered as teaching media. In the parable we are saying, "God's truth appears to me like this." Then the factuality or otherwise of the story is of little consequence. The story is an illustration. Everyone understands it so. It does not matter whether it happened or not. But if we say, "God's truth is shown in this happening, God's grace is shown in that," then the situation is very different. In that case if what we describe did not happen we cannot say that God's truth has in fact been revealed, that his grace has in fact been shown. Our story may be edifying. It may tell a lot about our ideas. But we should be clear that it is our ideas that it reveals. It tells us nothing about God. The question is whether John is telling us what he thinks about God, or whether he is telling us what God has done. We should never minimize the importance of the distinction between "God's truth is like —" and "God's truth is seen in —."

The question, then, is not whether the parabolic kind of writing is theoretically possible. The question is "What has John in fact done?" Here it seems that too many critics have been content to lay it down dogmatically that John has written in this or that fashion. What they have not done is to adduce evidence to prove the point. To lay it down that John has written theology, not history, can be countered by the simple device of affirming that John has written history but not theology. One dogmatic statement can be met by another. What is required here is evidence. And the evidence is that where he can be tested John proves to be remarkably accurate. The inference is that he is accurate also in other places.

There is also the point that, as we noted earlier, there seems reason for holding that part of John's aim was to counter false teachers of a docetic type. These men held that there was no real incarnation; Jesus only "seemed" to eat and drink and move among people. As a counter to this kind of teaching John insists that Jesus was a real man. He insists on "the flesh" of the Son of man and all in all makes it quite clear that Docetism is incompatible with Christianity. But if John was writing as the kind of critic we are thinking of maintains he wrote, he would have given his whole case against the Docetists away. They would have been quite happy with an
incarnation of this type. So long as they could be assured that the things Jesus is alleged to have done he did not actually do, that the stories are no more than the vehicles of authentic teaching, they would have been content to accept them. It always seems surprising to me that critics will affirm so forthrightly at the same time both that John was trying to oppose Docetists and that his facts are not to be relied upon. Unless he knew that his facts were reliable, that they would stand up to challenge, he was highly vulnerable to any docetic attack and he must have known it.  

A further point to be considered is that there is a great difference in style between John and the Synoptists. One must always regard with healthy respect the objection that says, "If Jesus was as he is depicted in Matthew and Mark and Luke, he cannot have been as he is depicted in John. The two are incompatible." It certainly is the case that there are significant differences between these two portraits. The usual way of accounting for this difference is to say that in the Fourth Gospel we have the result of the prolonged meditation of the Beloved Disciple and that what he has produced is his view of what God has done in Christ rather than a factual account of what happened.

I have more respect for this argument than for any of the others. But I do not think it will carry the weight that many scholars place upon it. It is possible to account for it, at least in some measure, and H. Riesenfeld has drawn attention to the importance of considering the way in which Jewish rabbis carried on their instruction of scholars. We are almost incurably convinced that the use of notebooks is essential to the learning process. This, however, was not the case in the first century. Then it was often held that if a man had to look something up in a book he did not really know it. The true scholar was a person who had committed to memory the things he had learned. Until a man had a teaching in his memory he was not considered really to have mastered it. The regular process of instruction, then, consisted in the teacher selecting certain items to be committed to memory and the student memorizing them. There was a regular system of instruction among the rabbis and an accepted body of oral teaching. This oral teaching was not expected to be altered in transmission. It would, of course, be nonsense to maintain that in practice it never was. From generation to generation of teachers and students there is not the slightest doubt that modifications were introduced. But the point is that nobody felt
that tradition was free and open to the modification of anyone who came along.

We may perhaps bring out this point by drawing attention, as Riesenfeld does, to the idea that is generally held as to how the early Christian church carried on its teaching. Riesenfeld holds that the picture often given is that "it was the custom in the primitive Church to preach freely and without restraint, and in this process sayings and narratives were created and invented. And then from this extensive body of material the evangelists or their predecessors made a well-considered selection." Riesenfeld immediately continues, "But this romantic picture has no relation to reality. On the contrary, it is probable both that from Jesus' own days the material was far more strictly limited and also that it was handed down in a far more rigid and fixed form."

There is nothing unlikely in this. In the Jewish system, Riesenfeld says, "The ideal pupil was one who never lost one iota of the tradition. That variations in the material took place in the process of tradition for psychological reasons is obvious, and this circumstance enables us to investigate the development of the tradition from another angle. For, however great its receptive capacities, even an Oriental mind is not a tape-recorder."

We must always be on our guard against reading back our methods of instruction and retention into the circumstances of Jesus and his apostles. They came out of a different culture and understood the learning process in an entirely different fashion. There can be little doubt but that memorization played an important part in the carrying on of the original Christian teaching. Broadly speaking, we may say that it is Riesenfeld's contention that in the Synoptic Gospels we have by and large the public teaching of Jesus, that is the teaching that he caused his disciples to commit to memory. This does not mean, of course, that there would be no variation. The differences between the Synoptic Gospels show that there was in fact variation. But it does mean that this is a recognizably homogeneous whole. This was the kind of thing that was carried on orally and was meant from the first to be carried on orally. Riesenfeld sees it this way: "In the Gospels we are shown very clearly that Jesus was a teacher, and especially in his relation to his disciples. This means more than his mere preaching in their presence. He gave them instruction and in this we are reminded, mutatis mutandis, of the method of the Jewish rabbi. And this implies that Jesus
made his disciples, and above all the Twelve, learn, and furthermore that he made them learn by heart."\textsuperscript{124} Riesenfeld finds evidence for this in the form in which Jesus' sayings are formulated in the Synoptic Gospels, in the preservation of some original Aramaic terms, and so on.

But any teacher does more than engage in public discussion and instruction. There is also more informal teaching that takes place in private. Riesenfeld thinks that John's Gospel takes its origin in this kind of thing: "here the starting point is to be found in the discourses and 'meditations' of Jesus in the circle of his disciples, such as certainly took place side by side with the instruction of the disciples proper, with its more rigid forms. Such a view is not incompatible with this line of tradition having also undergone a long and complex development."\textsuperscript{125}

It is not necessary to endorse everything that Riesenfeld has said to be convinced that there is an interesting and suggestive possibility here. Nor is it necessary to argue that this must have been the way it was. All that I am contending is that Riesenfeld has shown us one possible way in which two views of Jesus' teaching as divergent as those in the Synoptic Gospels and in John could nevertheless originate from the one Teacher. It is also quite possible that this is the explanation. It is quite possible that something else is the explanation. But in view of Riesenfeld's argument it does not seem possible any longer to maintain that the teaching of Jesus as given to us in the Synoptic Gospels is incompatible with what we see in the Fourth Gospel.

From all this it appears that we ought not to think of John as a writer who is not at all interested in history. He is certainly a theologian, but he has a reverence for the facts. There is no real reason for thinking that he composed edifying stories and discourses that had theological meaning but bore little relationship to what actually happened.

Something like this is often widely assumed. Indeed, it is almost a commonplace of modern Johannine criticism. Yet we should bear in mind that the process does not appear to be evident in the ancient world, at least among careful writers. A. W. Mosley has written a most interesting article, "Historical Reporting in the Ancient World,"\textsuperscript{126} in which he argues that many assumptions commonly made about the way in which the ancients wrote should be discarded. He is able to show that quite a number of historians of antiquity tell us how they understood their task. In the process they show a respect for how things actually happened. They did on
occasion, it is true, compose speeches and put them in the mouths of
historical characters. But they did this only where they had nothing else to
go on. And when they did compose speeches they tried to make their
characters say what they probably did say at the time. In other words,
historians did not regard themselves as having unlimited freedom. And
Mosley makes this further point, which is of the utmost significance for our
present inquiry, that, while they might compose speeches in this way, they
did not compose accounts of events. This does not mean that we cannot find
legendary accounts in antiquity. We can. But these are not found among
careful and honest writers. They are found among the second-rate, or
among those who are not avowedly attempting to give us accounts of what
occurred. The accepted standards in the ancient world among Greeks,
Romans, and Hebrews were different from and higher than what a number
of New Testament scholars have all too readily assumed.

The point of Mosley's article for our present inquiry is that there is no
doubt but that John is a careful and honest writer. If he tells us that a certain
thing happened, we have no reason for thinking that this is simply a
theological construction. The presumption must always be that John has a
respect for the truth. To say otherwise is to depart from the standards, not of
our own day only, but of those of the first century.

Hoskyns makes the important point that the very theological
significance that John is trying to bring out demands that we take his history
seriously. "His whole conscious intention," says Hoskyns, "is to force his
readers back upon the life of Jesus in the flesh and upon His death in the
flesh, as the place of understanding: he is therefore guilty of gross self-
deception if he is inventing or distorting the visible likeness of Jesus to
further his purpose."¹²⁷ This point is important. His theological purpose
being what it is, he cannot invent or distort history without making that
purpose difficult or impossible of attainment.

Another point of view that has attracted a good deal of attention is that
of J. L. Martyn, who discerns different levels in this Gospel, On one level
the author writes of happenings in Palestine in Jesus' day, on another what
he writes refers to what is happening in the community to which the author
belongs. Thus Martyn says: "In the two-level drama of John 9, the man
born blind plays not only the part of a Jew in Jerusalem healed by Jesus of
Nazareth, but also the part of Jews known to John who have become
members of the separated church because of their messianic faith and
because of the awesome Benediction." As the study unfolds the emphasis tends to be more on what is happening in the local community than what happened in Jerusalem many years before. This approach has won much support, though it is not easy to understand why. Martyn has not really cited evidence that this is the way the text ought to be read, and if a thesis like this is to be established we need hard evidence. Martyn has really done no more than show that if the assumption is made that the writer is engaging on a two-level account, then some interesting points can be made. But that is not the same as saying that this is what the author meant. Childs remarks, "To offer a historical reconstruction of the Johannine community of ch. 9 is not to be equated with an exegesis of the biblical text... the text of ch. 9 offers no hint that the passage is to be read on two separate levels." The substitution of imagination for exegesis means that this approach is not of great importance for an understanding of the theology of the Fourth Gospel.

S. S. Smalley is interested in the way this Gospel gives expression to the primitive apostolic kerygma. He finds in John "all the basic elements belonging to the pattern of apostolic preaching." He notices six points in the apostolic preaching that he finds in John on the one hand and in Mark and Acts on the other. We should not imagine that John is proclaiming a different gospel from that of the early church in general. He expresses himself in his own way, but his Gospel sets forth the same essential saving message as do other New Testament writers.

It seems, then, that we should take with the utmost seriousness the account that John has given. It is true that it differs in important respects from what we see in the Synoptists. But then we must bear in mind that the Jesus whom all four Evangelists depict was a gigantic figure, greater by far than can be comprehended in any one Gospel.

V. THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL TO THE SYNOPTICS

It has usually been accepted that John wrote after Matthew, Mark, and Luke. And since he wrote later than the others, and since their writings were regarded very highly in the early church, it has seemed a natural corollary that John must have made use of those Gospels. When we add to this the
fact that there are some striking coincidences of language (for example, in the story of the anointing of Jesus by the woman at Bethany, or in certain aspects of the ministry of John the Baptist), it has seemed proven beyond any reasonable doubt that John made use of the other Gospels. Sometimes it has been held that he wrote to correct misapprehensions that might arise from what they said. Sometimes it has been held that, while he agreed with his predecessors, he felt that there were certain aspects of the ministry of Jesus that they had not dealt with or had not dealt with adequately. So he wrote to supplement them. Either way it is felt that he had some of the earlier Gospels before him and that he wrote with a knowledge of what they contained.

In recent years not many have been found to espouse the view that John had all three Synoptists before him, but usually it has been agreed that he made some use of Mark.\(^\text{134}\) It has been held to be a little more uncertain whether he made use of Luke, but a large number of scholars hold that he did so.\(^\text{135}\) But his use of Matthew is contended to be much more problematical. While some scholars have held that he used this Gospel,\(^\text{136}\) most have felt that the points of contact are so few that the probability is that he did not.

In recent years, however, all this has been called in question. Probably the greatest impetus to the new way of thinking has come from P. Gardner-Smith, who made a very close examination of the alleged case for dependence and concluded that it cannot be substantiated.\(^\text{137}\) Others have followed in Gardner-Smith's footsteps, and there is an increasing conviction in recent times that John is independent of the Synoptists.\(^\text{138}\)

Perhaps the most cogent argument for dependence in recent times is that of Barrett. He is impressed by two things: the occurrence of a number of passages in Mark and John in the same order, and some striking verbal resemblances. His list of passages is as follows:

(a) The work and witness of the Baptist
(b) Departure to Galilee
(c) Feeding the multitude
(d) Walking on the lake
(e) Peter's confession
(f) The departure to Jerusalem
(g) The entry and the anointing (transposed in John)
Barrett clearly regards the occurrence of these in the same order in Mark and John as being very significant. He repeats the statement, and he puts it in italics. But with all respect to a great scholar, this is not a very impressive list, (a) must come first. Where else are we to put the work of John the Baptist? (b) must follow (a), and (c) must follow (b). And the case for dependence is weakened when one takes notice of the fact that Mark puts (c) 211 verses after (b) and John 99 verses after it. The conjunction of (c) and (d) is more impressive. This is the kind of sequence that is necessary if Barrett's case is to be established. If there were more sequences of this kind we would agree that the order was important. The placing of (e) Peter's confession after (d) walking on the lake is a sequence of the same kind if we could be sure that Mark and John are describing the same event. I do not think they are. There are important differences between Mark's scene at Caesarea Philippi and John's sequel to the synagogue sermon at Capernaum. And if these are not the same event, then the item cannot be included in the list, (f) the departure to Jerusalem cannot come anywhere earlier in the list and the following items cannot come before it. It is not without significance that Barrett brackets two items under (g) and that they are in reverse order in the two Gospels. I do not see how (h), (i), and (j) can come in any other than the order given.

From all this it is plain that the argument from the order of events is not really impressive. It is difficult to understand how any other order could be adopted for most of the items Barrett singles out.

The case for verbal dependence is no better. Presumably Barrett has not omitted any cogent evidence, but he gives us only twelve passages with verbal coincidences, most of which are single verses, and the agreements are rarely very close. When we reflect that Mark contains 12,000 words, this is not very convincing.

The cases for dependence on Luke and on Matthew are, of course, even less cogent. There is no point in examining either in detail.

It is true that there are some interesting coincidences of language. The expression "valuable pistic nard" in Mark and John for the perfume used at the anointing is the kind of thing that impresses, for it is an unusual
expression. But precisely because it is unusual it might well stick in the mind and be preserved in more than one line of oral tradition. What seems very clear to many who have examined the evidence closely is that the kind of thing that is common to John and the Synoptists is precisely the kind that one would anticipate finding in oral tradition. In fact, if we think of the development of oral tradition in different parts of the church coupled with a great respect for the incidents being narrated, we have the kind of situation that would account for both the resemblances and the differences. In other words, while there is some relationship between the tradition embodied in the Synoptists and that in John there is no valid reason, it would seem, for maintaining that the connection is written. It is much more likely to be oral.

VI. DISLOCATIONS

The Fourth Gospel does not read smoothly throughout. A number of writers have contended that the sequence of thought would be improved immensely if we rearranged the text in several places. The most plausible example is the reversal of the order of chapters 5 and 6. Chapter 5 deals with incidents in Jerusalem, whereas the sixth begins, "Sometime after this, Jesus crossed to the far shore of the Sea of Galilee." This would follow naturally enough from the end of chapter 4, where John has been talking about the healing of the nobleman's son in Galilee. Jesus is then in a position to cross the sea, whereas a reference to crossing the sea with the point of departure in Jerusalem is not so immediately obvious. If this rearrangement be carried out, there is also an improved sequence at the other end. Chapter 7 begins, "After this, Jesus went around in Galilee, purposely staying away from Judea, because the Jews there were waiting to take his life." This does not follow very naturally upon chapter 6, which is located in Galilee, but it would follow very well on chapter 5, which is located in Jerusalem and which speaks of a conflict between Jesus and the Jews that might well have reached serious proportions.

Another suggested rearrangement takes its origin from the words in the Farewell Discourse, "Come now; let us leave" (14:31). This looks like a preparation for leaving the upper room, but there are three more chapters
before Jesus and his friends leave for Gethsemane. It would obviously improve matters if the end of chapter 14 could be located somewhere near the end of the discourse. Accordingly, a number of modern students suggest that chapter 14 should immediately precede chapter 17. Bernard points out other difficulties in the Farewell Discourse and suggests a rearrangement to give the order 13:1-30; 15; 16; 13:31-38; 14; 17.146

And so one might go on. A number of suggested rearrangements have been made, some of which give a smoother sequence, though that is not true of every such rearrangement. In fact, it might almost be laid down that every rearrangement suggested is attended by some disadvantages. For example, G. H. C. MacGregor and A. Q. Morton are among those who wish to rearrange the Farewell Discourse. But having suggested a rearrangement that puts chapter 14 after chapters 15 and 16, they point out that if we adopt it, "Thomas's question in XIV. 5 seems unnatural after Jesus' words in XVI. 5ff. Also, of the two allusions to the 'Comforter' in XIV. 16f. and XV. 26 the former reads like the first and indeed seems presupposed in the latter. There are moreover in ch. XIV many almost needless repetitions of the thought of ch. XV and XVI."147

Objections may be urged against even the most plausible of all the suggestions, namely the reversal of order of chapters 5 and 6. Thus Dodd stresses the need to establish Jesus' position as the Divine Son (5:19-47) before he advances his claims in chapter 6. He concludes: "We see therefore how important it is for our author's argument that the discourse in ch. ν should precede the present discourse."148. Some commentators feel that the crisis at the end of chapter 6, where many left Jesus and he challenged the Twelve with "You do not want to leave too, do you?" (6:67), comes too early if it precedes chapter 5. Others point out that a quick removal to Galilee would follow very naturally on the conflict mentioned in chapter 5. So, although many have been convinced, it cannot be said that the case has been made out beyond any shadow of a doubt.

This seems to be more or less the position throughout. The rearrangements are normally suggested for subjective reasons. As the text stands, it seems to some that the sequence is poor and that it would be improved by a rearrangement. But when the rearrangement is carried through, other disadvantages commonly appear.

There is, moreover, the problem of accounting for the present disorder. If any suggested rearrangement is to be accepted, we must have some
convincing explanation of how the present text came into existence. What is so obvious to us must surely have been apparent to whoever it was that put the text in the present order. It is, further, not easy to understand how a manuscript could get into such disorder.

Sometimes a note of objectivity is brought into the discussion. It is suggested that originally the manuscript was in separate sheets. A calculation may be made, as, for example, by Bernard. He suggests that each leaf of two pages contained about 750 letters, a figure he arrives at by postulating a page of thirty-four lines, each of eleven letters. He then finds that the various major displacements he sees in the Epistle represent a multiple of approximately this amount of space. But to get this he must insist on approximations. His sixth major section, for example (12:36b-43), contains 598 letters, which is a not inconsiderable distance from his average. In fact, most scholars hold that so many allowances for this sort of thing are required that the apparent note of objectivity cannot be sustained.

A more serious objection is in seeing how the manuscript could come to be scattered in the way postulated. We do not know anything about the way manuscripts were commonly written in antiquity that encourages us to think that a leaf would be written in this way and not form part of a roll or a book. If it were in a roll or codex it could not easily be detached. Bernard does not seem to have given consideration to the fact that in a roll sheets are fastened together in such a way that if these were written on back and front the passages on the two sides of the one sheet would not be consecutive, while in a codex form two leaves (four pages) would form a unit, not one (two pages).

Even if this improbability could be overcome we are faced with a further difficulty. We must postulate that modern critics without the separate pages before them are better able to discern the correct sequence than the first- or second-century editor who had the leaves actually in his hands. If he could not perform this feat it is difficult to think that we can. It must also be borne in mind that the theory asks us to think that each page where a displacement occurs conveniently coincided with the end of a sentence. Haphazard displacement is much more likely to result in broken sentences in most cases. All in all, it cannot be said that the hypothesis of dislocations has been successfully made out.

One cannot help thinking that sufficient attention is not being given to the author's intention. We all too readily assume that he must have had
somewhat the same canons of consistency as we have. But if he was not interested in producing the kind of consistency that we take for granted, he may well have had different standards as to what part of his writing should follow what other part. In other words, it is always better to try to make sense of the manuscript as it stands than to try our hands at varying the order. A number of modern writers, for example C. K. Barrett, C. H. Dodd, and R. H. Lightfoot, are convinced that we should take the present order of John rather than try to rearrange it. C. J. Wright goes further and suggests that in our rearrangements we may be missing something important: "In trying to make a book conform to standards of our own, we may fail to understand the author's type of mind."

VII. SOURCES

A number of scholars have attempted to demonstrate the existence of sources used by this Evangelist. They point to "aporias" ("perplexities"). For example, Jesus does his first "sign" in Can a (2:11), then does "signs" in Jerusalem (2:23), but his next miracle narrated is Jesus' "second sign" (4:54). In the upper room Peter asks Jesus where he is going (13:36), but a little later Jesus says none of them has asked where he is going (16:5). There are quite a number of such aporas in this Gospel, and to some it seems that the best explanation of them is that whoever produced this Gospel in its final form has made use of a number of sources but without smoothing the connections so to speak.

Sometimes the search for sources is done in a fairly modest way. Thus it may be reasoned that 20:30-31 is clearly the end point of an original Gospel. Therefore, chapter 21 is an addition by some later hand, and if this later hand is responsible for chapter 21 perhaps it is responsible for other parts of the Gospel also. In other words, the very presence of chapter 21 may be held to be evidence of the activity of a redactor. This figure, acting as editor, may then be held to be responsible for a number of verses mainly of a connective character. The redactor, it is then plausibly argued, has worked over the Gospel material, putting it into its present shape, and in the process he turns out to be responsible for a good deal of it.
Another approach is to point out that there is some evidence that John made use of Mark and Luke, at any rate, possibly Matthew also. This, it is maintained, gives evidence of some use of sources. Since the Evangelist used these sources, he may well have used others also. This argument, however, is not very convincing in the light of the improbability that John used any of the Synoptists. Since we have looked at this possibility and rejected it, there seems no point in pursuing this particular theory of sources.

A very important attempt to disentangle sources is that of Rudolf Bultmann. He thinks that the enumeration of the "signs" in 2:11; 4:54 can scarcely have originated with the Evangelist, for that writer says that Jesus did a large number of signs (2:23; 4:45). The "sign" at the end of chapter 4 is thus not Jesus' "second sign," as 4:54 says. Again, Bultmann feels that 20:30, which speaks of Jesus as having done "many other signs ... in the presence of the disciples," is not a very suitable conclusion for the Gospel. But he thinks it would be quite in place for a conclusion to a narrative of "signs." From these and other considerations Bultmann is led to postulate the existence of a "signs" source. When the "signs" are removed from the Gospel the most notable further feature is the discourses. Bultmann goes on accordingly to deduce that there was a "revelation" source, which he thinks was of Gnostic origin. A third source is to be discerned in the Passion and Resurrection narrative. In addition to all this Bultmann finds evidence of the activity of a redactor.  

Since Bultmann a number of scholars have given attention to the possibility of discerning sources underlying the Fourth Gospel. Perhaps outstanding among them is R. T. Fortna, who argued strongly from the "signs" related in this Gospel to a primitive document that may properly be called a Gospel. In a later work he examines the relationship between that primitive writing and the present Gospel. There have been others, notably H. M. Teeple and W. Nicol. D. A. Carson has given a useful summary of a number of recent attempts at source criticism. He concludes, "The results of such criticism are sometimes brilliant, usually stimulating, and often imaginative; but it is doubtful if they are demonstrable, even in the limited sense of commanding sustained assent to their probability." So he says, "In brief, this paper is an appeal for probing agnosticism in these matters."
And with all respect to those very capable scholars who have argued for sources, that seems about as far as we can go. The writer of this Gospel may have used sources, but if he did he has made them so thoroughly his own that untangling them now seems impossible. Unfortunately for any idea of sources in this Gospel, the precise delineation is very difficult. There seems little question but that the style of the Gospel is uniform. If John did use sources he has so reworked them and made them his own that in the judgment of many competent scholars it is now impossible to discern which were sources and which was John's own material. What B. H. Streeter said about one particular view with which he was dealing has a much wider application: "if the sources have undergone anything like the amount of amplification, excision, rearrangement and adaptation which the theory postulates, then the critic's pretence that he can unravel the process is grotesque. As well hope to start with a string of sausages and reconstruct the pig." It seems much safer to take the Gospel as it stands and accept the view that it comes from the Evangelist. There is no need to deny that he made use of sources (or perhaps of "traditions," as Beasley-Murray suggests). He may have done so, but if he did he reworded them in his own language and there is now no way of recovering them. Those who detect sources find awkward jumps from time to time (which enables them to say that they have found the sources). But if they are right, the final redactor has not smoothed things out; if he could leave those awkwardnesses, then John could just as well have done so. In view of the uniformity of style it is better to regard John as responsible. Any criticism of this Gospel that rests on the detection of sources must be regarded as suspect.

At the same time we must bear in mind that there are some interesting variations in John. Thus long ago H. R. Reynolds pointed out that John puts over 145 words on the lips of Jesus that he does not use elsewhere in his Gospel. While as far as I know nobody has argued that this points to a separate source for all Jesus' sayings, it must yet be taken into consideration as showing part of the method of the Evangelist. His style is much the same throughout his Gospel, but such facts as this show that he is aware that there were nuances in Jesus' speech that did not characterize his own.

A fascinating new approach to Johannine studies is that of R. A. Culpepper, who employs literary criticism in his *Anatomy of the Fourth*
Gospel. There is room for legitimate criticism of this approach, for it is not at all clear that the canons that govern our understanding of the modern novel give us the clue to the understanding of the Fourth Gospel. There are differences between fiction and history, and between fiction and theology. While a novel may claim to be bringing "truth" to its readers the truth claims of the novel are not the same as the truth claims of the Gospel. But for our present purpose the important point is that the aporias that worry so many critics and cause them to postulate sources do not trouble Culpepper. He integrates into a unity the materials that have caused others to discern disparate sources. In a footnote he points out that, while he is not trying to clarify the Gospel's composition and history, his method has implications affecting that task. And he says firmly, "In its present form, if not in its origin, the gospel must be approached as a unity, a literary whole."

A recent approach has been that of seeing development from the traditional material rather than the use of sources. Thus Brown argues for five stages in this development, from the basic traditional material to the finished work. Lindars likewise stresses the place of development but gives more prominence to sermons. Such approaches are of interest and value, but before espousing them we must bear in mind the caution expressed by Kysar in these words: "They are provocative and imaginative but essentially unprovable."

The idea that preaching lies behind this Gospel has much to be said for it and is favored by many students. There is not the slightest reason for doubting that the writer of the Gospel was a preacher, nor that he had been preaching for quite a few years before writing this work. Now preachers not uncommonly have sermon notes, and I see nothing against the suggestion that John had made notes for his preaching throughout the years and that when he came to write his Gospel he made use of those notes. The characteristics that have led some scholars to discern sources may reflect nothing more than the use of a variety of sermon notes. Moreover, when an itinerant preacher uses the same sermon in a number of different places it is not uncommon for him to make changes, adding new points, smoothing out difficulties (sometimes introducing new ones!), and the like.

Let me conclude this section with some words of Luke T. Johnson: "The FG (i.e. 'The Fourth Gospel') we now read does not have the look of a composition by committee or of a haphazard outcome of heavy-handed
editing. Only to minds obsessively concerned with a certain level of consistency are seams always indicators of sources. To other readers, they appear as literary signals. The FG does not require reconstruction. It stands today as it has for two thousand years as a coherent, profound, and challenging witness, itself sufficient evidence that the Johannine community had within it at least one great theologian and writer."\textsuperscript{176}

**VIII. PLACE OF COMPOSITION**

It is, of course, not known where the Gospel was written, but three places show some signs of probability. The first of these is the traditional site, namely Ephesus. This goes back to Irenaeus, who says, "Afterwards, John, the disciple of the Lord, who also had leaned upon His breast, did himself publish a Gospel during his residence at Ephesus in Asia."\textsuperscript{177} This is not proof, but it is a fairly early indication, and, as we noted earlier, Irenaeus had had personal contact with Polycarp, who knew John personally. So the tradition is entitled to be heard. It is supported by the fact that Ephesus is not far from Phrygia, the center of the Montanist movement, and the Montanists made early use of this Gospel. It is also true that one of the minor features of the writing is an insistence on the minor role played by John the Baptist. We know that there were continuing disciples of the Baptist in the vicinity of Ephesus (Acts 19:1-7), and it may well be that this state of affairs continued until the writing of this Gospel. A strong point in favor of Ephesus is that no other name seems to be urged in antiquity.

The most popular alternative suggestion is that the Gospel comes from the general region of Antioch. It is pointed out that there are parallels to the *Odes of Solomon*\textsuperscript{178} which are thought to belong to Syria. There are also some coincidences of language with the writings of Ignatius, who was bishop of Antioch. Those who see evidences of a Gnostic way of thinking in John also point out that the type of Gnosticism presupposed is one that has affinities with Judaism, and this is likely to have arisen on the borders of Judaism. This would be supported by familiarity with things Jewish that this Gospel displays, which would be natural in an adjoining country. The fact that the first orthodox commentary on John came from Antioch (written by Theophilus) may also be relevant. A. F. J. Klijn regards the attitude to
Peter in this Gospel as significant and "Since Peter was held in particular esteem in Antioch, perhaps that is the place to which this gospel was addressed"\(^{179}\)

The third suggestion is Alexandria\(^{180}\) or somewhere else in Egypt. It is pointed out that the earliest manuscript of this Gospel was found in Egypt, which indicates early use of John in that land. Further, the teaching of this Gospel is held to have points of contact with the allegorical method thought to have been characteristic of Egypt. Perhaps more relevant is the fact that Egypt was a center of early Gnosticism. The Gnostics made much use of John, and it may be that this was due in part to the fact that this Gospel was there, in Egypt, available to be used.

None of these suggestions can be said to be compelling, and in the end we are left without certain proof. Perhaps there is a little more to be said for Ephesus than for either of the others, but this is as far as we can go.

**IX. BACKGROUND**

A good deal of attention has been given to the background presupposed by this Gospel. This is, of course, important for its interpretation, for we must know the kind of milieu in which the author moved if we are to be sure we understand his meaning. One reason why different scholars understand this Gospel differently is that they have different ideas of its background.

There can be no doubt that the Old Testament played a large part in the author's thinking. He has obviously read it well and pondered it long. He quotes it a number of times, sometimes from the Septuagint, and sometimes perhaps from his own translation of the Hebrew. But quite apart from specific quotation it is clear that he has absorbed the teaching of the Old Testament. In his treatment of the Good Shepherd (ch. 10) and of the true Vine (ch. 15) he has unmistakable allusions to the Old Testament without specific quotation. Again and again this is the case. It is clear that he knew his Bible very well indeed.

With this we must take Judaism. There can be little doubt that the teachings of the rabbis lie behind some of the teaching of this Gospel, though we must be on our guard here because of the late date of the rabbinic sources. Experts in rabbinics agree, however, that, while the
writings as we have them are later than New Testament times, they embody much ancient material. Some of it certainly goes back to the times of John, and even of Jesus. The parallels adduced in Strack-Billerbeck are sufficient to show that this is an area that must not be overlooked. But Judaism was not monolithic. The rabbinic writings give us what we may term normative Judaism, but there were other currents in first-century Judaism. H. Odeberg has given much attention to Jewish mysticism and has been able to show that there are many points of contact.\footnote{181} We should also notice here the importance of the Qumran scrolls. These give us a useful insight into another section of unorthodox Judaism, and here again there are connections with John.\footnote{182} Others have found acquaintance with Jewish apocalyptic thought.\footnote{183} It must be stressed that while the resemblances between the Fourth Gospel and each of these types of Judaism are real, so also are the differences. In fact, this should be obvious from the very fact of the wide spread of the resemblances. It is impossible that any writing should at the same time reflect accurately the essential positions of normative Judaism, mystical Judaism, and Qumran. But something of each is to be discerned in the background.\footnote{184}

There is also a Hellenistic background. Some have seen this preemminently in the Prologue, with its reference to the \textit{Logos}, a concept found among Greek philosophers. In the note on this concept I point out that John's is not the typical Greek use, but he may have had the Greek use in mind for all that. It is plain from his habit of explaining Jewish terms, even common ones like "rabbi" (1:38; even Mark does not feel the necessity to explain this term, Mark 9:5, etc.), that he wrote for people who were not Jews. Now any group of cultured people in the first century would have had some acquaintance with Hellenistic thought. When we know that Judaism is not the whole story, allowance must be made for a Greek background. Some scholars think that this is especially true of the writings of Philo.\footnote{185} This man appears to have been influential in Hellenistic Judaism, and his writings may well have been known to the first readers of this Gospel. Many scholars see some affinities with Philo in the Prologue.

Another possible background is discerned in the \textit{Hermetica}, a group of writings of a philosophical and religious nature attributed to Hermes Trismegistus. C. H. Dodd, who has made a thorough examination of these tractates,\footnote{186} thinks that this kind of approach to life is presupposed at points in our Gospel. This may well be the case, but Dodd's results must be used
with caution. G. D. Kilpatrick has shown that some of the characteristic
concepts of the *Hermetica* are totally absent from John, and that the
vocabulary is different. He finds much more affinity with the Septuagint,
which is an important conclusion.\(^{187}\) The Hellenistic world knew other
religions of salvation than that brought before us in the *Hermetica*, and John
appears to have some acquaintance with the kind of thinking found in them.
The mystery religions brought people the concept of life, and some of
John's phraseology recalls it.\(^{188}\)

A number of students have suggested that Gnosticism is the proper
background. Sometimes this is precisely located in Mandaism. Mandaeans
are continuing Gnostics of a non-Christian type. All the other Gnosticism
we know comes before us as a Christian heresy. The Mandaeans are often
said to show that Gnosticism was not of Christian origin. And some go
further; they maintain that John takes shape only when seen against this
background. But despite the confident statements of some who have
examined this literature closely, it is difficult to agree with them. The
Mandaean documents as we know them are late. Even allowing for the fact
that the sixteenth-century manuscripts known to us go back to earlier
originals, it is difficult to date this literature early enough to be significant.
Dodd says, "The compilation of the Mandaean Canon . . . cannot be dated
much, if at all, before A.D. 700."\(^{189}\) Some of its ideas may, of course, be
considerably older than the compilation of the canon, but these dates show
that it is most unlikely that this kind of thinking had any real effect on John.

Rudolf Bultmann is the outstanding modern commentator who sees
Gnosticism as the significant background to John. He holds that the Gnostic
redeemer myth lies behind John's idea of a Christ who came forth from God
and who returns to God.\(^{190}\) This can be made to sound convincing, for there
can be no doubt that the thought that Christ came down from heaven and
that he returns there, having accomplished his mission of salvation, is of
great importance to John. But the existence of this redeemer-myth in any
pre-Christian form is far from having been proved.\(^{191}\) So for all its
popularity in some circles this idea must be discarded.\(^{192}\) The Gnosticism
we know is definitely second-century. There is no reason for thinking that it
sprang full grown from nothing, and Gnosticism was certainly hospitable to
topics from a multitude of sources. We may well hold, accordingly, that
some of the ideas that were ultimately to form an integral part of
Gnosticism were in existence when John wrote. Indeed, I have earlier
suggested that one of John's aims was to combat docetic ideas. But this is not the same as seeing Gnosticism as a coherent system at the time John wrote, nor of thinking even of its essential ideas as his background. For either of these the evidence is lacking.

It must be insisted that the background to John is the early Christian church. John's fundamental ideas are the basic Christian ideas. He presents an individual picture indeed, but it is a picture of the same Christ and of the same religion as that of other Christian writers. We have rejected the idea that John is dependent on the Synoptic Gospels, but the fact that the contention can be seriously put forward shows that the teaching in these Gospels must be taken as part of the Johannine background. So must the exposition of the faith we find in the Pauline Epistles. Not everyone would agree with E. F Scott when he says, "The evangelist is everywhere indebted to Paul." But he does point us to something of importance. The Evangelist is not a Paulinist, but he knows the same Christ that Paul knows. John is an authentic Christian document and for its full meaning to be appreciated it must be viewed in company with the other early Christian writings, the remaining books of the New Testament.

2. Ibid.
3. I have examined some of the more important problems in my Studies in the Fourth Gospel (Grand Rapids, 1969). For fuller statements about some of the matters referred to in this Introduction I refer to that volume.
4. For a useful discussion of the problems raised by this Gospel see Robert Kysar, The Fourth Evangelist and His Gospel (Minneapolis, 1975).
5. For a fuller account see SFG, ch. 4.
6. This does not mean that the authority of the Gospel depends on its authorship. B. S. Childs is not correct when he says, "The traditional defence sought to establish the theological authority of the
gospel by proving that its author was an eyewitness" (The New Testament as Canon [London, 1984], p. 129). The book is authoritative whoever wrote it. That it was written by an eyewitness is a conclusion drawn from the Gospel itself, not a theological presupposition that must be supported somehow.

7. This is not to deny that there are differences. Thus J. S. King can say: "much British scholarship has been concerned to use the Fourth Gospel in the quest of the historical Jesus, but American scholarship, more closely following the instincts of E. F. Scott, has used it for the quest of the Johannine community" (ExT, 94 [1982-83], p. 363).


9. See the full examination of the evidence in the Introduction to his Commentary.

10. Lightfoot, p. 2.

11. R. A. Culpepper, while not accepting the Apostle John as the author, argues that this is what the Gospel itself leads us to think: "When the narrator dramatically pulls the curtain on the implied author in the closing verses of the gospel, the reader recognizes that the Beloved Disciple fits the image the gospel projects of its implied author"; "its implied author is the Beloved Disciple" (Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel [Philadelphia, 1983], p. 47).

12. It is sometimes said that, since ch. 21 is a supplement, added after chs. 1-20, the words refer only to the author of ch. 21. Granted that the final chapter is to be regarded as a supplement (and we must bear in mind that, while some scholars see it as from the hand of another author than chs. 1-20, others do not), T. Zahn’s point is still valid: "if it was necessary to assure the readers that chap. xxi. was written by the beloved disciple of Jesus, it was even more important to make clear to them who wrote chaps. i.-xx" (Introduction to the New Testament, III [Edinburgh, 1909], p. 237). If it was a different author we are justified in looking for some hint that this was so.

13. The verb used for "loved" in 20:2 is φιλέω, in the other passages ἀγαπάω.

14. Advocated, for example, by Filson (pp. 21-25); see also his contribution to Current Issues in New Testament Interpretation, ed. W. Klassen and G. F. Snyder (London, 1962), pp. 119-23. Vernard Eller also argues that Lazarus is meant (The Beloved Disciple [Grand Rapids, 1987], pp. 53-73). J. N. Sanders distinguishes between the disciple whom Jesus ἠγάπα, whom he takes to be Lazarus, and him whom Jesus ἑρωλέι, whom he thinks was John the Elder and was identical with John Mark. He regards the former as the witness behind this Gospel and the latter as responsible for its "publication" (F. L. Cross, ed., Studies in the Fourth Gospel [London, 1957], pp. 72-82).


16. Some scholars follow somewhat the same path I have been treading in that they look for the "witness" behind the Gospel among people mentioned in the New Testament and consider him the Beloved Disciple, but they then take a different line by suggesting that someone else was the actual author of the Gospel. Thus MacGregor approves of Swete's suggestion that the rich young ruler was the Beloved Disciple ("Jesus looked at him and loved him," Mark 10:21), but he thinks John the Elder was the writer of the Gospel (pp. Ixiii-ixiv). While the ruler was certainly loved by Jesus, there is no evidence that he ever became a disciple. Others see John the Apostle as the Beloved Disciple and the "witness," but think of a follower of his, perhaps John the Elder, as the actual author of the Gospel. An ingenious view is that of Robert Eisler, who regarded Lazarus as the Beloved Disciple and John, the son of the high priest Annas (mentioned in Acts 4:6), as the Evangelist, with the heretic Marcion as his amanuensis (The Enigma of the Fourth Gospel [London, 1928]). Margaret Pamment argues that the Beloved Disciple "represents gentile Christianity" (ExT, 94 [1982-83], pp. 363-67), but this scarcely does justice to the fact that the Gospel depicts him consistently as an individual, not as a symbol.

17. MacGregor mentions approvingly the curious hypothesis of "the deliberate cancellation by the Redactor, in the interest of his theory that the Beloved Disciple is John, of all independent..."
references to John by name" (p. xlix). There is, of course, not a shred of evidence for this, and the suggestion is noteworthy only as showing that, as the evidence stands, the case for identifying the Beloved Disciple with John is convincing.

Yet we should not overlook the point made long ago by W. Sanday, who reminds us that Jesus referred to himself as "the Son of man" and thinks that his followers may have adopted "a similar method of oblique and allusive reference." Sanday thinks that "the beloved disciple had a special reason for not wishing to obtrude his own personality. He was conscious of a great privilege, of a privilege that would single him out for all time among the children of men. He could not resist the temptation to speak of this privilege. The impulse of affection responding to affection prompted him to claim it. But the consciousness that he was doing so, and the reaction of modesty led him at the same moment to suppress, what a vulgar egotism might have accentuated, the lower plane of his own individuality. The son of Zebedee (if it was he) desired to be merged and lost in 'the disciple whom Jesus loved' " (The Criticism of the Fourth Gospel [Oxford, 1905], pp. 79-80).

Cf. A. M. Hunter: "after all the conjectures have been heard, the likeliest view is that which identifies the Beloved Disciple with the Apostle John" (Interpreting the New Testament 1900-1950 [London, 1951], p. 86). More recently Stephen S. Smalley has written, "I have found no convincing reasons so far to deny that the beloved disciple was John the son of Zebedee, one of the twelve, and that his initial witness brought the Fourth Gospel to birth in due course" (ExT, 97 [1985-86], p. 103; Smalley does not view John as the writer of this Gospel, but as the witness behind it). J. A. T. Robinson can say, "at least a good deal begins to come together and make sense if the hypothesis is accepted, on its own merits, that the man behind John's Gospel, the beloved disciple, is indeed the son of Zebedee, as tradition has unanimously asserted" (The Priority of John [London, 1985], p. 122).


Our Translated Gospels (London, n.d.). He begins his Preface with this uncompromising statement: "The material of our Four Gospels is all Palestinian, and the language in which it was originally written is Aramaic, then the principal language of the land, with the exception of the first two chapters of Lk., which were composed in Hebrew." I should perhaps add that he thinks John 21 formed no part of the original, but that it was composed in Greek by the translator.

An exception is E. C. Colwell. He examines the case made out by Burney and Torrey and concludes: "(I) The method employed by Burney and the other Aramaic scholars is unsound — for (1) they use no adequate control; (2) they are inaccurate and inconsistent; (3) they point to the cumulative force of a list of Aramaisms of the weakest sort. (II) Their results are not at all convincing: (1) they do not pick the same Aramaisms when they work independently; (2) they reject each other's mistranslations; (3) the vast majority (about 90 per cent) of their Aramaisms have been shown by this study to be paralleled in Greek; (4) what remains is the inevitable minimum of Semitisms in a gospel which inherited the earlier Christian traditions. There is here nothing to justify the claim that the author of the Fourth Gospel thought in Aramaic or wrote in Aramaic" (The Greek of the Fourth Gospel [Chicago, 1931], pp. 130-31).

ExT, LXXI (1959-60), p. 166. Later he says, "The trend of recent studies has been to make the Evangelist's links with Palestine much stronger than many of us have allowed" (ibid., p. 222).

See, for example, the many passages cited by SBk. Curiously W. G. Kümmel says, "any kind of familiarity with the views of the rabbis nowhere is evident in John" (Introduction to the New Testament [London, 1965], p. 155). It is better to take the verdict of Israel Abrahams than this sweeping statement. Abrahams speaks of "the Fourth Gospel's close acquaintance with Hebraic traditions" (Studies in Pharisaism and the Gospels, first series [Cambridge, 1917], p. 135). S. Neill reports him as saying, "to us Jews the Fourth Gospel is the most Jewish of the four" (The Interpretation of the New Testament [London, 1964], p. 315). Neill immediately goes on, "If a learned Jew makes a remark of this kind, it is impossible for a Christian to say that he does not know
what he is talking about." Again, Odeberg detects "already, at a superficial reading, passages, sentences and words revealing a terminology all but identical with the Rabbinic" (FG, p. 5). It seems clear that John has points of contact both with official Judaism as represented by the Pharisees and with unorthodox Judaism as depicted in the Qumran scrolls.

26. For example, W. C. van Unnik says, "Many things in this Gospel are suggestive of personal reminiscence (l:39f.: 4:6; 13:21ff., especially in chs. 18 to 21" (The New Testament: Its History and Message [London, 1964], p. 61). So also Barclay: "Many of these things are such apparently unimportant details that they are inexplicable unless they are the memories of a man who was there" (I, p. xx). B. P. W. Stather Hunt goes so far as to say, "no other Gospel bears upon its face such undeniable proof that its author was an eyewitness of the scenes which he records" (Some Johannine Problems [London, 1958], p. 7).

27. The verb is θέαομαι, of which AS says, "in NT apparently always in literal, physical sense of 'careful and deliberate vision which interprets ... its object.' "

28. Sanday refers to "all those marks of an eye-witness which we shall see to be present in great number and strength. They point to a firsthand relation between the author and the facts which he records. If the Gospel is not the work of an eye-witness, then the writer has made a very sustained and extraordinary effort to give the impression that he was one" (Criticism, p. 70).

29. F. L. Cribbs makes a similar point with regard to "the concerns found in John," which are "those that were typical of the church prior to A.D. 70 (e.g., church unity, brotherly love, the Messiahship of Jesus, the relationship of the church to Israel, the mystery of Israel's unbelief, Jewish persecutions), while the important concerns towards which the late first-century churches directed their attention (e.g., the rise of false prophets within the church, the loss of early enthusiasm, apostasy, the antichrist, church discipline and organization, Roman persecutions) are totally lacking in John" (JBL, LXXXIX [1970], p. 54).


31. Brown, I, pp. 519-24. He concludes, "In sum, it seems that the Prologue's description of the Word is far closer to biblical and Jewish strains of thought than it is to anything purely Hellenistic" (p. 524). See also W. F. Howard, FGRCI, p. 11.

32. The Fourth Gospel (Edinburgh, 1906), p. 100. He locates the writing of this Gospel in the "period of truce" before the conflict with Gnosticism (p. 103). S. S. Smalley says, "The fourth evangelist not only has a real concern for the historical basis of salvation, he also has what gnosticism lacks — a theology of salvation which involves deliverance from sin by means of a cross" (John: Evangelist and Interpreter [Exeter, 1978]), p. 53.

33. Some authors draw attention to the role of Qumran in this connection. Thus A. Feuillet: "as Father Mollat justly points out, at the very heart of Judaism there was a whole school of thought, now brought to light by the Dead Sea Scrolls, which attributed great importance to knowledge and used a vocabulary which makes one think of Hellenism. If a Greek influence was brought to bear on St. John, perhaps it was only in this way, and therefore very indirectly. Further research will be able to clear up these delicate points" (A. Robert and A. Feuillet, Introduction to the New Testament [New York, 1965], p. 884). But this may be ascribing too large a function to the Scrolls. If this Gospel was intended for an audience living in a center of Greek culture, it is not unnatural to hold that its author had direct experience of Greek thought. Nevertheless Feuillet does well to remind us that we should look carefully at what the Scrolls can tell us and not be too ready to assume Hellenistic influence.

34. Strachan thinks that this Gospel was written in part with people like the Stoics in mind. "Gethsemane, to the Stoic, would represent a moral breakdown." While retaining what is essential (12:27), John omits what would repel such readers (Strachan, p. 58). This at least merits consideration.

35. See further SFG, pp. 184-85.
36. It is usually said, sometimes quite dogmatically, that the omission is due to a desire to keep information about this "holy mystery" from the uninitiated. Thus J. Jeremias writes: "All difficulties disappear, however, when it is realized that the author of the Fourth Gospel consciously omitted the account of the Last Supper because he did not want to disclose the sacred formula to the heathen" (The Eucharistic Words of Jesus [Oxford, 1955], p. 73). But this immediately confronts us with another problem: If the "sacred formula" is to be kept from outsiders, why do Matthew and Mark and Luke all include it in their Gospels?


38. As D. Moody Smith Jr., holds: "If Jesus actually spoke as he speaks in the various strands of the Synoptic tradition, I find it impossible to believe that he also spoke as does the Johannine Christ" (Interpretation, XXI [1967], p. 475).

39. Cf. R. H. Lightfoot, "the Church has never been aware of any fundamental incompatibility between the portrait of the Lord in this gospel and that in the other three. This question has long ago been settled by the religious consciousness of Christendom" (p. 1).

40. BNT, p. 171, η. 1.


42. See below, pp. 39-40.

43. Adv. Haer. 2.22.5; 3.1; 3.3.4. Eusebius cites a letter of Irenaeus to Florinus in which he speaks of what he learned from Polycarp, who had known John. Among other things Irenaeus says, "I remember the events of those days more clearly than those which happened recently.... I can speak even of the place in which the blessed Polycarp sat and disputed, how he came in and went out, the character of his life, the appearance of his body, the discourses which he made to the people, how he reported his intercourse with John and with the others who had seen the Lord, how he remembered their words ..." (HE 5.20.5-6). The importance of this should not be minimized. Cf. R. H. Maiden: "A historical fact which appears in a contemporary or nearly contemporary letter may generally be accepted without demur, for the reason that the author is not trying to write history... When historical facts are referred to in letters, it shows that they were matters of common knowledge in the circle in which the writer and his correspondent moved" (cited by H. P. V. Nunn, The Authorship of the Fourth Gospel [Eton, 1952], pp. 37-38).

44. Westcott, p. lxx. C. H. Dodd regards the idea that the beloved disciple was the author as possible but not probable. But of Irenaeus he says, "His evidence is formidable, even if it is not conclusive. Anyone who should take the view that in the absence of any cogent evidence to the contrary it is reasonable to accept Irenaeus's testimony is on strong ground" (HTFG, p. 12). H. P. V. Nunn reminds us that some of those who commended this Gospel in early days knew what persecution was. Irenaeus may have witnessed the persecution at Lyons and certainly succeeded the martyr Pothinus. Tertullian gave up a brilliant career to become a Christian, and he lived through the persecution of Severus. Origen's father was killed in this persecution, and he himself nearly suffered the same fate. Nunn proceeds: "It is not usual for exceptionally well educated men living under these conditions to accept the capital documents on which their faith depends without enquiry or examination, when such are possible, as they undoubtedly were at that time. They were even less likely to compose a spurious Gospel and to find acceptance for it when they had seen men and women put to horrible deaths for believing statements which this Gospel was intended to commend" (Authorship, p. 101).

45. Sanday brings out the importance of Heracleon: "To recognize a writing is one thing; to recognize it as sacred is another; to comment upon it as so sacred and authoritative that its contents can be interpreted allegorically is a third; and all this is so early as c. 170" (The Criticism, p. 240).

46. The Chenoboskion documents show only that the Gospel was held in high esteem. But Irenaeus adds that Ptolemaeus and his followers held this Gospel to have been written by "John, the disciple of the Lord" (Adv. Haer. 1.8.5; ANF, I, p. 328).

49. Ibid., p. 104.
50. Ibid., p. 49 (my italics).
51. Barrett examines the passages in which it has been said that Ignatius depends on John and concludes: "There is nothing in these (or any other) passages to prove that Ignatius had read John" (p. 111). After a similar treatment of Justin Martyr he likewise says: "These passages do not prove that Justin had read John; yet they are sufficient to give some plausibility to that hypothesis" (p. 94). These estimates, especially the latter, are far from being unchallenged. Thus Bernard thinks that it is "in accordance with all probabilities that Ignatius had read this famous book. ... He uses several Johannine phrases after a fashion which is difficult to explain if they are no more than reflexions of current Christian teaching" (p. lxii). In view of such uncertainties it is good to have solid evidence for the acceptance of this Gospel at such an early date.
52. Yet this should not be exaggerated. Cf. T. E. Pollard, "There is no evidence that the Fourth Gospel was treated with suspicion anywhere other than in Rome, and then only by a small group, although we must allow the possibility that some writers like Justin Martyr, the contemporary and strong critic of Valentinus, hesitated to use it openly" (ABR, VII [1959], p. 45).
54. Lagrange thinks that the evidence of Marcion points to an accepted view that John was the author (pp. XLVII-XLVm).
55. Some commentators cite Celsus as one who bears testimony to John. From Origen's *Contra Celsum* it is clear that this opponent of Christianity referred to the Fourth Gospel (e.g., 1.70). Since Celsus appears to have been active during the third quarter of the second century this is early testimony to the fact that Christians regarded the book as authoritative. But Celsus, naturally enough, does not use the name "John," so we cannot cite him for authorship.
58. *The Johannine Circle* (London, 1976), p. 5. He discerns three stages: "1. The author, a strong personality, made use both of traditions belonging to the common legacy of early Christianity and of a number of special traditions. ... 2. He was responsible for the main lines of the work as we have it now. 3. A redactor or a group of redactors under the influence of the author and belonging to his circle revised or completed the whole work after his death" (pp. 9-10).
59. *The Community of the Beloved Disciple* (London, 1979), pp. 22-24. G. Johnston says of Brown's view: "A theory that multiplies the hypotheses like this should be rejected in favour of the simplest reasonable explanation. The evidence, in our judgment, warrants only that the book was left unfinished and has been edited by persons unknown" (Johnstone, p. 14; he rejects the idea of a Johannine "school," p. 75).
60. For a survey of writing on the Johannine "community" or "school" see R. Kysar in *Interpretation* 31 (1977), pp. 355-66.
61. Hengel, p. 81; he concedes that pupils edited the book and put it into circulation (p. 84).
62. J. A. T. Robinson has a useful comment: "To sum up on the question of authorship, perhaps I can make the point by comparison and contrast. Brown, as we saw earlier, argues for the identity of the beloved disciple with John son of Zebedee but denies the identity of the beloved disciple with the evangelist. Cullmann *per contra* argues for the identity of the beloved disciple with the evangelist but denies the identity of the beloved disciple with John. He believes he was an anonymous Judaean disciple, a former follower of the Baptist, in part an eye witness, but not one of the twelve. ... I believe that both men are right in what they assert and wrong in what they deny" (*Redating the New Testament* [London, 1976], p. 310).
63. Ralph P. Martin holds this view: "John the presbyter sets out in a polemic and evangelistic tract the authentic teaching of John the apostle as the former confronts a new situation in the

64. C. S. Petrie has made a careful examination of the evidence in his article "The Authorship of 'The Gospel according to Matthew': A Reconsideration of the External Evidence" (NTS, 14 [1967-68], pp. 15-32). He speaks of John the Elder as "that elusive mythical figure that for so long has bedevilled students of the Fourth Gospel" and goes on, "We must see just how Eusebius brings him into the picture and why; and then, after wondering at the fuss he has been allowed to cause, consign him to oblivion" (p. 20). J. A. T. Robinson says, "as author of the Gospel he is a mere construct of modern scholarship. In fact it is at least doubtful whether he ever even existed as a second character (he is not alluded to anywhere else in ancient literature)" (The Priority of John [London, 1985], p. 103).

65. Sometimes the view is reinforced by the assertion that the Apostle John was martyred early. But the evidence for this is very shaky. See SFG, pp. 280-92. And it is curious that those who put forward this theory do not usually take notice of the fact that, even if it be accepted at its face value, it does not say when John was martyred. At best it says that James and John were both killed by the Jews. It says nothing about time or place, or whether the two were martyred together. Yet this is obviously the critical point.

69. B. H. Streeter, for example, argued that John the elder need not have come into contact with the apostle very much (he thinks that he derived most of his facts from Mark or Luke): "We need only postulate for him a connection with the Apostle and an attitude to his memory comparable to that of Irenaeus towards Polycarp. A brief and, as it seemed in the halo of later recollection, a wonderful connection with the Apostle — perhaps also a few never-to-be-forgotten words of Christ derived from his lips — would make the attitude towards the Beloved Disciple expressed in the Gospel psychologically explicable" (The Four Gospels [London, 1930], p. 433). But that is just what it would not do. Plainly Streeter did not reflect on his analogy. Irenaeus clearly thought a great deal of Polycarp. But the point is that he said so. He mentioned the name and he spoke of things Polycarp said and did. Streeter, however, asks us to believe that the Elder John all but obliterated his hero. That is psychologically impossible.

70. The Son of Zebedee (London, 1927), p. 86.
71. Or "Pure"; the word is ἀγνοῦ.
73. E.g., ODCC, s.v. "Abercius."
76. R. A. Edwards gives as one reason for his accepting the Johannine authorship that "the alternative suggestions seemed far too complicated for them to be possible in a real world where living men met and talked" (The Gospel according to St. John [London, 1954], p. ix).
77. Michaels sees the apostle John as the author, but this "does not necessarily mean that he composed it all at once." He finds "a complex creative process centering on the historical and theological reflections of one man as hammered out in the context of a particular community of faith and in relation to that community's concerns" (Michaels, p. xxii).
78. Kysar, p. 92.
80. Sometimes the position is oversimplified. M. S. Enslin, for example, wrote: "every critic, whatever his views as to the author, agrees that the gospel cannot antedate the year 100" (Christian
Beginnings [New York and London, 1938], p. 448). This was not true in 1938 and it is not true now.

81. Cf. C. C. Torrey: "At the annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis in New York City, in December, 1934, I challenged my New Testament colleagues to designate even one passage, from any of the Four Gospels, giving clear evidence of a date later than 50 a.d., or of origin outside Palestine. The challenge was not met, nor will it be, for there is no such passage" (Our Translated Gospels, p. x). At least this incident shows that the evidence for a late date is not obvious.

82. See below, pp. 43ff.


84. Cf. R. M. Grant, "The only grounds on which this point [i.e. that John is earlier or later than the Synoptics] can definitely be 'proved' lie in a general theory of the development of early Christian thought, and the chief support of this theory is provided by the Gospel itself. Since the argument is circular we shall do well to neglect it" (A Historical Introduction to the New Testament [London, 1963], p. 155).


86. Turner, p. 18.


88. Cf. R. M. Grant, "This outside evidence, scanty though it is, confirms our impression that the evangelist is dealing with the real problem presented by those who revered the Baptist more highly than Jesus. This feature of his gospel suggests that it was written at a relatively early date" (A Historical Introduction, p. 153).


91. Some Johannine Problems, p. 113.

92. See JBL, LXXXIX (1970), pp. 38-55; the quotation is on p. 55.

93. A. M. Hunter comes somewhere near this when he says, "It might have been written about 80; but then again it might have been written a decade earlier" (Interpreting the New Testament, p. 222). C. L. Mitton mentions this verdict approvingly (ExT, LXXI [1959-60], p. 340). R. M. Grant thinks that it was written "around the time of the Roman-Jewish war of 66-70 (probably not long after it)" (A Historical Introduction, p. 160).

94. Cf. J. A. T. Robinson: "The decisive question is the status and origin of the Johannine tradition. Did this come out of the blue round about the year A.D. 100? Or is there a real continuity, not merely in the memory of one old man, but in the life of an on-going community, with the earliest days of Christianity? What, I think, fundamentally distinguishes the 'new look' on the fourth Gospel is that it answers that question in the affirmative" (SE, I, p. 350). Robinson, of course, has since argued that the Gospel was written before A.D. 70.

95. This is as old as Clement of Alexandria, who thought that John was content with "the bodily facts" (τα σωματικά) in the Synoptists, but wrote as well "a spiritual Gospel" (πνευματικόν εὐαγγέλιον) (Eusebius, HE 6.14.7).

96. A. Wikenhauser further points out that "if it was John's intention to supplement the Synoptics, he would certainly have shown clearly how his account was to be harmonized with theirs" (New Testament Introduction [New York, 1958], p. 301). The difficulties in harmonizing the accounts are, of course, notorious.


98. This view is as old as Irenaeus, who viewed the Gospel as written to oppose Cerinthus (Adv. Haer. 3.11.1).

99. See the comments by R. M. Grant and J. Munck on p. 58, nn. 191 and 192 below.

100. Gk. δοκείν, "to seem," gives the name to the heresy.

101. J. N. D. Kelly points out that the first person to mention Docetists (δοκηταί) is Serapion of Antioch (ft. 200). "But Docetism was not a simple heresy on its own; it was an attitude which
infected a number of heresies, particularly Marcionism and Gnosticism" (Early Christian Doctrines [London, 1958], p. 141). The attitude appears to have been earlier than the emergence of fully developed Docetism.

102. Lindars, pp. 61-63.
103. A curiosity of scholarship is the view of E. L. Titus that this Gospel teaches Docetism: "with the descent of the Spirit — the point of the Incarnation — that humanity ceased to operate, except in terms of the physical organism: he walked about, used the voice mechanism, etc., but the mental and spiritual qualities were no longer those of a man. From the point of the Incarnation, the continuum of the human element remained only in the minds of the Jews" (The Message of the Fourth Gospel [New York, 1957], p. 33). If this is not Docetism, it is Apollinarianism. Either way Titus makes our author a heretic. Another author who regards John as heretical is E. Käsemann, who says forthrightly, "From the historical viewpoint, the Church committed an error when it declared the Gospel to be orthodox" (The Testament of Jesus [London, 1968], p. 76). He says that this Gospel's "acceptance into the Church's canon took place through man's error and God's providence" (ibid., p. 75). I have examined Kasemann's position in "The Jesus of Saint John," in Robert A. Guelich, ed., Unity and Diversity in New Testament Theology (Grand Rapids, 1978), pp. 37-53. Raymond E. Brown thinks John's statements are closer to Monophysitism than to Docetism but rejects both views (Interpretation, XXI [1967], p. 399, n. 27).

104. C. F. D. Moule points out that this Gospel "contains tough polemic against Jews." He thinks that here there "may be good traditions of the actual controversies of Christ's own lifetime, preserved and reset in such a way as to be entirely topical to the evangelist's own circumstances" (The Birth of the New Testament [London, 1962], pp. 94 and 95).

105. W. Baldensperger is usually cited as the outstanding example of a scholar who viewed John this way. I do not think that any recent writer sees this as the dominant purpose of the Evangelist, though many hold that it was one of his subordinate aims (e.g. Strachan, pp. 109-12).

106. For John's followers as a continuing movement see C. H. H. Scobie, John the Baptist (London, 1964), ch. XII.

107. . Thus in discussing John 6 Odeberg refers to the views of J. Kreyenbühl, who, he says, "maintains that the section really speaks of the Eucharist, but not by way of advocating it but by way of a strong rejection of this sacrament, as being a ritus, an institution of the Church. The object of the Evangelist is, acc. to Kreyenbühl, to put against the Sacrament of the Church ... his own spiritual understanding: the real flesh and blood of the Son of Man (= the Evangelist) are his teaching, his religion, his life in God and of God, and these only are potent of eternal Life" (FG, p. 237). Cf. Also E. C. Colwell and E. L. Titus: "We would go so far as to say that the Fourth Gospel represents a reaction to an increasing suppression of spontaneous religious experience through the substitution of an ex opere operato sacramental ritual" (The Gospel of the Spirit [New York, 1953], p. 52).

108. Cf. O. Cullmann, "Scholars have long ago observed and commentators fittingly commented upon the author's deep interest in the sacraments, in this or that passage. We mean to go further, however, and to show how the Gospel of John regards it as one of its chief concerns to set forth the connexion between the contemporary Christian worship and the historical life of Jesus" (Early Christian Worship [London, 1953], p. 37). K. and S. Lake think of this Gospel as written "by a Hellenistic Christian in order to support the sacramental theology which finds a centre in the divine Jesus" (An Introduction to the New Testament [London, 1938], p. 51; see also pp. 61-62).

109. Cf. E. F. Scott: "In order that the religion might naturalise itself in the larger Gentile world to which, since the days of Paul, it had chiefly appealed, it required to find expression in the Hellenic modes of thought. . . . The writer of the Fourth Gospel, not content with employing a Greek idea here and there, attempts an entire restatement of the Christian message in terms of the current philosophy" (The Fourth Gospel, p. 6).

110. This seems to be the view of C. H. Dodd: "It seems therefore that we are to think of the work as addressed to a wide public consisting primarily of devout and thoughtful persons ... in the
varied and cosmopolitan society of a great Hellenistic city such as Ephesus under the Roman Empire" (IFG, p. 9).

111. H. G. G. Herklots makes an important point as he concludes his discussion of John: "The Greek world wanted Jesus at its own price, as a spiritual influence only, and not as one who had taken on flesh and blood. It was only through being lifted up from the earth, in the bitter anguish of crucifixion, that He began the process in which history finds its meaning and consummation, of drawing all men to Himself" (A Fresh Approach to the New Testament [London, 1950], p. 121). This Gospel makes good use of terms intelligible in the Hellenistic world, but it is to impress ideas that are not Hellenistic.

112. There is a textual problem as to whether the present or the aorist subjunctive of the verb πιστεύω should be read. On the whole it seems that the present is somewhat more probable. Some authors argue from this that the meaning is "that you may continue to believe," and they deduce that John wrote primarily to Christians to strengthen their faith. Thus F. V. Filson thinks there is no doubt about John's purpose, and he cites this text. But a little later he says, "he aimed, not primarily to win new converts or to convince his opponents, but to state the role of Jesus Christ in such a way that his role as Son of God, as the Father's agent in creating and upholding the world, and as the Savior and Lord of the world, would be plain, and so the church would be saved from despising or disparaging the historical Jesus" (A New Testament History [London, 1965], pp. 374, 376-77). But this seems to be reading a good deal into the tense.

113. C. H. Dodd points out that, quite apart from grammatical considerations, the Gospel shows that its author "is thinking in the first place, not so much of Christians who need a deeper theology, as of non-Christians who are concerned about eternal life and the way to it, and may be ready to follow the Christian way if this is presented to them in terms that are intelligibly related to their previous religious interests and experience" (IFG, p. 9).

114. Cf. C. F. D. Moule: "This Gospel, unlike the others, answers the question, 'What must I do to be saved?' The others mainly confine themselves to the story of discipleship; the Fourth Gospel speaks in terms not only of following and imitation, but of belief and incorporation" (The Birth of the New Testament, p. 94). He immediately goes on, "What is less often noticed is that it also answers the question 'What must I do . . .?' — it is an extremely individualistic message. ... St John sees Jesus as the source of life, to be connected with whom is, for each individual, life eternal." In a number of places Moule insists on the individualism of this Gospel.

115. See further SFG, ch. 2.

116. Cf. Marsh, "John seems to have believed that theology was not something which could be used to read a meaning into events, but rather something that was to be discovered in them. His story is what it is because his theology is what it is; but his theology is what it is because the story happened so" (pp. 580-81).

117. Cf. Titus: "it is natural for the modern mind, unaccustomed to ways of antiquity, to view the material as history. This view has vitiates even the best of modern commentaries"; "If, at any point, his narrative conveys information on the subject, it is more by accident than by intent"; "the question of the historical accuracy of the medium of communication is quite beside the point" (The Message of the Fourth Gospel, pp. 13, 14, 21).

118. A good example is W. H. Brownlee's verdict on what the Scrolls have shown us about the teaching of John the Baptist: "The most astonishing result of all is the validation of the Fourth Gospel as an authentic source concerning the Baptist" (SNT, p. 52).

119. See SFG, pp. 110-12.

120. Cf. B. W. Bacon: "In an age so eagerly bent on ascertaining the historic facts regarding Jesus' life, and the true sequence of events (Luke i.1-4), it is insupposable that an author so strenuous to uphold the concrete reality of the church's historic tradition should not give real history so far as he was able. He could not afford to depreciate it in the face of Docetic myth and fancy and contempt for a 'Christ in the flesh' " (The Making of the New Testament [London, n.d.J, p. 222). Bacon, it is true,
thinks that John wrote late and that "real history was no longer attainable" (p. 223). But that is another matter. If John was early or had access to reliable tradition, real history was attainable and on Bacon's showing he must have used it.

121. See "The Gospel Tradition and its Beginnings," in SE, I, pp. 43-65. The point of view is argued more fully by B. Gerhardsson in Memory and Manuscript (Uppsala, 1961). This view has been vigorously criticized, as, for example, by C. F. Evans in Theology, LXI (1958), pp. 355-62. J. J. Vincent summarizes in SE, III, pp. 105-18.1 have written on this at somewhat greater length in SFG, pp. 131-37.

122. SE, I, p. 61.
123. SE, I, p. 55.
125. SE, I, p. 63.
127. Hoskyns, p. 117.

129. The New Testament as Canon, p. 133.
131. Ibid., p. 49.

132. William Temple says, "A good photograph is vastly preferable to a bad portrait. But the great portrait painter may give a representation of a man which no photographer can emulate." He goes on to suggest that the Synoptists "may give us something more like the perfect photograph; St John gives us the more perfect portrait" (p. xvi). It might be more accurate to speak of the Synoptists as also giving us portraits (after all, different painters may paint differing, but worthwhile portraits of the same sitter). Each brings out some of the original that the others miss. See further the comments by Albright and Mitton, p. 15 above.

133. This topic is treated at greater length in SFG, ch. 1.

136. H. F. D. Sparks argues that John knew Matthew JTS, n.s. III [1952], pp. 58-61). See also the reply by P. Gardner-Smith (JTS, n.s. IV [1953], pp. 31-35).
138. Kümmel cites as supporters of John's independence of the Synoptists Michaelis, Manson, Menoud, J. A. T. Robinson, Sanders, Wilkens, and Higgins. He lists others who hold that John knew none of the Synoptists though he did know the tradition they reproduce, namely Feine-Behm, Connick, Noack, Mendner, Feuillet, Klijn, Heard, F. C. Grant, Bultmann, Dodd, Hunter, Kasemann, Borgen, Haenchen, Grundmann; Buse and Temple hold that John knew one of Mark's sources (Introduction, pp. 143-44).
139. Barrett, pp. 43-45.
140. Gardner-Smith, however, suggests that "it may have been customary at quite an early period to relate the story of Christ's walking on the water immediately after the story of the feeding of the five thousand" (Saint John and the Synoptic Gospels, p. 89, n.). If this were so, Barrett's point would have less force. Is it too prosaic to suggest that they are in this order because this is the order in which they happened?

141. Cf. E. B. Redlich, "This is identification run riot, for the words of confession are too unlike to be referred to one event; besides the locality is not the same" (An Introduction to the Fourth Gospel [London, 1939], p. 71).
142. Cf. Kümmel, "The number of texts for which a dependence of John upon the Synoptics can be defended with any reason is astonishingly small, and by closer inspection even for those texts
the number of divergencies is far greater than that of the agreements" (*Introduction*, p. 144); he thinks, however, that John probably had Mark and Luke in mind "and used them from memory" (p. 145).

143. For a fuller treatment see *SFG*, pp. 15-19.

144. Thus Gardner-Smith draws attention to three verbal correspondences in the narratives of the Anointing and proceeds, "All these three are of a kind very easily remembered, striking in character, and therefore likely to become stereotyped in oral tradition" (*Saint John and the Synoptic Gospels*, p. 49).


150. There is a further difficulty concerning the dating of the use of the codex form. Bernard's view will not stand, I think, if the roll form was used for the original writing of this Gospel. The codex form does not seem to have been widely used until the second century A.D. (F. G. Kenyon, *Our Bible and the Ancient Manuscripts* [London, 1939], pp. 12-13). It may be just early enough for the autograph of John, but it is a near thing. As Guthrie puts it, "there is no certain evidence to show whether codices were used quite as early as this" (*New Testament Introduction*, p. 287).

151. "Neither displacement theories nor redaction theories are needed to explain the present state of the gospel" (Barrett, p. 26).

152. "Unfortunately, when once the gospel has been taken to pieces, its reassemblage is liable to be affected by individual preferences, preconceptions and even prejudices. ... If ... it should appear that the structure of the gospel as we have it has been shaped in most of its details by the ideas which seem to dominate the author's thought, then it would appear not improbable that we have his work before us substantially in the form which he designed" (*IFG*, p. 240).

153. "It is reasonable to hold that no attempt should be made to alter the order of the text as we have it" (Lightfoot, p. 8).

154. Wright, p. 29. He goes on, "Not only so, but by the multiplicity and diversity of our schemes of rearrangement we are in danger of making our conclusions a laughing-stock to those not yet bereft of a sense of humour." Haenchen surveys a number of theories and concludes succinctly, "The time of theories of displacement is gone" (Haenchen, p. 51).


156. R. H. Strachan in the earlier editions of his commentary worked on the theory of redaction, but abandoned it in the third edition, where he says, "All attempts ... to discover the work of different hands in the Gospel have reached hardly any agreement, and are open to the charge of oversubtlety" (Strachan, p. 81).

157. For a convenient summary see Bultmann, pp. 6-7. Hengel says that E. Ruckstuhl has shown that "from a stylistic point of view there is no justification for Bultmann's numerous literary-critical operations." Further, "The Fourth Gospel is 'a unitary work throughout', 'it has a clear ground plan of its own' and forms 'an unusually strong stylistic unity' which includes ch. 21." Ruckstuhl's conclusions, Hengel says, "have never really been refuted" (Hengel, p. 89).


159. *The Fourth Gospel and its Predecessor* (Philadelphia, 1988). Hengel thinks that this book is "totally unsatisfactory"; it ignores the work of A. Schweizer and B. Noack and relegates E. Ruckstuhl to one footnote, while its own investigation of style "is more than scanty" (Hengel, p. 203, n. 72). He also speaks of Ruckstuhl as "taking apart piece by piece the opposed theses of R. T. Fortna" (p. 90).


162. Howard produces tables that show the incidence of certain stylistic characteristics. He says, "It would be absurd to claim that they amount to a demonstration. We may, however, point out that there is a remarkable distribution of these characteristics through all parts of the Gospel, narrative and discourse, Galilean and Judaean" (*FGRCI*, p. 107; the tables are found in Appendix B, pp. 276-81). See also the studies by Vern Poythress in *NovT*, 26 (1984), pp. 312-40; *WThJ*, XLVI (1984), pp. 350-69. He argues that the use of *de, oum, kai, and asyndeton* show that the Fourth Gospel differs from other New Testament books, but that in the use of these constructions the Fourth Gospel is remarkably uniform. J. J. O'Rourke has examined the use of the historic present in John and demonstrated that it "does not show any pattern nor does it provide any evidence for determining sources" (*JBL*, 93 [1974], pp. 585-90; the words quoted are on p. 590). H. M. Teeple argues that "four main writers are involved: the authors of two written sources, the editor who used portions of the sources in his composition, and the redactor" (*The Literary Origin of the Gospel of John*, p. 249).

163. *The Four Gospels*, p. 377. It is hard to dissent from Kysar's view that "it would seem fair to conclude that the method of source criticism of the fourth gospel is somewhat in shambles" (Kysar, p. 24). There is a well-known dictum of Pierson Parker, "It looks as though, if the author of the fourth Gospel used documentary sources, he wrote them all himself" (*JBL*, 75 [1956], p. 304).

164. See p. xli.

165. Even when an author does not impose his own stamp as thoroughly as does John, the difficulty of detecting sources may be immense. If I may quote Streeter again, "In Mark we have extant one of the main sources of both Matthew and Luke. But if we had before us only Matthew, or only Luke, no critic on earth would have been able to reconstruct a source like Mark. Even where we have two copies of a lost document to help us, we are at times baffled; witness the fact that no one has yet made a convincing reconstruction of Q" (*The Four Gospels*, p. 378).

166. W. G. Kümmel examines and rejects a number of different source theories with comments like: "these partition hypotheses have proved to be inadequately grounded in respect to methodology" (*Introduction*, p. 141); "the tenability of such source theories has been fundamentally disputed with the help of vocabulary statistics" (idem); The more far-reaching hypotheses of Wellhausen, Schwarz, and Hirsch, according to which John arose through extensive expansion of a 'Grundschrift,' can only be designated as arbitrary and undemonstrable" (p. 150). He rejects the theories of Eckhardt, Boismard, Broome, and Macgregor and Morton. He is more respectful of Bultmann, but rejects his views, too (pp. 150-52).


168. I have tried to show that John habitually introduces small changes in "Variation — A Feature of the Johannine Style" (*SFG*, ch. 5).


170. P. 49, n. 65.


172. Kysar, p. 53. He says that Brown's five-stage theory "seems supremely imprecise" (p. 52), and that Lindars has "only the rather subjective appraisal of plausibility upon which to rely" (p. 53).

173. "The hypothesis that (the Johannine discourses) were in the first place sermons delivered by the evangelist and subsequently (perhaps even after his death) arranged in the gospel has much to commend it" (Barrett, p. 21). Brown emphasizes the place of "oral preaching and teaching" in stage 2
of the formation of this Gospel (Brown, I, p. XXXV). Lindars assigns a large place to "the homilies of John" (Lindars, pp. 51-54).

174. Though Eusebius says he used "unwritten preaching" ἀγράφος κηρύγματι, HE 3.24.7.


178. Turner and Mantey, however, discount this: "The Odes of Solomon were viewed by Harnack as affording an important source of ideas for the Fourth Gospel, but subsequent research has modified this judgment and virtually annulled it" (p. 7). Barrett thinks that the parallels "hardly go beyond what might reasonably be expected in two Christian writers who use a variety of images to express union with Christ and the blessings that flow from that union" (Barrett, p. 65).


181. See FG passim.

182. See SFG, ch. 6.

183. E.g., Barrett, p. 31. In his Franz Delitzsch lectures Barrett insists that Judaism is part of the background of this Gospel. He can say things like "John is both Jewish and anti-Jewish" (The Gospel of John and Judaism [London, 1975], p. 71).

184. "One clue is crystal clear, namely, that contemporary research favors a Palestinian, Old Testament, Jewish setting for the thought of the gospel" (Kysar, p. 144). Barrett has brought out very clearly the importance of more than one strand of Judaism for an understanding of this Gospel (The Gospel of John and Judaism).

185. Dodd regards Philo as important (IFG, pp. 54-73). So also A, W. Argyle, ExT, LXIII (1951-52), pp. 385-86.


187. See Studies in the Fourth Gospel, ed. F. L. Cross (London, 1957), pp. 36-44. He concludes that "we can discard the Hermetica along with the Mandaean texts and other evidences of Gnosticism. They constitute no significant part of the background of the Gospel, they do not provide the key to its interpretation" (p. 43).

188. N. Perrin and D. C. Duling say, "Certainly no one would deny the diversified nature of John's Jewish environment. ... It seems all observers acknowledge a highly complex environment which might, for want of precise language, be called syncretistic Hellenistic Judaism" (The New Testament, An Introduction2 [San Diego, 1982], p. 342). Cf. Kysar, "contemporary research favors a Palestinian, Old Testament, Jewish setting for the thought of the gospel" (Kysar, p. 144).

189. IFG, p. 115.

190. See, for example, Primitive Christianity in its Contemporary Setting (London, 1956), pp. 163-64.

191. Cf. R. M. Grant: "The most obvious explanation of the origin of the Gnostic redeemer is that he was modelled after the Christian conception of Jesus. It seems significant that we know no redeemer before Jesus, while we encounter other redeemers (Simon Magus, Menander) immediately after his time" (Gnosticism [London, 1961], p. 18). Again, G. Quispel, writing on the Gnostic documents of Chenoboskion, sees the possibility of giving "the death-sentence to Bultmann's hypothesis of a pre-Christian Gnostic Redeemer" (The Jung Codex, p. 38).

192. J. Munck has an incisive criticism of Bultmann: "Bultmann believes he can prove that the Gospel of St. John presupposes this redeemer myth and can only be understood in the light of it. But no attempt has been made at a critical evaluation of the material cited, and the author does not distinguish between probable dependence, the use of the same terminus technicus in the same sense and in quite another sense, ana the use of the same imagery in the same sense and in quite another, and therefore probably entirely irrelevant, sense. For these reasons the data so meritoriously
assembled form only a kind of valuable raw material for defining concepts and have not the power of
a proof, as Bultmann believed” (W. Klassen and G. F. Snyder, eds., Current Issues in New Testament

193. See above, p. 31.

194. Munck objects even to the term "proto-gnostic" (as implying "that the proto-gnostic forms
a preliminary to Gnosticism"), and prefers "syncretistic" as "a term which does not definitely
anticipate the specially gnostic but merely describes an observed phenomenon as a single expression
of the religious mixture from which Gnosticism derives" (Current Issues, pp. 236-37).

195. The Fourth Gospel, p. 46. Moffatt puts "Paulinism" at the head of "the main currents
which flow through the gospel" apart from the Old Testament (An Introduction to the Literature of the
TEXT,
EXPOSITION,
AND NOTES
I. THE PROLOGUE (1:1-18)

The first eighteen verses of this Gospel form a Prologue to the whole.\(^1\) Some commentators have thought that this section was originally separate, perhaps being composed by someone other than the Evangelist.\(^2\) They see it as having no real connection with the Gospel, but as being adapted more or less successfully to its present situation. It is more likely that it was written for this place, for it accords so well with what follows. These verses bring before us some of the great thoughts that will be developed as the narrative unfolds: the excellency of Christ, who is the Word of God, the eternal strife between light and darkness, and the witness borne by the Baptist, that greatest of the sons of Israel. But the principal topic in these verses is the incarnation, together with its astonishing sequel, the rejection of the Word by those who might have been expected to welcome him.

Of particular interest and importance is the use of the term *Logos* or Word, which is applied to Christ in these verses, and in these verses only, in this Gospel (for that matter the term is rare elsewhere, Rev. 19:13 being the only other place in the New Testament where there can be no doubt about it, and there it is not "the Word" simply, but "the Word of God"). But, though the term is not used in this way elsewhere in John, the idea that Christ stands to the Father in the relationship that it denotes permeates the whole. As E. F. Scott says, "it pervades the Gospel and supplies the key by which its teaching must be interpreted."\(^3\) This Gospel is a Gospel about the Word. The Prologue sounds the keynote. Where Mark begins with the gospel message and Matthew and Luke have their birth stories, John takes us back in his opening to the eternal purpose of God.

Some writers have thought that the Prologue should be understood as poetry.\(^4\) It is true that it is possible to arrange it to look like verse. Bernard,
for example, has done this in Greek,\(^5\) and Rieu does it in his English translation. It is also undoubtedly true that some of the attributes of poetry are to be found in it. But, as Barrett justly remarks, those who regard it as verse differ markedly in their verse arrangements\(^6\) and in what they regard as prose insertions. It is also true that their methods, applied elsewhere, could make "poetry" of almost any part of the Gospel. It is better to regard the Prologue as elevated prose. It is written in a meditative strain (but then so is much of this Gospel). This lends a musing air to the passage. But that does not make it poetry.

A. THE WORD AND GOD (1:1-2)

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was with God in the beginning.

1 John's first words, "In the beginning," are probably a conscious reminiscence of the first words of the Bible. The first book of the Hebrew Bible was named "In the beginning" (from its opening words); therefore, the expression would be widely known. John is writing about a new beginning, a new creation, and he uses words that recall the first creation. He soon goes on to use other words that are important in Genesis 1, such as "life" (v. 4), "light" (v. 4), and "darkness" (v. 5). Genesis 1 described God's first creation; John's theme is God's new creation. Like the first, the second is not carried out by some subordinate being. It is brought about through the agency of the Logos, the very Word of God. There is continuity with the old creation. The Word was "in the beginning," which means that he was before all else.\(^7\) But it probably means more. The term rendered "beginning" can also denote "origin" in the sense of basic cause.\(^8\) Temple is probably right in thinking that the phrase here combines two meanings, "in the beginning of history" and "at the root of the universe." John is fond of using expressions with more than one meaning. If it happened only occasionally we might regard it as coincidence and make a serious effort to decide between the two possibilities. But it happens so often that it must be seen as deliberate. It is John's way of bringing out the fuller meaning of whatever expression he is using. So here it seems that he has both possible meanings in mind and wants us to see both in his words. It is quite in his manner to begin his
Gospel with an expression that is to be taken in two ways. Both are important. There never was a time when the Word was not. There never was a thing that did not depend on him for its existence. The verb "was" is most naturally understood of the eternal existence of the Word: "the Word continually was." We should not press the tense unduly, but certainly the verb denotes neither a completed state nor a coming into being. It is appropriate to eternal, unchanging being. John is affirming that the Word existed before creation, which makes it clear that the Word was not created. It is of the utmost importance to grasp this. Others, particularly among the Jews with their emphasis on the one God as the source of all things, had thought of the Word as of excellent dignity, but as subordinate, as a created being. It is fundamental to John that the Word is not to be included among created things. "In the beginning" (with all the fullness of meaning that these words can hold) the Word "was." "He is seen as greater than all things, greater than time, changeless as eternity" (Guthrie).

For "the Word" (Logos) see Additional Note A, pp. 102-13. The introduction of the term as something familiar in the very first line of the Gospel brings before us one of the difficulties that will remain with us throughout. It is not proven beyond doubt whether the term, as John uses it, is to be derived from Jewish or Greek or some other source. Nor is it plain precisely what he meant by it. John does not tell us, and we are left to work out for ourselves the precise allusion and its significance. Again and again we will find ourselves in this situation. I do not mean that John's thought is confused or that we cannot follow what he is saying. On the contrary, his thought is clear and his style lucid. But his combination of simplicity and profundity often leaves us wondering whether we have caught all his meaning.

This at any rate can be said: "the Word" points to the truth that it is of the very nature of God to reveal himself. A person's word is the means whereby he reveals what he is thinking. "The Word of God is His thought (if we may put it so) uttered so that men can understand it." God is not to be thought of as aloof and indifferent. He reveals himself. But he reveals himself as he chooses. He is sovereign in revelation as in all else. We must guard against two misinterpretations. The one is that of thinking of the revelation as static. It is more than the revelation of certain truths about God. To know God is life eternal (17:3). The knowledge of God that the Word brings is not merely information. It is life. The Word is creative.
The other is that of thinking of the Word as nothing more than an attribute or even an activity of God. John thinks of the Word as coming to earth in the person of Jesus of Nazareth (v. 14). At the same time he partakes of the innermost being of God, for "the Word was God." It is probably impossible for us to read the Prologue without thoughts of Jesus of Nazareth, but it is worth bearing in mind that there is nothing to link the two until we come to verse 14. Until that point the first readers of this Gospel would have thought of the Word in terms of a supremely great Being or Principle. If we are to evaluate the intended impact of these words we must bear this in mind.

"The Word was with God" is probably as good a translation as we can manage for a difficult Greek expression. If the preposition is to be taken literally, it means "the Word was toward God." John thinks of no opposition between the Word and the Father. The whole existence of the Word was oriented toward the Father. Probably we should understand from the preposition the two ideas of accompaniment and relationship. That the thought is of importance and is no casual expression is indicated by the fact that the statement is repeated in verse 2. It marks an advance on the previous statement (cf. also 1 John 1:2). There John established the personal existence of the Word. Now he goes on to the Word's personal character in relation to the Father. Not only did the Word exist "in the beginning," but he existed in the closest possible connection with the Father. The expression does differentiate between the two. Perhaps John is by implication refuting any idea that the Word is an emanation from God, quite distinct from the Godhead. The Word and God are not identical. But they are one.

The high point is reached in the third affirmation: "the Word was God." Nothing higher could be said: all that may be said about God may fitly be said about the Word. This statement should not be watered down. Moffatt renders, "the Logos was divine" (Goodspeed, Schonfield, and others are similar). While this English probably means much the same as does that of NIV, the emphasis is different, and such translations are no improvement. John is not merely saying that there is something divine about Jesus. He is affirming that he is God, and doing so emphatically as we see from the word order in the Greek.

If that is a staggering affirmation to us, there is no reason for thinking that it was any less so to the Jewish author of this Gospel. To the Jews of the day monotheism was more than a belief commonly held. It was a conviction to be clung to with fierce tenacity. The Jews might be ground
down under the heel of the Roman conquerors, but they could do more than hate their military superiors. They could despise them. The Romans were no more than ignorant idolaters, and, crass folly, believed in many gods! The Jews knew with an unshakable certainty that there was, there could be, only one God. When John says, "the Word was God," his words must be understood in the light of Jewish pride in monotheism. Even though this writer regarded monotheism as a central tenet in his religion he yet could not withhold from the Word the designation "God."

He says "the Word was God, "not "God was the Word." The latter would have meant that God and the Word were the same; it would have pointed to an identity. But John is leaving open the possibility that there may be more to "God" than the "Word" (clearly he thought of the Father as God, and his later references indicate a similar status for the Spirit). But he lays it down unequivocally that nothing less than "God" will do for our understanding of the Word.17

We should perhaps notice that John refers to Jesus as God again in verse 18 and in 20:28. If the present passage refers to Jesus in his pre-incarnate state as God, verse 18 takes up the thought for the incarnate Word and 20:28 for the risen Christ. John thus asserts the deity of his Lord at three very important places in his narrative.18

2 Nothing new is added in this verse, but two points are repeated from verse 1 and thereby given emphasis.19 The Word was "in the beginning" and the Word was "with God." The eternity of the Word is not to be overlooked or minimized. The other point concerns the close relationship between the Father and the Word. These two are not the same, but they belong together. The fact that One may be said to be "with" the Other clearly differentiates them. Yet though they are distinct, there is no disharmony. John's expression points us to the perfect unity in which they are joined.

B. THE WORD AND CREATION (1:3-5)

3Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made, 4In him was life, and that life was the light of men. 5The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood\(^a\) it.
It is no accident that John goes straight from his statement about the relation between the Word and God to the phenomenon of creation. As Cullmann puts it, "The self-communication of God occurs first of all in creation. That is why creation and salvation are very closely connected in the New Testament. Both of them have to do with God's self-communication."\textsuperscript{20} The development of the theme of the Logos leads naturally to the revelation made in creation.

3 From the relationship of the Word to the Father John turns to his relationship to creation. He makes the assertion that all created things\textsuperscript{21} were brought into being through him. The verb "were made" does not in itself mean specifically "were created" so much as "came into being." But in this context the difference is not significant. John is saying that everything owes its existence to the Word.\textsuperscript{22} He does not say that all was made "by" him, but "through" him. This way of putting it safeguards the truth that the Father is the source of all that is.\textsuperscript{23} The relation of the first two Persons of the Trinity in the work of creation is of interest. There is a careful differentiation of the parts played by the Father and the Son (1 Cor. 8:6). Creation was not the solitary act of either. Both were at work (and, for that matter, still are; cf. 5:17, 19). The Father created, but he did it "through" the Word.

A feature of Johannine style is the enunciation of a proposition in positive form and then immediately its repetition in the negative. We find this here. The second expression is emphatic, and we could render, "without him there was not even one thing made."\textsuperscript{24} The whole of creation is included in one broad sweep. Nothing is outside the range of his activity. There is a change of tense. "Were made" (aorist) pictures creation in its totality, as one act, but "has been made" is perfect, which conveys the thought of the continuing existence of created things. What we see around us did not come into existence apart from the Word, any more than what appeared on the first day of creation.

The emphatic assertion of the exclusive role of the Word in creation is probably to be understood against some contemporary idea. There are those who think that John was written in part to oppose Gnosticism. I do not think that this can be demonstrated, for on our present information Gnosticism, at
least in its developed form, appeared later than any date that is feasible for
the composition of this Gospel. But Gnosticism did not appear fully
fashioned in a moment of time. It was an eclectic movement, gathering
ideas from a variety of sources. It is not in the least unlikely that there were
people putting out at this time some such view of creation as was later
gathered into the various Gnostic systems (though we have no complete
evidence for the point), which viewed matter as inherently evil. Therefore
the good God could have had nothing to do with it. But it was held that
there were various "emanations" of spirit beings from him, until at last there
appeared one powerful enough to create and foolish enough not to see that
this would be a mistake. John strongly repudiates all such ideas. The world
is due to God himself\(^{25}\) acting through his Word.\(^{26}\) The universe is not
eternal, nor is it due to some foolish inferior being. This world is God's
world.\(^{27}\)

4 There is a punctuation problem here. It is possible to take the last
words of the previous verse with the opening words of this one to give
some such meaning as "What has been made was life in him," or,
alternatively, "What has been made in him was life." In our earliest
manuscripts there are, of course, few or no punctuation marks, so that either
reading is possible. It is perhaps worth noting that the earliest manuscripts
that do have punctuation seem usually to place the point before the disputed
words, and thus put them in verse 4, not verse 3. So do most other ancient
authorities, whether translations into other languages or quotations in the
Fathers.\(^{28}\) It was not until this way of understanding the text was used to
support heretical views\(^{29}\) that the Fathers tended to adopt the view that the
words belong in verse 3. Despite this hesitation it seems that this is the
better way to understand the text; the point should go after the words in
question so that they are read as part of verse 3. To take the text in this way
is to get a terse and forceful statement in verse 4, while the retention of the
disputed words in the previous verse is natural and adds to the emphasis
that is there built up. The other way of taking the words gives us an
exceedingly complicated expression in verse 4, and I am not sure that those
who adopt this view really face the difficulties. Barrett goes so far as to say
that both ways of rendering the words with this verse division ("That which
came into being — in it the Word was life," and "That which came into
being—in the Word was its life") "are almost impossibly clumsy." Moreover,
the sense is not easy to accept. That the Word is the source of life is a
typically Johannine idea. That everything that has been made is life is not, even if we add, "in him."

Following the usual verse division, then, we move on from creation in general to the creation of life, the most significant element in creation. Life is one of John's characteristic concepts: he uses the word 36 times, whereas no other New Testament writing has it more than 17 times (Revelation; next come Romans with 14 times and 1 John with 13 times). Thus more than a quarter of all the New Testament references to life occur in this one writing. (135). "Life" in John characteristically refers to eternal life (see on 3:15), the gift of God through his Son. Here, however, the term must be taken in its broadest sense. It is only because there is life in the Logos that there is life in anything on earth at all. Life does not exist in its own right. It is not even spoken of as made "by" or "through" the Word, but as existing "in" him. There is probably a characteristic Johannine double meaning here. The life of which John writes is in the first instance the kind of life that we find throughout this earth, but this will call to mind that spiritual life which is so much the more significant that John can speak of it as "the (NIV, 'that') life." Neither will be out of mind here. This Gospel constantly associates life with the Word. He came that people might have life and have it more abundantly (10:10). He died so that people might have everlasting life (3:16). He gave his flesh for the life of the world (6:51). Only those who eat his flesh and drink his blood have life (6:53-54), and similarly only those who come to him have life (5:40). When he gives life people perish no more (10:28). He said that he had power to lay down his life and to take it again (10:18), and he did just that. As Lord of life he raised Lazarus from the dead (ch. 11). Twice he said that he is "the life" (11:25; 14:6), a thought to which we are very close in the Prologue. The basic source of all life is the Father, who "has life in himself" (5:26, where see note). But the Father "granted the Son to have life in himself" (5:26), and it is this latter point to which attention is directed here.

What is the meaning of "that life was the light of men"?\textsuperscript{30} Grimm-Thayer equates the light with "intelligence," and explains the verse in this way: "because the life of men is self-conscious, and thus a fountain of intelligence springs up."\textsuperscript{31} But this is to take the words in an unnatural way. There is no indication in the context that intelligence is in mind, and in any case there appears to be no reason for confining the words to any one part of humanity.\textsuperscript{32} It is more likely that we should think of Old Testament
passages that refer to God as the source of light and life, for example: "For with you is the fountain of life; in your light we see light" (Ps. 36:9). It is this kind of thing that the writer has in mind. But he is writing about the Word, so his meaning will be that the Word, himself the life, is also "the light of men," John is preparing the way for the thought that he will develop throughout his Gospel, that Jesus is the life-bringer and light-bearer.

Just as John links life with Christ, so he links light with him. Christ is "the light of the world" (8:12; 9:5). He has "come into the world as a light" (12:46). Anyone who follows him "will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life" (8:12). People can be urged to believe in the light (12:36), just as they are urged to believe in him. And just as he who is life gave life to dead Lazarus, so he who is the light of the world gave sight to the man born blind (ch. 9). The first recorded words of God are "Let there be light" (Gen. 1:3), and in this chapter the Word is the source of light. All the light we have, whether we walk in it or turn our backs on it, we owe to the Word.

Over against light is darkness. The antithesis is a natural one whether we are thinking of the physical world or the spiritual world. It is the function of light to shine precisely in the darkness, to oppose darkness, to dispel darkness. The opposition of light and darkness is a major theme of this Gospel, a feature it shares with the Qumran scrolls. Not too much can be made of this since the antithesis is such a natural one, and very widespread in antiquity. Probably most religions express it in greater or lesser measure. But in both John and Qumran it is a prominent theme.

Notice that John changes his tense. Until now he has used the past exclusively, but the light, he says, "shines," The light is continually in action. Even as John writes it is shining. The light of the world, "the light of men," never ceases to shine. Discussions of whether John has in mind the preincarnate Christ or the incarnate Christ seem quite beside the point. He is not dealing here with the incarnation, but with the fact that it is of the very essence of light that it shines.

According to NIV the darkness "has not understood it." The Greek verb is not easy to translate. It contains the idea of laying hold on something so as to make it one's own (cf. its translation as "gets" with reference to a prize, 1 Cor. 9:24). This can lead to meanings like "lay hold
with the mind," and thus "comprehend" (KJV) or "apprehend." That the verb can bear such a meaning is not in dispute. Whether it is relevant to the present context is another matter. We do not usually talk of darkness as trying to "understand" light. To take this meaning is really to think of darkness as equivalent to certain people, or perhaps the human race at large. But in this Gospel darkness is not so much people as the evil environment in which people find themselves.\(^\text{42}\) The theme of the perpetual conflict between darkness and light is found throughout the book. People's condemnation is that they loved darkness rather than light (3:19). Jesus calls on them to follow him so that they do not walk in darkness (8:12). They are to walk while they have the light, lest darkness "overtake" or "overcome" them (12:35, the same verb as here). Jesus came "into the world as a light" so that whoever believes on him should not "stay in darkness" (12:46). His whole mission was a conflict between the light and the darkness. The verb we are discussing has a rarer but sufficiently attested meaning, "overcome." It is that that is required here. The light is shining in the darkness. And\(^\text{43}\) the darkness was unable to overcome the light. The aorist tense of the verb "overcame" is unexpected; we might have anticipated a present to give a timeless truth: "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness does not overcome it."\(^\text{44}\) The most natural way of taking the aorist, however, is as referring to a single occasion. It may be that we are to understand it of creation, the subject of the present passage, for there the light triumphed and not the darkness (and its attendant chaos). Some authors discern a reference to the fall (Gen. 3). Perhaps more likely is a reference to Calvary (so Murray). There the light and the darkness came into bitter and decisive conflict and the darkness could not prevail. Probably in his usual manner John is using an expression that should be taken as true on more than one level.\(^\text{45}\)

We have already noticed that the opposition of light and darkness is one of the great themes that John shares with Qumran. Like John the men of the desert community viewed the two as locked in mortal struggle. But we should not overlook the fact that for them there is no equivalent of John's past tense here. They looked and longed for the ultimate triumph of light. But they could not rest in a victory won as John could.\(^\text{46}\)

C. THE WORD AND JOHN THE BAPTIST (1:6-8)
There came a man, who was sent from God; his name was John. He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all men might believe. He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.

It is curious at first sight that there should be this mention of John the Baptist in the Prologue. There is no difficulty about his appearing in the narrative sections, but it is certainly perplexing to find him in this brief introduction to the Gospel as a whole. It may be that the answer is to be found in the prominence accorded the Baptist by some of his followers. While the Gospels depict him as pointing people to Christ and as regarding his whole mission as that of a forerunner, it seems that some of his followers did not accept this assessment of their leader. From the beginning some wondered whether he was the Christ (Luke 3:15). And as time went by it seems that some of his followers preferred to keep themselves aloof from the Christian movement, regarding John as a more important figure than Jesus ("Just as a man, overcome at the sight of dawn, would not deign to look at the sun"). Some had baptized in John's name as far afield as Ephesus (Acts 19:3), and they may have gone further. The great Apollos is first introduced as one who "knew only the baptism of John" (Acts 18:25). Our author does not enter directly into controversy with such people, but he insists more than any of the other Evangelists on the subordinate place of the Baptist. One of the aims of this Gospel plainly was to show how clearly and consistently John had pointed people to Jesus. Apparently the movement associated with the Baptist's name was particularly strong in the region where this Gospel was written. If, as seems probable, the author of the Gospel came from the group originally centered on John, his interest in his former teacher would be natural. This interest would not be lessened by the fact that John's was the witness borne to Christ by the last of the prophets of the old covenant.

6 The word rendered "came" is that translated "made" three times in verse 3. While in this verse there is no particular emphasis on the act of creation (we may well accept the translation "came"), yet the use of this word must be held to point a contrast between Jesus and John. Jesus "was" in the beginning; John "came into existence." The contrast is continued when John is described as "a man," for Jesus has already been spoken of as "the Word." But though John's place was subordinate, it was an important
one. While the Evangelist is concerned that John should not be accorded the place that belongs to Jesus he is also concerned that John's true greatness should be seen. John was "sent from God" (cf. v. 33; 3:28). His mission was not of human but of divine origin. This bold assertion at the very first mention of the Baptist is clear evidence that the Evangelist is not engaging in a campaign of denigration. He fully recognizes the greatness of the forerunner.

7 From the divine commission we come to the actual work of the Baptist. He came "as a witness" (better, "for witness"). Witness is one of the key concepts of this Gospel, and it is quite in accordance with this that right on the threshold John the Baptist is characterized in terms of witness. This is emphasized, first by drawing attention to the man ("this man," not simply "he," as NIV) and then by the twofold reference to witness ("witness" and "testify"); this Evangelist often emphasizes a concept by the simple device of repeating it. He speaks of John as a witness often and only. In the Synoptists John's preaching of repentance and his practice are noted. In this Gospel his one function is to bear witness to Jesus. We know him as "John the Baptist," but in this Gospel the references to his baptism are incidental. It is perhaps significant that there is no mention of his baptizing Jesus. But there is repeated reference to his witness; cf. 1:7, 8, 15, 19, 32, 34; 3:26 (cf. 3:28), 5:33. For this Evangelist John's witness is what matters. It was for witness that John came, and nothing else that he did can be compared in importance to this.

In this Gospel there are seven who bear witness to Jesus. Each of the three Persons of the Trinity does this —the Father (5:31-32, 34, 37; 8:18), Christ himself (8:14, 18; cf. 3:11, 32; 8:37), and the Spirit (15:26; cf. 16:14). The works of Jesus bear witness (5:36; 10:25; cf. 14:11; 15:24), as does sacred Scripture (5:39; cf. 5:45-46). A sixth witness is John the Baptist, while seventh is the variety of human witness consequent on the ministry of Jesus, that of the disciples (15:27; cf. 19:35; 21:24), the Samaritan woman (4:39), and the multitude (12:17). This emphasis on testimony should not be minimized. Testimony is a serious matter and the means of substantiating the truth of a matter; there is a legal air about it. It is clear that our author wants his readers to take what he writes as reliable. He is insistent that there is good evidence for the things he sets down. Witness establishes the truth.
It does more. It commits. If I take my stand in the witness box and testify that such-and-such is the truth of the matter, I am no longer neutral. I have committed myself. John lets us see that there are those like John the Baptist who have committed themselves by their witness to Christ. But he is also bold enough to think that God has committed himself. He has borne witness in a variety of ways but he has especially committed himself in Jesus, in all that the Son was and did. People who have borne their witness have committed themselves, and that is not to be overlooked. But the important thing is the witness of God.55

John's work was "to testify concerning that light."56 This somewhat indefinite expression does not tell us what he said, nor how or when he said it. We might possibly understand "the light" to denote goodness in general were it not for the previous references to light (vv. 4-5), and for the subsequent avowal that John was not the light. This makes it certain that by "the light" the writer means Jesus. The verb "testify," incidentally, is in the aorist. The meaning is not that John continually witnessed (though that, too, was true), but that he accomplished a finished work. He bore his witness to the Word, and there was nothing more that he could do.

This bearing of witness was not an end in itself. Behind it was the purpose "that through him all men might believe." Grammatically "him" might refer either to "the light" or to the subject "he," but the sense of the passage requires the latter. People are said to believe "in" Christ, not "through" him. On the other hand, it was a great privilege for John to be the means of bringing people to the place of faith.57 "Believe" is not in the continuous tense, and this is perhaps significant. John came to bring people to decide, to make the definitive act of faith.

8 The greatness of the Baptist had, as we have seen, caused some of his followers to entertain exaggerated ideas about him; they appear to have held him to be the Messiah. But the Evangelist vigorously repudiates this. He58 "was not the light."59 Just as he brings out the true greatness of John, so he makes clear his limitations. He goes on to repeat the truth that John came to bear witness. That was the whole reason for his appearance. That was why he was "sent from God." Those who did not understand this were misinterpreting his whole mission. There is nothing in the Greek corresponding to "came." This lends a note of abruptness, even eagerness to the words. Taken with the strong adversative, "but,"60 it puts a little more
emphasis on the words that follow. The writer cannot get to the words about "witness" quickly enough. There was a singleness of purpose about the Baptist (and about the Evangelist's description of him).

D. THE WORD INCARNATE (1:9-14)

9 The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world? 10 He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. 11 He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. 12 Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God. 14 The Word became flesh and lived for a while among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

a. 9 Or This was the true light that gives light to every man who comes into the world
b. 13 Greek of bloods
c. 14 Or the Only Begotten

Attention is now fastened on the incarnation. Two points receive special emphasis: one is the astonishing fact that the Word of God, true God as he is, took upon him human nature, and the other is the even more astonishing fact that when he did this, people would have nothing to do with him. John is concerned that we should miss neither the good news of the incarnation of God, nor the tragedy of the human rejection of God.

9 The Greek of this verse is somewhat awkward, since the verb "was" appears to have no subject. NIV solves the problem by linking "was" with the participle "coming" later in the sentence, but there is a strong objection in that the two constituent parts of the verb "was coming" would then be separated by a relative clause, a difficult if not impossible construction. It is better to understand the subject from the preceding verses: "(That light) was the true light. ..." But there is another problem, namely whether we should take "coming into the world" with "man" or with "light." In the
former case the meaning might be "every man at the time of his birth." Or we could take the whole expression "every man that comes into the world" to mean simply "all men" (the rabbis used the expression with just this meaning). But the sense of the whole passage is against such meanings. And they contradict John's practice. John does not normally speak of people in general as "coming into the world." This is a description he reserves for Christ. Moreover, this verse stands at the head of a section dealing with the incarnation, where a statement about the incarnation rather than one about people seems required. I take the words accordingly to apply to "the light."

The awkwardness of the verse appears to arise from the fact that John is saying two things and has run them together: "He was the true light," and further, he was "coming into the world." Fortunately our uncertainty about the construction does not extend to the sense. The Evangelist is speaking about the Word as "the true light," and going on from that, about the illumination he gives to people. Other lights "were flickers of the truth; some were faint glimpses of reality; some were will o' the wisps which men followed, and which led men out into the dark and left them there" (Barclay). But Christ is the genuine light. He is the light that brings real illumination. There is nothing unreal or shadowy about the light that is Christ.

His giving light "to every man" is not closely defined. There is a sense in which the Word gives light only to those who believe, for those who do not believe in him are yet in darkness (3:19-20). But, as James tells us, "Every good and perfect gift is from above" (Jas. 1:17). There is a general illumination of the whole race, and it is the common teaching of the New Testament writers that God has revealed something of himself to all people (Rom. 1:20), sufficient at least for them to be blameworthy when they take the wrong way instead of the right way. John attributes this general illumination to the activity of the Word. For "world" see Additional Note B, pp. 111-13.

10 John has a way of emphasizing a word by the simplest of all devices, repetition. He does this here. Three times he repeats the word "world," and each time it comes first in its clause. Clearly John wishes to fasten attention on it. He says three things. First, the Word (or the light) was "in the world." The verb conveys the thought of continuity. He did not simply pay a fleeting visit, but was there continuously. The second point is the reminder that the world owes its very existence to the Word. "The world
was made through him" employs the same vocabulary and construction as the similar words in verse 3 (where see note). The third point deals with the rejection of the Word by the world, and this rejection is heightened by the way John leads up to it. The Word was in the world continuously, the world that he had made, and yet the world did not know him.\(^{(70)}\) There is a subtle shift of meaning in the word "world." On the first two occasions it refers to the earth with all that is in it (including, of course, the human race). But on this third occasion it signifies people, more particularly those who came into contact with Jesus of Nazareth. See further Additional Note B, pp. 111-13.

"Did not recognize\(^{(71)}\) him" refers to more than intellectual knowledge. There is also the thought of the failure to know intimately, to know and love as a friend, to be in right relation. The tense is aorist, which perhaps indicates a single action; the world missed its great opportunity. It did not come to know the Word when the Word was in its very midst. The world did not know him. The world never does. The world's characteristic reaction to the Word is one of indifference.

11 With some vivid touches John highlights the tragedy of the rejection.\(^{(72)}\) We might translate the opening words, "he came home."\(^{(73)}\) It is the exact expression used of the beloved disciple when, in response to Jesus' word from the cross, he took Mary "into his home" (19:27; cf. 16:32). When the Word came to this world he did not come as an alien. He came home. Moreover, he came to Israel. Had he come to some other nation it would have been bad enough, but Israel was peculiarly God's own people. The Word did not go where he could not have expected to be known. He came home, where the people should have known him.

And it was the home folk, "his own,"\(^{(74)}\) who "did not receive him." This brings the rejectors into special relation with the Rejected. They should have known better. We must see here a reference to the Jewish nation. They had enjoyed many advantages, more particularly the revelation made known to them "at many times and in various ways" (Heb. 1:1). This time John does not say that they did not know him, but that they did not receive him. The verb may be used of taking a person to oneself in intimate relationship. It is used of Joseph taking Mary as his wife (Matt. 1:20, 24) and of Christ taking believers to himself in heaven (14:3). This was the kind of welcome that his own people ought to have given him when he went home. But they "did not receive him." The aorist tense here, as in the
previous verse, points to the decisive action of rejection. It fastens our attention on the crisis rather than on the continuing result.

In passing we may notice that this is an excellent example of John's emphasis on the fact of the incarnation. He is not content with a series of "mythological" antagonisms, with setting "light" over against "darkness," and the rest. He writes in personal terms and in concrete terms.

12 John does not wish to leave the impression (which might be gained from v. 11) that nobody responded to the Word. The bulk of the people did not respond, but some did, and John now turns his attention to them. There is an unusual grammatical construction in the Greek where "all who received him" does not fit smoothly into the sentence. This has the effect of setting them over against the rejectors of the last two verses and of putting a certain emphasis on those who received the Word. To them the Word gave "the right" or "the authority" to become God's children. There are three important words here. (1) "Gave." The end of the story is not the tragedy of rejection, but the grace of acceptance. There were people to whom he gave the gift that they should receive the Word and become children of God. (2) "The right." John does not speak of power, as in the sense of power over sin (though in fact they receive that, too). His thought is that of status. They have received full authority to this exalted title. He does not say "to be" but "to become." Not only is there a status, but there is a change of status. It is what Jesus speaks of as passing from death to life (5:24). (3) "Children." John refers to them as "children" rather than as "sons" of God. The term he uses is one that draws attention to community of nature (cf. 2 Pet. 1:4, "so that... you may participate in the divine nature") rather than one that would stress the rights and privileges of sonship. While the New Testament portrays God as the Father of all, paradoxically it does not speak of all as sons of God. God's attitude to all people is that of a Father. All are his sons in the sense that he made them and that he provides for them. But people are his sons in the full sense only as they respond to what he does for them in Christ. When they receive the Word they are born again (ch. 3) into the heavenly family. It is only in this way that they are really God's "children."

The "children," then, are those who believe.

In the opening part of the verse John has spoken of receiving him, now as believing on his name. These are different ways of looking at the same spiritual change wherein
one ceases to rely on one's own merits and achievements and comes to trust in Christ instead. Like the opening words of the verse, these are linked with the construction rather loosely. The effect is to give them a certain emphasis. That faith is the way is important. John does not wish his readers to miss it. Notice that they are to believe "in his name." The "name" meant much more to people of antiquity than it does to us. For us it is a mere appellative, a convenient label whereby we distinguish one person from another. We ask "What's in a name?" and answer (with Shakespeare) "that which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet." The name for us is a matter of indifference. Not so in the ancient world. There it stood for the whole personality. When, for example, the Psalmist spoke of loving the name of God (Ps. 5:11), or when he prayed, "may the name of the God of Jacob protect you" (Ps. 20:1), he did not have in mind simply the uttering of the name. He was speaking of all that "God" means. The name in some way expressed the whole person.\(^82\) To believe "in the name" of the Word, then, means to trust the person of the Word. It is to believe in him as he is.\(^83\) It is to believe that God is the God revealed in the Word and to put our trust in that God. This is more than simple credence. It is not believing that what he says is true, but trusting him as a person. It is believing "in" or "on" him. The Greek expression used here is found in the papyri in connection with accounts and the like, and it seems to be linked with the idea of possession.\(^84\) If the New Testament retains anything of this usage the expression will convey the additional thought that when we believe we yield ourselves up to be possessed by him in whom we believe.

13 John moves on to the way people are born into the heavenly family. Among the Latin MSS there is support for reading the singular "who was born," which takes the passage to refer to the Virgin Birth.\(^85\) All the Greek MSS and the great majority of versions and citations read the plural, and this attestation is so overwhelming that there is no doubt that it must be accepted. Yet it is not at all unlikely that John of set purpose uses words that will conjure up associations of the Virgin Birth, as Temple and Hoskyns (to name no others) hold. He will thus remind his readers that their spiritual existence depends on what Christ has done for them.

The origin of the "children of God" is described three times negatively and once positively. They are born "not of natural descent," where the Greek means "not of bloods." The plural is curious, as is the use of "blood" at all in this connection. But there was an idea in antiquity that birth took
place as the result of the action of blood. Thus in the *Wisdom of Solomon* we read, "in the womb of a mother I was molded into flesh, within the period of ten months, compacted with blood, from the seed of a man and the pleasure of marriage" (Wis. 7:1-2). The plural here may point to the action of both parents, or it may refer to blood as made up of many drops. "Nor of human decision," more literally, "Nor of the will of the flesh," points to sexual desire, though we should bear in mind that John does not use the term "flesh" with the evil sense it commonly has in Paul. For him it denotes our bodily nature in its weakness rather than in its sinfulness. "The will of the flesh" refers to the desire that arises out of the human bodily constitution. "A husband's will" may have much the same sense, or it may be taken more generally with a meaning like "nor of any human volition whatever." The piling up of these expressions is to be understood in the light of Jewish pride of race. The Jews held that because of the "Fathers," that is their great ancestors, God would be favorable to them. John emphatically repudiates any such idea. Nothing human, however great or excellent, can bring about the birth of which he speaks.

Over against this John sets the way people are born into the heavenly family. The new birth is always sheer miracle. All human initiative is ruled out. People are born "of God"; they can be born into the heavenly family in no other way. John uses bold imagery here, for his word "are born" is the verb commonly used of the male parent in begetting children (see further on 3:3).

14 Now comes the most concise statement of the incarnation. "The Word" (see on v. 1 and Additional Note A, pp. 102-11) refers to him who is nothing less than God. "Became" is in the aorist tense, and indicates action at a point of time. "Flesh" is a strong, almost crude way of referring to human nature (cf. its use in Rom. 1:3; 8:3; 1 Tim. 3:16; 1 John 4:2; *NIV* tends to paraphrase). John does not say, "the Word became man," nor "the Word took a body." He chooses that form of expression which puts what he wants to say most bluntly. It seems probable that he was confronted by opponents of a docetic type, people who were ready to think of Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ of God but who denied the reality of his humanity. They thought of him as only appearing to live a human life. Since God could not, on their premises, defile himself by real contact with humankind, the whole life of Jesus must be appearance only, John's strong term leaves
no room for such fancies. He is clear on the deity of the Word. But he is just as clear on the genuineness of his humanity.  

Notice that this is the first time that John indicates that the Word and Jesus are to be taken as the same. Up to this point it would have been quite possible for the reader to take "the Word" to refer to some supreme cosmic principle or the like. But in one short, shattering expression John unveils the great idea at the heart of Christianity — that the very Word of God took flesh for our salvation.

The Word "lived for a while among us." Properly the verb signifies "to pitch one's tent;" it may thus denote a temporary visit (Moffatt, "tarried among us"). But this cannot be insisted upon, and any exegesis that deduces a limited incarnation from the fact that the Word "tabernacled" among us is in error. The term had come to be used in a conventional fashion of settling down permanently in a place (e.g., Rev. 12:12; there can be no more permanent dwelling than in heaven!). But in Jewish ears the word might arouse other associations. The place of worship during the wanderings of Israel in the wilderness, the place where God had vouchsafed his presence, was "the Tabernacle," and that noun corresponds to the verb used here. That John wants us to recall God's presence in the tabernacle in the wilderness seems clear from the immediate reference to "glory," for glory was associated with the tabernacle. When, for example, it was first set up, "the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle" (Exod. 40:34). It is possible that we should see other symbolism here also. There seems to be no doubt but that John saw Jesus as a new and greater Moses, and a number of students have seen evidence for this here.  

It is possible that the Sinai theophany or some other Old Testament incident may be in mind. But certainly the glory associated with the tabernacle is part of John's meaning. The glory resulting from the immediate presence of the Lord is referred to quite often in Jewish writings. It came to be linked with the Shekinah, a word that means "dwelling" and is used of God's dwelling among his people (in the Targums this term was sometimes substituted for the divine name). There were various ways in which the Jews used the term, and it is likely that John has more than one of them in mind. As A. M. Ramsey says, "We are reminded both of the tabernacle in the wilderness, and of the prophetic imagery of Yahweh tabernacling in the midst of His people, and of the Shekinah which He causes to dwell among them. . . . The place of His dwelling is the flesh of Jesus."
saying, "All the ways of tabernacling of God in Israel had been transitory or incomplete; all are fulfilled and superseded by the Word-made-flesh and dwelling among us." That is the great point. What had been hinted at and even realized in a dim, imperfect fashion earlier was perfectly fulfilled in the Word made flesh.

That John had in mind the Shekinah and the glory that was associated with it seems further indicated by the express statement that the glory was "the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father." The verb "beheld" is invariably used in John (as, for that matter, in the whole New Testament) of seeing with the bodily eye. It is not used of visions. John is speaking of that glory which was seen in the literal, physical Jesus of Nazareth. Since he came in lowliness we have an example of the paradox that John uses so forcefully later in the Gospel, that true glory is to be seen, not in outward splendor, but in the lowliness with which the Son of God lived among us and suffered for us. John holds, it is true, that the miracles showed the true glory (2:11; 11:4, 40). But in a deeper sense it is the cross of shame that manifests the true glory (12:23-24; 13:31). The repetition of the word "glory" emphasizes its reality. The true glory was there, in the earthly life of the Word. And it was seen.

We should not read too much into "only begotten" (see mg.) To English ears this sounds like a metaphysical relationship, but the Greek term means no more than "only," "unique." It is used, for example, of the widow of Nain's "only" son (Luke 7:12; cf. also Luke 9:38). It is used also of Jairus's "only" daughter (Luke 8:42). Perhaps even more instructive is the use of the term with reference to Isaac (Heb. 11:17), for Isaac was not Abraham's only son. But he was "unique." He was the only son given to Abraham by God's promise. Used here, though the word does not necessarily denote a metaphysical relationship, it does at the least show that Jesus is God's Son in a unique way. No other is or can be the Son of God as he is. The unique character of the relationship between the Father and the Son is one of the great themes of this Gospel. What John here briefly indicates in one word he subsequently develops powerfully. From this point on, as R. H. Lightfoot notes, "St. John leaves behind him the use of the word Logos, in order henceforth, throughout the book, to use not only the historical name 'Jesus', but also the more personal terms of 'Father' and 'Son'."

There is a small problem, that of knowing with what we should connect the expression "full of grace and truth." ARV puts "and we beheld ... the
Father" in parentheses and takes it with "the Word"; RSV with "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth" makes sure of the same interpretation. REB reads "we saw his glory, such glory as befits the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth," which seems to attach it to "glory," a view found also in NRSV, "the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth." Many of the early Fathers took this view, as do some modern commentators (e.g., MacGregor). Another view is that the expression qualifies "the only begotten." There is probably most to be said for the first view, but in any case it is a problem of Greek grammar rather than of meaning, for on any showing it is the incarnate Word who is full of grace and truth.

"Grace" is one of the great Christian words, and it is a minor mystery that John uses it three times in his Prologue and not again throughout his Gospel. The word basically means "that which causes joy," and so means "winsomeness." It comes to signify "goodwill," "kindness," and the like, often with the notion that the favor shown is undeserved. In the Christian understanding of things grace is especially seen in God's provision for our spiritual need by sending his Son to be our Savior. From this we get the thought of the good gifts that God bestows on those who are saved, and finally that of the attitude of thankfulness that people ought to have toward God for all his goodness to them. Nowhere do we see more clearly what the grace of God means than in the Word made flesh.

With this John links "truth." This is another important Johannine word. It is found twenty-five times in this Gospel, so that it is clearly a topic in which John is deeply interested. We usually understand truth simply as the opposite of falsehood, and John may use the term in much this way (e.g., 8:45). But for him the term has a much wider meaning. Like "life" and "light," with which we were dealing earlier, truth is closely linked with Jesus. He could even say, "I am . . . the truth" (14:6). For the richness of this Johannine concept see Additional Note D (pp. 259-62). It is plain that for John truth is many-sided and many-splendored. When he speaks of the incarnate Word as full of grace and truth he is pointing us to the fact that truth and the complete reliability of God are bound up with one another. Truth as he sees it is not basically something that can be known apart from God. The Word is the revelation of truth as well as of grace. Grace taken by itself may have given people an unbalanced picture. Not only is God the
God of grace. He is that, but he is also the God who demands of his people "truth in the inner parts" (Ps. 51:6). They must "do" the truth (3:21).105

E. THE WORD'S SURPASSING EXCELLENCE (1:15-18)

15 John testifies concerning him. He cries out, saying, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.' "16 From the fullness of his grace we have all received one blessing after another. 17 For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. 18 No one has ever seen God, but God the only Son, who is at the Father's side, has made him known.

a. 18 Or but God the only begotten
b. 18 Some manuscripts but the only Son (or but the only begotten Son)

The Prologue concludes with a little section underlining the uniqueness of Christ. First we are reminded of his superiority to the Baptist, then of the great truth that he supplies all the need of his people. He is shown to surpass Moses by supplying grace and truth instead of the Law. The Prologue concludes with the point that he is the one revealer of the God whom no human eye has seen.

15 The use of the present tense indicates the continuance of the witness of John: the Evangelist still hears his voice! The report of John's words is not without its difficulties. We would have expected "This is he" (as in v. 30, and as Rieu actually renders here). The use of "was" may indicate that the Baptist had spoken of Jesus before and was now pointing back to that occasion. More probably it is a way of referring to the continuing existence of the Word. Throughout the Prologue the present tense is never used of the Word, with but one exception, "shines" in verse 5. The continuous imperfect is used of him again and again (vv. 1, 2, 4, 9, 10), a way of speaking that puts some stress on his continuing existence.

In the second half of the verse there is a change in the sphere of reference of the prepositions from that of time to that of importance. "He who comes after me" refers to the fact that John's ministry preceded that of
Jesus in point of time. "Has surpassed me" indicates that notwithstanding this, Jesus' ministry was first in point of importance. This was a noteworthy statement, for in antiquity it was widely held that chronological priority meant superiority. People were humble about their own generation and really thought that their fathers were wiser than they — incredible as this may sound to our generation! They really believed in "the good old days." But John indicates a reversal in the case of the Baptist and Jesus. Till Jesus came John the Baptist occupied the center of the stage, but he who was later in time "has surpassed" his forerunner. We should probably think of a reversion to priority in time in the expression at the end of the verse. Though Jesus appeared on the earthly scene after John the Baptist he was really before him. As verse 1 has made clear, he preexisted from eternity. So he actually was before John even though his earthly birth was later. The Greek is, however, somewhat unusual, and literally means "first of me." Some scholars take "first" to mean not "first in time," "before," but "first in importance," which would give a meaning like "he was my Chief." This, however, seems to be an unnatural meaning for the expression. Most authors agree that it should be taken to refer to time: "He existed before me." But it is an unusual and emphatic expression. As Westcott points out, it denotes not merely relative priority but absolute priority. The preexistence of Jesus shows his superiority (cf. Moffatt, "my successor has taken precedence of me, for he preceded me").

Verse 15 shows that John thought of Jesus as far surpassing him. The point of the "for" that links that verse and this is perhaps that Christians in general can support this verdict, "for" they have experienced the good gifts that he gives. "Fullness" will have here the active meaning, "that which fills." Christ is the source of all our blessings. There is a hint at the infinite extent of his resources, for "all" receive from him. We might have thought that the receiving of Christ's fullness would be described as continuous. But John uses the same verb and the same tense as he has used of the single act of receiving Christ in verse 12. He prefers to concentrate on our becoming participators in the fullness when we first received Christ. "Grace for grace" (NIV paraphrases) is an unusual expression. Literally it means "grace instead of grace." Clearly John intends to put some emphasis on the thought of grace. Probably also he means that as one piece
of divine grace (so to speak) recedes it is replaced by another. God's grace to his people is continuous and is never exhausted. Grace knows no interruption and no limit. In contrast with the Law grace stresses the dynamic character of the Christian life. Law can be mastered. A person may acquire merit by conforming to the Law. Anyone may know the precise requirements the Law demands. But grace is always an adventure. No one can say where grace will lead, what blessing it will bring, or what challenge it will make. Grace means an ever deepening experience of the presence and the blessing of God.

17 "The law" strictly stands for the first five books of the Old Testament. These books were sacred Scripture par excellence to the Jews of that day (and for that matter, of this). But because they were so eminent the title came to be used simply to mean Scripture, that is the entire Old Testament. From that it could mean the whole of Judaism considered as a system based on Scripture. In this verse there is probably a mingling of the first and last meanings. The Jews thought of Moses as the author of the first five books of the Bible, but not of the whole of the Old Testament, so the second meaning is excluded. But John is not concentrating on the first five books of the Bible; he is contrasting the old with the new, Judaism with Christianity. All that Moses could produce was "law." And he did not even originate that, for it was "given through" him; it came from God. Over against the idea of law is that of "grace and truth" (see on v. 14). A good deal of Jewish thought regards these two divine attributes as revealed through Moses (see SBk on v. 14). John may well be claiming accordingly that God's revelation of these attributes was wrongly ascribed to Moses. They were not revealed through him, but they came through Jesus. The association of truth with the gospel revelation in Jesus Christ is clear in this verse, for in its more usual sense truth certainly came by Moses. But John's concern is with the whole way of salvation by grace as it was revealed and established in the ministry of Christ. This was God's way, and his more excellent way at that. Since it "came" through Christ it points to his surpassing excellence. The verb is somewhat curious, and not what we would have expected. It associates grace and truth more closely with Christ than the law with Moses, though the retention of the preposition "through" ensures that the divine origin is not overlooked. This is John's first use of the human name Jesus (though the idea of the Word made flesh came earlier). He is fond of this name, using it 237 times in all (Matthew
has it 150 times, Mark 81 times, and Luke 89 times). This is more than a quarter of the total New Testament occurrences of the word (905 times). But it is otherwise with the compound title Jesus Christ, found elsewhere in this Gospel only in 17:3 (though cf. 20:31). John uses the term "Christ," however, more often than the other Evangelists (19 times; Matthew has it 17 times, Mark 7 times, and Luke 12 times). This will accord with his aim of writing so that people may believe that Jesus is the Christ (20:31). This title depicts him as the Messiah of Israel (see on v. 20). There is point in using the full name Jesus Christ with all solemnity in this passage where his superiority to Moses is being brought out. The contrast of the Christian way with the Jewish and the function of Moses as subordinate to and pointing forward to the Christ is a recurring theme in this Gospel (see 5:39, 46; 6:32; 8:32ff.; 9:28ff.). We have already seen that John depicts Jesus as a second Moses. T. F. Glasson has written a book to show that the contrast of Moses and Christ is one of John's major themes.122

18 At first sight this verse may seem to be very loosely connected with the preceding if in fact it is connected at all. But in reality it forms the climax to the entire Prologue, stressing as it does that Christ is in the closest possible relationship to the Father. There is also the thought that, though Moses was highly esteemed by all Jews, yet in the system he inaugurated nobody could "see" God. By contrast, Jesus Christ has revealed him.

The emphatic declaration, "No one has ever seen God" (notice that the word "God" is in an emphatic position) is in line with the words of the Lord, "no one may see me and live" (Exod. 33:20; cf. John 5:37; 6:46). Yet there are other passages that explicitly affirm that some people have seen God (e.g., Exod. 24:9-11). What then does John mean? Surely that in his essential being God has never yet been seen by people. Some had had their visions of God, but these were all partial. The theophanies of the Old Testament did not and could not reveal God's essential being. But Christ has now made such a revelation. As Calvin puts it, "When he says that none has seen God, it is not to be understood of the outward seeing of the physical eye. He means generally that, since God dwells in inaccessible light, He cannot be known except in Christ, His lively image."

Instead of "God the only Son" some very good manuscripts read "God the only begotten" (mg.)125 The second reading seems to have both better attestation and transcriptional probability on its side. It is objected that "only begotten God" is not a usual Johannine expression, and that the
following mention of "Father" makes "Son" more natural. But these very reasons would incline scribes to alter "God" to "Son," all the more so since "only begotten God" is a startling expression. It is not easy to understand what would cause anyone who had "Son" before him to alter this to "God." It seems that we should accept as the correct reading "only begotten God." But in any case the sense is scarcely affected. Christ is elsewhere called both "Son" and "God," so there is no point of doctrine involved. For "only begotten" see on verse 14. It is possible that we should punctuate with a comma after "begot-ten," thus giving three titles of Christ: "Only begotten, God, he who is in the bosom of the Father." This final expression brings out the closeness of the Father and the Son. It also carries overtones of affection (cf. our "the wife of his bosom"). The copula "is" expresses a continuing union. The only begotten is continually in the bosom of the Father. When the Word became flesh his cosmic activities did not remain in abeyance until the end of his earthly life. There are mysteries here that we cannot plumb, but we must surely hold that the incarnation meant the adding of something to what the Word was doing, rather than the cessation of most of his activities. The verb "declared" (here only in John) is used of setting forth a narrative (cf. Luke 24:35, where it is rendered "told"). It indicates that Jesus has now given a full account of the Father. This does not mean that there is nothing more to be learned of him. The term is not precise enough for that. But it does point to the adequacy of the revelation made in Christ. We may have confidence that God is as Christ revealed him. The word is used in the mystery religions and elsewhere as a technical expression for the revelation of divine secrets. Often it is used of the gods themselves making a disclosure. Such associations fitted the word to be used of a full and authoritative revelation of the divine Being. Such a revelation could, of course, be made only by One uniquely qualified in the manner made clear by the references to him in the earlier part of the verse.

ADDITIONAL NOTE A: THE LOGOS (THE WORD)

The term Logos was in frequent use among the Greeks. The word might be thought of as remaining within a person, when it denoted thought or reason. Or it might refer to the word going forth from the person, when it
denotes the expression of the person's thought, that is speech. The Logos, as a philosophical term, depended on the former use. It denoted something like the world-soul, the soul of the universe. It was an all-pervading principle, the rational principle of the universe. It was a creative energy. In one sense all things came from it, in another people derived their wisdom from it. The concept is as old as Heraclitus (sixth century B.C.). This philosopher declared that the Logos "is always existent," and again that "all things happen through this Logos." He thought of the ultimate reality sometimes as Fire, some-times as God, sometimes as Logos. "In Heraclitus the three conceptions, Logos, Fire, and God, are fundamentally the same. Regarded as the Logos, God is the omnipresent Wisdom by which all things are steered." Heraclitus found people conceiving of the universe in physical terms. He introduced the idea of the Logos to account for the order he saw in the kosmos. It was the stabilizing principle of the universe.

Later thinkers for the most part failed to follow this thought up. For example, though Plato occasionally mentions the Logos, he is more concerned with his distinction between this material world and the real, heavenly world of "ideas." It was the Stoics who really developed the concept of the Logos. They abandoned Plato's heavenly archetypes in favor of the thought (more akin to Heraclitus) that the universe is pervaded by the Logos, the eternal Reason. The term Logos gave expression to their deep conviction of the rationality of the universe. They did not think of the Logos as personal, so they did not understand it as we would God. For them it was essentially a principle or force. But the important thing is that if it was a principle it was the supreme principle of the universe. It was the force that originated and permeated and directed all things.

When John used the term Logos, then, he used a term that would be widely recognized among the Greeks. The average person would not know its precise significance to the philosophers (any more than his modern counter-part knows what the scientist understands by, say, "nuclear fission"). But he would know that it meant something important. John could scarcely have used the Greek term without arousing in the minds of those who used the Greek language thoughts of something supremely great in the universe. But, though he would not have been unmindful of the associations aroused by the term, his essential thought does not derive from the Greek background. His Gospel shows little trace of acquaintance with Greek
philosophy and less of dependence on it. And the really important thing is that John in his use of Logos is cutting clean across one of the fundamental Greek ideas. The Greeks thought of the gods as detached from the world, as regarding its struggles and heartaches and joys and fears with serene divine lack of feeling. John's idea of the Logos conveys exactly the opposite idea. John's Logos does not show us a God who is serenely detached, but a God who is passionately involved. The Logos speaks of God's coming where we are, taking our nature upon himself, entering the world's struggle, and out of this agony winning our salvation.

More important for our understanding of this Gospel in general and of its use of this term in particular is its Jewish background. The opening words, "In the beginning," compel a comparison with Genesis 1:1, while "the Word" irresistibly turns our attention to the repeated "and God said" of the opening chapter of the Bible. The Word is God's creative Word (v. 3). The atmosphere is unmistakably Hebraic.

A feature of Old Testament teaching that was receiving attention in the first century was its use of concepts like "the Word," and "Wisdom." While nothing was said to compromise the basic monotheism of Judaism, attention was increasingly directed to passages where such entities are given an almost independent existence. Thus throughout the Old Testament the Word of the Lord is thought of as an effective agent for accomplishing the divine will. "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made" (Ps. 33:6). When God speaks he does something. His word is a divine action. God's revelatory act is often described by saying that the word of the Lord "came" to the prophet. In keeping with this a prophet may ascribe a more or less independent existence to the Word, as when he reports God as saying, "so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it" (Isa. 55:11). And in Psalm 29 "the voice" of the Lord is regarded in much the same way.

There are also semipersonalizations of Wisdom or the Law. Thus Wisdom can be spoken of very much like a divine person: "The Lord possessed me at the beginning of his work, before his deeds of old; I was appointed from eternity, from the beginning, before the world began. ... I was there when he set the heavens in place. . . . Then I was the craftsman at his side. I was filled with delight day after day, rejoicing always in his presence, rejoicing in his whole world and delighting in mankind" (Prov.
Parallelism can show that "the law" and "the word" can mean very much the same thing (Isa. 2:3; Mic. 4:2). In such passages "Wisdom" or "the Law" or "the Word" is in some sense divine, yet not quite the same as God.\textsuperscript{143}

There is another use of some importance, namely that in the Targums. When Hebrew ceased to be a spoken language Scripture was still read in that language in the services in the synagogue. As a concession to the weakness of the flesh there arose the custom of giving a running translation, which was called a Targum. At first the Targums were oral only, but in later times they were written down. Those that have survived enable us to see that they were somewhat free paraphrases rather than exact translations. The Targumists tried to give the sense of the passage being read, and not simply to translate mechanically. These Targums were produced at a time when, from motives of reverence and from a fear of breaking the third commandment, Jews had ceased to pronounce the divine name. When they came to this name in the original the readers and translators substituted some other expression they thought more reverent, such as "the Holy One" or "the Name." Sometimes they said, "the Word (\textit{Memra})."\textsuperscript{144} For example, where our Bible says, "Then Moses led the people out of the camp to meet with God" (Exod. 19:17), the Targum reads "to meet the Word of God." This kind of thing is quite common. Barclay says that in the Targum of Jonathan\textsuperscript{145} alone the expression is used in this way about 320 times. It is often said that this Jewish use is not relevant because it does not denote a being in any way distinct from God. It is just a reverent way of referring to God himself.\textsuperscript{146} But this is hardly the point. The point is that wherever people were familiar with the Targums they were familiar with "the Word" as a designation of the divine.\textsuperscript{147} The Johannine use is not that of the Targums, but to those familiar with the Targums it must necessarily arouse these associations.

In the period between the two Testaments there was a marked extension of the usages we have been discussing. There are some striking statements about Wisdom.\textsuperscript{148} Thus Wisdom is reported as saying: "I came forth from the mouth of the Most High, and covered the earth like a mist. I dwelt in high places, and my throne was in a pillar of cloud. Alone I have made the circuit, of the vault of heaven and have walked in the depths of the abyss" (Sir. 24:3-5). Clearly Wisdom stands in close relationship to God, though the writer is careful to speak of her as a created being: "From eternity, in the
beginning, he created me" (Sir. 24:9). In the *Wisdom of Solomon* we find that Wisdom "glorifies her noble birth by living with God" (Wis. 8:3), and that she "is an initiate in the knowledge of God, and an associate in his works" (Wis. 8:4). The writer can pray, "O God of my fathers, and Lord of mercy, who hast made all things by thy word, and by thy wisdom hast formed man" (Wis. 9:1-2, a passage that incidentally shows that the author made little distinction between Wisdom and the Word). There is an even bolder personification of the Word: "For while gentle silence enveloped all things, and night in its swift course was now half gone, thy all-powerful word leaped from heaven, from the royal throne ... a stern warrior . . . and touched heaven while standing on the earth" (Wis. 18:14-16). While it would be too much to say that these writers thought of Wisdom or the Word as having any distinct existence of their own, yet their bold imagery was certainly preparing the way for John's idea of the *Logos*.

It is difficult to know whether Philo should be thought of as a Jewish or Greek thinker. The great Alexandrian Jew really effected a synthesis of Greek philosophy and Old Testament thought. He spoke much about the Word, and his various sayings do not readily harmonize. Sometimes he speaks of the *Logos* as a "second God," sometimes as the one God in action (is it too much to see in this his Greek philosophy and his Hebrew religion respectively?). If we might venture on a generalization, he saw the *Logos* as a philosophically respectable bridge between a transcendent God and this material universe. He had no intention of abandoning the Old Testament. But he accepted the philosophical ideas of the day, and interpreted the Old Testament in terms of those ideas. Thus his view of the *Logos* is rather that of current philosophy, somewhat modified, than the religious conception of the Old Testament.

C. H. Dodd takes very seriously the idea that the Philonic understanding of the *Logos* is part of the background of the Johannine Prologue. He thinks that Philo helps us to understand expressions very difficult to explain in terms of a merely Jewish background, for example, "the Word was God." His conclusion is that the opening words of the Prologue "are clearly intelligible only when we admit that λόγος, though it carries with it the associations of the Old Testament Word of the Lord, has also a meaning similar to that which it bears in Stoicism as modified by Philo, and parallel to the idea of Wisdom in other Jewish writers." This,
however, seems to assume that the whole of the Johannine concept of the
Word must be explicable in terms of some part of its background, be it
Jewish, Hellenistic, or whatever you will. This I would strongly contest.
John's thought is his own. He uses a term that would be full of meaning to
his readers whatever their background. But whatever their background they
would not find John's thought identical with their own. His idea of the
*Logos* is essentially new.

We may sum up this part of the discussion in the words of William
Temple. The *Logos*, he says, "alike for Jew and Gentile represents the ruling
fact of the universe, and represents that fact as the self-expression of God.
The Jew will remember that 'by the Word of the Lord were the heavens
made'; the Greek will think of the rational principle of which all natural
laws are particular expressions. Both will agree that this Logos is the
starting-point of all things." John was using a term that, with various
shades of meaning, was in common use everywhere. He could count on all
his readers catching his essential meaning.

Such, then, is the background to John's thought. But it is not his
thought itself. He had a richer, deeper, fuller idea than that of any of his
predecessors. For him the Word is not a principle but a living Being and the
source of life; not a personification but a Person, and that Person
divine. The Word is nothing less than God. John gave full expression to
this, but it is important to notice that this was but the culmination of a
tendency inherent in Christianity from the first. The "word" stands for
the whole Christian gospel in such passages as Mark 2:2 (where it applies to
the preaching of Jesus) and Mark 8:32 (where it has special reference to the
death of the Son of man). Allan D. Galloway can regard *Logos* as
referring to the work of Christ rather than to his Person. That is to say, it
is a term that gathers up into itself the universal saving significance of
Christ. He, the Word, is no tribal savior, but the one hope of all the human
race. The Word and the gospel are intimately connected. When Luke speaks
of those who were "eyewitnesses and servants of the word" (Luke 1:2), it is
difficult to escape the impression that by "the word" he means more than
teaching. He is thinking of the intimate relationship between Christ and the
gospel, and is coming very close to calling Jesus "the Word." Again, he
does not seem to make much distinction between preaching the word (Acts
8:4) and preaching Jesus (Acts 11:20). A number of times Paul speaks of
preaching Christ (1 Cor. 1:23; 2 Cor. 4:5; Gal. 3:1). He can explain "the word of God" as "the mystery," and this in turn as "Christ in you" (Col. 1:25-27). Though the step of calling Christ "the Word" is not often taken (but cf. 1 John 1:1; Rev. 19:13), it is clear that the way had been prepared.

There is a preparation also in the realm of ideas, for in some passages, though the terminology is different, Paul ascribes to Christ qualities and activities akin to those postulated of Wisdom in the Old Testament and elsewhere (see Phil. 2:5ff.; Col. 1:15ff.). The conclusion seems inescapable that, while John uses a term that was widely familiar and would convey a meaning to people of very diverse backgrounds, his thought is essentially Christian. When he speaks of Jesus as the Logos he does but put the coping stone on an edifice that was being erected throughout the New Testament.

After the Prologue John does not apply the specific term Logos to Jesus, but it should not be overlooked that he puts a great deal of stress on "the word(s)" of Jesus or of God. He makes it clear that Jesus' words are God's words (3:34; 14:10, 24; 17:8, 14), which makes it very important to believe them (5:47). Indeed, to abide in Jesus' "word" is the same as to be his disciple (8:31). Jesus' words bring life (5:24; 6:68; 8:51), and in fact are life (6:63). They bring cleansing (15:3) and power in prayer (15:7). The reverse side of the coin is that the refusal to heed Jesus' word or words brings judgment (12:47-48). Those who refuse to hear belong to the devil (8:47; cf. 44). It is important to "keep" Jesus' word (14:23; 15:20; 17:6). There is a good deal more. It is quite plain that the use of Logos on the threshold of this Gospel is not a casual expression. It is meaningful, and leads us into an important concept for the understanding of the Gospel.

**ADDITIONAL NOTE B: THE WORLD**

The word χόσμος has a Johannine ring about it in the New Testament. Altogether it occurs 185 times, of which 78 are in this Gospel, 24 in the Johannine Epistles, and 3 in Revelation. It is not frequent in the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew 8 times, Mark 3 times, Luke 3 times); in the Pauline Epistles it occurs 47 times. It is thus a word of some importance for John and to a lesser extent for Paul, but it is not used much by other New Testament writers.
Basically the word denotes order and is used for "ornament," a use we may still see in the New Testament (1 Pet. 3:3; this use has given us our word "cosmetic"). The universe with all its harmonious relationships is the outstanding ornament, and the term is used for the universe at large. It is probably this use that we find in John 1:10, "the world was made through him" (cf. 1:3, "Through him all things were made"). When Christ is called "the light of the world" (8:12; 9:5) or when it is said that he came or was sent "into the world" (3:17; 11:27, etc.) the universe at large may be meant, though, of course, it is possible that it is this world that is in mind. For the human race this earth is the most significant part of the universe, so it is not surprising that the term came to be used for this world in which we live. We see this in such a passage as "In this world you will have trouble" (16:33).

It is a natural transition to using the word for the majority of people or a large number of people, for example, when the Pharisees said despairingly, "Look how the whole world has gone after him!" (12:19). But the majority has not usually been conspicuous for its zealous service of God. When Jesus came, the world at large opposed him, rejected him, and in the end crucified him. So it is not surprising that "the world" is used for people in opposition to Christ. H. Sasse can speak of the world as "the sum of the divine creation which has been shattered by the fall, which stands under the judgment of God, and in which Jesus Christ appears as the Redeemer." The world "is in some sense personified as the great opponent of the Redeemer in salvation history." It is this use of "the world" as hostile to Christ and all that he stands for which is the significantly new use the term acquires in the New Testament. It does not appear to have such a meaning in Greek writings at large; there it is rather something attractive, the order and the beauty of the universe. But for John and for Paul the shattering thing was that those who live in this beautiful and ordered universe acted in an ugly and unreasonable way when they came face to face with Christ. The world hates his followers, and he could say, "If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first" (15:18). Long before this he said to his brothers, "The world cannot hate you, but it hates me" (7:7). In line with this several passages speak of the evil one as "the prince of this world" or the like (12:31; 14:30; 16:11). The world rejoices when the disciples are lamenting (16:20). There is a blindness about the world. When the Word came into the world, the world
he had made, "the world did not recognize him" (1:10). Nor does it know the Father (17:25). Neither can it receive nor does it know the Spirit.\(^{173}\)

But John does not leave us with a picture of unremitting hostility between God and the world. It is true that the world is not interested in the things of God, but it is not true that God reciprocates. On the contrary, God loves the world (3:16). Christ speaks to the world the things he has heard from God (8:26). The whole work of salvation that God accomplishes in Christ is directed to the world. Thus he takes away the sin of the world (1:29). He is the Savior of the world (4:42). He gives life to the world (6:33). This is at cost for he gives his flesh for the life of the world (6:51). Christ came specifically to save the world, not to judge it (3:17; 12:47). His success is shown by the references to the overthrow of Satan, the prince of this world (12:31; 14:30; 15:11). The victory remains with Christ (16:33), but this does not alter the fact that the world basically opposed him. This will perhaps account for the fact that the term "world" does not appear, either in John or elsewhere in the New Testament, for the eschatological sphere of blessing. For that some other term is used.

The word thus has many shades of meaning. This diversity must be kept in mind in studying this Gospel, because the boundaries between the classifications are not hard-and-fast. John moves freely from one to another, or even uses the term in ways that may evoke more than one of its possible meanings.\(^{174}\)

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1. Morgan points out that we should not understand the term "Prologue" merely in the sense "Preface." "It is far more than a preface. In these eighteen verses we have an explanation of everything that follows from the nineteenth verse of chapter one, to the twenty-ninth verse of chapter twenty. All that follows is intended to prove the accuracy of the things declared in the first eighteen verses ... it is a summation; everything is found in those first eighteen verses." Similarly Godet sees it
as "the summary of the testimonies which Jesus bore to Himself in the course of His ministry ... it is
at once the most normal and the richest expression of the consciousness which Jesus had of His own
person" (I, p. 291). R. H. Lightfoot is emphatic: "These verses give the key to the understanding of
this gospel, and make clear how the evangelist wishes his readers to approach his presentation of the
Lord's work and Person."

2. Brown, for example, describes it as "An early Christian hymn, probably stemming from
Johannine circles, which has been adapted to serve as an overture to the Gospel narrative of the
career of the incarnate Word" (p. 1).


4. Schonfield, for example, maintains that "The Prologue consists of a hymn interspersed with
brief remarks. The hymn is antiphonal, the alternate lines being chanted as a response" (Schonfield,
p. 451, η. 1). This is, of course, pure assertion. Schonfield may be right, but there is no evidence.


6. Brown cites eight different reconstructions, and adds his own (Brown, I, p. 22). But the only
parts all agree belong to the original poem are vv. 1, 3-4, and 10-11.

7. Knox renders, "At the beginning of time," but John's εν άρχῇ is at once more concise, more
far-reaching, and more impressive. We might get something of its force by considering the slightly
different ρημα αρχης that is used in 1 John 1:1. This draws attention to what took place from the
beginning on, whereas our present passage tells us that in the beginning "the Word was already there"
(Barclay's translation). Barth says finely, "this Word was not, like all other words, a created human
word, merely relating to God, merely speaking from God and about God. As the Word it is spoken in
the place where God is, namely, εν άρχῃ, in principio of all that is" (Church Dogmatics, I/1

8. Thus BAGD gives the first meaning of the word as "beginning" and the second as "the first
cause." Tertullian makes a great deal of the double meaning of the term αρχη in Gen. 1:1 (LXX) in
his argument against Hermogenes (XIX; ANF, III, p. 488).

9. "Was" is ήν, not έγένετο, which is used in vv. 3, 6, and 14 (see 8:58 for a good illustration of
the difference between γίνομαι and ειμί). It is relevant to notice that ήν occurs again in the next
clause, where Knox brings out the continuous force by rendering, "God had the Word abiding with
him." Westcott draws attention to the fact that, whereas the opening of Genesis takes us back to the
beginning and that which starts from that point, "St. John lifts our thoughts beyond the beginning and
dwells on that which 'was' when time, and with time finite being, began its course." Calvin thinks
little of any argument drawn from the tense of the verb and looks for "weightier reasons ... the
Evangelist sends us to the eternal sanctuary of God and teaches us that the Word was, as it were,
hidden there before He revealed Himself in the outward workmanship of the world."

10. Cf. R. P. Casey, who says that the Prologue's "principal difficulty lies neither in its style nor
in its terminology but in the fact that its author has his feet planted firmly in two worlds: that of the
O.T. and that of Hellenistic philosophy and allows his gaze to wander easily from one to the other. At
every important point he has not only two thoughts instead of one, but two sets of allusions in mind"
(JThS, n.s. IX [1958], p. 270).

11. C. H. Dodd, How to Read the Gospels (London, 1944), p. 29. Cf. also Bailey, "Self-
revelation in active expression of His will and in rational order is part of God's nature."

12. Cf. Karl Heim: "'The word distinguishes itself only from the dark foil of silence. If there is no
silence the speaker cannot make himself understood at all. His words then are drowned in noise.
Therefore there is no understanding of the word of God in all those philosophies which do not
acknowledge the distinction between these two forms of God's presence, silence and speech, which
hold the opinion either that God is equally beyond reach everywhere, or that He can be experienced
everywhere in the same way and is always equally near" (Jesus the Lord [Edinburgh and London,
1959], p. 154).
13. Cf. Barrett: "the term Logos is seen to describe God in the process of self-communication — not the communication of knowledge only, but in a self-communication which inevitably includes the imparting of true knowledge. The Logos is a Word of God which at the same time declares his nature and calls into being a created life in which a divine power circulates" (p. 61).

14. ὁ Λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν. Many commentators (e.g. Bernard, Boismard) deny that πρός with the accusative differs from παρά with the dative. J. Rendel Harris says bluntly that the construction used here is due to "the writer's or the translator's Greek, or if we prefer it, want of Greek" (The Origin of the Prologue to St John's Gospel [Cambridge, 1917], p. 5). But the Greek of this Gospel is not slipshod. Dods maintains that the preposition "implies not merely existence alongside of but personal intercourse. It means more than μετά or παρά, and is regularly employed in expressing the presence of one person with another." For its use with persons cf. Matt. 13:56; Mark 6:3. According to A.T. Robertson, "the literal idea comes out well, 'face to face with God' " (Robertson, p. 623). He also says, "face-to-face converse" is in mind (p. 625). MacGregor thinks that the preposition "expresses nearness combined with the sense of movement towards God, and so indicates an active relationship. The Logos and God do not simply exist side by side, but are on terms of living intercourse, and such fellowship implies separate personality." It is hard to see less. B. F. C. Atkinson feels a sense of intimacy, and finds in the construction "the sense of home." He cites as examples of this use, "I will arise and go home to my father... And he arose and went home to his father" (Luke 15:18, 20). This passage he takes to mean, "The word was in God's home" (The Theology of Prepositions [London, n.d.], p. 19). For BDF the construction signifies "with, in the company of" (239 [1]). MiM discovers in it "not merely being beside, but maintaining communion and intercourse with," and cites Mark 6:3; 1 John 1:2: 2:1.

15. The Greek is Θεός ἦν ὁ Λόγος. The adjective "divine" would be θεϊός, a word that was available and is found in the New Testament (Acts 17:29; 2 Pet. 1:3, 4). Godet thinks that if this word been used of the Logos it would have denoted "a quasi-divinity, a condition intermediate between God and the creature." John is not saying this but affirming the full deity of the Logos. Abbott points out that it is more common to have an adjective than a noun in this position (1994a; he cites 6:60), which makes John's use of the noun all the more significant. The difficulty about the construction is the absence of the article with Θεός. Strachan says dogmatically, "the word theos has no article, thus giving it the significance of an adjective." But this is too simple. How else in Greek would one say, "The Word was God"? And, as Westcott says, an article would equate Θεός and Λόγος, and would be "pure Sabellianism." Had' this been John's meaning he could not have said "the Word was with God."

The true explanation of the article appears to be given by E. C. Colwell, who has shown that in the New Testament definite nouns that precede the verb regularly lack the article (JBL, LII [1933], pp. 12-21). On this verse he comments: "The absence of the article does not make the predicate indefinite or qualitative when it precedes the verb; it is indefinite in this position only when the context demands it. The context makes no such demand in the Gospel of John" (p. 21). See further B. M. Metzger's comments on Colwell's view (ExT, LXIII [1951-52], pp. 125-26), and the discussion by J. Gwyn Griffiths (ExT, LXII [1950-51], pp. 314-16). Strachan's statement ignores the usage of the New Testament, as do translations like that of Moffatt. N. Turner comments on Moffatt's rendering, "Once again dilution of the high Christology of a New Testament author is seen to be based on a fallacious appeal to unfounded grammatical principles" (Grammatical Insights, p. 17). B. A. Mastin has some reservations about Colwell's approach, but he firmly rejects the idea that the passage means no more than that the Word was divine. He concludes that it is "overwhelmingly probable that John i.l describes the pre-existent Logos as God" (NTS, 22 [1975-76], p. 37). NEB renders, "what God was, the Word was," and J. A. T. Robinson makes a good deal of this rendering in his objection to the conventional understanding of the words (Honest to God [London, 1963], p. 71). E. D. Freed, however, in an article entitled "Honest to John" (ExT, LXXV [1963-64], pp. 61-63), maintains that Robinson's treatment of this and other Johannine passages can scarcely be accepted. He argues for the rendering "the Word was God." This is the way NRSV takes it (as also Knox, Weymouth, etc.).
16. Cf. E. M. Sidebottom: "One cannot help feeling that the tendency to write 'the Word was divine' for θεός ἐν ὁ λόγος springs from a reticence to attribute the full Christian position to John. It will not do to say that the meaning is that the Word 'belongs to the same sphere of being as God'; Philo could have accepted some such formula as that. . . . But Philo was a Jew. He could not have accepted what the Church taught about Christ" (The Christ of the Fourth Gospel [London, 1961], pp. 48-49).

17. D. M. Baillie finely brings out the importance of this: "when Justin, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Clement and Origen set themselves to grapple with the question as to whether the Logos was of the very being of God Himself from all eternity, the discussion was not on some remote point of ancient metaphysics. The question was: Is the redeeming purpose which we find in Jesus part of the very being and essence of God? Is that what God is? Is it His very nature to create, and to reveal Himself, and to redeem His creation? Is it therefore not some subordinate or intermediate being, but the Eternal God Himself, that reveals Himself to us and became incarnate in Jesus for our salvation?" (God Was in Christ [London, 1955], p. 70).

18. B. A. Mastin brings this out in his very important article, "A Neglected Feature of the Christology of the Fourth Gospel" (NTS. 22 [1975-76], pp. 32-51). He says, for example, "In both John i.1 and 1.18 θεός is also used of the Father, and presumably in this case it conveys that he is God; it is difficult to suppose that the word bears an entirely different meaning when it is used later in these verses of the Logos" (p. 50). G. Reim endorses Mastin's argument and shows that there is a fulfillment of Ps. 45 behind what John writes (NTS, 30 [1984], pp. 158-60).

19. The use of the pronoun οὗτος also serves to add a measure of emphasis to the statement. John is very fond of using this pronoun in this way. The absence of a connecting particle is to be noted. Both Burney (AO, pp. 49-56) and Black (AA, pp. 38-43) note that this construction is especially frequent in this Gospel and find in it evidence for a Semitic background. Burney thinks that it gives evidence that the Gospel was originally written in Aramaic. Black maintains that the construction is especially typical of the sayings of Jesus and finds evidence of this in the sayings in the Synoptics. He concludes, "John may not be as a whole a translation of an Aramaic original, but, in the sayings and speeches of Jesus, as in the Synoptics, may contain translations of an Aramaic tradition, edited and rewritten by the author of the Gospel in Greek" (AA, p. 43). This is part of the evidence that we have reliable information in this Gospel.


21. He says πάντα, not τά πάντα nor ό χόσμος. This perhaps points to all things taken individually rather than to the universe considered as a totality.

22. C. H. Dodd says, "the whole creation is a revelation of the thought or purpose of God" (How to Read the Gospels, p. 29). This, however, is not quite the thought. John is not here speaking of revelation at all. J. D. McCaughey in a private communication says, "What John is doing is making an affirmation of faith: πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο. It is quite arbitrary to go on from there to assert that πάντα, the whole creation, is a revelation of God's thought and purpose. The Prologue asserts that all things were made through the Word; it does not assert that the Word can be recognized through all things."

23. Yet it should be noted that the preposition διά is used also of the Father (Rom. 11:36; Heb. 2:10).

24. οὐδὲ ἐν, "not even one," is stronger than οὐδέν, "nothing."

25. Temple finds in the thought of creation by the Word the expression of the conviction "that all things are in their measure an expression of that Will which sustains but also moulds and guides all things, so that the unity of the world, its principle of rational coherence, is the Divine Personality in self-expression" (Nature, Man and God [London, 1940], p. 302). But see n. 29 above.

26. Luther makes this verse the occasion of a strong statement of the divinity of Christ: "If Christ is not true and natural God, born of the Father in eternity and Creator of all creatures, we are doomed ... we must have a Savior who is true God and Lord over sin, death, devil, and hell. If we
permit the devil to topple this stronghold for us, so that we disbelieve His divinity, then His suffering, death, and resurrection profit us nothing" (vol. 22, pp. 21-22).

27. Some scholars connect the concluding psalm in the Qumran Manual of Discipline: "By his knowledge everything comes to pass; and everything that he establishes by his purpose; and without him it is not done" (DSS, p. 388). But, though this last expression could be rendered "without him it is not made," Burrows's translation is preferable. The psalmist is not thinking about creation but about providence. More apposite is 1QS 3:15, "From the God of knowledge is all that is and that is to be" (DSS, p. 374). Perhaps there are closer parallels in the Apocrypha, such as "O God . . . who hast made all things by thy word" (Wis. 9:1, and cf. Sir. 42:15). Perhaps we should also note the Odes of Solomon 16:20, "the worlds were made by His word." This, however, may be of Christian rather than Jewish origin (see J. Rendel Harris, The Odes and Psalms of Solomon [Cambridge, 1911], pp. 112-13).

28. Westcott has a long note in which he cites the principal authorities and accepts this division of the sentences (pp. 59-63). He takes the meaning to be, "Creation has not 'life in itself' (v. 26), but it had and has life in the Word" (p. 61). I doubt whether this is the meaning of δ γέγονεν ἐν αὐτῷ ζωὴ ἐν αὐτῷ. Though an impressive list of modern commentators supports this verse division (and for a long list of Fathers in support see M. E. Boismard, St. John’s Prologue [London, 1957], p. 14), I do not find their reasons convincing. C. K. Barrett finds that "inclines slightly" to the division I have supported by reason of its punctuation marks (ExT, LXVIII [1956-57], p. 175).

29. The words were understood by some to signify that the Spirit was created by the Son.

30. John moves easily between the thoughts of life and light; see 3:16-19; 8:12; 12:46-50, etc.

31. ἥτις ζωή.

32. Marcus Dods thinks that the words mean "that the life which appears in the variety, harmony, and progress of inanimate nature, and in the wonderfully manifold yet related forms of animate existence, appears in man as 'light,' intellectual and moral light, reason and conscience."

33. For this thought in later Judaism, cf. 1 Banich 4:2-3: "All they that hold it (the Torah) fast are appointed to life; but such as leave it shall die. Turn thee, O Jacob, and take hold of it; walk towards her shining in the presence of the light thereof."

34. McClymont stresses the definite article before "light," which, he thinks, "brings out its universality as it exists in the Word." Similarly Plummer, "the one true Light."

35. The imagery of light was very widespread in the ancient world. Dodd cites evidence to show that such expressions as this verse "would be entirely in place in a Hermetic writing" (IFG, p. 18). John's words would have a widespread appeal. He is very interested in light, and he uses the term φῶς 23 times, almost a third of its New Testament occurrences (more than a third if we add the 6 occurrences in 1 John). The term is used next most frequently in Acts (10 times).

36. John's word is αἰωρία, which he uses 8 times, and again 6 times in 1 John. This total of 14 out of 17 New Testament occurrences makes it a characteristic Johannine word. The other writers prefer αἰωτος, which occurs only once in this Gospel and once in 1 John, but 30 times in the New Testament. There appears to be no difference in meaning.

37. So prominent is this theme in the Scrolls that a complete writing is given over to it, The War of the Sons of Light with the Sons of Darkness. And, of course, the idea is found in many other places in the Scrolls.

38. Beasley-Murray finds the present "unexpected; it embraces history and the present time of the Evangelist. The light of the Logos shone in the primal darkness at creation, and continued amidst the darkness of fallen mankind; it shone with greater brilliance in the glory of the Incarnate One; and it shines on in the era of the Resurrection, which is the time of the Paraclete."

39. φαίνει points to the essential action of light in itself (so Westcott), rather than to the effect of light in illuminating people, which we observe in φωτιζει in v. 9.

40. The negative οὐ (οὐχ) is unusually common in John, where it occurs 286 times, which is more often than in any other book of the New Testament. Matthew uses it 204 times, Mark 117 times,
and Luke 174 times. Similarly John uses οὐδείς 52 times (Matthew 19 times, Mark 26 times, and Luke 33 times). This is not the case with μή, which John uses 117 times, whereas Mark has it 129 times and Luke 142 times. He never employs ημείς rather, though it is found in each of the other three Gospels. Again, John’s use of the emphatic οὐχί (5 times) is well below that of Luke (17 times), or even of the much shorter 1 Corinthians (12 times). We are perhaps to connect John’s preference for οὐ partly with the simplicity of his style, which favors the use of the objective negative, and partly with the subject matter. John has a good deal to say about the conflict between Jesus and his enemies, light and darkness, good and evil. This calls for some resounding negations.

41. χατέλαβεν.  
42. Cf. D. W. Baldensperger: “By the term *darkness* we must not understand unbelieving men, but the Satanic world, set against God. This is an allusion to an accepted theological tenet in Judaism: the struggle of the Messiah (Logos) against Satan” (cited in Boismard, *St. John’s Prologue*, p. 21).  
43. χαί is sometimes used, as here, in the sense, “and yet” (which is more properly expressed by χαίτοι, a word found only three times in the New Testament). It joins two affirmative clauses, but the sense conveyed is adversative.  
44. The aorist could, of course, be a gnomic aorist with much this meaning. Or it could be conative, regarding a prolonged conflict as a completed whole. But a single action seems more probable.  
45. Morton Smith argues for the translation "master" as preserving some of the ambiguity of χατέλαβεν (*JBL*, 64 [1945], pp. 510-11). Temple makes the point that John is "most modern" in that "The evil which for him presents the problem is not only in men's hearts; it 'lieth in the evil one' (1 John v,19). St. John might have had all the modern problem of the callousness and cruelty of nature before his mind. Anyhow, his approach is the modern approach. He does not conceive of Nature as characterised by a Wordsworthian perfection, which is only spoilt by fallen mankind."  
46. Cf. F. F. Bruce: "the affinities in vocabulary should not make us overlook the new element in John's use of these terms. When he speaks of the true light, he is not thinking in abstractions; he is not primarily concerned with a body of teaching or a holy community; to him the true light is identical with Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh" (*Second Thoughts on the Dead Sea Scrolls* [London and Grand Rapids, 1956], p. 134).  
47. J. A. T. Robinson scouts the idea that the followers of the Baptist ever formed a distinct sect: "I cannot find a shred of reliable historical evidence for them at the time — that is for the mere existence of disciples of John after his death who were not in some way Christians, let alone for those who were actively anti-Christian" (*NTS*, 4 [1957-58], p. 278; on p. 279, n. 2 he traverses the evidence and finds it unconvincing, though he does not mention the passage from the Clementine Homilies, cited in the following note). But quite apart from the evidence of the Clementines, there is the existence of the followers of John mentioned in Acts 18:25; 19:3. Granted that these were in some sense Christian, their existence at all is inexplicable if there was no Baptist "sect." And if there was one, nothing in Robinson's treatment tells against the view that by the time of the Clementines they were hostile to Christians. But with his contention that in the New Testament period there was no such sect actively opposed to Christians we have no quarrel. That is exactly the position taken up by the Evangelists.  
48. Calvin. J. B. Lightfoot speaks of a new attitude towards Christianity developed by the followers of John the Baptist: "His name is no longer the sign of imperfect appreciation, but the watchword of direct antagonism. John had been set up as a rival Messiah to Jesus" (*St Paul's Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon* [London, 1876], p. 403). That some people came to regard John as the Messiah is attested by the *Clementine Recognitions* (1.54, 60). This aroused such hostility from the Christian side that John was even called a false prophet (such appears to be the meaning of *Clementine Homilies* 2.17). Our Evangelist is more balanced. He recognizes both the greatness of John and the superiority of Jesus.
49. It is, of course, just possible that some were baptized in Palestine and later moved to Ephesus. But it is unlikely that the whole company would have done this.

50. Morna Hooker examines the two passages in the Prologue that refer to the Baptist and says, "Their importance lies in the fact that each refers to John as the witness who confirms the truth of what has just been said, that light is shining in the darkness, and that we have seen the glory of the incarnate Logos" (NTS, XVI [1969-70], p. 357).

51. ἀπεσταλμένος παρά Θεοῦ. The perfect indicates the permanent character of his mission. He continues in the character of a man sent, παρά Θεοῦ does not indicate the same close relationship as does πρός τον Θεόν in v. 1, but too much should not be made of this, for Jesus can say that he came παρά the Father (17:8). This Gospel makes frequent use of the idea that the Father sent the Son into the world. There may, however, be significance in the fact that the verb is always in the active when it refers to Christ, never passive as it is here and in 3:28. For the alleged distinction between ἀποστέλλω and πέμπω see on 3:17.

52. For the greatness of John the Baptist see SFG, pp. 59-60. The simple description of the man, "his name was John," invites comment. It has traditionally been taken as pointing to John the Apostle as the author of the Gospel. Who else would introduce the Baptist without qualification as John? Support for this is found in the fact that this Evangelist is usually very careful with names that might be confused, as we see from his treatment of Judas (6:71; 12:4; 13:2; 14:22; 18:2), Mary (11:2; 19:25), and Joseph (19:38). The Synoptists, of course, also sometimes refer to the Baptist simply as John (e.g., Matt. 11:2; Mark 2:18), But when full allowance is made for this, the use of "John" in the Fourth Gospel is sufficiently unusual for the point to have weight.

53. είς μαρτυρία signifies "for witness," not "to be a witness." It is the activity rather than the man that receives the emphasis.

54. The noun μαρτυρία is found 14 times in John (it does not occur in Matthew, but is found three times in Mark and once in Luke), and the verb μαρτυρέω 33 times (once each in Matthew and Luke, not in Mark). In both cases John uses the word more often than anyone else in the New Testament.

55. Gabriel Marcel makes much of the commitment aspect of witness, as in The Philosophy of Existence (London, 1948), pp. 67-76. He says, for example, "To be a witness is to act as a guarantor. Every testimony is based on a commitment and to be incapable of committing oneself is to be incapable of bearing witness. This is indeed the reason for the preliminary oath which is administered in a law court. By taking the oath I bind myself, I give up the possibility of withdrawing myself, as it were, from what I have said" (p. 68). See also his The Mystery of Being, II (London, 1951), ch. VIII. Similarly J. H. Oldham says, "Unless you commit yourself, unless you stake everything on the truth of what you say, you cannot be a witness" (Life Is Commitment [London, 1953], p. 11).

56. "He is thus saying, before he records John's testimony to the incarnate Logos, that the Baptist also bore witness to the Logos that had been the true illumination of all men, and especially of God's own people Israel" (Marsh, p. 98).

57. There is a contrast between John's preaching to all, that they might believe, and the attitude of the men of Qumran. For them, "There must be no admonitions or contention with the men of the pit, for the counsel of the law must be concealed among the men of error" (DSS, p. 383).

58. ἐξείνος is used to emphasize the subject. The pronoun is a favorite with John, who uses it 70 times, more than any other New Testament writer (Matthew 54 times, Mark 23 times, Luke 33 times, Acts 22 times, Paul 21 times). He uses it significantly often of Christ (10 times), of the Father (6 times), and of the Holy Spirit (5 times). The pronoun is often a way of giving emphasis. Indeed, except when it is used in dialogue it is usually emphatic in this Gospel.

59. John was ὁ λύχνος, "the lamp" (5:35), but not τὸ φῶς, "the light."

60. ἀλλ'. John is very fond of ἀλλά, which he uses 101 times. This is more than in any other book in the New Testament (next is 1 Corinthians with 72). ἀλλά ἵνα recurs (1:31; 13:18; 15:25).
61. ἵνα is usually taken as telic after an ellipsis of "he came" or the like. It has, however, been suggested that this is an example of imperatival ήνα. For this construction see C. J. Cadoux, *JThS*, XLII (1941), pp. 165ff.; H. G. Meecham, *JThS*, XLIII (1942), pp. 179-80; A. R. George, *JThS*, XLV (1944), pp. 56ff.; C. F. D. Moule, *IBNTG*, pp. 144-45; M, I, pp. 178-79, III, pp. 94-95 (and the literature there cited). Such discussions make it clear that this construction is more widespread than has often been assumed. But it is questionable whether John lends as much support as Cadoux, for example, claims. Thus if in the present passage tva were imperatival we should translate, "let him bear witness," which is an impossible sense. Cadoux suggests, "he had to bear witness." But this is not an imperative; it sounds more like a construction based on δει. Further, ἵνα occurs in other Johannine passages with no preceding principal verb (1:22; 9:3; 13:18; 14:30-31; 15:24-25; 18:8-9, 31-32; 19:24). In some of these the imperatival sense is quite impossible, and in none of them does it yield a better sense than the supposition of an ellipsis. Sometimes, as here, a verb may readily be supplied from the context; sometimes no verb in the context is suitable (e.g., 13:18; 15:24-25). It may be that John uses the construction as a way of hinting at the divine purpose working out in each of the passages where it occurs. The telic force in ἵνα would be favorable to such a significance. John incidentally is fond of constructions with ἵνα: the word occurs in this Gospel 147 times, which is far and away the highest total in any New Testament book. Next is Mark with 65 times, while Matthew and Luke have it 41 times and 46 times respectively.

62. There is a note on the construction in Abbott, 2277. John often separates participles from ἵν (cf. v. 28), and it may be that we should take ἔρχομενον with ἵν accordingly. But it will probably be in the sense, "That was the true light... coming..."

63. No argument should be based on the occurrence of ἄνθρωπον, for John uses the redundant ἄνθρωπος quite often (cf. 2:10; 3:1, 27, etc.; all told he uses the word 60 times).

64. There is an interesting parallel to the present passage, namely, "Thou givest light ... to all who enter into the world" (Lev. Rah. 31.6; Soncino edn. p. 401). Again, the Law is said to have been given "to lighten every man" (Test. Lev. 14:4).

65. The participle might be held to mean, "by coming into the world." This, however, does not seem to be the significance of the incarnation in John, and therefore should be rejected. If the present tense, ἔρχομενον, be held to be continuous, the meaning will be that the light continuously came in many ways (cf. Westcott: "He came in type and prophecy and judgement"), but especially in the incarnation. In 6:33, 50 we read similarly of a continuous coming of Christ (ὁ χαταβάτων), while in 6:51, 58 the reference to the single coming in the incarnation is plain (ὁ χαταβάς).

66. The word for "true" is ἀληθινός, which Bernard distinguishes from ἀληθής "as the genuine from the true" (though he admits that the distinction is not always easy). This leads to comments like that of Godet: "It designates the fact as the adequate realization of the idea. It contrasts, therefore, not the true with the false, but the normal appearance with the imperfect realization." Barrett thinks that in this Gospel ἀληθής is applied to opinions and statements and those who hold them, whereas ἀληθινός means "real," "genuine," "authentic." G. D. Kilpatrick, however, has shown that John's use of ἀληθινός is probably always attributive and of ἀληθής predicative (BT, 11 [1960], pp. 174-75; the doubt arises because of textual variants). Brown rejects this view, holding that the word is predicative in 4:37; 7:28; 19:35, taking the opposite view of the variants (The Epistles of John [New York, 1982], p. 267). But Kilpatrick's position seems to be the right one. John's distinction between the two words in this case is purely grammatical, and we should not look for any essential difference in meaning. Both words cover various shades of meaning including "true" and "genuine." BAGD gives both meanings for both words.

67. The use of the singular, πάντα ἄνθρωπον, rather than the plural, πάντας, may be meant to indicate every person individually rather than all people in the mass.

68. Calvin says that "men ... bear the distinction between right and wrong engraved in their conscience. Thus there is no man to whom some awareness of the eternal light does not penetrate." Strachan denies that the words mean that "in every man, irrespective of race or religion, there is some
knowledge of God, however faint." He thinks the words have much the same sense as 3:21 and that John has in mind the effect of the message. Thus "the idea of Judgment is prominent." Barrett comments, "the light shines upon every man for judgement, to reveal what he is."

69. The pronoun αὐτόν in the third clause is masculine, and this probably indicates that we should understand "Word" here rather than the neuter "light."

70. The pronoun αὐτόν is masculine and means "him." But grammatically it refers to φῶς and should be neuter. It is possible that we are to understand the real subject as the Λόγος now regarded in his aspect of light. Or John may already be thinking of the incarnate Christ. Both, of course, could be true. Dodd takes notice of the point and discusses some of its implications (IFG, pp. 268-70).

71. The verb is γινώσχω, which it is sometimes suggested means knowledge acquired by effort and attention, whereas οἶδα would denote rather an intuitive knowledge. But it is more than doubtful whether this distinction can be shown to hold in this Gospel. See further on 2:24.

72. In a well-known passage Augustine speaks of having read in the writings of the Platonists something equivalent to the teaching of the Prologue up to this point. "But I did not read in those books that He came unto His own, and His own received Him not" (Confessions 2.9). Here is the distinctively Christian note, that which sets the gospel apart from the writings of the philosophers.

73. The Greek is εἷς τὰ ἑαυτα ἔλθεν. W. F. Howard accepts this meaning, but adds, "there is also warrant for translating it 'his own possession' " (IB). Luther distinguishes between the coming of Christ into the world mentioned earlier in the Prologue and this coming which he calls "His real advent" and which he understands to refer to his entering on his public ministry at his baptism (Luther, 22, p. 77).

74. οἱ ἴδιοι. Note the change from and the link with εἰς τὰ ἴδια.

75. Plummer and others distinguish between the meaning of παρέλαβεν here and ἐλαβόν in the next verse. The former verb means "to take from the hand of another, accept what is offered," Plummer says, whereas the latter "denotes the spontaneous acceptance of individuals, Jews or Gentiles." Christ was offered to the Jewish nation, but they did not avail themselves of the offer. Moffatt makes another distinction with his renderings "welcome" in v. 11 and "accepted" in v. 12. But Moulton denies any distinction, taking this to be an example of "a classical idiom by which the preposition in a compound is omitted, without weakening the sense, when the verb is repeated" (M, I, p. 115). In view of John's penchant for using synonyms with no appreciable difference of meaning, it would not be wise to build much on a difference of meaning here. Elsewhere I have pointed out that variation of expression without significant difference of meaning is a mark of John's style (SFG, pp. 293-319). See also the note on 3:5.

76. This is the first of twenty-seven examples cited by Burney of the use of the casus pendens followed by a pronoun, which he regards as evidence of a Semitic origin (AO, pp. 64-65). The construction is found in many languages, including Greek, so that it is not its occurrence but its frequency that is significant. Burney found twenty-one examples only in the whole of the Synoptic Gospels, so that John does use the construction significantly often. Black points out that after the Prologue most are in sayings of Jesus, and all are in direct speech (AA, p. 35; it may be asked whether this is in fact the case with 3:32). This points to Aramaic behind the sayings in this Gospel.

77. έξουσίαν. BAGD gives the first meaning of this word as "freedom of choice, right to act, decide, or dispose of one's property as one wishes" (though they classify this passage under "ability to do someth.")." "Authorization, an imparted title to a new status, rather than an inherent ability, is the root meaning of the word" (IB).

78. The term John uses is τέχνα. He never uses υἱὸς of human sonship to God, but keeps this term for Christ, who alone has the full right to what the word signifies. This is a distinctive Johannine usage. The nearest John gets to using "son" for people is when he refers to them as becoming υἱὸς φῶτός (12:36). By contrast, Paul speaks of people as both υἱοὶ and τέχνα. He uses the former term to
refer to the rights Christ confers on those adopted into the heavenly family rather than the community of nature they share.

80. Curiously Schnackenburg says the passage "speaks of the supernatural process which takes place in baptism." It certainly speaks of "the supernatural process," but there is nothing in the passage about baptism; John is writing about faith, not any ecclesiastical action.

81. The expression is τοῖς πιστεύουσιν εἰς τὸ όνομα αὐτοῦ. While John uses the verb πιστεύω 98 times (as against Matthew 11 times, Mark 14 times, Luke 9 times, Acts 37 times, Paul 54 times), he never uses the noun πίστις. This may, as some think, be due in part to the use made of the noun by heretical thinkers. But it is clear that he thought of faith as an activity, as something that people do. His favorite construction is to follow the verb with εἰς and the accusative (36 times). Of this W. Turner writes, "The sense must be that the believer throws himself upon his Lord in loving, self-abandoning faith and trust" (ExT, LXIV [1952-53], p. 51). By contrast the simple dative means believing that what someone says is true. But in the last resort if one believes God one acts on that belief, so probably there is not much difference in ultimate meaning. See further, Additional Note E, pp. 296-98.

82. For the use of "the name" in antiquity see the note by S. New in The Beginnings of Christianity, ed. F. J. Foakes-Jackson and K. Lake, V (London, 1933), pp. 121-40.

83. BAGD explains the meaning of "believe in the name of the Son" as "believe in the Son and accept what his name proclaims him to be" (2.a.a). There is a similar meaning here.

84. See MM sub ὄνομα (5). They think that the use of this expression in connection with baptism signifies "baptized into the possession of."

85. The singular is read by the Old Latin MS b, and the verb, though not the pronoun, appears to be singular in syrC There is also patristic support, notably from Irenaeus (Latin translation; see Adv. Haer. 3.16.2) and Tertullian. The latter vigorously defends the singular (De Cam. Chr. 19), and he regards the plural as an invention of the heretics. Justin can say, "His blood did not spring from the seed of man, but from the will of God" (Dial. Try. 63), which may possibly imply this reading. In modern times the singular is accepted by Burney, Torrey, Boismard, and others (see the list in Boismard, St. John's Prologue, p. 39, η. 1). There are good notes in Hoskyns, pp. 163-66, and Boismard, pp. 35-45. Torrey regards the usual text as giving us "an impossible saying." He thinks that the past tense of the verb rules out any possibility of the saying being a promise of the new birth and goes on: "Only one being could be described in the phrases used here" (Our Translated Gospels [London, n.d.], pp. 151-53). But we should not overlook MacGregor's caution, "the words in question would exclude the idea of human mother no less than of human father (cf. Heb. 7:3)." We should also bear in mind that John does not elsewhere speak of the Virgin Birth, whereas he does refer to regeneration (ch. 3; it is an important topic in John, see 2:29; 3:9; 4:7; 5:1, 4, 18).

86. Turner views the plural as classical and says here "of husband and wife" (M, HI, p. 27).

87. Hoskyns thinks that the writer could not say that "the Christians were not born of blood (singular), because their birth does in fact depend upon a death which later he describes as involving theouing of blood (xiv.34)."

88. John is rather fond of the word θέλημα, which he uses 11 times (more than in any other New Testament book). Here there is an implicit reference to the will of God, and such a reference, implicit or explicit, is found in every passage where John uses it. The frequency with which John employs the term is indicative of his deep interest in the way God's will is wrought out.

89. Note the strong adversative ἀλλ'.

90. Lucetta Mowry finds a reference throughout this section to the Qumran idea of two groups of men, but with a different basis of division. Here "one recalls the Essene ceremonies when men were elevated or lowered in rank according to their ethical achievements during the past year. But John maintains that one must be transformed into the other order by a power outside the self. The divine spirit transforms men" (BA, XVII [Dec. 1954], p. 92).
91. On the basis of patristic citations Boismard reconstructs the text of vv. 12 and 13 to read,

"All those who received him,
He gave them to become children of God,
He whom (sic) neither of flesh nor of blood
But of God was begotten." (St. John's Prologue, p. 35)

The value of quotations in the Fathers is not to be denied, but I do not see how they justify us in rejecting the testimony of the MSS in this case.

92. C. E. B. Cranfield argues (against Barrett) that "became" or "was made" "is surely the natural meaning of egeneto here" (ExT, 93 [1981-82], p. 215). The verb is identical with that used of the Baptist in v. 6, which underlines the reality of the incarnation.

93. Laurence Housman brings out something of the wonder of it all:

"Light looked down and beheld Darkness.
Thither will I go,' said Light.
Peace looked down and beheld War.
Thither will I go,' said Peace.
Love looked down and beheld Hatred.
Thither will I go,' said Love.
So came Light and shone.
So came Peace and gave rest.
So came Love and brought life.
And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us."

94. There is a valuable note on glory in Strachan, pp. 103-6. Two notable comments are, "When the Evangelist says We beheld his glory, he is really saying that the final purpose of God is already achieved in the historical person Jesus," and "The 'glorifying' of Jesus always means His dying" (p. 106). See also the articles by Paula von Mirtow in Theology, XLIX (1946), pp. 336-40, 359-65. See also on δοξάζω in 7:36 below.

95. Many authors see a reference to the Sinai theophany rather than to the setting of the tabernacle. The points of contact with Exodus 33 are especially numerous:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exodus 33</th>
<th>John 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7 Now Moses used to take the tabernacle</td>
<td>14 the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 the pillar of cloud (the Shekinah) descended</td>
<td>we beheld his glory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 all the people saw the pillar of cloud</td>
<td>17 the law was given through Moses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Yahweh spoke to Moses face to face</td>
<td>18 no one has ever seen God</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 you cannot see my face</td>
<td>the only begotten Son . . . has made him known</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 you will see my back, but my face shall not be seen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All this strengthens the view that John wants us to view Jesus as the new and greater Moses. H. Mowvley emphasizes the importance of the connection with Exodus 33 in an article in ExT, 95 (1983-84), pp. 135-37.

96.. The Glory of God and the Transfiguration of Christ (London, 1949), pp. 59-60. So also W. Nicholls, "By the play on skene, eskenosen, St. John implies that Christ as the Word made flesh was the true Shekinah, the true presence of God with men" (Jacob's Ladder [London, 1958], p. 19).

97.. But against this we should notice Barrett's two points that Shekinah means not the glory of God, but the presence of God and that σηκνάω and its compounds are not regularly used to render למודא.

98. D. E. Holwerda emphasizes this: "The 'we' of 1:14 does not refer to the 'Apostolic Church' (Barrett, Comm.) or to believers in general, both pre- and post-resurrection (Bultmann, Comm.). The 'we' must be restricted to those who saw Jesus' σηκνάωσα. It is true, as Bultmann says, that not all who were eyewitnesses of Jesus saw His glory and that, therefore, θεάομαι refers to a seeing in faith. But this gives no cause for extending this seeing to all believers. Every believer sees Jesus in faith, but he
does not see the earthly (σχηνοϋν) Jesus” (The Holy Spirit and Eschatology in the Gospel of John [Kampen, 1959], p. 3, n. 8).

99. Wright comments, “Whatever awakens us to the reality of the presence of God is a manifestation of the Divine glory. Tintern Abbey was this to Wordsworth. The Thames was this to Francis Thompson. The ‘flower in the crannied wall’ was this to Tennyson.” All this is doubtless true, but it is misleading to see in it a parallel to John's thought. For him Jesus was the unique embodiment of the glory of God. Because of Jesus' character as the Word we see in him the divine glory, and we see it nowhere else. See further on 3:14.

100. All this has implications for Christian service. As C. H. Dodd reminds us, "Because the Lord is King, and His claim upon all His creatures is absolute, the word of God is first of all a call or command. Christ as λόγος is God's call to us, His command laid upon us.... Unless our worship includes this element of whole-hearted allegiance, it has not reckoned with the full gravity of the statement: 'the Word became flesh' " (Studies in the Fourth Gospel, ed. F. L. Cross [London, 1957], p. 21).

101. It should not be overlooked that μονογενής is derived from γίνομαι, not γεννάω (one v, not two). Etymologically it is not connected with begetting. See further the note by D. Moody, BT, 10 (1959), pp. 145-47.

102. John makes "Father" the characteristic word for God, as may be seen by the fact that he uses the term more than twice as often as anyone else and almost entirely of God. The figures for the Gospels are: Matthew 64 times; Mark, 18 times; Luke, 56 times; and John, 137 times. Of John's total of 137 no less than 122 refer to God.

103. If πλήρης is rightly regarded as masculine and nominative it must go with λόγος. But the word is often treated as indeclinable, in which case it could agree either with δόξαν or μονογενούς. John does not use the adjective elsewhere, so we are left to the general probabilities.

104. He is probably also pointing to the frequent conjunction of hesedh and 'emeth in the Old Testament (cf., e.g., Exod. 34:6). Newbigin draws attention to this passage and remarks, "In the Old Testament the primary reference is to God's faithfulness, so that 'grace and truth' means God's faithfulness to his covenant of mercy." C. K. Barrett, however, warns us that John's meaning is not that of the Old Testament expression (The Gospel of John and Judaism [London, 1975], p. 31).

105. The four concepts "mercy," "dwell," "grace," and "truth" that we meet here are found together also in Ps. 85:9-10.

106. The perfect χέχραγεν is used in the sense of the present, as Moulton has shown (M, I, p. 147; so also Burton, Moods, 78). Abbott (2479) suggests that one reason for the use of this tense and not the aorist is that the latter tense is used several times of Jesus' preaching (7:28, 37; 12:44). This may be so, but here the primary reason surely is that the Evangelist thinks of the Baptist's voice as still effectively sounding.

107. In v. 4 the present, ἐστιν, is read by χ D syrC sah, some Old Latin MSS, and a few other authorities. Most editors and commentators, however, agree that this is a correction of ἦν, and not the true text. An exception is Boismard, who not only accepts the present but alters the next verb to the present also (without any MS support) because "it is clear that the second verb 'to be' should be in the same tense as the first" (St. John's Prologue, p. 13). But this argument cuts both ways.

108. It is possible, however, to take the words differently, ὃπισώ in the New Testament is used much more often of place than of time. In particular ἐρχομαι ὃπισώ τινός is used of following someone, that is, of becoming or being a disciple (e.g., Mark 8:34). The expression here could be taken to mean, "A follower of mine has taken precedence of me, for he (always) was before me, my superior."

109. O. Cullmann draws attention to the Jewish apologetic that reasoned that Moses preceded the Greek philosophers and poets and was therefore superior to them (The Early Church [London, 1956], pp. 177-82). The Clementine literature by contrast developed the opposite idea that chronological priority means inferiority (Cain preceded Abel, Ishmael was born before Isaac, Esau
came before Jacob, Aaron was prior to Moses [Clementine Homilies 2.16]). It goes on to assert that this gives the means of distinguishing the evil from the good, and thus John, who came before Jesus, is regarded as a false prophet. But this unusual approach highlights the more normal attitude.

110. John introduces the proposition with ὅτι, "for." He is unusually fond of this conjunction and employs it altogether 271 times. No other book of the New Testament has it more than 173 times (Luke), so John's usage stands out. It is a mark of his style.

111. πρώτος μου. Cf. Bruce, "he had absolute primacy over me."

112. See Murray, and Abbott (1896-90, 2665-66, 2799a).

113. There is something of a parallel, however, in the ἐμὲ πρῶτον ώμῶν μεμίσηχεν of 15:18.

114. Wright says that here "the language of time is used to express the notion of quality, as in the utterance found at 858, 'Before Abraham was, I am.'"

115. Some MSS read "And," but the attestation of "For" is superior and should be accepted.

The view that John the Baptist is still the speaker in v. 16 does not seem to be correct (though it can claim the support of great names, e.g. Origen and Luther). The sense seems to be against it. Grace is explicitly associated with Christ in vv. 14 and 17, in the latter of which it is explicitly contrasted with the preceding Judaism. If John be held to have uttered the words, "we all" will mean "all we prophets."

116. J. B. Lightfoot has an important note on πλήρωμα (Colossians, pp. 257-73). He argues from the form (the -μα ending) that the word must be passive in meaning. J. Armitage Robinson shows, however, that usage does not support Lightfoot and that words of this type sometimes do have the active meaning (St Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians [London, 1907], pp. 255-59). MM remind us that in the papyri nouns in -μα and nouns in -σις were drawing closer in meaning at this period (sub voc.). See also the articles on "Pleroma" in HDB and ISBE, and "Fullness" in ISBE. This is the only place in the Johannine writings where the term is found.

117. "The thought is of the inexhaustible resources of grace ('grace upon grace') which the people of Christ find in Him, and on which they may freely draw" (F. F. Bruce, Commentary on the Epistle to the Colossians [Grand Rapids, 1957], p. 207, n. 122). Perhaps we should notice also that we may have here a foretaste of the later Gnostic view. The Gnostics held that the totality of spiritual beings emanated from the high good God and they denoted the totality of such beings by the word πλήρωμα. If the idea is as early as New Testament times Paul will be hitting at it when he insists on the uniqueness of Christ by saying that it was the Father's good pleasure "to have all his fullness dwell in him" (Col. 1:19), or again, "in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form" (Col. 2:9). And John will then mean that what these curious speculations spread over a multitude of divine beings is in fact concentrated in Christ.

118. R. E. Brown detects a possible reference to the Qumran doctrine of the coming of the Messiahs (SNT, p. 204). If this is so, John will mean that what the covenancers looked for in vain Jesus completely supplied.

119. χάριν ἀντί χάριτος. The χάι that links this to the preceding words means "and, what is more." It should not be taken to signify "namely," or "that is to say." Abbott thinks that this use is probably absent from John altogether (2146a). There is an interesting parallel to the expression in Philo. He speaks of God as granting "graces," χάριτος, and ἐτέρας ἀντί εχείνων χαί τρίτας ἀντί των δευτέρων, "and others in their stead, and third ones in place of the second" (De Post. Cain. 145). John does not use the preposition ἀντί apart from this passage.

120. "Grace" and "truth" both have the article here, though neither has it in v. 14. The meaning may be "the" grace and "the" truth already mentioned, or the well-known, outstanding grace and truth. This latter is supported by the fact that preliminary manifestations of grace and truth are found in the Old Testament (cf. Exod. 34:6; Ps. 86:15). The verse affords a good example of John's habitual paratactic style. We should have expected the contrasting μεν and δέ, but John simply puts the two statements side by side.
121. ἐγένετο (used in w. 3, 6, 10, 12, 14, and 15; the perfect in v. 4) signifies "became," "came into being." In some of its previous occurrences it refers to the Word's creative activities (3, 10, 12); its use here may be meant to associate grace and truth with the work of Christ. As Christians understand it, grace is always "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ," and they can say of truth "as truth is in Jesus" (Eph. 4:21). There is point in linking them both to Christ's creative work.


123. For John's frequent use of οὐδείς see on v. 5.

124. John is fond of the verb ὤραω, which he uses 31 times, far more than in any other book in the New Testament (next is Acts with 16 times). For the difficulty of discerning a difference of meaning in John's various words for seeing see on 2:23.

125. (ὁ) μονογενής Θεός is read by P66 P75 Ch C* L 33 boh syrP and a good deal of patristic evidence, including some heretics (Valentinians, Arius). ὁ μονογενής ΥΙός is read by AC3 K0 f1 fl3 28 565 700 vg syrC and much patristic evidence. On the basis of quotations in the Fathers Boismard reads simply μονογενής.

126. The expression is εἰς τὸν χόλπον, not ἐν τῷ χόλπῳ (13:23), "into the bosom," rather than "in the bosom." If the distinction can be pressed we have an expression analogous to πρὸς τὸν Θεόν of 1:1, with the thought of the orientation of the Son toward the Father. But, as often in Hellenistic Greek, εἰς may simply be equivalent to ἐν. Abbott, however, denies that John uses εἰς loosely (2706-13), as does I. de la Potterie (Biblica, XLIII [1962], pp. 366-87). The latter sees the significance of the present passage as "'tourné vers le sein du Père', comme pour décrire le Fils, éternellement conscient de recevoir de ce sein toute sa vie, tout son être" (Biblica, XLIII [1962], p. 385). But we must not overlook John's habit of using synonyms without significant difference of meaning (see on 3:5).

127. In the Greek it is the participle ὁ ὥν.

128. The word χόλπος is found in the New Testament only in Luke and John. John 3:13 is a parallel to the present passage if the appropriate words are rightly read there.

129. Augustine has some fine sayings, e.g., "Man was added to Him, God not lost to Him"; "He emptied Himself not by losing what He was, but by taking to Him what He was not" (Homilies on the Gospel of John, 8.3; 17.16).

130. ἐξηγήσατο. From this root we derive our word "exegesis." It is a suggestive thought that Christ is the "exegesis" of the Father.

131. This will be the point of the emphatic Ἐχεῖνος (for this term see on v. 8), "He and no other."


133. These are distinguished as λόγος ένδιάθετος and λόγος προφοριχός. Some-times we read also of λόγος σπερματιχός, the "seminal" or "generative" reason, the creative force in nature. This last term is often in the plural. Justin used it in the singular of Christ, saying concerning the philosophers, "each man spoke well in proportion to the share he had of the spermatic word" (2 Apol. 13).

134. Origen seems to understand λόγος in much this way: "all who are rational beings are partakers of the word, i.e., of reason, and by this means bear certain seeds, implanted within them, of wisdom and justice, which is Christ" (De Prin. 1.3.6).


136. Adam, Religious Teachers, p. 233. We must be on our guard against thinking that "God" means the same to Heraclitus as it does to us. He could say, "God is day and night, winter and
summer, war and peace, satiety and hunger. But he is changed, just as fire, when mingled with different kinds of incense, is named after the flavour of each" (Religious Teachers, p. 225).

137. T. F. Glasson, following J. Burnet, questions whether Heraclitus really had a Logos doctrine (JThS, n.s. III [1952], pp. 231-38). It may be doubted whether he has made his point, though clearly John owes nothing directly to Heraclitus.

138. John also has affinities with strands of Greek thought that do not use the Logos concept. Thus Dodd is able to point out that there are parallels in the Poinandres to several things John said about the Logos in John. He goes on, "we may say that the Johannine conception of Christ has in some measure combined the roles assigned in the Poinandres to four distinct beings" (IFG, p. 33). There is no question of literary dependence. But John has clearly used a form of expression that would strike many chords among his Greek readers.

139. F. V. Filson shows that there is no complete parallel in Greek thought to the Johannine concept (The New Testament against its Environment [London, 1950], pp. 89-90). He reminds us that "in the Christian account the Son or Logos is linked with the historical Christ and not, as logic would lead us to expect, with the Spirit. This most notable difference is striking, but it is often overlooked. The fact shows that the Christian doctrine of the Spirit is not a borrowing from Stoic sources, either directly or indirectly. It derives from a historical career and its sequel, rather than from a Greek philosophy" (p. 90). See also W. J. Phythian-Adams, CQR, CXXXIX (1944-45), pp. 1ff. But if John's idea of the Logos cannot be derived from Greek concepts the effects of its Greek associations are important. A. C. Headlam says: "It enabled Christianity to express itself in terms of Greek thought. ... It enabled a Christian philosophy to be built up in harmony with current thought" (Christian Theology [Oxford, 1934], p. 334). For the importance of the Logos concept to early Christian theologians see G. L. Prestige, God in Patristic Thought (London, 1952), and especially ch. VI.

140. Yet it is surely going too far to say, as J. Burnet does, "the Johannine doctrine of the λογός has nothing to do with Herakleitos or with anything at all in Greek philosophy" (Early Greek Philosophy [London, 1945], p. 133, η. 1). It would be impossible to use a term so widely known in Greek philosophy in a writing in the Greek language, probably published in a center of Greek culture, without being mindful of the associations the term would arouse.

141. Cf. W. Barclay: "John spoke to a world which thought of the gods in terms of passionless apatheia and serene detachment. He pointed at Jesus Christ and said: 'Here is the mind of God; here is the expression of the thought of God; here is the Logos.' And men were confronted with a God who cared so passionately and who loved so sacrificially that His expression was Jesus Christ and His emblem a cross" (ExT, LXX [1958-59], p. 82).

142. "There can be little doubt that the Hebrew concept of word as deed plays a major role in understanding the meaning of the Logos. In Old Testament history and prophecy the debar Yahweh always meant Yahweh's activity in creation, revelation and redemption" (R. Morgan, Interpretation, XI [1957], pp. 159-60). Thorlief Boman puts a great deal of emphasis on the dynamic significance of dabhar (though he rejects the idea of the word as "a connecting link between Jahveh and his creation. It is of moment to the prophets and the other great personalities of the Old Testament to trace the creation directly back to Jahveh" (Hebrew Thought compared with Greek [London, 1960], p. 64). He notices Faust's translation of John 1:1, "In the beginning was the deed," and comments, "Actually Goethe is on solid linguistic ground because he goes back to the Hebrew (Aramaic) original and translates its deepest meaning; for if dabhar forms a unity of word and deed, in our thinking the deed is the higher concept in the unity" (p. 66). The linguistics behind all this has been severely criticized, notably by James Barr in The Semantics of Biblical Language (Oxford, 1961). But, when full allowance has been made for his strictures the connection of logos with deed is noteworthy.

143. See G. A. F. Knight, A Biblical Approach to the Doctrine of the Trinity (Edinburgh, 1953), for a discussion of several Old Testament terms of this kind. He thinks that "the Word of God" in the Old Testament is an "alter ego of God" (p. 16).
144. W. F. Albright refers to the manuscript Targum Neofiti 1 (a complete Palestinian Targum) as "an important new Aramaic targum of the Pentateuch" that "has come to light in the Vatican library." It is "two or three centuries older than any previously known targum." In it, Albright tells us, "the 'Word' of God appears as a surrogate for the name of God, Yahweh" (New Horizons in Biblical Research [London, 1966], p. 45). See also M. Mcnamara, The New Testament and the Palestinian Targum to the Pentateuch (Rome, 1966); G. J. Cowling, "New Light on the New Testament? The Significance of the Palestinian Targum," TSF Bulletin, no. 51 (Summer 1968), pp. 6ff.

145. A Targum On the Former and Latter Prophets, that is the books in our Bible from Joshua to 2 Kings (excluding Ruth), and the prophetic books (excluding Daniel).

146. SBk, II, pp. 302-33, makes it clear that Memra is used as another name for God. It is not an intermediary. Bultmann directs attention to the point that the Targums always use Memra with a genitive. It is "the Memra of the Lord" or the like, not simply "the Memra," as in John's use of "the Word." E. M. Sidebottom gives the force of it in these terms: "Memra then is not a mediating principle of any kind, and not the creative Word of the psalms ... it is the Name of God himself, with perhaps the suggestion especially of God as self-revealing" (The Christ of the Fourth Gospel, p. 39).

147. M. Mcnamara regards the Targums as an important part of the background of John's Logos concept ("Logos of the Fourth Gospel and Memra of the Palestinian Targum (Ex 12-42); ExT, LXXIX [1967-68], pp. 115-17). He can go so far as to say, "Johannine tradition may yet well prove to be mainly influenced by liturgical Jewish tradition, particularly of the form found in the Targums" (p. 117). This may be going too far, but the influence of the Targums on John should certainly not be overlooked.

148. Rendel Harris argues strongly that the Logos must be understood in terms of the Wisdom literature. Again and again he suggests that the Prologue is to be understood against this background: "the Prologue to the Gospel can be turned back from a Logos-Hymn to a Sophia-Hymn" (The Odes and Psalms of Solomon, p. 39).

149. Similarly there was a development in the personification of the Law, the Torah. This had a great vogue among the rabbis, as may be seen from the passages cited in SBk, II, pp. 353ff., where we see the Torah depicted as preexistent, as eternally existent with God, as God's daughter, as active in creation, as the life of Israel and the light of Israel.

150. W. F. Howard says that Philo used the term "no fewer than thirteen hundred times" (Christianity according to St. John [London, 1943], pp. 36-37).

151. D. M. Baillie reminds us that "in the Philonic tradition the Logos, so far as hypostatized at all, was conceived as an intermediate being, between God and man" (God was in Christ, p. 70, n. 1). This is very different from John's idea of a Logos who "became flesh," that is, who was both God and man.

152. Cf. Westcott: "He found a 'Logos' in the Greek Bible which he accepted as the record of revelation, and he applied to that what Greek writers had said of the 'Logos,' without thinking it necessary to inquire into the identity of the terms" (p. xxxvi).

153. Against this A. W. Argyle argues that Philo thought of the Logos very much as he did of God ("The Logos of Philo: Personal or Impersonal?" in ExT, LXVI [1954-55], pp. 13-14). On the question of the personality of the Logos in Philo, A. C. Headlam says, "if we ask what it was in itself, whether it was personal or impersonal, we get no satisfying answer. Philo never asked or answered the question. He remains always vague and poetical" (Christian Theology, p. 331).

154. See, for example, the list of parallels he gathers (IFG, pp. 71-72, 276-77). Another who stresses Philo is A. W. Argyle (ExT, LXIII [1951-52], pp. 385-86). He questions whether "any fully satisfactory alternative interpretation" of the Fourth Gospel has been found to that which sees it in the light of Philo. He cites an impressive list of parallels and concludes, "Their cumulative force suggests that to deny any connexion between the Johanneine Logos conception and that of Philo would be to throw away a valuable clue to the understanding of the mind and thought of the fourth evangelist."
155. IFG, p. 280. He proceeds to apply this concept to the expression "the Word became flesh." It is curious that he selects this passage, for from the time of Augustine on, many have felt that this thought is completely out of harmony with Philo. Argyle, for example, says bluntly, "Philo could not have said" it (IFG, p. 385). Indeed, Philo says explicitly of the life πρός Θεόν that it "has never come down to us, nor submitted to the constraints of the body" (Quis Rer. Div. Her. 45).

156. Temple, p. 4.

157. MacGregor dismisses as "a singularly futile dispute" the question of whether John's Logos concept owes more to Greek or Hebrew sources. He says, "John must certainly have been indebted to both; if he was able adequately to present the Gospel to a heterogeneous Church, it was just because in the forefront of his Gospel so many converging streams of thought are gathered into one clear pool in which is reflected the face of Jesus Christ" (p. xxxv). Similarly B. H. Streeter thinks that "The interpretative fusion of Greek philosophic mysticism with the conception of a Personal God reached by the Hebrew Prophets, modified by the religious experience of the Early Church, obtained its classical expression in the Prologue of the Fourth Gospel" (The Four Gospels [London, 1930], p. 374). In an article entitled "Ambiguity of Word Meaning in John's Gospel" F. W. Gingrich points out that it is characteristic of John to use words with two meanings (Classical Weekly, XXXVII [1943-44], p. 77) He thinks that λόγος is used here to convey both the Hebrew "word" and the Greek "reason."

158. In discussions of John's use of the Logos not all have borne in mind the principle of which C. J. Wright reminds us: "the 'ancestry' of an 'idea' is not the idea itself" (p. 65). T. E. Pollard holds that John "intended the Prologue to be interpreted in the light of the rest of the Gospel. . . . The subject of the Gospel is Jesus Christ, not the Logos" (Johannine Christology and the Early Church [Cambridge, 1970], p. 13).

159. "Logos for the Christian is a person. The Logos is not an abstract philosophical concept. It is not a category of religious experience. Nor is it speculative religious mythology. It is person, infreshed, living, historical person" (R. Kysar, John the Maverick Gospel [Atlanta, 1976], p. 25).

160. Godet thinks that the writer "wished to describe Jesus Christ as the absolute revelation of God to the world, to bring back all divine revelations to Him as their living centre, and to proclaim the matchless grandeur of His appearance in the midst of humanity" (I, p. 290). Cullmann maintains that "this title expresses very forcefully an important aspect of New Testament Christology — the unity in historical revelation of the incarnate and the pre-existent Jesus" (The Christology of the New Testament [London, 1959], p. 258). His whole discussion of the term is very valuable.

161. "The compelling urge which led the Evangelist to pen, or make use of, the Logos Hymn, is not any of the external factors which from time to time have been proposed, but the dynamic fact of Christ Himself" (V. Taylor, The Names of Jesus [London, 1953], p. 164).

162. On ἐνεχεν ἐμοῦ χαι ἐνεχεν τοῦ εὐαγγελιου in Mark 10:29 Vincent Taylor comments: "together with the Synoptic variants, it is important as indicating an identification of Jesus Himself with the 'Gospel' and the 'Kingdom' in primitive Christian thought" (in loc.).

163. He says, "in the long run, it is primarily as an assertion of the cosmic significance of the work of Christ that we should see it" (The Cosmic Christ [London, 1951], p. 54). He compares the openings of the Second and Fourth Gospels and goes on:"Both Mark and John, while using very different language and symbolism, imply the same claim for the universal significance of the redeeming work of the Christ" (pp. 54-55).

164. T. E. Pollard finds similarities between Paul and John: "Like St Paul, St John focuses his attention on the redemption which God has wrought through Jesus Christ, and like St Paul also he argues back from the mediatorial work in redemption (the recreation of man and the cosmos) to the mediatorial work in the original creation" (Johannine Christology and the Early Church [Cambridge, 1970], p. 22).

165. Against this, E. F. Scott thinks that "There can be little doubt that by thus importing the doctrine of the Logos into the Gospel record, John is not only compelled to do violence to historical
fact, but empties the life of Christ of much of its real worth and grandeur, while seeming to enhance it. The moral attributes, trust, pity, forgiveness, infinite sympathy, are replaced by certain metaphysical attributes, which are supposed to belong more essentially to the divine nature" (*The Fourth Gospel*, p. 173). But where does John's use of the *Logos* replace "moral attributes" with "metaphysical" ones? The fact is that the *Logos* adds something rather than replaces anything. If we are to think of a real incarnation, then there *must* be genuine deity as well as genuine humanity, and John insists strongly on both. His use of the *Logos* concept is part of his way of drawing attention to the deity. Nowhere can it be justly held to minimize the humanity. Scott's idea that the doctrine of the *Logos* is "born of philosophical theory" (p. 175) perhaps accounts for his point of view. But, as we have seen, for John the idea is more religious than philosophical, more dependent on the Old Testament than on the Stoics, and more dependent on Christian experience and thought than either. The Prologue is the expression, not of a philosophical theory, but of a religious faith.

166. With a different metaphor Hoskyns says: "The workshop in which the Word of God was forged to take its natural place among the great theological descriptions of Jesus and His Work is a Christian workshop: the tools are Christian tools" (p. 162). He develops the point convincingly (pp. 159-63). See also K. Harper. "Christ the Word" (*ExT*, LX [1948-49], pp. 200-202).

167. There does not appear to be much difference between his use of ῥηματα (always plural) and λόγος (nor between λόγος and λόγοι; see on 14:24).

168. J. Ernest Davey maintains that the emphasis on the word(s) of God or of Christ is "One of the leading features in the Gospel" (*The Jesus of St John* [London, 1958], p. 83). He also says, "the main suitability of the word Logos to John's conception of Christ's significance lies in the central importance for him of the teaching or message of God which Christ mediated to men in His actual words and life on earth" (p. 88).

169. Interestingly, as H. Sasse notes, it was used among the Greeks also for heaven (TDNT, III, pp. 871-72). This use is not found in the New Testament.

170. TDNT, III, p. 893. He is referring primarily to Pauline usage, but these words apply also to John.

171. TDNT, III, p. 894.

172. Bultmann sees the ugliness in our determination to live for ourselves: "The delusion that arises from the will to exist of and by one's self perverts truth into a lie, perverts the creation into the 'world.' For in their delusion men do not let their quest for life become a question about themselves so as to become aware of their creaturehood, but instead they give themselves the answer so as to have a security of their own. They take the temporary for the ultimate, the spurious for the genuine, death for life" (*Theology of the New Testament*, II [London, 1955], p. 27). The whole section, "The Perversion of the Creation into 'the World,' " is important. Toward the end Bultmann says, "the world creates for itself a security of its own and operates within it as that which is familiar and to be taken for granted. It shrugs off the disturbance which is created for it by the appearing of Jesus with its incredulous question: 'How can this be?' (3:9), or with similar 'how's' (6:42; 7:15; 8:33; 12:34)" (p. 32).

173. Barclay says, "There is only one thing certain about the kosmos, the world — the kosmos is not what it was meant to be. Something has gone wrong. What is that something? It is sin" (II, pp. 21-22).

II. THE BEGINNING OF JESUS' MINISTRY  
(1:19-51)

A. THE WITNESS OF JOHN (1:19-34)

1. John and the Pharisees (1:19-28)

19 Now this was John's testimony when the Jews of Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him who he was. 20 He did not fail to confess, but confessed freely, "I am not the Christ."
21 They asked him, "Then who are you? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" He answered, "No." 22 Finally they said, "Who are you? Give us an answer to take back to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" 23 John replied in the words of Isaiah the prophet, "I am the voice of one calling in the desert, 'Make straight the way for the Lord.' "
24 Now some Pharisees who had been sent questioned him, "Why then do you baptize if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet? "
25 "I baptize with water," John replied, "but among you stands one you do not know. 26 He is the one who comes after me, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie." 28 This all happened at Bethany on the other side of the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

a. 20 Or Messiah. "The Christ" (Greek) and "the Messiah" (Hebrew) both mean "the Anointed One"; also in verse 25.
b. 23 Isaiah 40:3
c. 26 Or in; also in verses 31 and 33

The opening of the narrative proper might well be understood as the account of the happenings of one momentous week. John does not stress the point, but he does give notes of time that seem to indicate this. The first day is taken up with a deputation from Jerusalem that interrogates the Baptist. "The next day" we have John's public pointing out of Jesus (vv. 29-34). Day 3 tells of two disciples of the Baptist who followed Jesus (vv. 35-40). It seems probable that verse 41 takes us to day 4 (see the notes on v. 39). It
tells of Andrew's bringing of Peter to Jesus. Day 5 is the day when Philip and Nathanael come to him (vv. 43-51). The marriage in Cana is two days after the previous incident (i.e., the sixth and seventh days, 2:1-11). If we are correct in thus seeing the happenings of one momentous week set forth at the beginning of this Gospel, we must go on to ask what significance is attached to this beginning. The parallel with the days of creation in Genesis 1 suggests itself, and is reinforced by the "In the beginning" that opens both chapters. Just as the opening words of this chapter recall Genesis 1, so it is with the framework. Jesus is to engage in a new creation. The framework unobtrusively suggests creative activity.

The first activity to be recorded is that of an official party of questioners who came to interrogate the Baptist. This gave him the opportunity of bearing his witness to the One who was to come after. Characteristically the writer says nothing about John's baptismal activities. He concentrates on his witness (see on v. 7).

19 We do not read in the other Gospels of these messengers who were sent to John from "the Jews." But it is plain enough that John's preaching attracted a good deal of attention. Matthew, for example, says, "People went out to him from Jerusalem and all Judea and the whole region of the Jordan" (Matt. 3:5). It is accordingly not only natural, but to be expected, that the authorities would make diligent inquiry about the new religious movement. They could not ignore a man with such a following. Jews in high places were very sensitive to movements that might culminate in disorders and lead to trouble with the Romans. The inquisitors came from Jerusalem from "the Jews." This expression is rare in the Synoptic Gospels. Each of them refers a few times to "the King of the Jews" and scarcely uses the term otherwise. But in John it is used 71 times. Sometimes the Evangelist employs it in a neutral sense (e.g., 2:6, "used by the Jews for ceremonial washing"). He can even use it in a good sense (e.g., "salvation is from the Jews," 4:22). But much more often he uses it to denote Jewish people hostile to Jesus ("the religious world, organized and established apart from faith in Jesus," New-bigin). It does not necessarily denote the whole nation. In fact characteristically it means the Jews of Judea, especially those in and around Jerusalem. Now and then it is used in such a way as to exclude some of those who were certainly Jews by race. Thus the parents of the man born blind were clearly members of the Jewish nation, but they are said to fear "the Jews" (9:22). It is the aspect of hostility to
Jesus that "the Jews" primarily signifies in this Gospel. It may mean Jews from Galilee (6:41, 52), but more usually it points to those in and around Jerusalem. Not infrequently it refers to the leaders of the nation. We should probably deduce from this and from the composition of the delegation mentioned here that it came from the Sanhedrin.\(^3\)

It is not certain whether we are to understand verse 24 to indicate that the whole delegation was Pharisaic. Probably this is not the case (see the note on that verse). But it is plain that Pharisees were prominent in connection with the inquiry, and it is equally clear that the Pharisees were the real religious leaders of the nation. So it is not surprising that Pharisees should be linked with "the Jews." Consistently the nation that should have welcomed Jesus opposed him. Consistently the religious leaders led the way in this opposition and rejection. As the Gospel unfolds, this antagonism becomes clearer and clearer.

The delegation is said to have consisted of "priests and Levites."\(^4\) We might have expected some Sadducees\(^5\) since the high-priestly families mostly came from this party, or some scribes. But for some reason John never mentions either group.\(^6\) We should probably understand them to be included under the general term "the Jews." Among the lower priests some were sympathetic to the Pharisees,\(^7\) and it is likely that some were sent on this errand. Since the Baptist came from a priestly family (Luke 1:5ff.), the priests would be especially interested in his behavior.\(^8\) From all this it seems that the delegation was official and widely representative. It asked\(^9\) a simple question, "Who are you?" John was a puzzle. He did not conform. Officialdom wanted to know more about him.

20 No one in the delegation is reported to have said anything about the Messiah. But John discerned the drift of the inquiry. Messianic speculations were in the air,\(^10\) and he framed his reply accordingly. The Evangelist might have written simply, "And he said." Instead we have a rather complicated expression: "And he confessed and he did not deny and he confessed . . ." (NIV shortens this). This piling up of one expression on top of another is perhaps intended to indicate the seriousness of the Baptist's reply. He vigorously repudiated any suggestion that he might be the Messiah.\(^11\) The impression conveyed by the solemn way of introducing his reply to the question is strengthened by his use of the emphatic pronoun "I": '7 am not the Christ" (as though to say, "It is not I who am the Christ!"). This
emphatic pronoun is a marked feature of John's speech in this chapter. He uses it constantly, and each time he contrasts himself with Jesus and takes the lower place. He says: 'I am the voice" (v. 23), 'I baptize" (v. 26), 'I am not worthy" (v. 27), "when I said" (v. 30), 'I did not know him" (vv. 31, 33), "I came baptizing" (v. 31), and "I have seen" (v. 34). The series is noteworthy and the effect is to make it quite clear that John claimed a subordinate position.12

In this verse the point is that, whatever John was, he was certainly not the Christ. There was a Christ, but it was not he. With us "Christ" has become little more than a personal name for Jesus, but properly it is a title, "the Christ," which means "the anointed" (as does "the Messiah").13 In the Old Testament various people were anointed, but notably priests and kings (for the latter, cf. the phrase, "the Lord's anointed"). The rite was used to set men apart for special functions. When in due course the expectation grew up that one day God would send into the world an exceptionally great Person, a mighty Deliverer, One who would represent him in a very special sense, this coming great One was thought of not as "an anointed one," but as "the anointed one," "the Messiah." Among those set apart by God for special functions he stood out. So the title was applied by believers to Jesus, and it remains to remind us of this public and official aspect of his ministry.14

21 It had been foretold by the prophet Malachi that before "that great and dreadful day of the Lord comes" God would send Elijah the prophet (Mal. 4:5). This was understood to mean that Elijah would precede the Messiah, Accordingly when John made it so clear that he was not the Christ his interrogators bethought them of this prophecy and inquired whether then15 he was Elijah. His denial puzzles many, for Jesus explicitly asserted that John was "the Elijah who was to come" (Matt. 11:14). This is one of the passages that seem to show that this Gospel was written in independence of the Synoptics. It is not in contradiction of them, but had John had their statement before him he would scarcely have left his own account in just this form.

The solution to the difficulty is probably that there was a sense in which John was Elijah and a sense in which he was not. He fulfilled all the preliminary ministry that Malachi had foretold (cf. Luke 1:17), and thus in a very real sense Jesus could say that he was Elijah. But the Jews remembered that Elijah had left the earth in a chariot of fire without passing
through death (2 Kings 2:11), and they expected that in due course the identical figure would reappear.\textsuperscript{16} John was not Elijah in this sense, and he had no option but to deny that he was.\textsuperscript{17} And, of course, we must bear in mind the possibility that John may not have known that he was Elijah.\textsuperscript{18} No man is what he is in his own eyes: he really is only as he is known to God. At a later time Jesus equated John with the Elijah of Malachi’s prophecy, but that does not carry with it the implication that John himself was aware of the true position. It is further proper to point out that, whereas the Synoptists give something of a biography of the Baptist, this Evangelist does not. Instead he concentrates on John’s theological significance, and derives this rigorously from his relationship to Jesus. Jesus confers on John his true significance. John’s own estimate of himself matters little.

John’s denial provoked a third question, "Are you the Prophet?" The Jews appear to have expected all sorts of prophets to appear before the coming of the Messiah (cf. Matt. 16:14; Mark 6:15; Luke 9:19).\textsuperscript{19} More particularly they thought of the prophet like Moses (Deut. 18:15-19). But John was not that prophet either, so he answered\textsuperscript{20} briefly, "No."\textsuperscript{21} It is not without its interest that from the days of the very earliest Christian preaching it was held that "the prophet" was identical with the Christ (see Acts 3:22), whereas the Jews distinguished between the two, as we see from this passage and 7:40-41\textsuperscript{22} The increasing curtness of John's successive answers should not be missed. It appears to stem from a dislike for answering questions about himself. He had come to bear witness about Another.

\textbf{22} The questioners were in a difficult position. So far all they had elicited from John had been a string of denials; they had no positive statement to put in their report. Yet John was preaching, drawing crowds in the wilderness, and baptizing. They must have something to say about him. So they turn the matter over to John. Instead of making another suggestion they ask him what he thinks about himself. They must\textsuperscript{23} have some answer to take back to those who had sent\textsuperscript{24} them.

\textbf{23} John’s reply is given in words from Isaiah 40:3 that are applied to him in each of the four Gospels (Matt. 3:3; Mark 1:3; Luke 3:4). In each of the others the words are applied to John by the Evangelist; here John uses them himself. The point of the quotation is that it gives no prominence to the preacher whatever. He is not an important person, like a prophet or the
Messiah. He is no more than a voice (contrast the reference to Jesus as "the Word"). He is a voice, moreover, with but one thing to say. John's ethical teaching is not large in amount, nor striking in content (see Luke 3:10-14). As T. W. Manson says, "It is an anticlimax and it is important to realise why. It is because it is Interimsethik, the genuine article: telling men how to make the best of a bad job till the new day dawns." John's real function was not to teach ethics, but to point people to Jesus. "Make straight the way for the Lord" is a call to be ready, for the coming of the Messiah is near. The imagery is that of preparing a roadway by clearing away the obstacles. This was an important process in ancient times, especially for roads in the wilderness country.

It is not without its interest that the Qumran sect made use of the same passage from Isaiah: "they shall be separated from the midst of the session of the men of error to go to the wilderness to prepare there the way of the Lord; as it is written, 'In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.' This is the study of the law, as he commanded through Moses." But they understood it to apply to themselves as they sat down quietly reading their Bibles in the desert. Whatever happened to people outside, they would be ready when Messiah came. John, by contrast, understood the words as a clarion call to the nation. He was not concerned with himself and his own safety at all. He was trying to prepare the way of the Lord by getting people ready to meet the Lord. He was only a voice. But he was a voice, proclaiming the Lord's message.

The meaning of this verse is not quite clear. Traditionally it has been understood as "they which were sent were of the Pharisees" (KJV). But this involves the inclusion of an article that most textual critics agree should be omitted. If we omit it, we are still left with different ways of taking the words. They could mean, "they had been sent from the Pharisees" (so Bernard). But this implies that the whole delegation was Pharisaic, which is most unlikely (see on v. 19). Alternatively we could take the words as "Some Pharisees who were in the deputation asked him" (REB), which makes part of the delegation Pharisaic, or, "Now some of the Pharisees had been sent to John" (Phillips), which gives the Pharisees a delegation of their own in addition to the official one. It is difficult, to be sure, but I incline to the sense of REB. The words scarcely point to two delegations, but they do seem to indicate that some Pharisees were not content with the progress made by the official delegation and accordingly added some questions of
their own. The Pharisees were a religious party, dating from the time of John Hyrcanus and Alexander Jannaeus. They seem always to have represented the ordinary people as against the aristocracy, and pure religion over against the ecclesiastical policies so characteristic of the Sadducees. They made a great deal of the study of the Law (see on v. 17). But they tended to surround it with a mass of their own interpretations. In practice this meant that the keeping of their traditions loomed larger than the Law. On occasion, as Jesus pointed out, the traditions hindered people from living in accordance with the spirit of the Law (Mark 7:6-13). Some of the Pharisees were men of noble spirit, but all too often their multitudinous regulations led to an emphasis on the outward, and this in turn to spiritual pride. This was accentuated by the fact that ordinary people did not have the time (nor the inclination!) to learn, let alone practice, the host of traditions that the Pharisees valued so highly. On this occasion their inquiry was the natural outcome of the position they had arrogated to themselves in the Jewish religion. A man was preaching and baptizing. He was drawing crowds in the name of religion. The Pharisees must know all about him.

25 John had given them an answer as to his view of his activities. But it could not have satisfied them. What had they really discovered of a positive nature? Nothing. So they try a new tack. Since John does not claim to be either the Messiah or a messianic person, why does he baptize? Baptism was not a new practice in Judaism. It was the regular rite in the admission of converts from other religions. When such a conversion took place, the males of the family were circumcised and all, of both sexes, were baptized. This was seen as the ceremonial removal of all the pollutions contracted in the Gentile world. The novelty in John's case and the sting in his practice was that he applied to Jews the ceremony that was held to be appropriate in the case of Gentiles coming newly into the faith. All Jews were prepared to accept the view that Gentiles were defiled and needed cleansing. But to put Jews in the same class was horrifying. The Jews were God's people already. It is true that on the basis of certain Old Testament passages some people expected that there would be baptizing when the messianic age dawnded (Ezek. 36:25; Zech. 13:1). But John had denied being the Messiah. It was all very perplexing and the Pharisees wanted to know more about it.

26, 27 John's reply points them to Jesus in accordance with his characteristic role. "I" is emphatic (as is "you"); all that he does is to baptize in water. After this we expect a reference to another kind of baptism, like
the baptism in the Holy Spirit to which in fact all three Synoptists refer in a corresponding statement. But instead our Evangelist passes on to the greatness of Jesus and drops the subject of baptism. This should not be taken as indicating that he does not regard his baptism as important. He does. He does not depreciate it. But his baptism is not an end in itself. Its purpose is to point people to Christ (v. 31). John's interest is in the Christ and in nothing less. So he proceeds to tell his inquisitors that the Great One stands among them, though they do not know him (cf. v. 11). Then he repeats the words about his coming after him (v. 15). Finally he brings out the greatness of the one who was to come by referring to his own personal unworthiness. He was not worthy to loose the thongs of the great one's sandal. Loosing the sandal was the task of a slave; a disciple could not be expected to perform it. To get the full impact of this we must bear in mind that disciples did do many services for their teachers. Teachers in ancient Palestine were not paid (it would be a terrible thing to ask for money for teaching Scripture!) But in partial compensation disciples were in the habit of performing small services for their rabbis instead. But they had to draw the line somewhere, and menial tasks like loosing the sandal thong came under this heading. There is a rabbinic saying (in its present form dating from c. A.D. 250, but probably much older): "Every service which a slave performs for his master shall a disciple do for his teacher except the loosing of his sandal-thong." John selects the very task that the rabbinic saying stresses as too menial for any disciple, and declares himself unworthy to perform it. He is unworthy of the most menial of tasks for the one who was to come after him. Humility could scarcely take a lower place.

The section closes with a note of place. These things happened at John's normal spot for baptizing on the other side of the Jordan (i.e., from Jerusalem). The name of the place varies in the MSS. Some read "Bethabarah" and some "Betharabah," but both seem due to Origen, who early in the third century visited the land and reported that he could find no town called "Bethany" on the other side of the Jordan. He says that the ancient manuscripts read "Bethany." But because he thought the place must be he adopted that reading. Origen was a great scholar, but for once it appears that he is not to be relied on. Close attention to his words shows that he did not actually go to Jordan; he says only, "they say that Bethabara is pointed out." He appears to have been misinformed. It seems that "Bethany" is the right reading. But quite early the location was lost sight of.
The Evangelist adds "on the other side of the Jordan" to distinguish this locality from the better-known Bethany, which was near Jerusalem.\textsuperscript{41}

2, John and Jesus (1:29-34)

29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! 30 This is the one I meant when I said, 'A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.' 31 I myself did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be revealed to Israel." 32 Then John gave this testimony: "I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him. 33 I would not have known him, except that the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is he who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.' 34 I have seen and I testify that this is the Son of God."

On the second day of this momentous week John publicly pointed out Jesus as the Messiah to whom he had given his witness. He went on to tell how he had come to know that Jesus was he.

29 For the note of time see the commentary on verses 19-28. "Coming" will here mean "approaching," not "coming to him for the first time." Verses 26 and 32-33 show that John had recognized Jesus\textsuperscript{42} as the Christ on an earlier occasion. "Look" is a favorite expression in this Gospel, and John uses it more often than all the other New Testament writers put together\textsuperscript{43}.

The expression "the Lamb of God"\textsuperscript{44} has passed into the general Christian vocabulary. But for all that it is very difficult to know exactly what it means. It is not found elsewhere in the New Testament (though Jesus is sometimes spoken of as "the Lamb," especially in Revelation\textsuperscript{45}), nor in any previous writing known to us.\textsuperscript{46} Thus we are not able to appeal to some other writing as John's source. The genitive "of God" may mean "provided by God" (cf. Gen. 22:8), or "belonging to God."\textsuperscript{47} Perhaps in his usual manner the Evangelist wants us to combine both meanings. But to what does "the Lamb" refer? Many suggestions have been made, among which we notice the following: (i) \textit{The Passover Lamb}, a suggestion supported by the apparent identification of Jesus' sacrifice with the Passover in 19:36.
Against it are two main points, the one that the Passover victim was not necessarily a lamb at all,\(^48\) and the other that the proper term in use at the time for the Passover victim was not "lamb" but "Passover" \((\text{pascha}).\)\(^49\) Another objection, that the Passover was not an expiatory sacrifice (and thus could not be said to take away the world's sin), is not valid. All sacrifice was held to be expiatory,\(^50\) and, specifically, the Passover was sometimes viewed in this way.\(^51\) (ii) \textit{The lamb "led ... to the slaughter"} (Isa. 53:7). This is possible, but nothing in the context points to it. We can hold this view only if we can feel that there was such a widespread acceptance of the view that Isaiah 53 applied to the Messiah that an unexplained reference to a lamb and to the taking away of sin would be seen to refer to that chapter. That Christians in due course came to understand the chapter in this way is clear enough. That those who heard John the Baptist did so is not. This explanation of the words is unlikely.\(^52\) (iii) \textit{The Servant of the Lord}. This is another way of seeing the origin of the expression in Isaiah 53. Some scholars think that an ambiguous expression in Aramaic, meant as "the Servant of the Lord," was mistranslated.\(^53\) The difficulties here are linguistic. It is not easy to think that so well known an expression as "the Servant of the Lord" should be unrecognized, and should be translated by so difficult and unusual a phrase as "the Lamb of God."\(^54\) (iv) \textit{The lamb of the daily sacrifices} offered morning and evening in the Temple.\(^55\) Once more we must admit the possibility. But we must add that there is nothing that clearly indicates it. We have no knowledge of the daily sacrifice ever being called "the lamb of God." (v) \textit{The "gentle lamb"} of Jeremiah 11:19. This should probably be dismissed, for that lamb was apparently not thought of as taking away sins, (vi) \textit{The scapegoat}. This accords well with the thought of the taking away of sin. But it suffers from the fatal defect that the scapegoat was not a lamb, (vii) \textit{The triumphant Lamb} of the apocalypses. This is undoubtedly the meaning of "the Lamb" in Revelation, and Dodd accepts the idea in this passage.\(^56\) But it is more than difficult to see this as the reference. John is not talking about victory over enemies, but sacrifice for sin. Why should the language of sin-bearing be used if what is meant is the defeat of foes? (viii) \textit{The God-provided Lamb} of Genesis 22:8. This draws attention to one important aspect of Christ's sacrifice, the divine initiative.\(^57\) But it does not help with the others. And in any case there is no indication in Genesis 22 that the lamb was considered to effect or
foreshadow the far-reaching atonement of which the Baptist speaks.  

A guilt-offering, since sometimes this was a lamb (passages suggested are Lev. 14:12ff., 21, 24-25; Num. 6:12; cf. the expression "the lamb for the guilt offering," Lev. 14:24), or a sin offering (Lev. 4:32). The objection to such views is that neither a guilt offering nor a sin offering was characteristically a lamb. Since the victim was so often another animal (e.g. a ram), the allusion would be almost impossible to detect.

From all this it is clear that there is no agreement (though two or three of these views would have many supporters). The fact is that a lamb taking away sin, even if it is distinguished as God's Lamb, is too indefinite a description for us to pinpoint the reference. If the writer really had in mind an allusion to one particular offering we are not able any longer to detect it with certainty. But it seems more probable that of set purpose he used an expression that cannot be confined to any one view. He is making a general allusion to sacrifice. The lamb figure may well be intended to be composite, evoking memories of several, perhaps all, of the suggestions we have convassed. All that the ancient sacrifices foreshadowed was perfectly fulfilled in the sacrifice of Christ.

The verb "takes away" conveys the notion of bearing off. It is perhaps not specific enough to point to any one particular means of atonement, but it does signify atonement, and that by substitution. "Jesus bears the consequence of human sin in order that its guilt may be removed" (Hoskyns). It is removed completely, carried right off. John speaks of sin, not sins (cf. 1 John 1:9). He is referring to the totality of the world's sin rather than to a number of individual acts. The expression "the sin of the world" does not appear to have been used prior to this passage. The reference to "the world" is another glance at the comprehensiveness of Christ's atonement. It is completely adequate for the need of all people. Right at the beginning of his Gospel John points us forward to the cross and to the significance of the cross.

Objection has been made to the authenticity of this saying. It is pointed out that the Synoptic Gospels (as well as general probability) show that Jesus was not held to be the Messiah until some considerable time later than this. But this is to overlook the significance of Zacharias and Simeon and Anna. Luke tells us that, even before Jesus' ministry started, "The people . . . were all wondering in their hearts if John might possibly be the Christ" (Luke 3:15). Messianic speculations were in the air, and there is no reason
why the man whom Jesus called the greatest of those born of women (Luke 7:28) should not have had the prophetic insight to have greeted Jesus thus.\(^{64}\) Again, it is urged that the disciples found difficulty to the very end in accepting the truth that Jesus must suffer. Yet before his ministry has begun the Baptist is here depicted as referring to his sacrificial death. To this there is a threefold answer. In the first place, what John knew of the Christ he knew by way of revelation, as the succeeding verses make clear. It is not a matter of what the unaided human reason or intuition could discern in Jesus of Nazareth, but what God has made known. He would be a bold man who would set limits in advance to what God can reveal to his prophets. That John's words made little impression on the followers of Jesus need cause no surprise. Neither did Jesus' own predictions of his passion.\(^{65}\) In the second place, the Qumran scrolls have made acceptance of the saying "not so impossible as it once seemed," as Brownlee puts it. He points out that the scrolls link suffering, and specifically the Suffering Servant, with messiahship, and he discovers "important Essene conceptions in John's messianic expectation."\(^{66}\) They have not been taken over unaltered, but the point is that the Qumran evidence indicates that a saying like this on the part of a man like John no longer looks improbable. In the third place, if it is not authentic it is difficult to ascertain where the saying comes from. It possesses none of the characteristic marks of a Johannine construction.\(^{67}\)

30 For the most part this verse repeats the thought of verse 15 (where see note). There is a change from the participles of that verse and of verse 27 to the indicative, which states the fact with greater directness. There is also the use of the word "man."\(^{68}\) While the Christology of this Gospel is of the highest order, the writer never loses sight of Jesus' manhood. Before leaving this verse we should perhaps also notice that, though the Baptist says he is quoting words he spoke on a previous occasion, there is no record of that occasion in this Gospel.

31 John begins this sentence with "and" (which NIV omits), a construction very common in this Gospel, especially in speeches. The construction is found in all languages, but it is much more common in Aramaic than in most, certainly much more so than in Greek. John's fondness for using it is further evidence that Aramaic lies behind this Gospel, more particularly the speeches.\(^{69}\) I" is emphatic.\(^{70}\) John had been looking for the Messiah, but he did not know who he was. Yet the whole purpose of his baptism was to make the Messiah manifest to Israel. The
Greek construction emphasizes this point. One might have thought that John's baptism was concerned largely with leading people to repent. But this was not its final purpose; John baptized so that the Messiah should be "revealed ('made manifest') to Israel." "With water" may perhaps be another small depreciation of the Baptist, for it contrasts him with one who "will baptize with the Holy Spirit" (v. 33). But it is no more than a small depreciation, for it is no mean task to reveal the Messiah to Israel.

32 For "testimony" (= "witness") see on verse 7. This second act of witness is to make clear how John had come to know Jesus for what he was (cf. Rieu, "John gave proof"). "I have beheld" renders a Greek perfect that should be given its full force. John is not writing of something that he saw once and that soon passed away, but of something that had continuing effects. The verb is used in this Gospel of seeing with the bodily eye. John is not talking about a vision. He actually saw the Holy Spirit come down upon Jesus in a form like that of a dove. The Spirit not only descended but remained on him (a detail not in the Synoptists). We should probably understand that the Spirit remained with him permanently.

33 John repeats his statement that until the time of this descent of the Spirit he did not know him. This does not necessarily mean that he did not know Jesus at all, though some have taken this to be the meaning of the words. It is, of course, quite possible that this is his meaning, for Jesus was brought up in Galilee and John in the lonely parts of Judea. They may never have met until now, although they were related. But it seems more probable that John means that he did not know Jesus to be the Messiah who would baptize with the Holy Spirit until he saw the sign. Recognition came not from prior knowledge, but from supernatural revelation. John does not say how and when he had been given the sign, but he says that he had it from God, who had sent him to baptize that the Spirit would descend and abide on the one whom he awaited. He does not say whether the sign of the dove was included in the original revelation, or whether he simply recognized the dove for what it was when he saw it alight on Jesus. But what is clear is that he had a divinely appointed sign, and that he knew Jesus by that sign. This divine leading marks the Baptist out from all others: "every other disciple is dependent upon a human witness for the reception of divine illumination about the true nature of Jesus" (Marsh, p. 132; cf. Matt. 11:11). John goes on to describe him as "he who will baptize with the
Holy Spirit." All three Synoptists make this point; Jesus came that people might be brought into contact with the divine Spirit. But baptism is a figure which stresses abundant supply. So John will mean that the Spirit leads people into the infinite divine spiritual resources. This had not been possible previously, for there is a quality of life that Christ and none other makes available. This life is a positive gift from the Spirit of God. Baptism with water had essentially a negative significance: it is a cleansing from — . But baptism with the Spirit is positive. It is the bestowal of new life in God.79

34 Again the Greek perfects must be allowed their full force. "I have seen"80 means much the same as "I saw" (v. 32). "I testify" is another perfect and points to the continuing effect of the Baptist's words. They were not the idle utterance of the moment, said and then over. They continued with full effect. At the end of the verse there is a textual problem, whether we should read "the Son of God" (so NIV) or "God's Chosen One" (REB).81 On the whole "God's Chosen One" is probably the correct reading. It has good attestation, and it is unlikely that an original "Son of God" would have been altered into it, whereas the reverse process is quite intelligible. If we accept this reading, John is saying that Jesus is the object of the divine call. The choice of none less than God has fallen on him.

If the reading "the Son of God" were accepted there would be a certain stress on the deity of Christ. Each of the Evangelists in his own way brings out the deity of the Savior at the beginning of his Gospel. Matthew and Luke do it with the birth stories and Mark with his reference to Jesus as "the Son of God" in his opening sentence. John has already done this in the Prologue, and with this reading he does it again. The climax of the Baptist's testimony would then be that "this is the Son of God."82 This is all the more important in that this Gospel was written to bring people to a knowledge of this truth (20:31). "Son of God" is, of course, an expression that might mean much or little. The term was used of Solomon (2 Sam. 7:14) and in the plural of all Israel (Hos. 1:10). People who believe and are thus admitted to the heavenly family address God as "Father" and are said to be "sons of God" (though John never uses that term of them; see on v. 12). But here the expression will have its fullest force; it will point to the closest personal relationship to the Father. It will be an assertion of the deity of the Messiah.83 Either reading makes good sense, but "God's Chosen One" seems to have the weight of the evidence.
B. THE FIRST DISCIPLES (1:35-51)

1. Andrew and Peter (1:35-42)

35 The next day John was there again with two of his disciples. When he saw Jesus passing by, he said, "Look, the Lamb of God!"
36 When the two disciples heard him say this, they followed Jesus. Turning around, Jesus saw them following and asked, "What do you want?" They said, "Rabbi" (which means Teacher), "where are you staying?" 39 "Come," he replied, "and you will see." So they went and saw where he was staying, and spent that day with him. It was about the tenth hour. 40 Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was one of the two who heard what John had said and who had followed Jesus. 41 The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, "We have found the Messiah" (that is, the Christ). 42 Then he brought Simon to Jesus, who looked at him and said, "You are Simon son of John. You will he called Cephas" (which, when translated, is Peter). a. 42 Both Cephas (Aramaic) and Peter (Greek) mean rock.

It was the Baptist's mission to point people to Jesus. In the previous section we have seen him bearing his witness. Now we find him sending some of his followers after the Lord. There are accounts of a "call" in the Synoptists (e.g., Mark 1:16-20), but they differ greatly from this. Despite Barrett's hesitation we should not fear to accept both as authentic. The Fourth Gospel tells of a call to be disciples; the Synoptists of a call to be apostles. "John's theme is not the calling of the apostles into office; it is their congenial association with Christ." Strictly speaking, there is no "call" in this Gospel (except in the case of Philip, v. 43). Neither does Jesus call, nor John send. The disciples of John recognize the Messiah and spontaneously attach themselves to him. A minor confirmation is that John tells us that Simon was given the name "Peter" when Jesus first met him (v. 42), whereas in the Synoptists, who do not recount this meeting, there is no indication of when the name was bestowed. Psychologically it may well be that some such contact as is here recorded is almost the necessary prelude to
the far-reaching call narrated by the Synoptists, with its requirement that the called abandon everything for Jesus. See further Godet's note on verse 43.

35-36 Once again there is a precise note of time (see on vv. 19-28). One of the two disciples (i.e., "learners"; the word meant those who had attached themselves to a given teacher) is subsequently named Andrew, but the other's name is not given. From early times it has been thought that he was the beloved disciple, and, while this is not proven, it may well be the case. It would accord with this that we have some touches of an eyewitness, the picture of John "standing," and the look he gave Jesus as he walked. For "the Lamb of God" see on verse 29.

37 The Baptist on this occasion said nothing about following Jesus. But his whole ministry was forward-looking, and he had instructed his disciples well. Thus when this pair heard Jesus acclaimed as "the Lamb of God" they knew what was expected of them. They immediately left John and followed Jesus. The verb "followed" is in the tense appropriate for once-for-all action, which may indicate that they cast in their lot with Jesus. They did not mean to make a tentative inquiry but to give themselves to him. We should also notice that the verb has both a general sense of "follow" and a more specific sense of "follow as a disciple." In this place both senses may be in mind. They walked down the path after Jesus and thus followed. But they also symbolically committed themselves to him.

Let us not overlook the light all this sheds on John's greatness. It is not particularly easy to attach disciples firmly to oneself when one is calling for a strenuous following of the right. But when this has been done it is the mark of a truly great man that he can gently, but firmly, detach them, so that they may go after a greater.

38 As the two approached Jesus he turned and asked, "What do you want?" It is a very natural touch that they did not know what to say, for "where are you staying?" (Knox, "where dost thou live?") is not really an answer to the question. They may have been a trifle shy. And their words probably imply that what they wanted with him could not be settled in a few minutes by the wayside. They looked for a long talk. They address him as "Rabbi," the customary form of address for disciples speaking to their teacher. The Evangelist explains the Aramaic word for the benefit of his non-Jewish readers.

39 Jesus welcomed them. "Come, and you will see" is equivalent to "Come and see" (v. 46, where see note). This invitation implies more than
that they should see for themselves the place where he was lodging; it is an
invitation to visit him. It led to their staying with him that day, and probably
means that they spent the night with him. The time is given as "about the
tenth hour," that is about 4 p.m. on our time scale. The Jews measured
their days from sunset to sunset, and divided both night and day into twelve
hours. John's habit of noticing the time of day is one of the small touches
that point to an eyewitness (see 4:6, 52; 18:28; 19:14; 20:19). Coming to
Jesus in the late afternoon and then having the kind of conversation that the
circumstances indicate almost requires us to understand "spent that day" as
"remained overnight." This means that the Evangelist is regarding the
coming of the two to Jesus as the events of one day. The next happenings
belong to the following day.

40 The name of one of the two was Andrew, who came from the city of
Bethsaida (v. 44). Although his brother has not yet appeared on the scene,
nor been given the name "Peter" by Jesus, the full name "Simon Peter" is
used and Andrew is identified with reference to him. When the Gospel was
written, the great apostle was well known and this way of writing was both
intelligible and natural. The more obscure is described in terms of his
relationship to his famous brother.

41 There are difficulties about the word rendered "first." There is a
textual problem, for the manuscripts differ. One reading is the nominative
of the adjective, and gives the meaning "Andrew was the first to find. . . ."
This probably implies that the unnamed disciple also found his brother, but
Andrew did it first. A second could be taken in either of two ways. It might
be an adverb, when it will mean that Andrew found his brother before he
did anything else. Or it might be the accusative of the adjective, when the
meaning will be that Andrew found his brother before he found anyone
else. A third reading, not well attested, means "in the morning" (Bernard
accepts this, as also Moffatt, Schonfield, etc.). The second of these is most
likely to be correct, and in the sense of the adverb. This probably means
that the next morning Andrew promptly went in search of his brother. When
he found him he told him that they (his plural "we" means that he was
already thinking of a community) had found the Messiah (an expression
that occurs only here and in 4:25 in the New Testament). In his customary
manner the Evangelist explains that this word means "Christ" (see on v. 20).
This early recognition of Jesus as the Messiah puzzles some in view of the
indications in the Synoptic Gospels that it was a long time before the
disciples had anything like an adequate view of his Person. But, as Hoskyns puts it, "the Evangelist does not, as is often supposed, idealize the first disciples, since it is precisely the title Christ which requires interpretation."

There is no great mystery about the disciples' thinking of Jesus as the Messiah. There seem to have been many claimants to messiahship in that period. It was the content put into the term that mattered. All the evidence is that it was quite some time before any of Jesus' followers reached anything like an adequate understanding of the term. But that does not mean that they did not use it. It was easy to call Jesus "Messiah"; it was quite another thing to understand what this should mean as he interpreted his vocation. Part of John's purpose appears to be to refute erroneous ideas about messiahship. It would be quite in accordance with this that he should record the disciples' first inadequate recognition of Jesus as Messiah, preparatory to unfolding in his Gospel the true meaning of the messianic office. Messiahship means a good deal to John. He writes his whole Gospel to make us see that Jesus is the Messiah. For the further development of the thought see verses 45, 49; 3:28-29; 4:25-26, 29, 42; 5:45-46; 6:15; 7:26-27, 31, 40-43; 9:22; 10:24; 11:27; 12:34; 17:3; 20:31.

42 Andrew brought his brother to Jesus, an act of which Temple says, "perhaps it is as great a service to the Church as ever any man did." Each time we meet Andrew in this Gospel he is bringing someone to Jesus (6:8; 12:22), a consistency worth noting. Jesus gave the newcomer a searching look ("gazed at him," Moffatt), and proceeded to rename him. This must be understood in the light of the significance attaching to the "name" in antiquity (see on v. 12). It stood for the whole person. It summed up the entire personality. The giving of a new name is an assertion of the authority of the giver (e.g., 2 Kings 23:34; 24:17). When done by God it speaks in addition of a new character in which the person henceforth appears (e.g., Gen. 32:28). There is something of both ideas here. Simon is from this time Jesus' man. But he is also a different man, and the new name points to his character as "the rock man." Peter appears in all the Gospels as anything but a rock. He is impulsive, volatile, unreliable. But that was not God's last word for Peter. Jesus' renaming of the man points to the change that would be wrought in him by the power of God.

2. Philip and Nathanael (1:43-51)
The next day Jesus decided to leave for Galilee. Finding Philip, he said to him, "Follow me." Philip, like Andrew and Peter, was from the town of Bethsaida. Philip found Nathanael and told him, "We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote — Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." "Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?" Nathanael asked. "Come and see," said Philip. When Jesus saw Nathanael approaching, he said of him, "Here is a true Israelite, in whom there is nothing false." "How do you know me?" Nathanael asked. "I saw you while you were still under the fig tree before Philip called you." Then Nathanael declared, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the King of Israel." Jesus said, "You believe because I told you I saw you under the fig tree. You shall see greater things than that." He then added, "I tell you the truth, you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man."

The process of adding to the number of followers of Jesus continues. Jesus himself seeks out Philip and calls him, the only disciple said in this Gospel to have been called by Jesus. Philip repeats the earlier pattern by going out and bringing Nathanael. Very little is known of this man, but the story of his coming to Jesus is full of interest.

For the note of time see on 1:19-28. In the previous section Jesus is not said to have done anything to draw Andrew and the others. They heard the Baptist's words and followed or were brought by one another. Here Jesus takes the initiative. He determined to leave for Galilee, and sought out Philip. No reason is given for this, nor is there any explanation of how Jesus knew Philip. It is not even said where he found him. There is nothing to show whether it was in the same general area as the preceding, or somewhere on the way to Galilee, or even in Philip's city of Bethsaida. We are not told whether Philip was a disciple of John the Baptist, though this seems likely. The name "Philip" is Greek (and means "lover of horses"). It is, however, found among the Jews, so we need not think that its bearer was of Greek descent. It has been conjectured that he was named
after Philip the tetrarch (mentioned in Luke 3:1), who rebuilt Bethsaida Julius. The Synoptists mention Philip in lists of the apostles, but give us no further information about him. John brings him before us on a number of occasions. Each time he seems somewhat out of his element, and it is probable that he was of limited ability. His contribution to feeding the multitude is the information that they could not be fed even with two hundred denarii worth of bread (6:7). When the Greeks came to him asking to see Jesus he did not know what to do, and he had to consult with Andrew before bringing the men to Jesus (12:21-22). And it was Philip who asked Jesus in the upper room to show them the Father — that is all they ask! (14:8-9). The fact that on this occasion he did not seek out Jesus, but Jesus went to find him may indicate some lack of initiative. If so it is encouraging to reflect that Jesus went out of his way to find this rather limited man and to enlist him in the apostolic band. Some of the apostles were undoubtedly men of great ability, but Philip compels us to realize that others were perfectly ordinary people. Jesus had (and has) use for such followers. The verb "Follow" will be used here in its full sense of "follow as a disciple." The present tense has continuous force, "keep on following."

44 Philip's home city is given as Bethsaida. Andrew and Peter were also natives of this place (though they had a house in Capernaum at the time of Jesus' ministry, which may mean that they lived there then; Mark 1:21, 29). Not much is told us in the Gospels about the city (Mark 6:45; 8:22; Luke 9:10), but Jesus' denunciation of it as one of the cities wherein "most of his miracles had been performed" (Matt. 11:20-24; Luke 10:13-14) shows that he exercised a considerable ministry there. We are reminded that there is much that is not recorded in our Gospels (cf. 21:25). The exact site of the city is not known, and there is dispute as to whether there was a Bethsaida "of Galilee" (12:21) in addition to Bethsaida Julius. This latter had been rebuilt by Philip the tetrarch and named Julias after the daughter of the Emperor.

45 The process of one disciple finding another is repeated, as Philip seeks out Nathanael ("One lighted torch serves to light another," Godet). The plural "we" shows that Philip had already identified himself with the little group about Jesus. Nothing is recorded of Nathanael other than this incident and his presence among the fishermen in 21:2 (which adds the information that he came from Cana). The name means "God has given" (and is thus equivalent to our Theodore). This has led to the conjecture that
the passage is allegorical and that an ideal disciple is meant (one "given by God"), but there is little to be said for this. While the name is not a common one among the Jews, it is found. There is no reason for doubting that a real person is meant. The incident reads like the record of an actual happening rather than a pious fiction. Others think that Nathanael is another name for Matthew, since the two names are of similar meaning. Others again suggest that Nathanael is to be identified with Bartholomew, an apostle who is never mentioned (at least by this name) in John, just as Nathanael is never mentioned in the Synoptists. Bartholomew is coupled with Philip in all three Synoptists (Matt. 10:3; Mark 3:18; Luke 6:14), and another link is found in that he is mentioned immediately after Thomas in Acts 1:13 while Nathanael is in the same position in John 21:2. Moreover, Bartholomew is not really a personal name, but a patronymic meaning "son of Tolmai" (cf. Barjona = "son of Jona"); the man who bore it almost certainly had another name. The other disciples mentioned in this chapter all became apostles, and it is suggested that Nathanael is likely to have done so too. If he is to be identified with one of the apostles, Bartholomew is probably our man. But why should we identify him with an apostle? Jesus had many disciples outside the Twelve, and there seems no reason for holding that Nathanael was anything other than one of them. It is certain that John wants us to think of him as attaching himself firmly to Jesus, but this does not make him an apostle.

Philip speaks of Jesus as the object of prophecy; both Moses and the prophets have spoken of him. This is, of course, another way of calling him Messiah. In an unobtrusive but very definite way John, in accordance with his declared aim (20:31), is emphasizing that Jesus is the Messiah. Andrew and his friend recognized him, and now Philip does the like. Philip does so in terms that show that the messianic ministry of Jesus was to fulfill the purposes of God from of old as they have been recorded in Holy Writ. Westcott thinks that the form of the sentence, with "we have found" coming last in the Greek, implies that Philip and Nathanael "had often dwelt on the Old Testament portraiture of the Messiah." When Philip speaks of Jesus as "the son of Joseph" we should not take the words as a denial of the Virgin Birth. Joseph was the legal father of Jesus, and the Lord would accordingly be known as Joseph's son. In any case it is unlikely that the Virgin Birth would have been communicated already to such a new disciple as Philip. This is a good example of "the irony of St. John." Again and
again he allows his characters to state, without refutation, ideas that
Christian people would know to be false.\footnote{103}

46 Nathanael's sceptical question\footnote{104} does not reflect, as far as is known, a widely held opinion of Nazareth. It was not a famous city,\footnote{105} but we have no reason for thinking it was infamous. We should probably understand Nathanael's words as the utterance of a man who could not conceive of the Messiah as coming from such an insignificant place.\footnote{106} Moreover, since Nathanael himself came from Cana, it is not at all improbable that we have here a trace of the rivalry that often grips small centers (and bigger ones!) not far from one another. Philip was not a particularly resourceful man (see on v. 43), and he did not attempt to convince his friend by argument. Instead he invited him to see for himself, which, in the circumstances, was probably as wise an answer as he could have given. It is good advice still. "Come and see" was a formula common among the rabbis.\footnote{107} They used it to show that a solution to a particular problem was possible and that it should be sought together. The expression might also point to something new or important or the like.

47 As Nathanael approached, Jesus spoke of him as "a true Israelite, in whom there is nothing false"; NRSV has "no deceit!" This last word is used in earlier Greek writers for the "bait" used in catching fish. It comes to signify \"any cunning contrivance for deceiving or catching,\" as the net in which Hephaestus catches Ares ... the Trojan horse ... Ixion's bride ... the robe of Penelope."\footnote{108} It is used in the Bible of Jacob before his change of heart (Gen. 27:35), which is the point of Temple's translation, "an Israelite in whom there is no Jacob!" (Morgan also gives this as the sense of the verse.) Jesus salutes Nathanael as a straightforward person. "Israelite" is used here only in this Gospel, though "Jew" (especially in the plural) is common, as we have noted. It means here a true son of Israel (cf. Rom. 2:29). The most frequent use of the term in the New Testament is as an address in the speeches in Acts.

48 Nathanael's reaction is a surprised question as to the source of Jesus' knowledge of him, a reaction incidentally that shows the accuracy of Jesus' description. A more guileful man would have "modestly" asserted his unworthiness. Jesus' reply\footnote{109} was evidently convincing to his questioner, but it is not at all clear to us. He said that he had seen Nathanael before ever Philip called him,\footnote{110} and the time is specified as "while you were still under
the fig tree." There is no further explanation and no other reference to the incident. We are left to conjecture. The fig tree was almost a symbol of home (cf. Isa. 36:16; Mic. 4:4; Zech. 3:10). Its shade was certainly at a later time used as a place for prayer and meditation and study, and there is no reason for thinking that the practice does not go back as far as this. It seems probable that Nathanael had had some outstanding experience of communion with God in the privacy of his own home, and that it is this to which Jesus refers. Whatever it was, Nathanael was able to recognize the allusion. It is difficult to explain Jesus' knowledge of the incident on the level of merely human knowledge. Nathanael had never met him before this moment. We are required to understand that Jesus had some knowledge not generally available to the human race (cf. 2:24-25).

The effect on Nathanael of these simple words is more than surprising. His immediate response is to salute Jesus in terms implying divinity. "Nathanael capitulated for ever to the man who read and understood and satisfied his heart" (Barclay). For the respectful "Rabbi" (which Nathanael did not use at first) see the comments on verse 38, and for "Son of God" see those on verse 34 (cf. 11:27). Here, as there, the article is important. It indicates that the expression is to be understood as bearing a full, not a minimal content. While Nathanael could not as yet have understood all that Jesus' sonship involved, Jesus' knowledge of the fig tree incident impressed him. Here was someone who could not be described in ordinary human terms. In his case terms that indicate the closest possible relationship to God were needed. "King of Israel" is an unusual expression. In the New Testament it is used, apart from this passage, three times only. At the triumphal entry Jesus was hailed in these terms by the multitude (12:13). As he hung on the cross Jesus was saluted as "King of Israel" and invited to come down (Matt. 27:42; Nathanael used sincerely at the very beginning of Jesus' ministry a title that was to recur in mockery at the very end!). And Mark reports mockers as referring to "this Christ, this King of Israel" (Mark 15:32). In the Old Testament God is the King of his people, and it is clear that in the intervening period the Messiah came to be thought of as exercising the divine prerogative of rule. Nathanael is speaking in the highest terms available to him. In recording this estimate John is adding to the evidence accumulated throughout this chapter that Jesus is indeed the Messiah. Nathanael expresses this truth differently from the others, but the essential meaning is the same (see on v. 41). Nor should we overlook the
fact that Nathanael has just been called an "Israelite," In calling Jesus "King of Israel" he is acknowledging Jesus to be his own King: he is submitting to him. John uses the term "King" 16 times, and on almost every occasion it refers to Jesus (John refers the word to Jesus more than twice as often as any other Evangelist), the exceptions being at the trial when Pilate and the Jewish leaders both use the term; but even here the use is brought about solely because of Jesus' claim. The royalty of Jesus is important, even though it is veiled by his lowly life and death.

50 Jesus' words,\textsuperscript{116} You believe" (alternatively the words might be taken as a question, "Do you believe ... ? so NRSV), mark Nathanael as the first man explicitly said to believe in this Gospel (though cf. vv. 7, 12, and the notes there). The previous exchange had led Nathanael to put his trust in Jesus, with all that that implies. From this time forth he was a "believer." It was Jesus' statement that he had seen Nathanael underneath the fig tree that had brought this about. Now the Master promises that his new disciple will see greater things.\textsuperscript{117} The Master's ministry was only beginning. There would be many more examples of his power to reveal.

51 "I tell you the truth" is NIV's way of handling Amen, which is the transliteration of an Aramaic or Hebrew word, the participle of the verb that means "to confirm"; it was used to indicate one's assent. For example, it was (and still is) the response of the congregation to a prayer voiced by the one who leads the worship; it was the way the people made it their own (1 Cor. 14:16). Very occasionally it was the conclusion to one's own prayer (e.g., Tobit 8:7-8), when it had the nature of a wish. But this use is rare. Characteristically the word is one's assent to words uttered by somebody else. In the Gospels it is used only by Jesus, and always as a prefix to significant statements. Presumably this is to mark them out as solemn and true and important. This use of Amen to introduce one's own words appears to be Jesus' own, no real Jewish parallel being adduced.\textsuperscript{118} In view of the associations of the term it almost certainly has a religious significance. It marks the words as uttered before God, who is thus invited to bring them to pass. There are probably also christological implications. Jesus identifies himself with the words and also with the God to whom he appeals.\textsuperscript{119} In the Synoptic Gospels the word always occurs singly, whereas in John it is invariably doubled.\textsuperscript{120} No satisfactory explanation of this has been put forward, but it certainly marks what follows as important.
The change in the Greek from the singular in verse 50 to the plural here shows that this saying is meant for a wider circle, though addressed in the first place to Nathanael. There is no subsequent reference in this Gospel to the heavens being opened (the verb is used mostly of the opening of the eyes of the blind, and once of the opening of a door). In the rest of the New Testament we read of the heavens being opened only in the accounts of the baptism of Jesus (Matt. 3:16; Luke 3:21) and in visions (Acts 7:56; 10:11; Rev. 19:11), none of which is likely to be in mind here. That the expression points to some vision of the divine is clear enough, but beyond that it is not easy to go. The ascent and descent of angels seem to be a reference to the vision of Jacob (Gen. 28:10ff.). But in the patriarch's dream there is no mention of the heavens being opened, while conversely here there is no mention of the ladder Jacob saw. In both passages, however, there is the thought of communication between heaven and earth. In both the angels are said to ascend first, which may imply their presence on earth already. In this passage the place of the ladder is taken by "the Son of Man." Jesus himself is the link between heaven and earth (3:13). He is the means by which the realities of heaven are brought down to earth, and Nathanael will see this for himself. The expression then is a figurative way of saying that Jesus will reveal heavenly things, a thought that is developed throughout this Gospel. Philip's view of Jesus (v. 45) is true but inadequate. Jesus is indeed the fulfiller of prophecy, but he is also the Son of man, the revealer of God, the means of establishing communication between earth and heaven. The force of the perfect, translated "open," should not be overlooked. They would see the heavens opened and remaining opened. For "the Son of Man" see Additional Note C, pp. 150-52. Strachan regards this verse as "the key to the Evangelist's whole conception of Jesus." His conclusion is, "The wide open heaven, and the ascending and descending angels symbolize the whole power and love of God, now available for men, in the Son of man." 

In this chapter Jesus has been accorded several titles: the Logos (v. 1), God (v. 1), the light of men (v. 4), the true light (v. 9), the only begotten from the Father (v. 14), a greater than John the Baptist (vv. 15, 26-27, 30), Jesus Christ (v. 17), the only begotten God (or Son, v. 18), the Lord (v. 23), the Lamb of God (vv. 29, 36), he that baptizes with the Holy Spirit (v. 33), probably God's Chosen One (v. 34), the Son of God (v. 49), Rabbi (vv. 38, 49), the Messiah (v. 41), he of whom Moses and the prophets wrote (v. 45),
and the King of Israel (v. 49). We may fairly comment that by recording all
these John makes a beginning on the picture of our Lord that he is to paint
throughout the Gospel. He is out to show him as the Christ (20:31), and this
is how he begins to do it. But all these are titles used by others. Jesus calls
himself simply "the Son of man."

**ADDITIONAL NOTE C: THE SON OF MAN**

"The Son of man" is a curious expression, and just as unusual in Greek as in
English. The literature on it is vast, and it is impossible to do justice to it in
a short note in a commentary. This Note is not intended to be
comprehensive; it is no more than a short indication of some of the more
important points.

The expression is a literal translation of the Aramaic *
* which means
"man" or "the man." In the Gospels it is used by Jesus as his favorite self-
designation, occurring in this way over 80 times. Nobody else ever uses it
of him except Stephen (Acts 7:56) and the people in this Gospel who ask
who Jesus means by the term (12:34). The fact that they ask this question
shows that the term was not an accepted messianic designation. In general
we can say that Jesus uses the term in a threefold way: (1) as a periphrasis
for "I," (2) of the heavenly Son of man, who will come in glory, and (3) of
the Son of man who suffers to bring people salvation. The origin of the term
is probably to be sought in Daniel 7:13-14, where a heavenly being is so
designated. I have discussed the expression in my The Lord from
Heaven, and perhaps I may repeat my conclusion: Jesus adopted the
term, "firstly because it was a rare term and one without nationalistic
associations. It would lead to no political complications. 'The public would
... read into it as much as they apprehended of Jesus already, and no
more.' Secondly, because it had overtones of divinity. J. P. Hickinbotham
goes as far as to say, 'the Son of Man is a title of divinity rather than
humanity.' Thirdly, because of its societary implications. The Son of man
implies the redeemed people of God. Fourthly, because it had undertones of
humanity. He took upon Him our weakness." It was a way of alluding to
and yet veiling his messiahship, for his concept of the Messiah differed
markedly from that commonly held.
"In spite of considerable differences of vocabulary and imagery, the fundamental significance of the title 'the Son of Man' in John is not different from that which it has in the synoptic gospels." This assessment of Robert Maddox is true, but in the Fourth Gospel one or two additions should be made. In this Gospel the term is always associated either with Christ's heavenly glory or with the salvation he came to bring. Thus there are references to him as having access to heaven or even being in heaven (1:51; 3:13; 6:62). The first of these (1:51) carries the idea that he brings heaven to people on earth. He is the only one who has ascended into heaven and come down (3:13). He will be our Judge at the last day (5:27; here the term lacks the article — it is "Son of Man," not "the Son of Man"). Twice Jesus refers to the Son of man as being lifted up (3:14; 8:28; cf. 12:34), and twice to his being glorified (12:23; 13:31). The Son of man gives the living bread, the food that abides forever (6:27), and those who receive it eat his flesh and drink his blood (6:53). His gift of eternal life is probably implied also in his demand on the man born blind that he believe on the Son of man (9:35). In typical Johannine manner there is sometimes a combination of the themes of suffering and of glory (12:23; 13:31). The true glory lies precisely in his sufferings. The term "the Son of Man" then points us to Jesus' conception of himself as of heavenly origin and as the possessor of heavenly glory. At the same time it points us to his lowliness and his sufferings for our salvation. The two are the same.

Moloney makes the point that "While 'the Son (of God)' is predicated of Jesus for all stages of his activity (see 17,1-5), 'the Son of Man' refers only to the incarnate Logos. It refers to Jesus as a man. Even his being 'lifted up' on the cross is only possible because of his human state." He speaks of the Son of man in Daniel 7 and says, "However, John has shifted the stress somewhat. No longer does the glory come in Jesus' future role as the son of Man, but in his 'elevation' on the cross." As he brings his discussion to a close he says, "The Johannine Son of Man is the human Jesus, the incarnate Logos; he has come to reveal God with a unique and ultimate authority and in the acceptance or refusal of this revelation the world judges itself."

The literature on the subject is enormous.
1. This Evangelist always uses the Hellenized form of the name 'Ιεροσόλυμα (preferred also by Matthew and Mark) rather than 'Ιερουσαλήμ, the transliteration of the Hebrew, which is the form used in LXX. Luke uses both forms, but prefers the latter.

2. In a very valuable note G. J. Cuming argues that in this Gospel "'the Jews'.. . means Judaeans as opposed to Galileans." Especially does it apply to "the chief priests and the Pharisees, whom he depicts as our Lord's bitterest opponents. The indictment is not drawn against the whole Jewish nation but against its religious leaders. The choice of the word 'Judaeans' to describe them strongly suggests that the Evangelist was a Galilean" (ExT, LX [1948-49], p. 292). This last point is not to be overlooked. Some maintain that the use of the term makes the author a foreigner, whereas it is sufficient explanation that he came from Galilee. For a full examination of the term see T. L. Schram, The Use of "loudaios" in the Fourth Gospel (date and place of publication not given). He says, "They are portrayed as people whose actions are determined by the Law and usage, and their refusal of Jesus is expressed accordingly. On the point of disbelief they contrast not with Jesus but with his disciples" (p. 208).

3. The membership of the delegation brings together two terms neither of which is found again in this Gospel, and which are not linked elsewhere in the New Testament, namely, "priests and Levites." John is apparently stressing the part played by official Judaism; the words point to an official embassy. Support for this has been claimed by suggesting that the inquiry constituted a trial of "a false prophet," which was the prerogative of the Sanhedrin (Sank. 1:5). But this seems farfetched. The point is clear enough without this dubious argument.

4. For the Levites in New Testament times see E. Schiirer, A History of the Jewish People (Edinburgh, 1885), II, i, pp. 264ff.; A. Edersheim, The Temple (London, n.d.), pp. 63ff. Their principal duties were to provide the Temple police and to supply music at the Temple services (for the latter of which there must always be at least twelve of them on the platform, 'Arak. 2:6). McClymont reminds us of the connection of the Levites with teaching (2 Chron. 35:3; Neh. 8:7-9). If this continued in later times the Levites would have special reason for examining the new teacher. But the regulations scattered throughout the Mishnah stress two functions only, those of providing music (orchestral, Sukk. 5:4, Kel, 15:6, and especially vocal, Rosh. Hash. 4:4, Tam. 7:3, 4, etc.), and of acting as guards (Midd. 1:1, 2, 5, etc.).

5. Some commentators (e.g., Wright) speak of Sadducees as being in the delegation. This is not unlikely, but there is no evidence.

6. "Scribes" are mentioned in 8:3 (NIV, "teachers of the law"), but there is no reason for regarding this as part of the Gospel.

7. Josephus is an example of a man who was both a priest and a Pharisee (Vit.1:2).

8. Barclay makes the point that Jewish orthodoxy frowned on John because he did not conform to the accepted ideas of either a priest or a preacher. He reminds us that the church is always in danger of repeating the mistake.

9. The verb is ἐρωτάω, which John uses 27 times (Matt. 4 times, Mark 3 times, and Luke 15 times). The use of αἰτέω is not so distinctively Johannine, being found in John 11 times (Matt. 14 times, Mark 9 times, Luke 11 times). This probably is mostly a matter of style, for in the New Testament the words do not appear to differ greatly in meaning. Properly, of course, ἐρωτάω means "ask a question," and it is thus appropriate in the present passage. See further on 11:22.

10. J. B. Lightfoot points out that we learn more about contemporary Jewish views on the Messiah from John than we do from the Synoptics. The topic is discussed in Galilee (1:41, 45, 49, etc.), in Samaria (4:25, 29, 42), and in Judea (5:39, 45-46; 7:26-27, etc.). "Among friends, among foes, among neutrals alike, it is mooted and discussed. The person and character of Jesus are tried by this standard. He is accepted or he is rejected as he fulfils or contradicts the received idea of the Messiah" (E. Abbot, A. P. Peabody, and J. B. Lightfoot, The Fourth Gospel [London, 1892], p. 152). See also on v. 41.
11. S. Mowinckel points out that the term "Messiah" has an eschatological character but also that "it has a political sense from the beginning" (He That Cometh [Oxford, 1959], p. 7). This must be borne in mind in reckoning with the sparse use of the term in the New Testament.

12. The emphatic pronoun ἐγώ is unusually frequent throughout this Gospel. John uses it 465 times, while Matthew has it 210 times, Mark 104, times and Luke 215 times. It is plain that John is much more ready than the others to use this emphatic form. This is not the case with the plural ἡμεῖς (Matt. 49 times, Mark 24 times, Luke 69 times, and John 48 times), nor with σὺ (Matt. 207 times, Mark 89 times, Luke 224 times, and John 151 times), nor with ὑμεῖς (Matt. 247 times, Mark 75 times, Luke 220 times, John 255 times).

13. The word "Christ" is the transliteration of the Greek Χριστός, "anointed." This in turn is a translation of the Hebrew שֶׁמֶשׁ which we transliterate as "Messiah" (cf. v. 41). Since Χριστός is a translation, not a transliteration of the Hebrew, it can be argued that we should translate it here and read "Anointed." But we are so accustomed to the term "Christ" that it is probably best to retain it.


15. This is John's first use of οὖν, a word he employs 194 times in all, far more than does any other New Testament writer (next is Acts which uses it 62 times). It is so much a mark of his style that we cannot always insist on an inferential sense.

16. LXX reads "Elijah the Tishbite" and not simply "Elijah" in Mai. 4:5 (LXX, 3:22), which would have encouraged the idea. The animal vision in Enoch 90 appears to depict Elijah's return before the judgment (En. 90:31; cf. 89:52). The contemporary Jewish expectation is attested in Mark 8:28; 9:11. We read of the functions of Elijah in the Mishnah (e.g., Eduy. 8:7). See also LT, II, pp. 706-09; SBk, IV, pp. 764-98. Justin reports the Jewish view that the Messiah "is unknown, and does not even know Himself, and has no power until Elias come to anoint Him, and make Him manifest to all" (Dial. Try. 8; ANF, I, p. 199). Augustine had the idea that Elijah was to come before Christ's second advent, so that John was not he (NPNF, I, vii, p. 27). This idea has been taken up in modern times by J. C. Ryle, who cites Chrysostom, Jerome, Theophylact, and Gregory in support of the theory of two advents of Elijah, or more accurately of two Elijahs, an Elijah in the spirit and an Elijah in the flesh.

17. It is objected that if this was John's meaning he should have explained himself further. But John was in no mood for a long discourse about himself as his severely curtailed answers show. He wanted to bear witness to Christ, not to talk about himself. In any case, in his modesty he may not have dared to claim that he was Elijah in any sense; he thought of himself as no more than "a voice." That this Evangelist did not deny that the Baptist was Elijah in any sense is perhaps indicated by his description of John in 5:35 in terms that recall the description of Elijah in Sir. 48:1.

18. C. F. D. Moule points out that it is too simple to see a straight contradiction between John's account and that of the Synoptists. "We have to ask by whom the identification is made, and by whom refused. The Synoptists represent Jesus as identifying, or comparing, the Baptist with Elijah, while John represents the Baptist as rejecting the identification when it is offered him by his interviewers. Now these two, so far from being incompatible, are psychologically complementary. The Baptist humbly rejects the exalted title, but Jesus, on the contrary, bestows it on him. Why should not the two both be correct?" (The Phenomenon of the New Testament [London, 1967], p. 70).

19. Yet this should not blind us to the startling effect on them of a man who looked and acted like a prophet. For them prophecy was dead. It was congealed in parchment and ink. John stabbed them into a new awareness of what prophecy really is.

20. John is fond of ἄπορχίσσεται, which he uses 78 times (Matt. 55 times, Mark 30 times, Luke 46 times). In the great majority of instances he has the aorist passive as here, the aorist middle being found twice only (5:17, 19), and the present, which might be either middle or passive, four times (12:23, where see note; 13:26, 38; 18:22).
21. The form is the accented **οὐ**, which is the negative answer, "No" (see BAGD). John uses it again only in 7:12; 21:5. In all three places the negative is a very firm one.

22. The Jews seem to have made very little use of the prophecy in Deut. 18 and when they did use it they do not seem to have identified the prophet with the Christ. Sometimes they thought that Jeremiah was meant (see SBk on Acts 3:22). F. J. Foakes Jackson and Kirsopp Lake suggest that the application of the prophecy to the Christ came into Christianity from Samaritan sources (*The Beginnings of Christianity*, I [London, 1920], pp. 404-8). In the Qumran scrolls the prophet and the Christ seem to be distinguished. Thus we read in the *Manual of Discipline*, "Until the coming of the Prophet and of both the priestly and the lay Messiah" (*SDSS*, p. 67). Millar Burrows renders "a prophet" (*DSS*, p. 383), but M. Black accepts the reference to the prophet of Deut. 18:15 (*SJT*, VI [1953], p. 6). J. T. Milik points out that the Qumran texts display a concern for the due recognition of this prophet as a true prophet, but apart from this show little interest in him. "Once it becomes clear that the Priestly Messiah's functions include the proclamation of the eschatological law, it is hard to understand what the Prophet can be except a precursor of the Messiah" (*Ten Years of Discovery in the Wilderness of Judea* [London, 1959], p. 126). The Christian (and Samaritan) view is thus distinctive. For Jewish speculations about the coming of prophets see SBk on John 6:14.

23. For the suggestion that **ινά** is imperative see on v. 8. An imperative here would yield the sense "let us give an answer" which seems improbable. The meaning is surely "(Tell us) so that we may give an answer."

24. The verb is πέμψασιν. For the alleged distinction of this verb from ἀποστέλλω see on 3:17.


26. **εὐθύνω** was used not only in the literal sense "to straighten," but also with the derived meaning "to correct." Thus in the papyri the passive participle "the corrected ones" has the meaning "the culprits" (see MM, s.v.). Similarly, the active participle is used of the steersman of a ship, "the one guiding straight." The word does not occur in the Synoptic parallels, nor in LXX, from which they quote (they all read ἔτοιμασατε). John may be making his own translation from the Hebrew. And he may, as Edwin D. Freed thinks, have been attracted to this verb because of its frequent use in an ethical or moral sense (*Old Testament Quotations in the Gospel of John* [Leiden, 1965], pp. 1-7).

27. 1QS 8:Off. (*DSS*, p. 382).

28. Cf. W. H. Brownlee: "John's ministry is well explained as that of a 'voice' not in any vague sense that adheres to Is. 40:3 itself, but in the dynamic sense that here was a neglected function which the Essenes had not been performing as they sought to prepare the Lord's way in the wilderness" (*SNT*, p. 47).

29. It is not found in p66 χ *A*B syr *P* co. See the note in Field, p. 84.

30. Dodd finds significance in the difference in the kind of questions asked by the two groups; "The official deputation, as such, is content with obtaining from the Baptist a disavowal of any dangerous pretensions; its Pharisaic members (or the Pharisaic deputation) wish to probe more deeply into the theoretical basis of his baptism. There is nothing here inconsistent with what we know of conditions at the time. At this point the evangelist seems to be following a well-informed tradition" (*HTFG*, pp. 264-65).

31. The name "Pharisee" is usually said to derive from a root that means "to separate," so that the name basically means those who have separated themselves from all loose religious practices and live in strict accordance with the law. This may indeed be the correct way of understanding it, but T. W. Manson suggests that the name derives from the word for "Persian": "The word Pharisee originally meant simply 'Persian'; and it was applied to the innovators in theology in much the same way that the term 'Romaniser' has been used in theological controversy in our own day. The name stuck, and at a later date was furnished with an edifying etymology. It was explained that it was really connected with a Hebrew root meaning 'to separate', and so signified that those who bore it were separated from all that is abominable in God's sight" (*The Servant-Messiah*, pp. 19-20). Whatever be the truth about the origin of the name the Pharisees were the party of strict orthodoxy.
32. "In theology" the Sadducees "are the representatives of an ossified orthodoxy with no guiding principle except quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus" (Manson, *The Servant-Messiah*, p. 20).


34. Perhaps it was also new in that he baptized people (as his title "the Baptist" indicates). Previously people seem to have baptized themselves before witnesses. E. Stauffer thinks that John was "an apocalyptist of levitical stamp." He raises the question whether John may not have expected "a levitical Messiah" (*New Testament Theology* [London, 1955], p. 24). T. W. Manson devotes ch. II of *The Servant-Messiah* to John the Baptist. *Inter alia he says*, "John was not the first to preach repentance and moral reformation: he was not the first to make washing a ritual act charged with religious significance: he was not the first to indulge in Messianic propaganda. But he was the first to bring all three things together in an organic unity" (p. 39). See also W. H. Brownlee, "John the Baptist in the New Light of Ancient Scrolls" (ch. III of *SNT*).

35. We should notice that John is interested in water, both literal and symbolic. He uses the term 21 times, whereas it is found 4 times in 1 John and 18 times in Revelation but no more than 7 times in any other book.

36. Among the Qumran Thanksgiving Psalms is one that says:"this tree which is planted in Truth puts forth upon its boughs blossoms of Holiness, keeping its secret hidden, unknown, sealed and unsuspected." (SDSS, p. 165) If, as a number of scholars believe, this refers to the Messiah, we have a striking parallel to the thought of this verse, though the language is very different.

37. SBk, I, p. 121.

38. ίνα (in the expression ἄξιος ίνα λύσω) has lost most of its telic force and is practically equivalent to the infinitive, as often in John. But Abbott points out that it is used in this way only in sentences when it is preceded by words like "good" or "command," never words like "evil" or "forbid." He proceeds, "The reason is that 'goodness' and 'command' suggest a positive object to be attained or a positive object in commanding; and object suggests purpose" (2094). Note further the use of the redundant pronoun αὐτοῦ, complementing the relative pronoun οὗ. Burney points out that in Semitic languages a statement like "I saw the man to whom I gave the book" would appear as "I saw the man who I gave the book to him." He sees this construction again in 1:33; 9:36; 13:26; 18:9 (AO, pp. 84-85). Each of these is in direct speech, which reinforces the view that an Aramaic source lies behind the sayings of this Gospel.

39. His words are, "We are aware of the reading which is found in almost all the copies, 'These things were done in Bethany.' This appears, moreover, to have been the reading at an earlier time; and in Heracleon we read 'Bethany.' We are convinced, however, that we should not read 'Bethany,' but 'Bethabara.' We have visited the places to enquire as to the footsteps of Jesus and His disciples, and of the prophets. Now Bethany . . . is fifteen stadia from Jerusalem, and the river Jordan is about a hundred and eighty stadia distant from it. Nor is there any other place of the same name in the neighbourhood of the Jordan, but they say that Bethabara is pointed out on the banks of the Jordan, and that John is said to have baptized there" (*Commentary on John*, VI,24; ANF, X, p. 370).

40. Cf. the comment of R. D. Potter: "How did the name disappear in 100 or 150 years? The answer is that Origen, despite his pious assertion about visiting the scenes of our Redemption, had never been there. He is reporting hearsay (δείχνυσθαι δέ λέγουσιν). He never discovered Bethany beyond Jordan because he never went to look. He did not even get to Bethabara on this side of Jordan" (SE, I, p. 332).

41. Pierson Parker has put forward the interesting suggestion that the Bethany meant is the one near Jerusalem. He thinks a correct paraphrase would be, "These things took place in Bethany, which is across from the point of the Jordan where John had been baptizing" (*JBL*, LXXIV [1955], pp. 257-61; cf. also the adaptation of this by Dr. Harold Greenlee, BT, IX [1958], pp. 137-38).
is interesting, but I remain unconvinced that the Bethany near Jerusalem could naturally be described as "across from" a point on the Jordan. The distance is more than 15 miles, and there are hills in between.

42. There is an article with Ἰησοῦν a, s often. For this construction see Richard C. Nevius, "The Use of the Definite Article with 'Jesus' in the Fourth Gospel" (NTS, 12 [1965-66], pp. 81-85); also the note in Bernard.

43. The word is ἴδε, which John uses 15 times out of its 29 New Testament occurrences. Matthew has it 4 times and Luke 9 times (the other occurrence is in Galatians). By contrast ἰδοὺ is found 62 times in Matthew, 7 times in Mark, 57 times in Luke, and only 4 times in John. There seems to be little difference in meaning, both forms being originally imperatives from εἶδον. But they have become conventionalized particles and, for example, both may be followed by the nominative (ἴδε here, ἰδοὺ in 19:5).

44. The nominative Ἄμνός shows that ἴδε is no longer a real imperative ("Look at—"), but an exclamation ("Behold!").

45. The word used in Revelation (and in John 21:15) is ἁρπίου, whereas that used here is ὄμνος (elsewhere in the New Testament only in v. 36; Acts 8:32; 1 Pet. 1:19). There does not appear to be any real difference of meaning. MacGregor thinks it "likely that the Evangelist is throwing back into John's words a title which, as applied to Christ, had in his own day become stereotyped." So far from this being the case, it is very difficult to find any evidence for the use of the term that does not depend on this passage. As far as I know, the expression is found nowhere before its occurrence here, and it does not seem to be attested in later times other than in passages ultimately dependent on this one. There is evidence for referring to Christ as "the Lamb," but with a different word and without the qualifier "of God."

46. There are references to "the Lamb of God" in the Testament of Joseph 19:11; Testament of Benjamin 3:8, but these are generally seen as included among the several Christian interpolations in these writings. H. C. Kee remarks that the Christian interpolations "seem to have a special affinity with Johannine thought" (J. H. Charlesworth, ed., The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, I [New York, 1983], p. 777).

47. It may possibly be a Hebraism that describes anything great by referring it to God (e.g., Nimrod was very mighty hunter, literally "a mighty hunter before Yahweh," Gen. 10:9). In that case it would describe Jesus as "that eminent, great, divine, and most excellent Lamb" (Ryle).

48. It might be a kid. I am not convinced by the contention that, while a kid was possible, a lamb was more usual. This may have been the case, though I have never seen it proved. But it fails to deal with the main point, namely that "the Passover lamb" is a modern expression, not an ancient one. Even if a lamb was offered most often, the term "the Passover lamb" was not used of it (τὸ πάσχα was the term as in 1 Cor. 5:7; curiously NIV imports "lamb" into this verse with no MS support). We are looking for the source of an expression that explicitly mentions a lamb.

49. G. Buchanan Gray says, "the Paschal victim was . . . neither as a time of fact necessarily a lamb, nor in the usage of the time was it called a lamb; the proper term for it was 'Passover', and it is only reasonable to suppose that had the author of the Fourth Gospel intended this he would, like St. Paul, have used the correct and unambiguous designation" (Sacrifice in the Old Testament [Oxford, 1925], p. 397).

50. SBk cites evidence that even the meal offering was regarded as having atoning value (III, p. 699; notice that Lev. 14:20 regards the burnt and meal offerings as making atonement). Lev. 17:11 connects atonement with "the blood" simply, not the blood of any particular sacrifice or sacrifices. Johannes Pedersen can say, "Everything in any way connected with sacrifice acquired an expiatory power" (Israel, III-IV [London, 1947], p. 634). Similarly C. R. North: "By the close of the OT period, too, all sacrifices were believed to have atoning value" (TWBB, p. 206).

51. G. Dalman cites Exod. Rab. 15 (35b), "I see the Paschal blood and propitiate you," and again (35a), "I mercifully take pity on you by means of the Paschal blood and the blood of
circumcision, and I propitiate your souls” (Jesus-Jeshua [London, 1929], p. 167). Josephus says of the Passover that the Israelites "in readiness to start, sacrificed, purified the houses with the blood" (Ant. 2.312).

52. See the authorities cited by H. H. Rowley, BJRL XXXIX (1950-51), p. 103, n. 4. Those who accept this view usually agree that other ideas are present also. Thus Vincent Taylor says, "The dominant conception appears to be that of the Servant, freely used in association with other sacrificial ideas" (Jesus and His Sacrifice [London, 1939], p. 227). But Rowley's arguments seem conclusive that the association of Isa. 53 with the Messiah was not made in pre-Christian times. He says specifically, "There is no serious evidence, then, of the bringing together of the concepts of the Suffering Servant and the Davidic Messiah before the Christian era" (The Servant of the Lord [London, 1952], p. 85). Similarly H. Wheeler Robinson: "There has been no success in all the endeavours made to find previous or contemporary identification of the Messiah with the suffering servant of Yahweh" (Redemption and Revelation [New York and London, 1942], p. 199).

53. J. Jeremias says, "the expression ὁ ἁμνός τοῦ θεοῦ conceals both a factual and a linguistic difficulty. (1) The description of the Saviour as a lamb is unknown to late Judaism. (2) The expression is an unparalleled genitive combination. Both difficulties are solved if we refer to the Aramaic where 'lamb' means (a) the lamb, (b) the boy, the servant. Probably behind the phrase ὁ ἁμνός τοῦ θεοῦ lies an Aramaic phrase in the sense of Ἰ.amazonaws (W. Zimmerli and J. Jeremias, The Servant of God [London, 1957], p. 82).

54. Dodd puts the criticism of Jeremias's view succinctly: "ἁμνός in the LXX never translates λίβατος. No examples are adduced for ἁμνός. Thus we lack evidence in support of the view either that the Aramaic-speaking Church (or John the Baptist) could have spoken of the הולך, or that a bilingual translator who took λίβατος in the sense of 'lamb' would have chosen ἁμνός as its equivalent" (IFG, pp. 235-36). (A Palestinian Syriac text is now known to have 'lamb' in Isa. 52:13, as also in Gen. 18:3; Jer. 30:10; cf. J. Jeremias, TDNT, VI, p. 679, n. 156; p. 702, n. 356.)

55. Hoskyns is one of few commentators who adopt this view. He speaks of John as declaring "Jesus to be the property of God, by whose complete obedience the normal sacrifices in the Temple — a lamb without blemish was offered daily both morning and evening (Exod. xxix.38-46) and even during the siege of Jerusalem these sacrifices were maintained in spite of very great difficulties . . . were fulfilled and superseded (ii.18-22)."

56. IFG, pp. 230-38. More recently Beasley-Murray finds "little doubt as to what figure is in mind: the Baptist has in view the Lamb who leads the flock of God, and who delivers them from their foes and rules them in the kingdom of God."

57. A. Richardson finds more than one allusion here, but certainly this one among others. He says, "St John would seem (as is his way) to have caught the subtle allusion to the sacrifice of Isaac implicit in the (Synoptic) tradition of the Baptism of Jesus, and he is emphasizing the truth in his own way: Christ is the Lamb of sacrifice promised by God to Abraham, the father of many nations, and thus he is the God-given universal Sin Bearer" (An Introduction to the Theology of the New Testament [London, 1958], p. 228).

58. Yet we should not overlook the tremendous importance assigned in Jewish thought to the Binding of Isaac. This was held to be a supremely significant sacrifice (see the evidence cited by G. Vermes, Scripture and Tradition in Judaism [Leiden, 1961], pp. 193-229; H. J. Schoeps, Paul [London, 1961], pp. 141-49). Vermes maintains that in the light of this the Johannine passage ceases to be a crux: "For the Palestinian Jew, all lamb sacrifice, and especially the Passover lamb and the Tamid offering, was a memorial of the Akedah with its effects of deliverance, forgiveness of sin and messianic salvation" (Scripture and Tradition in Judaism, p. 225). Those who advocate this view do not give weight to the fact that in Genesis 22:13 it was in fact a ram, not a lamb, that God provided.

59. Cf. J. Morgenstem: "Here, beyond all doubt, Jesus is conceived of, precisely as the Servant, as an ἁμνός 'a guilt-offering', sacrificing himself for the redemption of mankind from its iniquity and
thus effecting its salvation" (Vetus Testamentum, XI [1961], p. 425).

60. Feliks Gryglewicz argues that, in accordance with John's habit, the expression is used with a double meaning, the Servant of the Lord, and the Passover Lamb (see "Das Lamm Gottes," NTS, 13 [1966-67], pp. 133-46). This is all right as far as it goes, but it seems that the meaning is more likely to be multiform than dual in this case.


62. The verb is αἰρω, which John uses more than any other New Testament writer (26 times). It is found with the object άμάρτημα in 1 Sam. 15:25. and άνόμημα in 1 Sam. 25:28, both times in the sense "forgive." The idea of bearing sin in Heb. 9:28; 1 Pet. 2:24 is conveyed by αναφέρω, but there is not likely to be a great difference in meaning. MacGregor, agreeing that the verb αἰρω means not "take upon oneself." but "take out of the way," yet says, "But the latter thought, while enriching the former, also includes it, for a lamb can only 'remove' sin by vicariously 'bearing' it, and this Christ did." J. Jeremias finds two possible meanings of the verb in this passage: "to take up and carry" and "to carry off." He says, "In both cases it is a matter of setting aside the guilt of others. In the former, however, the means of doing this is by a substitutionary bearing of penalty; in the latter sin is removed by a means of expiation" (TDNT, I. pp. 185-86). 111 the Johannine manner probably both meanings are in mind. For the concept of sin-bearing see my The Cross in the New Testament (Grand Rapids, 1965), pp. 322ff.

63. John's interest in the people's sins should not be missed. He uses the noun άμαρτία 17 times, the same total as in 1 John. The only New Testament books that use the term more are Romans (48 times) and Hebrews (25 times). Curiously Haenchen says that sin "is not a basic concept in the message of the Evangelist."

64. Cf. Vacher Burch: "He is a man of uncommon powers, and his words flash out from his intuitive genius which owes nothing to the teaching method of his abrogator" (The Structure and Message of St. John's Gospel [London, 1928], p. 58).

65. Cf. C. F. Burney: "From these considerations we deduce the conclusion that the fact that our Lord was to fulfil the role of the ideal Servant, though not understood by the Apostles, was in some measure realized by the Baptist" (AO, p. 106; Burney's italics).

66. SNT, pp. 50. and 51. He goes on to speak of "the validation of the Fourth Gospel as an authentic source concerning the Baptist" (p. 52). This is not in contradiction of n. 52 above. There the point was that the linking of the Messiah with Isa. 53 was not widely made: here it is that the link was occasionally made, and specifically that this was done in circles to which John was apparently indebted.

67. Thus άμνός does not occur in John outside this saying, nor does this Evangelist use αἰρω for the removal of sin, nor, though he uses both άμαρτία and χόσμος often, does he speak elsewhere of "the sin of the world." It is worth pointing out that C. H. Dodd concludes his discussion of this passage with, "There seems no real reason why the whole expression, ὁ άμνός τού θεού ὁ αἰρων τήν άμαρτίαν τού χόσμου, should not have been used by John the Baptist, or in a traditional account of his preaching" (HTFG, pp. 270-71).

68. ἀνήρ. "Of whom" is ὑπέρ ού, "on behalf of whom." Many MSS read περί, but this preposition, besides giving a somewhat easier sense, is very common in John and is not likely to have been altered. The Baptist thinks of himself as an ambassador speaking "on behalf of" Christ.

69. See AO, pp. 56ff.; AA, pp. 44ff.
70. χάγω. John uses this term 30 times, three times as often as in any other New Testament book (1 Corinthians has it 10 times). Clearly he finds this form of emphasis congenial.

71. ἵνα has its full telic force, and it is reinforced by διά τοῦ οὗτος. The importance of making Christ manifest to Israel is given prominence by putting the ἵνα clause first. John has διά with the accusative 45 times, which is more than in any other New Testament book, but he has no special fondness for διά with the genitive (14 times).

72. It is sometimes alleged that John uses several verbs for seeing with distinctive meanings and that θεαόμαι, which is used here, has the notion of spiritual insight. But it is impossible to see this in some of its occurrences (e.g. v. 38; 6:5). Brown has a good note on John's verbs for seeing (pp. 501-3). He agrees that there are different kinds of sight in John, but not that these are conveyed by different verbs. He concludes, "Those scholars who think that the verbs are synonymous have almost as many texts to prove their point as do the scholars who would attribute specific meanings to the verbs" (p. 503). John uses θεαόμαι 6 times, the most in any New Testament book.

73. It is uncertain whether ἐξ οὐρανοῦ should be taken with χαταβαίνων ("descending from heaven like a dove") or with περιστεράν ("descending like a dove from the sky").

74. The symbolism is puzzling and perhaps inexplicable. The dove was not, as is sometimes said, a recognized symbol of the Holy Spirit (see LT, I, pp. 286-87; C. K. Barrett, The Holy Spirit and the Gospel Tradition [London, 1947], pp. 35-39). It sometimes symbolized Israel, but it is difficult to see it having this force here. But perhaps Jesus is being seen as the true, ideal Israelite at the very time that he received the Spirit.

75. The verb is ἐμείνε, aorist of μένω, a characteristic word of this Evangelist, here denoting the beginning of the Spirit's permanent dwelling in Jesus and the inception of the new order: the whole of Jesus' ministry is accomplished in the power of the Spirit.

76. Chrysostom held that Jesus was quite unknown to John until this moment, the reason being that John "had passed all his time in the wilderness away from his father's house" (17.2; p. 60). Godet follows the same line of reasoning, and thinks he would have known from the birth stories that Jesus was the Messiah (on v. 31). It is possible, as Brownlee points out (SNT, p. 35) that John's aged parents died while he was very young, and that he was brought up by a community of Essenes (who frequently adopted children, according to Josephus, Bell. 2.120). Origen thinks the reference is to the pre-incarnation period, with the added thought that "perhaps he is here learning something new about Him," namely that he is to baptize with the Holy Spirit (Commentary on John, 1.37; ANF, X, p. 317).

77. The use of the emphatic ἐχείνος should not be missed: "he that sent me to baptize with water, he (and none less) said. . . . " For ἐχείνος in this Gospel see on v. 8.

78. For the significance of the redundant pronoun αὐτόν see on v. 27.

79. For the idea of baptism with the spirit cf. the Manual of Discipline, "Like waters of purification (God) will sprinkle upon him the spirit of truth" (1QS 4.21; SDSS, p. 55).

80. ἐώραχα. For John's use of verbs of seeing see n. 71 above.

81. ὁ υἱός has far and away the best attestation, p66 75 ASC TH boh etc. But ὁ ἐχείνος υἱός is read by p5vld ἐχείνος Ambrose, a strong combination. Two other readings, ὁ ἐχείνος υἱός and ὁ μονογενής υἱός, appear secondary. There would be every reason for scribes to substitute υἱός for another reading before τοῦ Θεοῦ, but it is difficult to see how ἐχείνος could have been derived if υἱός was original. R. V. G. Tasker gives an additional reason for preferring ἐχείνος, namely that it "is in harmony with what would appear to have been the early tradition about the significance of the heavenly voice at Jesus' baptism"; he refers to Matt. 3:17: Mark 1:11 (GNT, p. 425).

82. See further Dom J. Howton's article "'Son of God' in the Fourth Gospel" (NTS, 10 [1963-64], pp. 227-37). He argues that "Whereas God of old chose a nation to work out his purpose in the world, and in that nation raised up prophets to direct his people, now he has chosen only one
individual who in himself represents God active in the world (cf. Heb. i. 1 -2). It is this meaning of the title 'son of God' that is primary for the Evangelist" (p. 233).

83. Brown notes the christological richness of this section of the Gospel: "When we look back on the wealth and depth of the material contained in the intervening verses (i.e. vv. 19-34), we appreciate John's genius at incorporating a whole christology into one brief scene."

84. Luther, vol. 22, p. 182.

85. J. A. T. Robinson finds "little to set against the traditional view that the unnamed disciple of the pair was the actual source of this material (i.e. the material in this Gospel) — whether or not he was also the author of the Gospel" (NTS, 4 [1957-58], p. 264, n. 2).

86. The verb is ἐμβλέπω. Cf. Swete on Mark 10:21, "Ἐμβλέπειν . . . is to fix the eyes for a moment upon an object, — a characteristically searching look turned upon an individual." But see n. 72 above.

87. John's verb is λαλούντος p, resent participle of λαλέω. This verb is unusually frequent in John, where it occurs 60 times (Matt. 26 times, Mark 21 times, Luke 31 times). We see the significance of these figures by comparing them with those for λέγω, which John has 266 times (Matt. 289 times, Mark 202 times, Luke 217 times). John thus has an unusual preference for λαλέω. His reason is not clear. LS gives the meaning of this verb as "talk, chat, prattle," while BAGD points out that in the classics it usually means "chatter, babble." This, however, is certainly not the meaning in John. MM cites examples from the papyri that "all bear out the usual distinction that, while λέγω calls attention to the substance of what is said, the onomatopoeic λαλέω points rather to the outward utterance." It does not, however, seem possible to find a real difference between the two verbs in John; this Evangelist seems to use them interchangeably. His unusual use of λαλέω appears to be no more than a stylistic preference.

88. Calvin views in the words as a rebuke to those who are satisfied "with a bare passing look For there are very many who merely sniff at the Gospel from a distance, and thus let Christ suddenly disappear, and whatever they have learned about Him slip away."

89. יָהָנוּ may literally "my great one." But the personal pronoun tended to become conventional, as in monsieur or madame. The word was used very much like our "Sir." Some scholars maintain that John's statement is anachronistic, on the grounds that the title was not in use before A.D. 70. Brown, however, cites Sukenik, who discovered an ossuary on the Mount of Olives that he dates several generations before the destruction of the Temple and that uses ἰδάσχαλος as a title. This may well indicate that "Rabbi" was in use in this way, though it is not absolutely conclusive, for διδάσχαλος does not always represent יָהָנוּ. W. D. Davies has no doubt about the usage in Jesus' day, for he devotes a section of his great work on the Sermon on the Mount to Jesus as "The Rabbi," and he says explicitly: "He was called rabbi. While in his day the title did not have the exact connotation of one officially ordained to teach that it later acquired, it was more than a courtesy title: it did designate a 'teacher' in the strict sense" (The Setting of the Sermon on the Mount [Cambridge, 1964], p. 422).

90. J. Jeremias interprets this as the time of the evening meal: "Jesus admits the two disciples of John the Baptist to His table" (The Eucharistic Words of Jesus [Oxford, 1955], p. 17, n. 4). One manuscript, A, reads ἐχτη, sixth, but this is difficult to accept, especially without support.

91. Westcott and others think the incident occurred around 10 a.m., holding that John follows the Roman system of reckoning the day from midnight to midnight. But it is not at all clear that this Roman usage is relevant. It is true that the Romans counted from midnight when reckoning the legal day on which leases or contracts were dated (see Dods), but for all other purposes they seem to have computed from sunrise. For example, they marked noon on their sundials with VI, not XII. Both Greeks and Romans measured from sunrise: "The Romans when they spoke of 'the first hour' meant as a rule the point of time when the first hora from sunrise was completed" (Sir R Harvey, ed., The Oxford Companion to Classical Literature, [Oxford, 1959], p. 88). J. Carcopino gives a table showing the hours of the day and comparing them with our time (Daily Life in Ancient Rome
[Penguin Books, 1962], pp. 167-68); he sees the tenth hour at the summer solstice as lasting from 3:46 p.m. to 5:02 p.m. on our reckoning. Similarly Gepp and Haigh's Latin-English Dictionary defines prima hora as "daybreak, sunrise" and reckons other hours accordingly; it notes no other usage. For Jewish use there is an instructive passage concerning evidence in which R. Judah accepts the testimony of two witnesses when one speaks of the third hour and another of the fifth, but rejects it if one spoke of the fifth hour and the other of the seventh, "since at the fifth hour the sun is in the east and at the seventh it is in the west" (Sank. 5:3). H. R. Stroes gives a full examination of the biblical evidence in an article entitled "Does the Day Begin in the Evening or Morning?" (Vetus Testamentum, XVI [1966], pp. 460-75). As the title indicates, Stroes presents just two views and does not even mention as a possibility that the day might begin at midnight. In New Testament times he thinks the day was regarded as beginning at sunset when precision was required; otherwise at sunrise (p. 462). It is difficult to understand why this Evangelist alone should have such an unusual mode of reckoning time as the Roman legal use. The early commentators seem to have accepted without question that John used the same method as the other Evangelists. Thus Chrysostom speaks of "the tenth hour" here as when "the sun was already near its setting" (18.3; p. 65). Augustine finds only an allegorical reference to the law "because the law was given in ten commandments" (7.10; p. 51)! MacGregor also adopts an allegorical explanation, "'the tenth hour,' the number of perfection, would mark the beginning of the Christian era" (Bultmann also sees allegory). J. Edgar Brans has a note in which he regards all the Johannine time references as symbolic (NTS, 13 [1966-67], pp. 285-90). But this seems to be going beyond the evidence and the probabilities. It is preferable to regard this and other such passages as straightforward notes of time. See further on 19:14.

92. John uses the compound name "Simon Peter" 17 times (Matt. 3 times, Mark 1 time, Luke 2 times). He also uses both "Simon" and "Peter," but his fondness for the compound is noteworthy. See further on 21.15.

93. The readings are πρώτος in K L W, πρώτον in p66 p75 K C A B Θ f l fl3, and πρωΐ in some Old Latin MSS. The attestation of πρώτον is thus superior. Some scholars hold that the use of τόν ιδιόν. "his own," favors πρώτος. But this argument is worth little, for in late Greek ιδιός often means no more than "his" (though Moulton denies that this applies here, M, I, p. 90).

94. The transliteration of a Hebrew word meaning "anointed." See further n. 13 above. "In Jewish lips 'we have found the Messiah' was the most comprehensive of all eurekas" (Dods).

95. Cephas is our transliteration of the Aramaic XPhθ, meaning "rock." Peter is from the Greek πέτρα with much the same meaning. Strictly the Greek equivalent of Cephas is Πέτρα, but this has a feminine ending and the less usual masculine form is used for Simon's new name. Originally πέτρα meant the solid rock and πέτρος a stone, a piece of rock, but the two seem not to have been sharply distinguished in New Testament times (see O. Cullmann, Peter: Disciple, Apostle, Martyr [London, 1962], pp. 20-21). Cephas does not occur in any of the other Gospels. It points to an Aramaic-speaking author, as anyone else would use the common form, Peter. Simon's father is called John, though in Matt. 16:17 the name is Jonah. This is John's only use of the name Cephas. Indeed, apart from this passage the term is found only in Paul. See further the note on 21:15.

96. A. J. Droge says that the name "is not symbolic of his potential for 'solid' leadership... in the Fourth Gospel Peter is a 'rock' because of his obtuseness and persistent inability to understand Jesus" (JBL, 109 [1990], p. 308). But this is perhaps too harsh; Brown detects "no attitude deprecatory of Peter in the Johannine writings" (p. 1006).

97. The meaning of the aorist ή θέλησαν is probably "he resolved."Grammatically the subject could be "Peter" (who was last mentioned), but the sense of the passage plainly requires us to understand "Jesus."

98. Barclay understands the passage to mean that the event took place in Galilee. He translates, "and there He found Philip." So Moffatt.

99. There is a change of preposition, Philip being ἀπὸ Βηθσαϊδά and ἐκ της πόλεως Ἄνδρέου χοί Πέτρου. Some writers find a distinction between them, with ἀπὸ signifying place of residence
and εκ place of origin (Abbott, 2289). But John uses the two prepositions more or less interchangeably. In this Gospel we read of Christ as both εκ and ἀπό heaven (6:33, 38), as εκ Galilee and ἀπό Bethlehem (7:41-42). There is no real difference. For John's habit of variation see SFG, ch. 5. John is much more fond of εκ than of ἀπό. He uses εκ 165 times, which is more than in any other New Testament book (next is Revelation 134 times, then Luke with 87 times). But he uses ἀπό only 40 times (Matt, has it 113 times, Mark 47 times, Luke 127 times, and Acts 114 times).

100. There is good evidence that Bethsaida was to the East of Jordan. Josephus locates it in lower Gaulanitis (Bell. 2.168), and it appears to be near the place where the Jordan flows into the lake of Galilee (Bell. 3.515); Pliny and Jerome are also cited in support. It is urged that Mark 6:45 shows that there was a Bethsaida in the general region of Capernaum, and this is supported by the use of the expression "Bethsaida of Galilee" (John 12:21). But George Adam Smith cites evidence that by the time of the war of 66-70 the term "Galilee" had extended its meaning to include territory around the lake. He thinks that even earlier the jurisdiction of Galilee's ruler extended to the East of the lake (EB, 566). On the whole it seems probable that there was but one Bethsaida, with perhaps a suburb across the river (R. H. Mounce favors this view, though noting some objections, ISBE, I, p. 475). The name incidentally means "House of fishing."

101. The prominent position of "Οὐ ἐγραψε ν..." may indicate that Philip and Nathanael had previously discussed the fulfilment of these scriptures. Philip cites no specific passage. Edersheim notes that the Rabbis interpreted no less than 456 passages messianically (LT, II, pp. 710-41). For Jesus' messiahship see on v. 41. For other passages showing that the Old Testament speaks of Jesus, cf. 2:22; 5:39, 46; 20:9).

102. "It is in accord with (John's) ironical use of traditional material that he should allow Jesus to be ignorantly described as 'son of Joseph' while himself believing that Jesus had no human father" (Barrett). Godet vigorously exclaims, "as if it were the evangelist who was here speaking, and not Philip! And that disciple, after exchanging ten words with Jesus, must have been already acquainted with the most private circumstances of His birth and infancy!"

103. For this characteristic of the Evangelist cf. G. Salmon, A Historical Introduction to the Study of the Books of the New Testament (London, 1892), pp. 280ff. As Salmon says, "no one understands better the rhetorical effect of leaving an absurdity without formal refutation, when his readers can be trusted to perceive it for themselves" (pp. 281-82). This is brought out by P. D. Duke, Irony in the Fourth Gospel (Atlanta, 1985, though curiously he does not see it in this passage). Duke finds irony running right through this Gospel and indeed finds the central truth of which John writes as essentially ironical:"They had beheld a man — and now, 'Behold the Man!' They had beheld flesh — and he was the Word; in him what they had beheld was glory. He came graciously to a world he had made — and was unrecognized. He visited his own chosen people — and was spurned. They lifted him up to shame — and he was lifted up indeed. He was beheld there by the outcast and accursed — and he made them his friends and children of God. So crucial is this irony to the Johannine message that it may fairly be said, if we do not grasp the Irony we do not grasp the Gospel" (p. 156).

104. G. D. Kilpatrick points out that the adjective ἁγιός is used predicatively here and at 7:12, while it is pronominal at 5:29. χαλός, he finds, is always attributive (BT, 11 [1960], pp. 173-74). The difference between the two then in this Gospel appears to be purely grammatical; there is no real difference in meaning. John uses ἁγιός 3 times and χαλός 7 times.

105. It does not appear to be mentioned before the New Testament. D. C. Pellett says that apart from the New Testament, the earliest evidence for the city is in Julius Africanus, A.D. 170-240 (IDB, 3, pp. 524-25). Bruce, however, cites its inclusion in a list of towns in an inscription in Caesarea discovered in 1962 and referring to places in Galilee to which priests emigrated after the disaster of A.D. 135.
106. "Nathanael uses intelligent human observation to set a firm limit to the power of God" (Hoskyns).
108. LS, sub δόλος.
109. Burney claims that ἀπεχρίθη (or ἀπεχρίθησαν or ἀποχρίνεται) without a connecting particle (which is found 66 times in John, elsewhere in the New Testament once only) points to Aramaic. He also suggests that ἀπεχρίθη χαι εἶπεν is a literal rendering of an Aramaic idiom (AO, pp. 53-54).
110. The articular infinitive (πρὸ τοῦ . . . φωνήσαι) is a construction rare in this Gospel. Abbott takes from Bruder the information that it is found four times only, here, 2:24; 13:19; and 17:5 (1995a). It occurs in Matthew around 24 times, Mark around 15 times, Luke around 70 times, so that John's use is exceptional.
111. ύπο τήν συχήν. If υπό (with the accusative here only in this gospel) has the idea of motion to it may imply that Nathanael had withdrawn to the fig tree. There is probably no significance in the change to ύποχάτω της συχής in v. 50, for John often repeats an expression with slight variations (see SFC, ch. 5). Grammatically it is possible to take "while you were still under the fig tree" with "called you" (as Chrysostom, for example, does). This would mean no more than that Nathanael had been under a fig tree at the time Philip called him. But little to be said for this view, and it is contradicted by v. 50. Calvin comments: "We should also gather from this passage a useful lesson, that when we are not even thinking of Christ we are observed by Him; and this must needs be so, that He may bring us back when we have withdrawn from Him."
112. See the passages in SBk, II, p. 371.
113. It is likely that we should understand the passage as meaning not only that Jesus had knowledge of some incident, but of what went on in Nathanael's thinking. "His surprise is not merely that Jesus in some clairvoyant way saw him in his own home, but that He knew what was going on in his mind" (Strachan).
114. There is an article with "king" in 12:13, but not here, and Abbott notices a difference: "The Son of God' reigns over, or is 'king of,' all the nations of the earth including Israel. David, or Hezekiah, or a merely Jewish Messiah, might naturally be called 'the king of Israel,'" i.e. the king for the time being. Nathanael is made to utter a confession much more inclusive than that of 'the great multitude' " (1966). This must, however, be rejected in the light of the rule established by E. C. Colwell, that where a definite predicate noun precedes the verb it does not have the article (see on 1:1). βασιλεύς here is surely just as definite as is υἱός.
115. "Note the strongly Hebraic mentality for which it is in the order of climax to pass from Son of God to King of Israel" (Temple).
116. The use of causal ὅτι introducing a clause preceding the main clause is to be noted. This construction is not common, and Prof. G. D. Kilpatrick in a private communication says it is completely absent from Matthew, Mark, Ephesians, the Pastorals, Hebrews, etc. There is no certain example in Luke-Acts and the Pauline Epistles, but he finds six examples in John, here, 8:45; 15:19; 16:6; 19:42; 20:29 (of which 15:19 is textually uncertain), and at least one in Revelation. For John's fondness for ὅτι see on 1:15.
117. This may be another reference to Nathanael as an Israelite (as Bernard, for example, thinks). The name "Israel" was widely held to be derived from יִשְׂרָאֵל "the man seeing God." Thus Jacob was thought of as the man of vision par excellence.
119. Schlier holds that in ἀμήν used in this way "we have the whole of Christology in nuce. The one who accepts His word as true and certain is also the one who acknowledges and affirms it in his own life and thus causes it, as fulfilled by him, to become a demand to others" (TDNT, I, p. 338). Ebeling is of the opinion that Jesus' use of ἀμήν gives expression to the fact "that Jesus identifies
himself entirely with his words, that in the identification with these words he surrenders himself to
the reality of God, and that he lets
his existence be grounded on God's making these words true and
real" (Word and Faith, p. 237). G. E. Ladd says, "Jesus used the expression as the equivalent of an oath, paralleling the Old Testament expression, 'As I live, saith the Lord.' Jesus' usage is without
analogy because in his person and words the Kingdom of God manifested its presence and authority" (Jesus and the Kingdom [London, 1966], p. 163). E. Kasemann comments, "it signifies an extreme
and immediate certainty, such as is conveyed by inspiration" (Essays on New Testament Themes [London, 1964], p. 42).

Matthew uses the single άμήν 31 times, Mark 13 times, and Luke 6 times. John has the
doubled άμήν άμήν 25 times. Clearly he is fond of the expression.

The translators adopt a variety of devices to bring out the meaning: "Truly, truly" (Moffatt, RSV), "Very truly" (NRSV), "in all truth" (Rieu), "Believe me" (Knox), "in most solemn truth" (Weymouth), "for a positive fact" (Schonfield), "most assuredly" (Wuest), "in truth, in very truth" (NEB), "in very truth" (REB), "I am telling you the truth" (GNB).

122. Yet it is possible to take in Gen. 28:12 as meaning "on him" (i.e. Jacob), not "on it" (the
ladder). This interpretation was held by some Rabbis, though not until after New Testament times as
far as our present knowledge goes. C. Rowland, however, argues that the ambiguity is there in the
Massoretic text and "in the light of the sophistication of exegetical methods practised by Jewish
interpreters, this ambiguity would have been exploited to the full from a very early time" (NTS, 30 [1984], p. 501). Burney holds that John accepts this view (AO, pp. 115-16), as does Odeberg. See
also the notes in Bernard and Barrett. It should be noted that the rabbinic tradition is that the angels
"ascended and descended on Jacob: they raised him up and put him down, they leapt on him, ran on him, teased him. . . . They ascended on high and found (beheld) his image, they descended on earth and found him sleeping" (FG, pp. 33-34). The thought in John is not this, but rather that the Son of
man is the means of bridging the gap between earth and heaven. He takes the place of the ladder.
Bernard has a valuable Additional Note in which he cites the patristic interpretations of Gen. 28:23,
and John 1:51. He shows that Augustine is the first to connect the two.

123. Strachan, p. 6. His whole note is important (pp. 5-11).

124. Strachan, p. 11.

125. Cf. T. Preiss: "The title which Jesus himself prefers and remarkably enough, as in the
Synoptics, is found only on his lips — is that of Son of Man. Do we not see there another proof, indirect but very substantial, of the definitely ancient character of the Johannine tradition?" (Life in

126. B. Vawter argues convincingly that Ezekiel's use of the term is one of the influences
behind the significance of the "Son of man" in this Gospel (CBQ, XXVI [1964], pp. 451-55),


129. The Lord from Heaven, p. 28.


132. Moloney, p. 17. He objects to A. J. B. Higgins's view that there are no "earthly" Son of
man sayings in John: "It could be argued that all the sayings are earthly" (and cites F. H. Borsch in
support, p. 18).


134. Moloney, p. 220.

135. Particular reference may perhaps be made to N. B. Stonehouse, The Witness of Matthew
and The Servant-Messiah (Cambridge, 1953), pp. 72-74; H. E. W. Turner, Jesus Master and Lord
IIII. THE SIGNS AND PUBLIC DISCOURSES OF THE CHRIST (2:1-12:50)

A. THE FIRST SIGN — WATER INTO WINE (2:1-11)

10« the third day a wedding took place at Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there, and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. 3When the wine was gone, Jesus' mother said to him, "They have no more wine." 4 "Dear woman, why do you involve me? " Jesus replied, "My time has not yet come." 5 His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." 6 Nearby stood six stone water jars, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing, each holding from twenty to thirty gallons. 7 Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water"; so they filled them to the brim. 8 Then he told them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet." They did so, 9 and the master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine. He did not realize where it had come from, though the servants who had drawn the water knew. Then he called the bridegroom aside 10 and said, "Everyone brings out the choice wine first and then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink; but you have saved the best till now." 11 This, the first of his miraculous signs, Jesus performed in Cana of Galilee. He thus revealed his glory, and his disciples put their faith in him.

a. Greek two to three metretes (probably about 75 to 115 liters)
It is often suggested that this miracle is not historical, but that, when the wine ran out, Jesus commanded water to be used. The "master of the banquet," entering into the spirit of the event, made a merry quip about this being the best wine of all! Someone who did not understand heard the remark and thus the story of a miracle originated.² Others think that John has adapted a heathen legend to set forth Christian truth.³ Such reconstructions founder on verses 9 and 11. In the first place John says that the water became wine. He records a miracle. And in the second place it was a miracle that had profound effects on those who had begun to follow Jesus. It is impossible to maintain that "his disciples put their faith in him," and that he "thus revealed his glory," on the basis of nothing more than a good joke.⁴ Nor is it easier to think that John would say this about a heathen legend. Plainly he records the miracle because he believes that it happened. But for him the miracles are all "signs": they point beyond themselves. This particular miracle signifies that there is a transforming power associated with Jesus. He changes the water of Judaism into the wine of Christianity,⁵ the water of Christlessness into the wine of the richness and the fullness of eternal life in Christ, the water of the law into the wine of the gospel.⁶ While this "sign" is recorded only in this Gospel, it should not be overlooked that there are partial parallels in the Synoptics. Thus the image of a wedding feast is used with reference to the kingdom of God (Matt. 22:1-14; 25:1-13; Luke 12:36), and the disciples in the presence of Christ are likened to wedding guests rejoicing with the bridegroom (Mark 2:19). Again the contrast of Jesus' message with Judaism is illustrated by the wine and the wineskins (Luke 5:37ff.).

J. Duncan M. Derrett has a very valuable discussion of this miracle.⁷ He points out that in the ancient Near East there was a strong element of reciprocity about weddings, and that, for example, it was possible to take legal action in certain circumstances against a man who had failed to provide the appropriate wedding gift.⁸ This is quite foreign to our wedding customs and we are apt to overlook such possibilities. But it means that when the supply of wine failed more than social embarrassment was involved. The bridegroom and his family may well have become involved in a heavy pecuniary liability. The gift made by Jesus was thus doubly important.
1-2 For "the third day" see on 1:19-28. The expression occurs only here in this Gospel. Verses 43-51 of the first chapter have given us the events of five days of the momentous week John describes. Nothing is said of day 6. "The third day," by the inclusive mode of reckoning then current, brings us to day 7. Cana is mentioned in this passage, in 4:46; 21:2, and nowhere else in the New Testament. On each occasion it is qualified by "of Galilee." Evidently it was not a well-known place. John does not disclose the identity of the happy couple, but the presence of the mother of Jesus (neither here nor anywhere else does he make use of her name) and the invitation extended to Jesus show that friends of the family were involved. The whole attitude of Mary, her taking action when the wine ran out, and her giving of instructions to the servants accords with this.

It is sometimes said that Jesus and his disciples were unbidden guests, being "invited" only when they turned up unexpectedly. It is inferred that it was their presence that caused the supply of wine to be inadequate. There is nothing in the narrative to show that this was in fact the state of affairs. The Greek may well mean that they had been invited earlier. We should perhaps comment on the lack of any mention of Joseph (he is not mentioned anywhere in this Gospel other than in the expression "son of Joseph" (1:45; 6:42). It may be that he had died before these days, though against this the natural inference from 6:42 is that he was alive then.

Our information about the details of marriage ceremonies (as distinct from marriage regulations) in first-century Jewry is far from complete. It may be filled out by assuming that customs did not alter greatly, so that earlier and later references may help us. We know that marriage was preceded by a betrothal that was much more serious than is an engagement with us. It meant the solemn pledging of the couple, each to the other, and was so binding that to break it divorce proceedings were necessary. At the conclusion of the betrothal period the marriage took place, on a Wednesday if the bride was a virgin and on a Thursday if she was a widow (Ket. 1:1). The bridegroom and his friends made their way in procession to the bride's home. This was often done at night, when there could be a spectacular torchlight procession. There were doubtless speeches and expressions of goodwill before the bride and groom went in procession to the groom's house, where the wedding banquet was held. We assume that there was a religious ceremony, but we have no details. The processions and
the feast are the principal items of which we have knowledge. The feast was prolonged, and might last as long as a week (cf. Judg. 14:12).

3 On this occasion the wine was all used up before the end of the feast. This meant more than the disruption of the festivities. There was something of a slur on the hosts, for they had not fully discharged the duties of hospitality. This may indicate that they were poor and had made the minimum provision, hoping for the best. It is also possible that the lack of wine involved another embarrassment, in that it rendered the bridegroom's family liable to a lawsuit. They were legally required to provide a feast of a certain standard.

Until this time Jesus had never performed a miracle (v. 11), but his mother's words to him show that she reposed trust in his resourcefulness. They may show more. Godet suggests that there was a "state of extraordinary exaltation" as a result of the events recorded in the first chapter. Mary would have shared in this. In addition she knew that angels had spoken about Jesus before his birth and that she had conceived him while still a virgin. She knew that his whole manner of life stamped him as different. She knew, in short, that Jesus was the Messiah, and it is not unlikely that she now tried to make him take such action as would show him to all as the Messiah she knew him to be.

4 Jesus' address to her, "Woman," is not as cold in the Greek as in English. He uses it, for example, in his last moments as he hangs on the cross and tenderly commends her to the beloved disciple (19:26). This vocative was "a term of respect or affection" (LS). Yet we must bear in mind that it is most unusual to find it when a son addresses his mother. There appear to be no examples of this use cited other than those in this Gospel. It is neither a Hebrew nor a Greek practice. That Jesus calls Mary "Woman" and not "Mother" probably indicates that there is a new relationship between them as he enters his public ministry. And if the form of address is tender, the rest of Jesus' words make it clear that there was something of a barrier between them. Evidently Mary thought of the intimate relations of the home at Nazareth as persisting. But Jesus in his public ministry was not only or primarily the son of Mary, but "the Son of Man" who was to bring the realities of heaven to people on earth (1:51). A new relationship was established. Mary must not presume. The meaning of "My time has not yet come" in the context is surely, "It is not yet time
for me to act." Yet we should notice a remarkable series of passages throughout this Gospel which refer to the "hour" or the "time" of Jesus. This is said not to have come in 7:6, 8, 30; 8:20, as well as here. But when the cross is in immediate prospect Jesus says, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified" (12:23; cf. also 12:27; 13:1; 16:32; 17:1; the same idea may be present in Matt. 26:18, 45; Mark 14:41). If we are right in linking the present passage with the later ones Jesus is thinking of his messianic function. At the threshold of his ministry he looks forward to its consummation.

Clearly Mary did not understand Jesus' words as a sharp rebuke. She doubtless realized that things between them were not the same as they had been hitherto. But she realized also that Jesus was not unmindful of the present difficulty, and that he would take what action was necessary. So she commanded the servants to obey his instructions.

John now draws attention to the presence of six large waterpots made of stone. The half dozen represented a good store of water for carrying out the kind of purification of which we read in Mark 7:1-4. Before the meal servants would have poured water over the hands of every guest. If there was a large number of guests a good deal of water would have been needed. John does not elaborate, but says enough for his Greek readers to understand why so much water was provided. "Holding" means "having space for"; it refers to capacity, not actual content. Some commentators find symbolism in the number six. The Jews saw seven as the perfect number, and six accordingly was short of perfection and thus lacking, incomplete. The six pots are then held to symbolize Judaism as imperfect. There may be something in this, but a strong objection is that the narrative contains nothing that would symbolize completeness, which would surely be required to correspond to the incomplete. Jesus does not create or produce a seventh pot.

Jesus tells "them," evidently the servants (as NIV), to fill the pots. This they do, "to the brim." This is possibly to indicate that there could be no addition to the contents. These pots at the time of the miracle contained nothing but water.

Jesus' next command is "draw some out" and then "take it to the master of the banquet." This evidently means that they are to draw from the big water pots. But, since the verb is the normal one for drawing water from a well, Westcott and others have thought that Jesus means them to draw
from the well and take that water directly to the chief table. This is within the range of possibility, but it is open to the not inconsiderable objection that, if it be accepted, there seems no reason for mentioning the waterpots or for Jesus' command that they be filled up. That they were filled right up to the brim surely indicates that they have some part to play in the story. Since the verb can be used for drawing water from a large vessel we need not doubt that that is what was done. The master of the banquet (an official mentioned here only in the New Testament) is apparently one of the guests charged with the duty of being the chairman who presided over the gathering.

9-10 John does not say how or when the miracle took place. He simply speaks of "the water that had been turned into wine." He does not even tell us how much water was changed into wine. It is usually held that it was all the water in the six waterpots, in which case Jesus was making a bountiful wedding gift to the couple, who were evidently poor. Not only did he rescue them from what might well have been a crippling liability, but he provided that they began their married life with an unexpected asset. There will be spiritual significance also, for the "sign" points to the truth that Christ abundantly supplies all the need of his people (cf. 1:16). This interpretation is not, however, certain. It is possible that John refers to the water actually drawn out (somewhat in the manner of the lepers who found themselves cleansed as they went to report to the priests, Luke 17:12-14). On this view, however, it is hard to see a reason for mentioning the size of the pots. It is better accordingly to accept the first-mentioned view. Either way what happened was startling. The master of the banquet did not know the origin of the wine he was tasting, but he recognized its quality. He summoned the bridegroom (who was responsible for the feast), and commented on his departure from common custom. People universally put out the better wine at the beginning of a feast, while palates are still sensitive. It is only when their guests are somewhat affected (the verb rendered "have had too much to drink" means "are drunken") that they produce the worse wine. This bridegroom, however, has kept the good wine until the end. We are thus left in no doubt as to the quality of the wine that resulted from the miracle.

11 John rounds off the narrative with a reminder of the nature of the event and its effect on the disciples. He gives a precise note of locality ("in
Cana of Galilee") in accordance with his general tendency to stress the factuality of the events he records. This is the first of Jesus' miracles, which John, as often, calls "signs." It is characteristic of them not so much that they arouse wonder and are hard to explain, nor even that they are demonstrations of the divine power, but rather that they point us to something beyond themselves. They show us God at work. They are meaningful. (See also Additional Note G, pp. 607-13.)

John tells us further that Jesus "revealed his glory" (for "glory" see on 1:14). This is very important for the Evangelist. His declared intention in writing his Gospel is to show that "Jesus is the Christ" (20:31). This involves the clear recognition that he is fully man, it is true, but it also involves bringing out the truth that he is more. Throughout the first chapter he has shown us both aspects. Jesus is the Logos who was with God and was God. He is also the "Teacher" to whom Andrew and his friend came (1:38). Neither aspect should be overlooked. So now he tells us that the "sign" he has described displayed the glory of Jesus. This might be hidden from the casual observer. Indeed, John says nothing at all of the effect of the "sign" on the master of the banquet or on the guests generally or on the servants who certainly knew what had happened. But his disciples saw "his glory" and they "put their faith in him" (Rieu: "his disciples' faith in him was fixed"). The glory of the Messiah was revealed to some and hidden from others. The disciples are now said to have "believed" in him. Nathanael has already been recorded as a believer (1:50), and now others join him. They had known enough about Jesus before this to follow him. Now in this miracle they saw his glory, and despite his outward lowliness they put their trust in him.

**INTERLUDE (2:12)**

12After this he went down to Capernaum with his mother and brothers and his disciples. There they stayed for a few days.

12 After the wedding Jesus and those with him went down to Capernaum for a short stay. The verb is appropriate, for Cana was on the uplands whereas Capernaum was by the Sea of Galilee. Capernaum was evidently a place of some importance, for we read of a centurion and his
soldiers there (Matt. 8:5-9) as well as a customs post (Matt. 9:9), and John tells of a royal official who evidently lived in that city (4:46). John does not say why Jesus went there. He has already been described as "of Nazareth" (1:45), but it may be that his family had now moved to Capernaum\(^48\) (though against this is the expression "a few days," which looks like a reference to a short visit). From the Synoptists we know that Capernaum was Jesus' center throughout most of his ministry, and it might even be called "his own town" (Matt. 9:1). "His mother" is not mentioned again until the passion narrative. The expression "his brothers" has been variously understood. The most natural way of taking it is to understand the brothers to be children of Joseph and Mary, the "Helvidian" view (from Helvidius, a fourth-century theologian who advocated it). The expression occurs several times in the Synoptic Gospels, and never with any qualification such as would be expected if the words were to bear any other meaning. The view is supported by appealing to the statements that Joseph "had no union with her until she gave birth to a son" (Matt. 1:25) and that Jesus was Mary's "firstborn, a son" (Luke 2:7). The most natural interpretation of both passages is that Joseph and Mary had children after the birth of Jesus. 

In the second century of our era, however, the idea of Mary's perpetual virginity appeared. Where this was held, the possibility of any other children was, of course, excluded. Two alternative explanations of "his brothers" were proposed. One saw them as the children of Joseph by a former marriage (the view of Epiphanius), and the other as Jesus' cousins (the view of Jerome). This last-mentioned view is almost universally rejected nowadays except by some Roman Catholics. There seems nothing in its favor and much against it (e.g. "brother" does not mean "cousin," the correct word for which existed and was in use in the New Testament, Col. 4:10). The Epiphanian view can claim the support of many writers of antiquity and some in modern times. The principal evidence for it is the very appearance of the tradition of Mary's perpetual virginity. But this can scarcely outweigh the natural sense of the passages cited from Matthew and Luke. Even J. B. Lightfoot, who favored the Epiphanian view, admits that such expressions would have been avoided by people who thought the idea of Mary's perpetual virginity of paramount importance. The Helvidian view by far the most probable.\(^49\)

No indication is given as to which disciples accompanied Jesus. Probably we should understand those mentioned in chapter 1.
B, CLEANSING THE TEMPLE (2:13-17)

13 When it was almost time for the Jewish Passover, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. 14 In the temple courts he found men selling cattle, sheep and doves, and others sitting at tables exchanging money. 15 So he made a whip out of cords, and drove all from the temple area, both sheep and cattle; he scattered the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. 16 To those who sold doves he said, "Get these out of here! How dare you turn my Father's house into a market!" 17 His disciples remembered that it is written: "Zeal for your house will consume me."a

a. 17 Psalm 69:9

The Synoptists each have an account of a cleansing of the Temple (Matt. 21:12-13; Mark 11:15-17; Luke 19:45-46). The Markan account is the fullest, but even so it is shorter than John's. John differs from Mark in mentioning oxen and sheep, the scourge of cords, the word for "money changers" (v. 14),50 the "pouring out" of the money (NIV, "scattered the coins"), and the command, "Get these out of here!" John's word for "overturned" is different from that in any of the Synoptics,51 and whereas they say that Jesus quoted Isaiah 56:7 followed by Jeremiah 7:11, John does not speak of him as citing any Scripture. But he does say that the disciples remembered Psalm 69:9, which none of the Synoptists records. He does not mention, as Mark does, Jesus' prohibition of carrying anything through the Temple, that is making a shortcut of it. Mark says that Jesus overturned the seats of the sellers of doves, John only that he told them to take "these" things away. But the most important difference is one of time. In this Gospel the cleansing of the Temple is the first great public act of Jesus' ministry; in the other Gospels it is the last.

The usual explanation of all this is that there was but one cleansing and that it took place, as the Synoptists allege, at the climax of the ministry.52 It was probably the event that sparked off the opposition of the high priests and led to Jesus' arrest. John's placing of the incident on this view is due to the fact that he has a theological rather than a chronological approach. John is making it clear that from the outset of his ministry Jesus repudiated what was central to the Temple cultus and further that his death and resurrection
were critically important. If we hold that there could have been only one cleansing this is probably the way to understand it.

But why should we make this assumption? The Johannine narrative is firmly embedded in a great block of non-Synoptic material. Apart from the work of the Baptist (which is manifestly different from anything in the Synoptics) nothing in the first five chapters of this Gospel is to be found in any of the Synoptics. Of course, it is not impossible that John took one lone Synoptic episode and bound it firmly into his own framework as far from its correct historical setting as he could make it. But in view of the major differences in wording and in setting, as well as in time, we will require more evidence than a facile assumption that two similar narratives must refer to the same event. The words in common are few: "sellers," "tables," "doves," "money changers," and "drove out," and without them it would be practically impossible to tell a story of Temple cleansing.

Moreover, the evil in question was one that was likely to recur after a check. Jesus' action, though salutary, is not likely to have put a permanent end to the practice, or can it be said that the authorities would certainly have taken such action after one incident as would effectively prevent a recurrence. At the time indicated in John Jesus was quite unknown. His strong action would have aroused a furor in Jerusalem, but that is all. The authorities may well have been disinclined to go to extremes against him, especially if there was some public feeling against the practices he opposed. It was quite otherwise at the time indicated in Mark. Then Jesus was well known and vigorously opposed by the high-priestly party. His action would inevitably lead to strong counteraction.

Murray makes the point that, at the trial before Caiaphas, there was difficulty in establishing the words used by Jesus on this occasion (v. 29; Mark 14:56-59). This is intelligible if the reference is to an event that occurred two or three years earlier, scarcely so if it had taken place within the week. The differences in the wording of Jesus' protests in the two accounts may also well point to two occasions, especially if Murray is right in seeing in "you have made it 'a den of robbers' " a reference to the determination of the authorities to kill Jesus. This would have been true on the second occasion, but not on the first. Tasker finds two cleansings and thinks of this one as explaining the mission of scribes sent to Galilee to oppose Jesus. The mission is mentioned, but no reason given for it in Mark
R. G. Gruenler discovers two cleansings and regards this as important: "There are two cleansings in the gospel accounts, appropriately framing the beginning and the ending of his redemptive ministry. . . ."

13 John refers to three Passovers (four if 5:1 be taken of a Passover). The first is that mentioned here and in verse 23. There is a second in 6:4, while the third is referred to several times (11:55; 12:1; 13:1; 18:28,39; 19:14). If, as seems probable, we take 5:1 to refer to another feast we are left with three Passovers, which will give us a minimum of two years for Jesus' ministry, and possibly something approaching three years. Each of these feasts John calls "the Jewish Passover" (for "the Jews" see on 1:19). Westcott, Barrett, and others think the expression points to the existence of a Christian Passover distinct from that of the Jews. But this is intrinsically unlikely, for at this period the Christians were not noted for the production of liturgical feasts. There is not much evidence in the New Testament even for the observance of Sunday (though enough to show that the day was kept). Again the Christian Passover was already sacrificed (1 Cor. 5:7), which would be a strange mode of speech if the Christians observed an annual festival of that name. There is also the difficulty that the Feast of Tabernacles is referred to in similar fashion (7:2). Are we to think of a Christian Feast of Tabernacles also? Where is this to stop? It is best to take the expression as John's usual explanation inserted for the benefit of his Gentile readers; it was a feast the church did not keep and there was thus need for an explanation for church members. The Passover commemorated the great deliverance of the people from Egypt (Exod. 12). John mentions the festival much more than do the Synoptists, and this may well be part of his plan to bring out the messianic significance of Jesus. What was foreshadowed in the great Passover deliverance of old was brought to its consummation in the sacrifice of Jesus.

14 The "temple" signifies the whole of the Temple precincts, including the various courts as well as the holy place. Here clearly one of the courts is meant. It is certain that the selling referred to here took place in the outer courtyard, the court of the Gentiles. The reason for the practice was, of course, the convenience of having at hand a supply of the victims required for the prescribed sacrifices. People who came to worship from a distance could scarcely bring their offerings with them. If they were to sacrifice at all they must have some way of purchasing the appropriate victims when they reached Jerusalem. Those "exchanging money" plied
their trade because it was permitted to make money offerings in the Temple only in the approved currency. People from other countries would bring all sorts of coinage with them and this had to be changed into acceptable coins. An astonishing number of commentators affirm that the reason for the unacceptability of other currencies was that the coins bore the Emperor's image or some heathen symbol. But, as Israel Abrahams pointed out long ago, Tyrian coinage was not only permitted but expressly prescribed (Mishnah, *Bekh*. 8:7), and this bore heathen symbols. He thinks that the reason for the prescription was that this coinage was "of so exact a weight and so good an alloy." Whatever the reason, people had to change their money before making their offerings and this required that money changers should be at work somewhere.

15-16 Jesus made a whip of "cords" (more probably "rushes") and proceeded to drive the traders from the Temple with their goods. It is clear that it was not so much the physical force as the moral power he employed that emptied the courts. "It was surely the blazing anger of the selfless Christ rather than the weapon which He carried which really cleared the Temple Courts of its noisy, motley throng." He overturned the tables used by the money changers and poured out their money. He commanded the dovesellers to take their birds away. His words to them are important, for they give the reason for his whole action: "How dare you turn my Father's house into a market!" (Moffatt, "My Father's house is not to be turned into a shop!"). The play on the word "house" is missed in modern translations (*ARV* retains it with "make not my Father's house a house of merchandise"). In the Markan story the traders are stigmatized as making the Temple "a den of robbers," but here the objection is not to their dishonesty, but to their presence: Jesus is objecting to the practice, and not merely to the way it is conducted. It is sometimes said that this represents an attack on the whole sacrificial system, for it would not have been possible to maintain the sacrifices unless people from afar could purchase the necessary victims in a convenient place. But that is just the point. A "convenient" place need not be within the temple precincts. It is to this that Jesus makes his objection, and not to anything else.

17 The effect on the disciples was to remind them of Psalm 69:9. The action of Jesus gave evidence of a consuming zeal for the house of God.
The ancient Scriptures found their fulfillment in what he did. "The action is not merely that of a Jewish reformer: it is a sign of the advent of the Messiah" (Hoskyns). We should not miss the way this incident fits in with John's aim of showing Jesus to be the Messiah. All his actions imply a special relationship with God. They proceed from his messianic vocation. The citation from Scripture is important from another point of view, for it accords with another habit of this Evangelist. While John does not quote the Old Testament as frequently as do some other New Testament writers, it is still the case, as Richard Morgan says, that "the Old Testament is present at every crucial moment in the Gospel." It is one of John's great themes that in Jesus God is working his purposes out. Every critical moment sees the fulfillment of Scripture in which those purposes are set forth.

C. DESTROYING AND RAISING THE TEMPLE (2:18-22)

18 Then the the Jews demanded of him, "What miraculous sign can you show us to prove your authority to do all this?" 19Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days." 20The Jews replied, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and you are going to raise it in three days?" 21But the temple he had spoken of was his body. 22After he was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what he had said. Then they believed the Scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken.

The Synoptics tell of a cleansing of the Temple, but they have nothing equivalent to this section. John records a cryptic saying of Jesus and goes on to give both a Jewish misunderstanding of it and his own interpretation. Characteristically he rounds it off with the effect of all this on the faith of the disciples.

18 The cleansing of the Temple was a startling act. It had its implications not only for the condemnation of the Temple traders, but also for the Person of Jesus (see on v. 17). It was a messianic action. The Jews (for this term see on 1:19) demanded that Jesus authenticate his implied claim by producing a "sign" (see the comments on v. 11 and Additional Note G, pp. 607-13). Interestingly they did not dispute the rightness of his action. They were not so much defending the Temple traffic as questioning
Jesus' implied status. Their demand arose from the facts that the Jews were a very practical race and that they expected God to perform mighty miracles when the messianic age dawned. Thus their test for a messianic claimant was, Can he do the signs of the Messiah? Paul could think of the Jews as seekers after signs just as typically as the Greeks were pursuers of wisdom (1 Cor. 1:22). In the Temple cleansing the Jews discerned a messianic claim (note again how faithfully John records anything that bears on Jesus' messiahsip), and they demanded accordingly that he authenticate himself by a sign.

Despite the hesitation of some critics the genuineness of this saying is beyond reasonable doubt, as is shown by the persistence of references to it. At the trial of Jesus one of the charges brought against him was that he had said he would destroy the Temple and raise it up again (Matt. 26:60-61; Mark 14:57-59). The mockers flung the same accusation at the dying sufferer on the cross (Matt. 27:40; Mark 15:29). Stephen's opponents said, "We have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place ..." (Acts 6:14; cf. Acts 7:48; 17:24). There is possibly another echo of the same accusation in the charge that Paul taught people "against... this place" (Acts 21:28), all the more so since the detailed charge against Stephen is an elaboration of the simple "This fellow never stops speaking against the holy place and against the law" (Acts 6:13). It is clear that the charge was persistent and repeated. It is idle to deny that there was any reality behind it at all, and to put the whole thing down to the malice of false witnesses. While there is no reason to doubt that those who testified against Jesus at his trial were ready to say almost anything to get him condemned, yet the evidence before us is that they used a distorted version (or rather versions — their witness did not agree, Mark 14:59) of a genuine saying of Jesus. What was this saying? There is nothing that seems adequate in the teaching recorded in the Synoptic Gospels. But this saying does meet the conditions. It has the necessary references to the destruction and raising again of the Temple, and it is not easy to understand. It would readily be misunderstood and misremembered.

Jesus usually refused to give a sign when asked for one (Mark 8:11-12; cf. his refusal to answer the question of John 6:30). He complains that, though his enemies could discern the weather signs in the heavens they were quite unable to recognize more important signs, "the signs of the times," when they were before them (Matt. 16:3). But in the Synoptic
Gospels he regularly pointed to his resurrection as the only sign that would be given to these people (Matt. 12:39-40; 16:4; Luke 11:29). "Destroy" is literally "loose.\textsuperscript{84} The verb is often used of untying and the like. It can refer to the loosing of the component parts from one another and so mean "destroy" (cf. its use for the breaking up of part of a ship, Acts 27:41, and the breaking down of "the dividing wall of hostility," Eph. 2:14). It can also be used of the dissolution of life, or killing. The imperative here seems equivalent to a conditional, "If you destroy ... I will raise up," though Howard equates it with the future tense, "You will destroy" (IB).\textsuperscript{85} It is possible also that we should discern something of the prophetic method wherein the spoken word initiates the action in which the purpose of God is worked out. There is irony in the fact that ultimately the Jews themselves were to be the means of bringing about the sign they asked Jesus to produce, and which they did not recognize when it came. There is further irony in that to put Jesus to death was to offer the one sacrifice that can truly expiate sin, and thus doom the Temple as a place for the offering of sacrifice. Jesus' word for "temple" denotes the shrine, the sanctuary, the very dwelling place of deity.\textsuperscript{86} It may be applied to the believer (as in 1 Cor. 6:19), but Jesus' use of the word probably implies that God dwelt in him in a very special way.\textsuperscript{87} In three days" means "within the space of three days" and does not pinpoint the event.

20 The Jews explode in an incredulous question. Their temple was a magnificent structure. Herod had commenced its rebuilding partly to satisfy his lust for building, and partly in an attempt to stand well with his Jewish subjects, among whom he was very unpopular; for both reasons it was important that the building be outstanding.\textsuperscript{88} Work was still going on at his death, and for that matter, for long after. The Temple was not completed until A.D. 63. The Jews accordingly mean here that the work has been proceeding for forty-six years.\textsuperscript{89} The fact that it was still not complete would heighten their amazement at a statement that they understood to mean that Jesus claimed the power to erect its like in a mere three days. "You" is emphatic. Though they had asked Jesus for a sign they mocked the suggestion that he of all people could do such a thing. Incidentally the pattern we see in these verses, a saying of Jesus, a complete misunderstanding, and an explanation, recurs in this Gospel (e.g. 3:3ff; 4:10ff., 32ff.; 6:41ff., 51ff.; 11:11ff.; 14:7ff.). It is not, of course, confined
to John (see, for example, Mark 7:15ff.; 8:15ff.), and we may see in it one of the ways in which Jesus instructed his hearers.

21 The Evangelist gives his own comment. Jesus was not talking about the temple of stones and mortar that they saw about them. He was talking about his body. It is possible to understand "his body" of the church, which in Paul's writings is explicitly called the body of Christ (Eph. 1:23; 4:16; Col. 1:18). On this view the saying would mean that Jesus would presently establish his church (cf. Matt. 16:18). There is little to be said for this. Such a saying would be far more cryptic than a reference to the resurrection. And there is no evidence for the application of the term "body" to the church for many years after this time. A somewhat similar suggestion is that Jesus referred to the destruction of the Temple as a living force, that is he spoke of the abolition of the sacrifices in the new system he would set up. It is not easy to understand this as his meaning.

More commonly scholars think that Jesus was referring to the literal Temple. But since we can scarcely think of him as undertaking to raise up the literal Temple in three days they feel that John is not giving us the saying exactly as it was spoken, and that its original form is lost. Jesus said something about the Temple, possibly about its being superseded in the new covenant he had come to establish, and the saying was misunderstood.

Such explanations, however, are in no way superior to that put forward by John. These factors are relevant:

(i) Jesus did predict the resurrection, though the disciples did not understand what he meant (Matt. 12:40; 16:21; 17:9, 23; 20:19, 26, 32; Mark 8:31; 9:9, 31; 10:34; Luke 9:22; 18:33). One such prediction with its specific mention of "three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (Matt. 12:40) comes in the same chapter as the reference to the "greater than the temple" (Matt. 12:6).

(ii) Jesus said something about the temple that referred in some way to its destruction. But the saying was not clear and straightforward. At his trial it was felt to be a useful charge to level at him, but the witnesses could not agree on the form of it (Mark 14:59). This argues for some such cryptic saying as the one we have here.

(iii) In Jesus' teaching "three days" almost always refers to the period leading up to the resurrection. It is not easy to see how this expression could have been attached to a saying about the Temple unless Jesus himself had connected the two. The explanations mentioned above ignore the three
days, or explain them as "a short time." This meaning is found in the Old Testament, but it is not common in the Gospels.

(iv) The persistence of the saying in accusations leveled at Jesus and afterward at his followers shows that he must have said something of the sort, and said it in such a way that it was impressed on the minds of his hearers, more especially of his opponents. Such a saying as this, made immediately after the cleansing of the Temple, meets the requirements. It would be easy for his foes to misinterpret it, their attention being focused on the material Temple at that moment. And it would not be inappropriate for Jesus to be thinking at that time of the real nature of his mission.

While then the primary reference of the saying is surely to the resurrection of Jesus it would be quite in the Johannine manner to see a double meaning in the words. It may well be that they point us also to the ultimate abolition of the Temple and of the Temple sacrifices. The words about rebuilding will in that case refer to their replacement by the spiritual temple and the new covenant effected by the death and resurrection of Christ. This is all the more likely in that all these events are inseparably bound up with one another. Such a double meaning would link the saying on the one hand with the Matthean passages noted above, and on the other with the temple "not made by man" of Mark 14:58 (cf. Acts 7:48; 17:24).

22 John does not say that the saying was luminous to "his disciples" (for this expression see on v. 2). But when Jesus was raised they remembered it, and it was then a strengthening of faith for them. John tells us that they then "believed the Scripture." In the singular "scripture" often refers to a single passage. If this is the case here, it is not easy to identify the passage in mind. It may perhaps be Psalm 16:10, which is interpreted of the resurrection (Acts 2:31; 13:35), or Isaiah 53:12, which is not unfairly understood of the resurrection, for it speaks of the activity of the Servant after his death. There is a reference to being raised on the third day (Hos. 6:2), but this does not seem relevant to Jesus' resurrection.

The disciples believed not only "the Scripture" but also "the words that Jesus had spoken." This placing of Jesus' saying alongside Scripture is interesting and its christological implications should not be overlooked. Notice also that the disciples are not said to have believed this saying until they saw it fulfilled. Jesus was fond of parabolic language, and evidently they took this to be another example. They may well have reasoned,
Obviously he cannot mean a rising from the dead in a literal sense. What then does he mean? But when the resurrection took place they saw the meaning of the words, and they believed them. May we not see in this a fulfillment of Jesus' later words, "the Holy Spirit . . . will remind you of everything I have said to you" (14:26)?

D. JESUS AND PEOPLE (2:23-25)

23 Now while he was in Jerusalem at the Passover Feast, many people saw the miraculous signs he was doing and believed in his name. But Jesus would not entrust himself to them, for he knew all men. 25He did not need man's testimony about man, for he knew what was in a man.

a. 23 Or and believed in him

John inserts a short section to show the success that attended the ministry of Jesus in Jerusalem at this time, and also to show Jesus' knowledge of people and independence of them. When many came to believe on him he did not commit himself to them. He was not dependent on human approval. The Master went his own way, unswayed by the passing enthusiasms of people. He knew people thoroughly.

23 For "the Passover Feast" see on verse 13, and for believing on the name see on 1:12. The verb "believed" is in the aorist tense; many came to the point of decision. Yet we should probably not regard them as having a profound faith. They believed because they saw the "signs" (cf. 6:2 and see Additional Note G, pp. 607-13), While such faith is better than none (see 6:26), it is not the deepest faith (cf. 20:29). It is no more than a beginning. R. H. Lightfoot points out that it is "only a first attraction to the Lord (cf. 445.48), and does not yet know Him as the Son of man, still less as the unique Son of God, and is therefore imperfect and liable to be overthrown; and of this He, the Word become flesh, is well aware." Strachan brings out the unsure basis of this faith by translating, "So long as they were beholding." The reference to Jesus' "signs" and the imperfect tense of the verb "was doing" (showing that Jesus continued to do signs) are somewhat perplexing, for John records no sign in Jerusalem unless the
cleansing of the Temple be called such. But he disclaims any attempt at being exhaustive (20:30; 21:25). There is no doubt that he wants us to think of Jesus as continually manifesting his glory but he does not go into details.

24 Jesus is set in emphatic contrast to those who saw his signs. There is an interesting word play, for the verb "entrust" in this verse is that rendered "believed" in the previous one. Because of what they knew of Jesus from his signs many came to put their trust in him. But because he knew all people Jesus put his trust in none of them (GNB misses the point with "because he knew them all"; John is referring to people in general, not only to this group). The verb used of his action is in the imperfect tense; it denotes his habitual attitude. To believe on the basis of the signs is to take as basic something we can see and to which we give weight on the basis of our experience. Jesus calls people to trust him for what he is, not because he passes the tests we set. Those who had been attracted by the miracles would have been ready to try to make an earthly king of him (cf. 6:15). But he did not trust himself to them. He looked for genuine conversion, not enthusiasm for the spectacular.

25 The idea of witness is a prominent one in this Gospel (see on 1:7), but John tells us that there was one form of witness that was not needed, namely a witness that would inform Jesus about people's innermost being. "He" is emphatic; there is no doubt as to the fact of Jesus' knowledge. This is to be understood in the light of the Old Testament view that God alone knows "the hearts of all men" (1 Kings 8:39). It involves an unobtrusive, but not unimportant, claim about the Person of Jesus.

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1. According to Bultmann this section of the book is the beginning of the manifestation of the glory of Jesus. Chapters 3-12 set forth its manifestation before the world and chapters 13-17 before
believers (p. 77).

2. See, for example, Leslie D. Weatherhead, *It Happened in Palestine* (London, 1944), pp. 43-44. Weatherhead imagines the scene: "The wine runs out. Water is served. Why, that's the best joke of all! They lift their wine-cups, as we do in fun when we shout, 'Adam's ale is the best of all.' The bridegroom is congratulated by the master of ceremonies, who carries the joke farther still. 'Why you've kept the best wine until now.' It requires only a servant going through the room into the kitchen for a wonderful rumour to start" (pp. 50-51).

3. J. Estlin Carpenter draws attention to the parabolic nature of the miracle: "It is a parable in action. The wine that failed was the old wine of Judaism" (*The Johannine Writings* [London, 1927], p. 377). He goes on to note the rites associated with the god Dionysos and he suggests that the Fourth Evangelist has transformed the miracles of Dionysos "into an imaginative symbol of the glory of Christ" (p. 380). Similarly Bultmann thinks that the story is doubtless (zweifellos) from heathen legend. But this is pure assumption. The parallels are not close enough to carry conviction. "No part of this legend as we know it bears any very close resemblance to the miracle at Cana" (R. E. Williams, *JBL*, LXXXVI [1967], p. 312, n. 1) John gives the impression that he is telling what happened and recording it for its meaning. That the story may well have been used to show the superiority of Christ to Dionysos is likely, but that its origin is in pagan legend does not follow. Hoskyns totally rejects the idea: "Neither in the actual narrative of the miracle of Cana nor anywhere else in the rest of the Gospel" can he find any hint of the transformation of a Greek story (Detached Note 3, p. 191). See also the notes in Barrett, who, while being ready to allow for the possibility of some Dionysiac elements, concludes, "it seems clear that John meant to show the supersession of Judaism in the glory of Jesus. It is possible that in doing so he drew material from Dionysiac sources; but it was Jewish purificatory water which stood in the water pots and was made the wine of the Gospel." Strachan brings out another valuable point when he says, "The whole style of the Johannine narrative of the Cana miracle is itself sufficient to disprove this (i.e. Carpenter's view). In addition, the Evangelist in his battle with the Docetists could not afford to 'transform' mythical stories into allegedly historical incidents." Wright also rejects Carpenter's view, but he himself suggests that "some incident and some words of Jesus are fused in the creative imagination, and by the spiritual insight, of the author, into a kind of parable. The incident and the words are treated by the Evangelist with the utmost freedom." This is no improvement on Carpenter and is just as subjective. It is one thing to say that John saw a symbolic meaning in this story; it is quite another to say that he constructed a parable. Others derive the story from Philo who says, "But let Melchizedek instead of water offer wine, and give to souls strong drink, that they may be seized by a divine intoxication, more sober than sobriety itself" (*Leg. Alleg.* 3.82). But again the parallels are not nearly close enough. Barclay views the narrative this way: "So to the Jews John said: 'Jesus has come to turn the imperfection of the law into the perfection of grace.' And to the Greeks John said: 'Jesus has come really and truly to do the things you only dreamed the gods could do.' " This may well be the point of John's telling the story. But it does not imply that he derived it from either his Jewish or his Greek predecessors. He recounts a Christian story that is valuable in both contexts.

4. Bailey rejects the jest idea, going on to say: "no event in the Gospel bears stronger evidence of personal observation." Cf. Murray, "It is morally incredible that 'the beginning of signs' can have been a conjuring trick"; and again, "I cannot help feeling that the statement of the effect of the sign on the faith of the disciples comes straight from the personal experience of one of them."

5. A. R. Vidler has a sermon on this story in which he says that John is trying to drive home a contrast, "the contrast between the old Jewish order of things, which was based on trying to observe the Law, and the new Christian order of things which springs from the grace and truth brought into the world by Jesus the Messiah, and which consists not in trying to be good but in rejoicing in the generosity of God" (*Windsor Sermons* [London, 1958], p. 68). F. F. Bruce speaks succinctly of "Christ's changing of the water of Jewish purification into the wine of the new age" (*Second Thoughts on the Dead Sea Scrolls* [London and Grand Rapids, 1956], p. 135).
6. yle finds eschatological significance in the story: "To attend a marriage feast, and cleanse the temple from profanation were among the first acts of our Lord's ministry at His first coming. To purify the whole visible Church, and hold a marriage supper, will be among His first acts, when he comes again."


8. quot;The groomsmen's gift [counts as a loan and] can be recovered through a court of law" (Mishnah, B.Bat. 9:4).

9. A. T. Robinson suggests that the meaning is simply "Tuesday," the third day of the week, "For there was and still is today in Greek or Hebrew no other way of designating that day of the week" (*The Priority of John* [London, 1985], p. 166). Against this, the expression comes after an impressive sequence of references to "the next day" and the like.

10. *osephus* says that he once had his quarters there (Vit. 86). But it is certainly not mentioned often in ancient literature.

11. his is puzzling, all the more so since this Evangelist is usually so explicit with names. A. H. N. Green-Armytage links this with the absence of all mention of the Apostle John by name. "If, as described in the Gospel, she was committed to the care of the beloved disciple and thereafter treated by him as his own mother, this way of referring to her is exactly what we should expect" (*John Who Saw* [London, 1952], p. 85 n.). For John's use of names see further *SFG*, pp. 237ff.

12. t may be significant that Mary "was (νυ)" there, while Jesus and the others were "invited" (έκλήθη, aorist). She had apparently taken up residence.

13. Bernard points out that the expression οι μαθηταί αύτο (Jesus' disciples as distinct from those of other rabbis) was the earlier designation, οι μαθηταί, "the disciples," being later. It is a mark of John's acquaintance with the primitive state of affairs that he usually employs the former expression, as here.

14. Taking the aorist έκλήθη in the sense of the pluperfect. See Abbott, 2461. This is the way *NIV* takes the Greek; Knox, Schonfield, Moffatt, and others are similar.

15. C. H. Lenski says, "The Jewish betrothal was the marriage itself. ... No religious ceremony and no vows of any kind accompanied this home-bringing although it was made a festive occasion with a procession and a feast" (*The Interpretation of St. Matthew's Gospel* [Minneapolis, 1964], p. 40). Again against this is the sealing of the "contract" at the marriage in Tob. 7:14. It seems that the actual marriage was more than simply the betrothal. See the article on Marriage in *IDB*, 3, pp. 278-87.

16. or information about marriage in New Testament times see SBk, I, pp. 500-517; II, pp. 372-99, the relevant articles in *ISBE*, *IDB*, etc., and the works cited in n. 6.

17. ohn says ύστερήσαντος οίνου. This is the sole occurrence of this verb in this Gospel. It is unusual, for ύστερεω in the active more often means "lack" than "be lacking."

18. t did mean this. The rabbis could say, "there is no rejoicing save with wine" (Pes. 109a). This does not point to carousing, for drunkenness was severely reprobed, and wine was normally well watered, the usual dilution being one part wine to three parts water (Soncino Talmud, Pes. p. 561, n. 7). But wine was a symbol. Its absence would mar so joyous an occasion as a wedding feast.

19. "Our bridegroom stood to lose financially — say, up to about half the value of the presents Jesus and his party ought to have brought" (Derrett, *Law*, p. 238).

20. προς αυτόν. G. D. Kilpatrick finds πρός used in this way after λέγω 8 times in all in this Gospel, after ειπον 10 times (including two v.l.), and after κατηγορέω, and αποχρίνομαι once each (the latter a v.l.). But there seems no difference in meaning from the more usual constructions (*BT*, 11 [1960], pp. 176-77).

21. Calvin suggests that Mary may have been trying to get Jesus "to allay the guests' annoyance with some godly exhortations, at the same time relieving the embarrassment of the bridegroom." But
her words seem to mean more than this.

22. Jesus used it also in addressing women for whom he was performing miracles (Matt. 15:28; Luke 13:12), the woman at the well (John 4:21), the adulteress (8:10), and Mary Magdalene at the tomb (20:15). In none of these can we detect any harshness.

23. f. Hoskyns, "before her request, He first makes it plain that He is no longer able to act under her authority (contrast Luke ii.51) or in response to her wishes. The time of her authority is over: she must lose her son: this is the destiny that has been laid upon her (Luke ii.35)." Derrett says, "The appellation 'woman' causes no difficulty: it is universally recognised that it implies no hostility or rudeness, though the correct explanation, namely that a religious devotee or ascetic will speak to a woman, if unavoidable, only in the most formal terms, seems not to have attracted attention" (Law, pp. 89-90). The trouble with this is that the Gospels picture Jesus as anything but a "religious devotee or ascetic." He was described as "a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and 'sinners' " (Luke 7:34). And he did talk with women (e.g., ch. 4). The position of Hoskyns is preferable.

24. The expression is found in Judg. 11:12; 1 Kings 17:18; 2 Kings 3:13; 2Chron. 35:21; Matt. 8:29; Mark 1:24; Luke 8:28. Turner has examined the use of the construction in LXX and concludes, "The remark of Jesus to his mother appears to be a polite request to refrain from interference and to leave the whole matter to him" (Grammatical Insights, p. 47). Barclay translates, "Lady, let me handle this in my own way," and Bruce, "Why trouble me with that, lady?" Vincent Taylor (on Mark 1:24) understands the Old Testament expression to mean, "Why dost thou meddle with us?" but this is too strong for the present passage. Godet gives its force as, "This formula signifies, that the community of feeling to which one of the interlocutors appeals is rejected by the other, at least in the particular point which is in question." Cf. Morton Smith, "Jesus is asking his mother why she intrudes in his affairs, why she bothers him" (JBL, LXIV [1945], p. 513). Sometimes Roman Catholic scholars think Mary is asking for a miracle. Thus J. Cortes sees Jesus as meaning, "What has changed between us? Why do you hesitate to ask me for a miracle? The hour of my Passion, in which you will not be able to ask me for miracles nor will I work them, has not come yet. You are as always my mother and I am your son. Therefore I will gladly accept your petition" (New Testament Abstracts, III [1958-59], p. 247). The difficulty with this position is that there was a change. Jesus had never previously worked a miracle (v. 11), so Mary might well hesitate to ask for one. The beginning of the public ministry altered all Jesus' relationships, but Mary was apparently slow to grasp this.

25. There is a valuable note on this passage by Edgar J. Goodspeed (BT, 3 [1952], pp. 70-71). He thinks there is no adequate English translation for γύναι and counsels that it be left untranslated. To him Jesus' words suggest "his independence of action," and he translates, "Do not try to direct me. It is not yet time for me to act." See also the note of Harry M. Buck (BT, 7 [1956], pp. 149-50). He advocates the rendering, "Madam, why is that our concern?" Perhaps Goodspeed's position is better.

26. It is possible to take the expression as a question, "Has not my hour now come?" Brown cites Gregory of Nyssa and Theodore of Mopsuestia in ancient times and Boismard and Michl in recent days as adopting this view. But it should almost certainly be rejected. Where οὖν introduces a question (e.g. Mark 4:40; 8:17, 21) the answer expected is "No," not "Yes." Moreover, Johannine usage is against it. In all John's eleven other uses of the word the meaning is negative (cf. especially 7:30; 8:20).

27. "We might even say that the whole life of Jesus is directed towards this 'hour' which will be the high point of his life" (de la Potterie, pp. 21-22).

28. O. Cullmann discusses the miracle in Early Christian Worship (London, 1954), pp. 66-71, and takes these words to point to the cross. He lays down the principle that "it belongs to the very essence of John's Gospel that words are used in a double sense, that they signify on the one hand something material, and on the other hand point to something quite different" (p. 68). The wine, then, is "a pointer to the wine of the Lord's Supper" (p. 69), while the water is a reference to Jewish rites of purification. "In place of all these rites there comes now the wine of the Lord's Supper, the blood of
Christ" (p. 70; see p. 69, η. 1 for others who find a reference to the Lord's Supper). There are interesting and suggestive points in this approach, but it does seem to be reading a good deal into the text. That John often uses words with a double meaning is undoubted, but we cannot go on to say that a reference to "the hour" plus one to wine compels us to discern an allusion to the Eucharist. Cullmann sees one or other of the sacraments almost everywhere in John. Bultmann, by contrast, doubts whether there are any references to the sacraments in this Gospel (p. 360).

29. Clay pots could become unclean, and if this happened they must be destroyed (Lev. 11:33). But stone vessels did not become unclean (Kel. 10:1; Par. 3:2). K. E. Bailey says that the average household would have had one such jar, and the rest would have been borrowed (Poet and Peasant [Grand Rapids, 1976], [p. 123, n. 24].

30. Yet we should not overlook the fact that Philo views six as "the perfect number." His reason is that it is "equal to the sum of its factors, 3, 2 and 1" (De Decal. 28).

31. Ryle comments, "Duties are ours. Events are God's. It is ours to fill the waterpots. It is Christ's to make the water wine."

32. We should, however, be quite clear that the verb has no original or necessary connection with wells, ἀντλέω is connected with ἄντλος, "bilge-water." LS gives its first meaning as "bale out bilge-water, bale the ship." The word is used quite generally of drawing water, and not infrequently it is employed in metaphorical senses (see LS). There is no linguistic reason for insisting on a well. The word is peculiar to John in the New Testament (he uses it 4 times).

33. Westcott objects to the view we have adopted on the ground that "It seems most unlikely that water taken from vessels of purification could have been employed for the purpose of the miracle." But surely that is just its point. It is not simply "purification" but "Jewish purification." It is precisely Judaism that is transformed by the power of God in Christ. More recently S. H. Hooke has maintained the position that the water was drawn from the well (NTS, 9 [1962-63], pp. 374-75), but he adds little to what the earlier commentators have said on this point. Is there perhaps a connection with the thought that Jesus gives that water which "will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life" (4:14)?

34. There is a difficulty in that the ἄρχιτρίπλικος (the title used here) was rather like a headwaiter, not an honored guest. His duty was "to arrange the tables and food" (AS). In this story, however, he is clearly not a servant, for he can summon the bridegroom (v. 9). He is a guest, and an important one. His function appeals to be much like that usually designated by the term συμποσιάρχης, "toast master" (in Sir. 32[35]: 1-2 the guest with this responsibility is called the ἄγοιμενος).

35. Cf. Augustine, "even as that which the servants put into the water-pots was turned into wine by the doing of the Lord, so in like manner also is what the clouds pour forth changed into wine by the doing of the same Lord. But we do not wonder at the latter, because it happens every year: it has lost its marvellousness by its constant recurrence. And it suggests a greater consideration than that which was done in the water-pots. For who is there that considers the works of God, whereby this whole world is governed and regulated, who is not amazed and overwhelmed with miracles?" (8.1; p. 57).

36. The verb μεθυσθῶσιν lacks a subject, a construction that John employs from time to time. Here he can scarcely mean the indefinite "people" (which is what the construction would normally signify). But there is no real difficulty; the context shows that "their guests" is meant (as NIV).

37. Schonfield translates, "when everyone is drunk." Barrett reminds us that "There is of course no ground here for conclusions regarding the degree of intoxication of the guests at this wedding; John finds the remark a neat way of emphasizing the superior quality of the wine provided by Jesus — the new faith based on the eschatological event is better than the old."

38. Cf. the term ἐξολοκρασία, defined by LS as "mixture of dregs, heel-taps, etc., with which the drunken were dosed at the end of a revel by their stronger-headed companions." This is, of course, not a parallel, and John does not use this word. But it shows what could happen at a banquet.
39. The word is καλός, which in John does not differ in meaning from ἄγαθός. See the note on 1:46.

40. P. W. Meyer argues that this verse brings out an important symbolical meaning. To him the story refers to the Christian salvation in contrast to Hellenistic ideas. According to the latter the best came first, the heavenly man before the earthly, the divine before the deterioration we see in the world. Salvation then was a reversal of the process, with the recovery of the original. But Christ brings us a salvation that is miraculously new. God has kept the best wine until last (JBL LXXXVI [1967], pp. 191-97).

41. The Greek reads Ταύτην ἐποίησεν ἀρχήν κτλ. The absence of the article gives a meaning like "This he did (as) a beginning of signs." See Abbott 2386 (i).

42. σημεία. John never uses δύναμις, the Synoptists' favorite word for the miracles, which stresses the element of power. R. T. Fortna says, "the σημεία were not prodigies in any sense; in the face of them men do not marvel or fear, but believe" (JBL, LXXXIX [1970], p. 153). He concludes his article by denying that the resurrection is the chief sign: "For John, the chief sign is rather Jesus' death, perceived as his glorification, by which he gives 'life' (3:14f.; 12:32)" (p. 166).

43. Cf. Bultmann: "that he manifested his δόξα is nothing other than that he manifested the όνομα of the Father (17.6)." Richardson points out that John "records no scene of Transfiguration, as do the three Synoptists; he regards the whole of Christ's incarnate life as an embodiment of the δόξα of God, though the glory is revealed only to believing disciples and not unto 'the world' " (An Introduction to the Theology of the New Testament [London. 1958], p. 65).

44. It is easy to miss it. That glory "was not revealed at the imperial palace in Rome. Or at Herod's temple in Jerusalem. Or at the colonnaded Acropolis in Athens. But here, in an impoverished village of Cana, nestled away in an obscure corner of Galilee" (Ken Gire, Incredible Moments with the Savior [Grand Rapids, 1990], p. 6).

45. For πιστεύω εἰς see on 1:12 and Additional Note E, pp. 296-98.

46. "After this" translates μετά τοῦ τοῦτο, an expression John uses again in 11:7, 11; 19:28; he uses the plural μετά τοῦ τοῦτο in 3:22; 5:1, 14; 6:1; 7:1; 19:38; 21:1. Bernard thinks that when the singular is used it is always implied that the time interval is short, whereas the plural is much more general (p. cviii). Barrett and Bultmann, however, deny that there is a distinction, and in view of John's habit of making slight variations in similar statements but without distinction of meaning (see on 3:5) they may well be right.

47. The spelling favored by most authorities is Καφαρναούμ (Kapharnaoum), equivalent to כפר נחום, "village of Nahum." The exact location is not known, but Tell Hum and Khan Minyeh have been strongly supported. In any case, it must have been on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee.

48. It may support this that in Mark 3:31ff. Jesus' mother and brothers appear at Capernaum, and that in Mark 6:3, while Jesus' brothers are named, only his sisters are spoken of as remaining at Nazareth. This would be natural if the sisters had married and later the rest of the family had moved to Capernaum.

49. See further J. B. Lightfoot, Saint Paul's Epistle to the Galatians (London, 1902), pp. 252-91; J. B. Mayor, The Epistle of St. James (London, 1910), pp. v-lv; R. V. G. Tasker, The General Epistle of James (London, 1956), pp. 22-24; V. Taylor, The Gospel according to St. Mark (London, 1959), pp. 247-49; Godet, in loc. Taylor concludes, "There can be little doubt that the Helvidian view stands as the simplest and most natural explanation of the references to the brothers of Jesus in the Gospels" (Mark, p. 249). He points to the significance of this: "The fact that Jesus had blood brothers and sisters, it may be held, underlines the reality and completeness of the Incarnation" (ibid.). Those who oppose the Helvidian view stress the facts that it is almost universally held that James of Jerusalem was one of "the brothers of the Lord," that the Epistles of James and Jude are held to have been written by these brothers, and that if such prominent Christians were really sons of Mary it would have been impossible for the tradition of Mary's perpetual virginity to have arisen so early.
The argument must be treated with respect, but it can scarcely outweigh the natural meaning of Scripture. The Helvidian view is to be preferred.

50. ἐρματιστής. The Synoptists use κολλυβιστής, which John has in v. 15.

51. John has ἀνέτρεψεν; Matthew and Mark have κατέστρεψεν.

52. Some scholars accept the Johannine dating, pointing out that, as Mark records but one visit to Jerusalem, he had to place the cleansing then. Ivor Buse says, "The explanation of the most complicated series of facts seems to be that both John and Mark were dependent upon an earlier account of the Temple Cleansing and that the influence of this earlier account led Matthew and Luke to make the same corrections in the Marcan story" (ExT, LXX [1958-59], p. 24). His argument is ingenious but unconvincing. R. H. Lightfoot devotes two chapters to the incident (The Gospel Message of St. Mark [Oxford, 1950], pp. 60-79). He finds himself unable to say whether the cleansing came early or late, though he inclines toward the Markan date. He does not discuss the possibility of two cleansings. E. B. Redlich argues for displacement, thinking that 2:13-3:21 was removed by an editor from an original position after 12:36 (ExT, LV [1943-44], pp. 89-92). His arguments are answered by G. Ogg (ExT, LVI [1944-45], pp. 70-72).

53. Cf. Barclay, "John, as someone has said, is more interested in the truth than in the facts" (cf. B. W. Bacon, "He aims to give not fact but truth" [The Making of the New Testament [London, n.d.], p. 223]); "He was not interested to tell men when Jesus cleansed the Temple; he was supremely interested in telling men that Jesus did cleanse the Temple." But this is not the impression left by reading this Gospel. John was interested in facts. He speaks much more often, for example, of witness (a means of attesting facts) than does any of the other Evangelists. He includes notes of times and place. I see no reason to hold that he saw any conflict between truth and facts; he cared about both. It is further the case that the point of view put forward by Barclay, though widely held, does not face the very real difficulty of explaining how John could confront opponents of a docetic type with such a lighthearted attitude toward facts.

54. Cf. the discussion in P. Gardner-Smith, Saint John and the Synoptic Gospels (Cambridge, 1938), ch. 1. See also SFG, pp. 23ff.

55. Most recent scholars simply assume the point. Thus Dodd says: "The suggestion that the temple was twice cleansed is the last resort of a desperate determination to harmonize Mark and John at all costs. The only legitimate question is whether the (single) cleansing is to be placed early or late in the Ministry" (HTFG, p. 157, n. 2). But with all respect, this is rhetoric, not reasoned argument. The question should be resolved by evidence, not dogmatism. The reason some scholars hold to two cleansings is not "a desperate determination to harmonize," but the number and character of the differences between the two accounts. Despite the assertions of some critics there are practically no resemblances between the two narratives, apart from the central act.

56. Plummer thinks it "incredible that anyone who had contemporary evidence could through any lapse of memory transfer a very remarkable incident indeed from one to the other. On the other hand the difficulty of believing that the Temple was twice cleansed is very slight. Was Christ's preaching so universally successful that one cleansing would be certain to suffice? He was not present at the next Passover (vi.4), and the evil would have a chance of returning. And if two years later He found that the evil had returned, would He not be certain to drive it out once more? Differences in the details of the narratives corroborate this view."

57. Cf. Bailey, "I cannot see that it is unlikely that Jesus should have repeated His action, though it is surprising that He should not have been immediately arrested on the first occasion. But the Temple authorities were not popular, and v. 23 suggests that He had popular support for what He did."

58. It is quite possible that Jesus' saying was repeated during his ministry (see n. 80 below). Even so, Murray's point will hold. If there was only one cleansing Jesus' words must have been spoken then, and if it was only a few days before the trial it would be very remarkable indeed if the authorities could find no witnesses who could agree on what he said.
59. See also Westcott's careful comparison of the accounts, yielding the conclusion that there were two cleansing.

60. Tasker says, "it may be suggested that it was because Jesus made this early attack upon traditional Pharisaic worship at the capital, that the mission of scribes was sent from Jerusalem to Galilee, when they entered upon what was virtually a 'counter-attack' by


62. See R. H. Lightfoot, Appended Note (pp. 349-56), for a discussion of the extent to which the idea of the Lord as the Passover victim pervades this Gospel. Hendriksen gives a brief account of the Passover ritual, and there is a fuller one in Edersheim's The Temple (London, n.d.), ch. XII. See also my article, "The Passover in Rabbinic Literature" (.ABR, IV [1954-55], pp. 59-76).

63. The word is ἱερόν. By contrast ναός signifies the "shrine," the "holy place," the "sanctuary." The former is not used metaphorically in the New Testament, but the latter is used of the body of Christ (v. 21) and is also applied to believers (1 Cor. 3:16-17; 2 Cor. 6:16).

64. At first sight it seems unlikely that animals would be allowed into any of the Temple courts, because of the risk of their getting loose and defiling the sanctuary. But V. Eppstein argues from Rosh Hash. 31a and other passages in the Babylonian Talmud that there was a dispute between Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin, as a result of which the high priest allowed merchants to set up animal stalls within the temple precincts ("The Historicity of the Gospel Account of the Cleansing of the Temple," ZNTW, 55 [1964], pp. 42ff.).

65. The present participle τούς πωλοῦντας will denote the habitual practice.

66. The word κέρματιστής properly denotes one who changes large money into small (κέρματιζω = "to cut small"). In the next verse the word is κόλλυβιστής, from κόλλυβος, originally a small coin, and then the fee for exchange. Weymouth renders the former term "money-changers" and the latter "brokers." But in this passage there is surely no difference in meaning. Both terms apply to those who carried on the business of money changing. A certain charge was legitimate. But the Temple money changers had a monopoly and often charged exorbitant rates. They have been estimated to have made an annual profit of about £stg. 9,000 a year, while the Temple tax brought the Temple authorities about £stg. 75,000 a year. The enormous wealth of the temple is illustrated by the fact that the Roman Crassus is said to have taken from it a sum equal to about two and a half million pounds sterling. See A. Edersheim, LT, I, pp. 367ff. for details. He relates that on one occasion the action of Simeon, the grandson of Hillel, caused the price of a pair of pigeons to fall from the equivalent of 15s. 3d. to 4d, This is related in Mishnah, Ker. 1:7 (where the price dropped from a golden denar [worth 25 silver denars] to a quarter of a silver denar).

67. Studies in Pharisaism and the Gospels, I (Cambridge, 1917), pp. 83-84. He says: "It is strange enough that while the bronze coins circulated in Judaea should conform scrupulously to the tradition and represent nothing but inanimate objects, the payment of Temple dues should not only be accepted but required in coins containing figures on them. Reinach meets this objection by the suggestion that 'once thrown into the Temple treasury, all gold and silver coins were melted down and transformed into ingots' " (p. 84).

68. There is some support for the reading ὃς φραγέλλιον, "as it were a whip" (p. 66 75 17 fl and some MSS of the OL). But this reading is probably not original and in any case it does not give us a significantly different meaning. The term is found here only in the New Testament, and it is not so far attested in earlier writings.

69. The expression is φραγέλλιον ἐκ σχοινίων. Yet it should be noted that in the only other occurrence of σχοινίαv in the New Testament, namely Acts 27:32, it denotes ropes on a ship. Schonfield renders "a lash of twisted rushes."

70. This is the most natural way of understanding the masculine πάντας even though the following τὰ τε πρόβατα καὶ τούς βόας means "both the sheep and the oxen." If animals only had been meant πάντας would have been more natural (see also Field, pp. 85-86).

72. The force of the present, μὴ ποιεῖτε, is "stop making." It implies that the action is going on. Moulton has a long note in which he shows that in the New Testament the distinction between the present and aorist tenses in prohibitions is observed, and specifically is this the case with John (M, I, pp. 122-26)

73. Not "our Father's house." Jesus never joins people with himself in such a way as to indicate that their relationship to the Father is similar to his (cf. 20:17). Bernard says that Jesus uses "my Father' 27 times in John, 16 times in Matthew, and 4 times in Luke. The Temple is often called "the house of God" in the Old Testament. Jesus' words amount to a claim to deity. Cf. Dalman, "In Jewish parlance it is unusual to refer to God in common discourse informally as Father without adding the epithet 'heavenly' " (*The Words of Jesus* [Edinburgh, 1902], p. 190). He examines Jesus' usage and concludes, "The usage of family life is transferred to God: it is the language of the child to its Father" (p. 192).

74. Cf. R. H. Lightfoot: "The word 'merchandise' suggests a reference to the messianic passage Zech. 14:21, end, if is is translated 'In that day (the day of the Lord) there shall be no more a trafficker in the house of the Lord of hosts'." It is quite in the Johannine manner to introduce in this way a subtle allusion to Jesus' messiahship, his great theme (20:31).

75. Cf. Strachan, "It is erroneous to suppose that Jesus' action is an attack on the whole sacrificial system. His motive was one of reverence for my Father's house, and of deep concern that the spirit of worship should thus be dissipated at its very door." The court in which all this noisy and boisterous traffic took place was the only court to which Gentiles might go when they wished to pray or meditate in the Temple. They ought to have been able to worship in peace. Instead they found themselves in the middle of a noisy bazaar. "A place that should have stood as a symbol for the freedom of access of all nations in prayer to God, had become a place associated with sordid pecuniary interests" (Wright). On the necessity for sternness in the face of evil Wright quotes Ruskin, that it is "quite one of the crowning wickednesses of this age that we have starved and chilled our faculty of indignation." But L. Goppelt sees more in Jesus' action: "Jesus attacked an institution that apparently contradicted the meaning of the temple and yet for the temple's sake was necessary. As an eschatological call to repentance, this attack was intended to uncover the questionable nature of the old and to summon to the new" (*Theology of the New Testament*, I [Grand Rapids, 1981], p. 96).

76. The formula of quotation is γεγραμμένον ἐστιν. The participial construction is usual in this Gospel (see 6:31, 45; 10:34; 12:14, 16; 15:25). The Synoptists prefer γέγραπται, as does Paul, and this formula is found in 8:17 (though even here Χ has the more usual Johannine formula). No real difference of meaning appears to attach to these two formulae. Whichever way Scripture is cited it is regarded as authoritative.

77. Interpretation, XI [1957], p. 156 (Morgan's italics).

78. See the excellent discussion in Dr. Alan Cole's Tyndale Lecture, published under the title *The New Temple* (London, 1950). Cole argues that the Temple references in Matthew "necessitate and indeed presume the Saying and interpretation found in Jn. ii.19" (p. 21). He sums up his conclusions in these terms: "(1) There was a certain amount of truth in the charge of the two witnesses at the trial of the Lord, as in that of the witnesses at Stephen's trial. (2) The fuller Marcan version of the Saying, especially in respect of its pair of correlated adjectives, represents what the early Church fully believed to be the teaching of the Lord. (3) These points are inexplicable unless the Saying recorded in the fourth Gospel at the account of the Temple purge (Jn. ii.19) be accepted. (4) The interpretation there given is not merely 'Johannine mysticism,' but corresponds to the primitive postresurrection belief of the Church at large" (p. 52).

79. John says that they "answered" (ἀπεκρίθησαν) and Morgan sees significance in the verb: "It is quite significant. The rulers recognized the startling challenge in what He had done in cleansing the Temple courts. As He stood in lonely dignity, coins scattered, animals dispersed in every
direction, and with the animals those who owned them gone, they gathered about Him and they 'answered' Him. It was an answer to what He had done."

80. See Edersheim, LT, II, pp. 68-69 for examples of this tendency in the rabbinic literature.

81. It is possible that the present participles, δ…κοιδομοῦν in both accounts point to a repeated claim by Jesus. At the very least they do not look like a reference to a single isolated saying.

82. It may be significant that Matthew does not call those who brought this charge "false" witnesses (KJV is based on an inferior reading). There was a measure of truth in their words. Mark does call them false, but his meaning is probably not that Jesus did not utter the saying, but that he did not mean it in the sense claimed.

83. Cf. C. F. D. Moule, "Putting the synoptic and the Johannean evidence together — and the two appear to be independent — we have a strong presumption that Jesus did say something about the destruction and replacement of the temple. This is important, because (apart from this saying) there seems to me to be no direct evidence that Jesus ever said anything which might have exposed him to the charges popularly levelled against him and brought with more formality against his follower Stephen" (JThS, n.s., I [1950], p. 30; the whole article, "Sanctuary and Sacrifice in the Church of the New Testament," is important).

84. Λύσατε. Abbott points to Eccl. 11:9 as a parallel construction, for it contains an imperative that implies a threat (2439 [iv]). Temple understands the word as "not an empty challenge, but a judgement on their mentality and policy which will involve the destruction of the Temple." Christ will then raise up "what shall thereafter be the habitation of God among men, that Risen Body which after the Ascension and Pentecost finds its earthly manifestation in that 'holy temple in the Lord, in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit' (Ephesians 1,11,21-22)."

85. Beasley-Murray comments, "it is an ironical call for them to carry on their behavior to its limit, which will end in the destruction of the temple of which they are guardians" (p. 40).

86. His word is ναός. For its distinction from Ιερόν see above, n. 60.

87. Cf. Matt. 12:6, "a greater thing than the temple is here" (ARVmg.). However we interpret the neuter it is clear that the "greatness" exceeding that of the Temple is closely connected with Christ. If we take it as equivalent to the masculine, Cole's words bring out the meaning: "Why is Christ 'greater than the Temple'? There can be only one all-embracing answer. It is because God's presence is more manifest in Him than in the Temple, On Him, not on the Temple, now rests the Shekinah" (The New Temple, p. 12). Similar thoughts are brought out in the Prologue to this Gospel, where the very Word of God "became flesh" in Jesus, he tabernacled among us, and the glory of God was manifest in him (1:14). Barrett comments, "the human body of Jesus was the place where a unique manifestation of God took place and consequently became the only true Temple, the only centre of true worship" (see on v. 21). Luther explains that when Christ calls himself a temple this means that "in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 2:9; Luther, vol. 22, p. 250).

88. Josephus says that the work was begun in the eighteenth year of Herod's reign (Ant. 15.380). This would be 20-19 B.C., and if the Jews' statement is accurate the date of this incident will be A.D. 27 or 28.

89. Τεσσαράκοντα και ἕξετεν οἰκοδομήθη ὁ ναός ούτος is difficult. Robertson explains the case of ἔτεσιν as instrumental, though it might be regarded as locative, "the whole period regarded as a point of time" (Robertson, p. 527). Barrett thinks it a combination of the two. The aorist is constative, the lengthy process being viewed as one whole. Yet the application of this tense to an edifice that was not to be completed for many years is not easy. There is, however, a parallel in LXX 2 Esdr. 5:16 (= Ezra 5:16), καὶ ἀπὸ τότε ἔως τοῦ νῦν ὄκκοδομήθη καὶ οὐχ ἐτελέσθη. It is not unlikely that the words in John refer to the completion of a definite stage of the work, and perhaps no building was going on at the time they were uttered. Some scholars think that the ναός as against the Ιερόν had been completed. The problem of the aorist would be solved if we could think (with Abbott, 2021-24) that the reference is to the temple of Zerubbabel, begun in 559 B.C. and completed in 513 B.C. and now being added to by Herod. But Herod's rebuilding was so extensive that this seems most
unlikely. The problem is discussed in detail by G. Ogg, *The Chronology of the Public Ministry of Jesus* (Cambridge, 1940), pp. 153-67. He concludes that the reference gives us no firm date. Nevertheless it does indicate within a year or two the time of Jesus' ministry. J. B. Lightfoot in an important note has shown that it is difficult to square this reference with the idea of a late writer who sat loose to accurate historical writing. It would have involved some abstruse research, both into Jesus' life and Herod's building program. And it is impossible to think of anyone doing all this work and then not drawing attention to it. See E. Abbot, A. R Peabody, and J. B. Lightfoot, *The Fourth Gospel* (London, 1892), pp. 158-60.

90. Note the emphatic ἐκείνος (see on 1:8). In contrast to the Jews (who did not understand) he spoke.

91. Cf. Wright: "The symbolism of Jesus was misunderstood in His day, as in every age it has been misunderstood. What He meant was that if they succeeded in destroying the true worship of Him whom he knew to be the Father, in this place, he would raise another 'temple' in the lives of His followers. This would be the true 'temple of his body.' God's temple is where He is known and worshipped." Similarly Cullmann says that the reference to the temple not made with hands (Mark 14:58) "can only refer to the community of disciples" (*Early Christian Worship*, p. 72, n. 3). R. H. Fuller dissents. John, he thinks, "does not speak of the church as the body of Christ: John 2:21 is often expounded in a Pauline sense, but it probably refers to the literal body of Jesus which passed through death to resurrection" (*The New Testament in Current Study* [London, 1963], p. 129). This view is surely correct.

92. Barclay thinks that Jesus meant that he would put an end to the Temple and to Temple worship: "He had come to show men a way to come to God without any Temple at all." He proceeds: "That must be what Jesus actually said; but in the years to come John saw far more than that in Jesus' saying. He saw in it nothing less than a prophecy of the Resurrection; and John was right. He was right for this basic reason, that the whole round earth could never become the temple of the living God until Jesus was released from the body and was everywhere present." Granted that the saying contains all this, why could not Jesus have meant it so? Why should John find in the words more than his Master who uttered the saying?

93. Jacob Neusner points out that the money changing was closely connected with the payment of the half-shekel (Exod. 30:11-16) that was used to purchase the animals for the daily sacrifices and thus for atonement for sin. He points out that women, slaves, or minors might pay the half-shekel, for they participated in the benefits of the sacrifices, but Gentiles and Samaritans were excluded from both. The work of the money changers in the temple courts was thus central to the Jewish system. He agrees with E. P. Sanders in seeing Jesus' action as "a broader statement that the Temple would be destroyed, for, in consequence of the cult's abrogation by reason of its uselessness, the daily whole offering sustained by every Israelite through his or her half-sheqel offering had no task to perform in the system of atonement and expiation of sin" (NTS, 35 [1989], pp. 289-90).

94. Bertil Gartner has shown that there are affinities with and differences from the teaching of Qumran (*The Temple and the Community in Qumran and the New Testament* [Cambridge, 1965]). The sectarian rejected the worship of the Jerusalem temple and thought of themselves as the new temple. But they lacked any equivalent of Christ. Gartner says, "the temple symbolism of the New Testament is built on the work of Christ; this it was believed had replaced the temple and its sacrifices once and for all. In short, the boundary between Qumran and the New Testament, in this matter of the content and function of temple symbolism, goes through the person of Christ" (pp. 104-5).

95. Cf. R. H. Lightfoot; "there is in this story, thus set before us here, a triple depth of meaning. First, the Lord performs an act by which He condemns the methods and the manner of the existing Jewish worship. Secondly, this act, as set forth by St. John, is a sign of the destruction of the old order of worship, that of the Jewish Church, and its replacement by a new order or worship, that of the Christian Church, the sanctuary or shrine of the living God. And thirdly, intermediate between the
old order and the new order is the ‘work’ — the ministry, death, and resurrection — of the Lord, which alone makes possible the inauguration and the life of the new temple.”

96. Cf. Hoskyns, "The rejection and putting to death of Jesus, His resurrection, the destruction of the temple and the end of animal sacrifice, the presence of God in the midst of the community of those who believe in Jesus, and the removal of sin — these are not isolated, separable occurrences. The sign that is given to the Jews is, therefore, the sign of the resurrection.”

97. In accordance with the usual New Testament usage the resurrection is ascribed to the Father, as the passive, ἠγέρθη, shows. Bernard, however, is incorrect when he says, in objection to the preceding saying’s being understood of the resurrection, "by the N. T. writers God the Father is always (Bernard's emphasis) designated as the Agent of Christ's Resurrection... Jesus is not represented as raising Himself" (on v. 19). Similarly Strachan, "The Resurrection is never regarded in the New Testament as the act of Christ Himself. It is the supreme act of God’s almighty power."

While it is true that the New Testament generally refers to the Father's action, Jesus himself said on a number of occasions that he would rise (Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:34; Luke 18:33; 24:7, 46; some MSS also in Matt. 17:9, 23; Luke 9:22; cf. also John 10:17-18). It is also said that he rose (Acts 10:41; 17:3; 1 Thess.4:14). This point is often overlooked, as when Schnackenberg writes, "Here, in contrast to the rest of the N.T., which speaks of the resurrection of Jesus as the work of God..." (p. 352).

98. In John this is clear enough in passages like 10:35; 13:18; 17:12; 19:24, 28, 36, 37, and this creates a presumption that other occurrences of ἡ γραφή also have a single Old Testament passage in mind, even though we are not able to identify it with certainty (namely 7:38, 42; 20:9). But the possibility remains that sometimes the general sense of the Old Testament may be meant. It is perhaps no coincidence that the two most difficult to pin down are this verse and 20:9, both of which refer to the resurrection. John may mean that this is the general tenor of Old Testament teaching.


100. ἐν τοῖς Ἱεροσόλυμοις (for this form see on 1:19). The article is found with this name elsewhere in the New Testament only in 5:2; 10:22; 11:18. It is difficult to see the reason for it. Perhaps as Bernard suggests, it means "the precincts of Jerusalem." The form with the article is found also in 2 Macc. 11:8; 12:9; 3 Macc. 3:16.

101. ohn adds ἐν τῇ ἑορτῇ to "the Passover," this being his first use of the noun. It is indicative of his interest in the feasts generally that he uses the term 17 times, whereas Matthew and Mark use it only twice each and Luke 3 times.

102. ohn is fond of the verb θεωρέω, which he uses 24 times; in the whole New Testament it occurs 58 times, so he has nearly half of its occurrences. The verb is often said to denote a more concentrated gaze than say, βλέπω, but it is difficult to see this consistently carried through (though this meaning may be in mind on some occasions). It can be used for the deepest and most perceptive sight (6:40), but on the other hand there is no such connotation here. In the comment on 1:32 we noted R. E. Brown's examination of John's words for seeing, in which he finds that while John certainly does have different kinds of sight in mind these are not consistently linked with particular words. We conclude that θεωρέω is a favorite word with John and is used of a variety of kinds of seeing.

103. Luther speaks of this as a "milk faith." This he explains as "a young faith of such as enthusiastically accede, give in, and believe but just as quickly withdraw when they hear something unpleasant or unexpected" (Luther, vol. 22, p. 251).

104. As we see from the emphatic αυτός, which opens the clause and the adversative δέ.

105. The verb is γινώσχω. For the use of the articular infinitive see on 1:48. Some differentiate this verb from οἶδα, suggesting that it denotes acquired knowledge, the knowledge that comes from observation and reasoning, whereas οἶδα points to immediate, intuitive knowledge. The former is said to be partial and growing, the latter complete and absolute. But it is very doubtful whether the
distinction can be pressed, especially in this Gospel. Bernard has a helpful comment (on 1:26): "Both verbs are used of Christ's knowledge of the Father; γινώσκω at 10 17 25, οίδα at 7 28 855. Both are used of the world's knowledge (or ignorance) of God, or of that possessed by the Jews: γινώσκω at !10 1723.25 6 8 16 31; ! Jn31.6; οίδα at 728 819 1521 both are used of man's knowledge of God and Christ: γινώσκω at 14 7.9 17 3, 1 Jn. 2 4.13.14 46.7.8 5 20, and οίδα at 1 31.33 422 14 7. Both are used of Christ's knowledge of men or of ordinary facts, e.g. γινώσκω at 2 25 56.42 gl 10 14 27, and οίδα at 6 64 8 37 1 33. The word used for the Father's knowledge of the Son is γινώσκω (10 15), and not οίδα as we should have expected. With this array of passages before us, we shall be slow to accept conclusions which are based on any strict distinction in usage between the two verbs." The view that the two verbs can be differentiated is argued by J. B. Lightfoot, Notes on Epistles of St Paul (London, 1904), pp. 178-79. But Bernard's case is strong. And it may be reinforced by the reflection that John habitually uses minor variations without significant difference of meaning (see on 3:5). John never uses the noun γνώσις, but the importance he attaches to knowledge is perhaps indicated by the fact that he uses γινώσκω 56 times and οίδα 85 times. As we have seen, both verbs are used of a variety of aspects of knowledge. But the really significant thing is the knowledge of Christ and of God, which are interconnected. To know Christ is to know the Father (14:7).

106. John quite often draws attention to unusual knowledge possessed by Jesus (4:17; 5:42; 6:61, 64; 13:1, 11; 18:4).

107. Loyd makes a comparison between this chapter and the temptation narrative: "(i) He will not turn stones into bread to satisfy His own hunger; but He turns water into wine to meet the needs of others, (ii) He will not leap from the pinnacle of the Temple in order to capture the popular imagination; but He does the unpopular thing of cleansing the Temple, (iii) He will not fall down and worship Satan in order to gain worldly power; but insists upon the need of individual conversion."

108. It is probably significant that "what is in the heart of his neighbour" is one of the seven things the rabbis thought of as hidden from people (Mekilta Exod. 16:32). John assigns this knowledge explicitly to Jesus. Odeberg points out that in one place or another John attributes to Jesus knowledge of the other six as well (FG, p. 45). John clearly regards Jesus as possessed of a knowledge that is more than human, but just as clearly he does not regard this as vitiating his real humanity. Jesus' knowledge is derived from his close communion with his Father (8:28, 38; 14:10).
JOHN 3

E. THE FIRST DISCOURSE — THE NEW BIRTH (3:1-36)

John pursues his aim of showing that Jesus is "the Christ, the Son of God" (20:31) chiefly in two ways: he narrates some of the signs Jesus did, and he records some of the discourses Jesus spoke. Sometimes the "sign" and the discourse are intimately related, sometimes not. The first "discourse" is a private talk to a single listener, Nicodemus, a member of the ruling class. ¹ The conversation brings out the means of attaining eternal life, and, in typical Johannine fashion, this leads on to reflections of the Evangelist and to further incidents.

1. The New Birth (3:1-15)

1Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish ruling council. 2He came to Jesus at night and said, "Rabbi, we know you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the miraculous signs you are doing if God were not with him." 3In reply Jesus declared, "I tell you the truth, unless a man is born again, a he cannot see the kingdom of God." 4"How can a man be born when he is old?" Nicodemus asked. "Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb to be born!" 5Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, unless a man is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. 6Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit b gives birth to Spirit. 7You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You c must be born again.' 8The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit." 9"How can this be?" Nicodemus asked. 10"You are Israel's teacher," said Jesus, "and do you not understand these things? 11I tell you the truth, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen, but still
y people do not accept our testimony. 12I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things? 13No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven — the Son of Man. 14Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, 15that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life."

Right from the opening verse of this Gospel John has been concerned to impress on his readers the surpassing excellence of Jesus. He is the Word become flesh. But he did not become flesh, so to speak, on general principles; he had a purpose. He came specifically in order that people might have the abundant life (10:10). In this chapter John furthers his purpose by recording a conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus, a typical representative of Pharisaic Judaism. As such Nicodemus would have stressed the careful observance of the Law and the traditions of the elders. For the loyal Pharisee this was the way of salvation. John uses this conversation to show that all such views are wide of the mark. Not a devout regard for the Law, not even a revised presentation of Judaism is required, but a radical rebirth. The demand is repeated three times (vv. 3, 5, 7). Nicodemus and all his tribe of lawdoers are left with not the slightest doubt but that what is asked of anyone is not more law, but the power of God within that person to remake him or her completely. In its own way this chapter does away with "works of the law" every bit as thoroughly as anything in Paul.

1 Jesus' visitor is introduced as "a man of the Pharisees" (for this term see on 1:24). The Pharisees had no vested interest in the Temple (which was rather the domain of the Sadducees). A Pharisee would, accordingly, not have been unduly perturbed by the action of Jesus in cleansing the Temple courts. Indeed, he may possibly have approved it, partly on the general principle that anything that put the Sadducees down a peg or two was laudable and partly in the interests of true religion. So there is no problem
about a leading Pharisee coming to Jesus just after the Temple cleansing (though, of course, we have no means of knowing how long after the events of ch. 2 Nicodemus came to Jesus). The name "Nicodemus" is Greek, but it occurred among the Jews. There was a well-known Nicodemus who survived the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 and whom some identify (improbably) with this Nicodemus. There is no certain reference to this Nicodemus in Jewish writings. John says that he was "a ruler of the Jews," which NIV renders as "a member of the Jewish ruling council" that is of the Sanhedrin (for "the Jews" see on 1:19). The use of the expression is doubtless intended to let readers know that Nicodemus stands as the representative of the old religion. We hear of Nicodemus only in this Gospel. He comes before us raising a hesitant (and apparently ineffectual) voice on behalf of Jesus when he is being discussed by the authorities after an abortive attempt to arrest him during the Feast of Tabernacles (7:50-52). He is not recorded as saying anything at the trial of Jesus, but he helped Joseph of Arimathea at the burial (19:39). We may, I think, fairly infer that he had a love for the truth, but that he was rather a timid soul. In the end he came right out for Jesus, and that at a time when all the disciples forsook him. That is saying a lot for a timid man.

Anyone in Nicodemus's position would be an unlikely candidate for the position of follower of Jesus. But Jesus' "signs" had impressed this Pharisee, and he wanted to know more. Prudently he came "at night." This is usually taken to be due to fear (so, for example, Michaels) or at least to a careful regard for people's opinions. Nicodemus was a prominent man; since he was "Israel's teacher" (v. 10) it would never do for him to commit himself to the unofficial Teacher from Galilee, not at any rate until and unless he was absolutely sure of his ground. If this is the explanation of the night visit it is not without its interest that Jesus says nothing in condemnation. He was content to receive Nicodemus just as he was. But it is not at all certain that the reason for the night visit was fear. The Pharisee may have chosen this time in order to be sure of an uninterrupted and leisurely interview. During the day Jesus would be busy and there would be crowds (crowds of common people!). Not so at night. Then there could be a long, private discussion. Others associate the late visit with the rabbinic commendation of those who pursued their studies into the night hours. Perhaps most scholars today think that the words should be taken symbolically. Jesus is the Light of the world, and it was out of the darkness
in which his life had been lived that Nicodemus came to the light. It would be quite in his manner for John to have more than one of these meanings in mind.

Nicodemus begins with a courteous, even flattering address (for the respectful "Rabbi" see on 1:38). He hails Jesus as a teacher "who has come from God." We must notice that he regards Jesus as a teacher only, and that he has as yet no perception of the real nature of him whom he sought out. He has come as one teacher to another to discuss matters of mutual interest. Indeed, there may even be a trace of condescension in that he, an honored Pharisee, had come to talk to a teacher who had never been through the schools (7:15). Though he comes alone he speaks in the plural: "we know." Evidently he is associated with others and feels that he can speak for them. The continuous tenses he uses are perhaps meant to indicate that Jesus habitually did the signs of which he speaks. Nicodemus has a true perception that such signs point to God (see Additional Note G, pp. 607-13 for the significance of the "signs").

Jesus declines to carry on with courteous exchanges that get nowhere, but plunges immediately into the very heart of the subject. Clearly Nicodemus is seeking instruction in the way to life. Jesus' first words tell him about it. He underlines the importance of his words by introducing them with the solemn "I tell you the truth" (see on 1:51). Then in one sentence he sweeps away all that Nicodemus stood for, and demands that he be remade by the power of God. The word rendered "again" might equally be translated "from above." Both senses are true, and in the Johannine manner our author probably intends that we understand both (Barclay gets the best of both worlds with "unless a man is reborn from above"). Anyone who would enter the kingdom of God must be born in a radically new fashion, and this second birth is from heaven. Entry into the kingdom is not by way of human striving (cf. 1:13), but by that rebirth which only God can effect. The kingdom of God is the most common topic of Jesus' teaching in the Synoptic Gospels. As such it has attracted a great deal of attention, and the literature on the subject is enormous. Most modern students hold that the term "kingdom" is to be understood in a dynamic sense; it means "reign" rather than "realm." It is God's rule in action. We are probably not meant to make much of a distinction between seeing and entering (v. 5) the kingdom. But it will be appropriate that Jesus speaks here of seeing it. So
far from entering into all that its privileges mean, anyone who is not reborn will not even see the kingdom. This passage incidentally is the only one in this Gospel that mentions the kingdom of God (though Jesus speaks of "my kingdom," 18:36). But John frequently speaks of eternal life, and for him the possession of eternal life appears to mean very much the same as entering the kingdom of God as the Synoptists picture it.

4 Nicodemus answers in a way that shows that he takes Jesus' words to refer to physical birth (for similar misunderstandings see on 2:20). It seems so obvious that the words are not meant to be taken literally that we must ask why Nicodemus adopted this curious interpretation. Perhaps it was a case of hurt dignity. There are references to proselytes who were admitted to the Jewish religion as being like children newly born. Nicodemus may have felt that the term appropriate to the Gentile as he entered the ranks of the chosen people was the last word that should be applied to one who was not only a Jew but a Pharisee, and a member of the Sanhedrin. So, not liking the way the conversation is going, he chooses to misunderstand. It is perhaps more likely that he is wistful rather than obtuse. A man, Nicodemus might have said, is the sum of all his yesterdays. He is the man he is today because of all the things that have happened to him through the years. He is a bundle of doubts, uncertainties, wishes, hopes, fears, and habits, good and bad, built up through the years. It would be wonderful to break the entail of the past and make a completely fresh beginning. But how can this possibly be done? Can physical birth be repeated? Since this lesser miracle is quite impossible, how can we envisage a much greater miracle, the remaking of a person's essential being? Regeneration is sheer impossibility!

5 Once again Jesus prefaces his remarks with the solemn and emphatic "I tell you the truth." This invites Nicodemus's undivided attention to the words that follow, for they are important. Jesus explains being born anew as being born "of water and the Spirit." There is no article with either noun in the Greek, but NIV can be defended for supplying one by the consideration that Jesus is undoubtedly referring to the regenerating activity of the Holy Spirit of God. On this occasion, however, he does not speak of being born "of the Spirit" simply (as he does in vv. 6, 8), but of being born "of water and the Spirit." The explanations of this unusual and arresting expression are many, but most of them fall into one or other of three main groupings.
(i) "Water" stands for purification (cf. 2:6). If this is the correct explanation there is probably a backward look at the baptism of John. This was "a baptism of repentance" (Mark 1:4), concerned with purifying (v. 25), and it could be explicitly contrasted with the baptism of the Spirit (1:33). The meaning then will be that Nicodemus should enter into all that "water" symbolizes (repentance and the like), and that he should also enter into the experience that is summed up as "born of . . . the Spirit," entering into the totally new divine life that Jesus would impart. Both demands were radical. The Pharisees refused John's baptism (Luke 7:30), and they consistently opposed Jesus. It was asking a lot for Nicodemus to accept both.

(ii) "Water" may be connected with procreation. This conception is quite foreign to us and we find it difficult at first to make sense of it. But Odeberg has gathered an impressive array of passages from rabbinic, Mandaean, and Hermetic sources to show that terms like "water," "rain," "dew," and "drop" were often used of the male semen. If "water" has this meaning here, there are two possibilities. Being born "of water" may point to natural birth, which must then be followed by being born "of the Spirit," that is spiritual regeneration. Or better, we may take "water" and "Spirit" closely together to give a meaning like "spiritual seed." In this case being born "of water and the Spirit" will not differ greatly from being born "of the Spirit." Lindars objects to this view on the grounds that "if John had meant this he would have said 'of blood', as in 1.13." But it is dangerous to assume such an insight into John's mind as to claim knowledge of how he would express himself. Odeberg's point is not so easily overthrown.

(iii) "Water" may refer to Christian baptism. The strong argument in favor of this view is that baptism may well have been the natural association that the term would arouse among Christians at the time this Gospel was published. John would scarcely have been unmindful of this. The weak point is that Nicodemus could not possibly have perceived an allusion to an as yet nonexistent sacrament. It is difficult to think that Jesus would have spoken in such a way that his meaning could not possibly be grasped. His purpose was not to mystify but to enlighten. In any case the whole thrust of the passage puts the emphasis on the activity of the Spirit, not on any rite of the church.
The second explanation seems the most likely, and that in the sense of taking "water" and "Spirit" closely together. Nicodemus was a Pharisee. He was used to this way of speaking, and the allusion would be natural for him. We should accordingly take the passage to mean being born of "spiritual water," and interpret this as another way of referring to being born "of the Spirit." Jesus is referring to the miracle that takes place when the divine activity remakes anyone. That person is then born all over again by the action of the very Spirit of God. As John is fond of using expressions that may be taken in more ways than one, it is, of course, not impossible that he wants us to think of the other meanings as well. But the main thrust of the words surely has to do with the divine remaking.

In verse 3 Jesus has spoken of "seeing" the kingdom of God; here, of "entering" it. There is probably no great difference of meaning. In both places Jesus is stressing the truth that spiritual regeneration is indispensable if we would be God's. It is the perennial heresy of the human race to think that by our own efforts we can fit ourselves for the kingdom of God. Jesus makes it clear that it is impossible to fit oneself for the kingdom. Rather, it is necessary to be completely renewed, born anew, by the power of the Spirit. These solemn words forever exclude the possibility of salvation by human merit. Our nature is so gripped by sin that an activity of the very Spirit of God is a necessity if we are to be associated with God's kingdom.

6 The teaching of this verse is succinctly paraphrased by Hoskyns: "There is no evolution from flesh to Spirit." While John does not use the term "flesh" in the same way as does Paul, to denote mankind's sinful nature, he yet uses it in such a way as to make clear that it is, so to speak, of the earth earthy. It cannot give rise to anything other than what is earthy. But Jesus has been speaking of a spiritual kingdom, the kingdom of God. For entrance into that kingdom a spiritual birth is required. It is perhaps worth adding that Jesus' statement is couched in quite general terms. This is a truth of general application and is not meant only for Nicodemus and his friends.

7 In the light of the principle he has just enunciated Jesus urges Nicodemus not to be astonished at his teaching on the new birth. It is only what is to be expected. Notice that Jesus now says "You," whereas earlier he has spoken about "one" being reborn. The plural may be a recognition that Nicodemus had associates (cf. his own "we," v. 2). At any rate it makes
the application of the words wider than to the Pharisee only. "Must" is a strong expression.43 There is no other way than that of rebirth.

8 The interpretation of this verse is complicated by the fact that the word that has been uniformly translated "spirit" in its occurrences hitherto in this chapter has more than one meaning. In Greek (as, for that matter, in several other languages) the one word may mean "spirit" or "breath" or "wind." The spirit of a person is the immaterial principle of life within him or her. And it was a matter of observation for people in early days that when the breath ceases the life ceases also. What more natural, then, than to apply the same word to both? And since wind is nothing more than a lot of breath going somewhere in a huny, it was equally natural to use the word for the wind.44 The word used here might then mean "wind" or it might mean "Spirit" (or, in the Johannine manner, there may be a hint at both meanings). Since the term was used previously in this chapter we would expect the earlier meaning to carry on and yield the sense "Spirit." The passage would then mean that people cannot predict the movements of the Spirit. The Spirit breathes where he wills, and just as people cannot comprehend the Spirit neither can they comprehend anyone that is born of the Spirit. This gives a consistent interpretation and a very natural one.

But it suffers from the not inconsiderable disadvantage that it is more than difficult to understand how anyone who cannot comprehend the Spirit or the person born of the Spirit can be said to hear the "sound" of the Spirit. The impossibility of giving this a satisfactory meaning inclines most translators and commentators to take the word in the sense "wind." The meaning then is that the familiar wind has its mysteries. It can be heard (did Nicodemus and Jesus hear a gust of wind at this point?). Yet people know neither its origin nor its destination. With no knowledge of scientific meteorology as we understand it, the wind, for the ancients, had something mysterious and unpredictable about it. As is the wind, so is anyone who has been born of the Spirit. The person who lacks spiritual life may have contact with such people, but knows neither the origin of their life nor their final destiny. This latter seems the preferable interpretation of the passage.45

9-10 Nicodemus confesses himself baffled by all this. His puzzled question elicits the gentle reminder that a man in his position ought not to find it all so very difficult. "Israel's teacher" (more literally "the teacher of Israel") points at the very least to preeminence as a teacher. The article ("the," not "a" teacher) may indicate that Nicodemus held some official
position, but if so we do not know what it was. But this leading Pharisee professed to know the things of God, and even to teach them to others. Under these circumstances he ought to have known that no one is able to come to God in her or his own strength or righteousness. Even if the information that he as well as others must be reborn was new to him he should not have greeted it with such astonishment.

11 For the third time in this conversation Jesus uses the solemn "I tell you the truth" (vv. 3, 5). This time it is not the truth that one must be reborn that is underlined, but the other truth that Jesus can be relied on. He has said nothing but that of which he has knowledge (Goodspeed, "we know what we are talking about"). Notice the twofold reference to witness (see on 1:7). It emphasizes the reliability of what Nicodemus has heard. "Testimony" (or "witness") does not point to opinions that may be debated, but to objective fact. Jesus is not hazarding a guess, but telling Nicodemus about things of which he has perfect knowledge. The plural "we" is curious, all the more so since Jesus so rarely associates people with him. Moreover, this passage must refer, at least primarily, to the Master's own knowledge and witness. But it may well be that he is here associating his disciples with himself. Westcott thinks that some of them may even have been present (cf. the comment of Cotterell on v. 2). None is mentioned, but it is not impossible. Those who have learned from Jesus and have experienced the rebirth to which he refers can speak to others of the necessity for the new birth. In doing so they testify to what they know. But whether it is of Jesus or his followers, the witness is not received. "You people" is another plural that takes us beyond Nicodemus. The Jews at large did not receive the witness. The present tense must be given its full force. This was no occasional thing, but the regular habit.

12 Jesus reverts to the first person singular and draws attention to what he himself is doing. He has borne witness to "earthly things" without being believed. The simplest way of understanding this is to see a reference to the present discourse. It was taking place on earth and concerned a process with effects discernible on earth. In contrast with this, Jesus can impart "heavenly things," that is higher teaching. But if men like Nicodemus will not believe the simpler things they cannot be expected to believe what is more advanced. Another suggested way of taking the words is to see in the "heavenly things" a reference to the present discourse, when "earthly things" would apply to some previous discourse of Jesus. It is urged that
"heavenly things" is a better description of this discourse than is "earthly things," and that if this meaning is taken it gives an excellent reason for the unbelief mentioned in the previous verse. Against it, however, is the fact that we have no evidence of any previous contact between Jesus and Nicodemus. Indeed, the opening words seem clearly to imply that this is a first meeting. This being so, there is no previous occasion to which we may refer the "earthly things," and they must accordingly describe the conversation in this chapter. A reference to previous teaching seems quite out of the question. Thus we adopt the first-mentioned interpretation.

13 Jesus makes it clear that he can speak authoritatively about things in heaven, though no one else can. No man has ever ascended into heaven (Prov. 30:4). But he has come down from there. Throughout this Gospel John insists on Jesus' heavenly origin. This is one way in which he brings out his point that Jesus is the Christ. Here his heavenly origin marks Jesus off from the rest of humanity. People are, as Paul puts it, "of the earth, earthy" (1 Cor. 15:47, KJV), but Jesus is from heaven. People cannot raise themselves to heaven and penetrate divine mysteries. It was part of the sin of the "son of the dawn" that he said in his heart, "I will ascend to heaven" (Isa. 14:12-13). But he could not do it. It remained a boast and an ambition. Jesus, however, really has been in heaven, and he has brought heavenly realities to earth (see on 1:51). The words may possibly have a polemical aim and be directed against those Jews who taught the possibility of great saints attaining heaven. Since in the context there is the thought of the new birth, and since there are references to seeing and entering the kingdom of God we, should probably understand the passage to mean that ascent into heaven is in fact possible. But this can be done only by the new birth that is "of the Spirit" and that the Son of man in some sense effects. It is not a human possibility. For "the Son of Man" see Additional Note C (pp. 150-52). The words "who is in heaven" (mg.) are absent from some of the most reliable manuscripts, and they should probably be omitted. If they are included they will point to the eternal being of the Son of man. The incarnation represents not a diminution of his functions, but an addition to them. Only a crassly literal localization of heaven would require us to think that Jesus had to leave heaven to come to earth.

14-15 This section of the Gospel concludes with an impressive statement of the purpose of the death of Jesus. Jesus recalls the incident
wherein, when fiery serpents bit the Israelites, Moses was told to make a snake of bronze and set it on a pole (Num. 21). Whoever looked at the bronze snake was healed. And, just as that snake was "lifted up" in the wilderness, so, Jesus says, "the Son of Man must be lifted up." This must refer to his being "lifted up" on the cross, as the context here and John's use of the verb elsewhere plainly show. But this does not exhaust the meaning of the expression. It is surely another example of John's use of words of set purpose to convey more than one meaning. The verb can refer to exaltation in majesty. It is used of Christ's exaltation (Acts 2:33) and again in a compound (Phil. 2:9). It is part of John's aim to show that Jesus showed forth his glory not in spite of his earthly humiliations, but precisely because of those humiliations. Supremely is this the case with the cross. To the outward eye this was the uttermost in degradation, the death of a criminal. To the eye of faith it was, and is, the supreme glory.

The purpose of Jesus' death was to give life to believers. For the importance of believing in this Gospel see on 1:12 and Additional Note E (pp. 296-98). Anyone who has believes has (the present tense points to a present possession) eternal life in Christ. This associates the life very closely with Christ. The life Christians possess is not in any sense independent of Christ. It is a life that is "hidden with Christ in God" (Col. 3:3), This is the first mention in this Gospel of eternal life (for "life" see on 1:4), a concept that means much to the Evangelist. He gives it a good deal of emphasis before his Gospel is through. In the Prologue he has informed us that life is "in" the Logos, and much the same thought is found here, with the addition that the lifting up of the Son of man is an integral part of the process whereby the life is mediated to believers. The word rendered "eternal" (always in this Gospel used of life) basically means "pertaining to an age." The Jews divided time into the present age and the age to come, but the adjective was used of life in the coming age, not that of the present age. "Eternal life" thus means "the life proper to the age to come." It is an eschatological concept (cf. 6:40, 54). But as the age to come is thought of as never coming to an end the adjective came to mean "everlasting," "eternal." The notion of time is there. Eternal life will never cease. But there is something else there, too, and something more significant. The important thing about eternal life is not its quantity but its quality. In Westcott's phrase, "It is not an endless duration of being in time, but being of which
time is not a measure."\textsuperscript{71} Eternal life is life in Christ, that life which removes a person from the merely earthly. As we see from the earlier part of this chapter, it originates in a divine action, the action wherein one is born anew. It is the gift of God,\textsuperscript{72} and not a human achievement.

2. Reflection (3:16-21)

16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son,\textsuperscript{a} that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. 18 Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son.\textsuperscript{b} 19 This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. 20 Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. 21 But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God."\textsuperscript{c}

a. 16 Or his only begotten Son
b. 18 Or God's only begotten Son
c. 36 Some interpreters end the quotation after verse 15.

All are agreed that from time to time in this Gospel we have the meditations of the Evangelist, but it is difficult to know where they begin and end. In the first century there were no devices like quotation marks to show the precise limits of quoted speech. The result is that we are always left to the probabilities and we must work out for ourselves where a speech or quotation ends. In this passage Jesus begins to speak in verse 10, but John does not tell us where this speech ends. The dialogue form simply ceases. Most agree that somewhere we pass into the reflections of the Evangelist. Perhaps the dividing point comes at the end of verse 15. The sentence which ends there has a reference to "the Son of Man," an expression used only by Jesus in all four Gospels. We are on fairly safe ground in maintaining that these are his words. But in verse 16 the death on the cross
appears to be spoken of as past, and there are stylistic indications that John is speaking for himself. It seems that the Evangelist, as he records Jesus' words about his death, is led to some reflections of his own on the same subject. That death is God's gift to deliver sinners from perishing. If, after all, they do perish that is because they prefer darkness to light. They bring it upon themselves.

16 God loved "the world" (see Additional Note B, pp. 111-13). The Jew was ready enough to think of God as loving Israel, but no passage appears to be cited in which any Jewish writer maintains that God loved the world. It is a distinctively Christian idea that God's love is wide enough to embrace all people. His love is not confined to any national group or spiritual elite. It is a love that proceeds from the fact that he is love (1 John 4:8, 16). It is his nature to love. He loves people because he is the kind of God he is. John tells us that his love is shown in the gift of his Son. Of this gift Odeberg finely says, "the Son is God's gift to the world, and, moreover, it is the gift. There are no Divine gifts apart from or outside the one-born (sic) Son." It should be noticed that God's love is for "the world"; in recent times some scholars have argued that John sees God's love as only for believers, but here it is plain that God loves "the world." In typical Johannine fashion "gave" is used in two senses. God gave the Son by sending him into the world, but God also gave the Son on the cross. Notice that the cross is not said to show us the love of the Son (as in Gal. 2:20), but that of the Father. The atonement proceeds from the loving heart of God. It is not something wrung from him. The Greek construction puts some emphasis on the actuality of the gift: it is not "God loved enough to give," but "God loved so that he gave." His love is not a vague, sentimental feeling, but a love that costs. God gave what was most dear to him. For "one and only" see on 1:14, and for "believes" on 1:12 (also Additional Note E, pp. 296-98). The death of the Son is viewed first of all in its revelatory aspect; it shows us the love of the Father. Then its purpose is brought out, both negatively and positively. Those who believe on him do not "perish." Neither here nor anywhere else in the New Testament is the awful reality behind this word "perish" brought out. But everywhere there is the recognition that a dreadful reality awaits the finally impenitent. Believers are rescued from this only by the death of the Son. Because of
this they have "eternal life" (see on v. 15). John sets perishing and life starkly over against one another. He knows no other final state.

17 Now John uses the thought of judgment to bring out God's loving purpose, and once again he employs the device of following a negative statement with the corresponding positive. God did not send the Son into the world, he tells us, in order to judge it. Elsewhere, however, he says that Jesus did come into the world "for judgment" (9:39). The resolution of the paradox demands that we understand salvation as necessarily implying judgment. These are the two sides to the one coin. Jesus came to bring salvation, but the very fact of salvation for all who believe implies judgment on all who do not. This is a solemn reality, and John does not want us to escape it. Judgment was a recognized theme in contemporary Jewish thought, but it is the judgment of God, and it is thought of as taking place at the last day. John modifies both these thoughts. He does, it is true, speak of judging sometimes in much the normal Jewish way (8:50). But it is quite another matter when he says that God has committed all judgment to Christ (5:22, 27). He goes on to speak of Christ as judging (5:30; 8:16, 26) or not judging (8:15 [but cf. 16]; 12:47), and of his word as judging people (12:48). His judgment is just (5:30) and true (8:16). How people will fare in the judgment depends on their relationship to him (5:24; 3:19). As the cross looms large Jesus can even speak of the world as judged (12:31), and of Satan likewise as judged (12:31; 16:11). Clearly John sees the whole traditional doctrine of judgment as radically modified in the light of the incarnation. The life and especially the death of Jesus have their effects on the judgment. So far we have referred to future judgment, the judgment of the last day. But this is not all of John's teaching. He views judgment also as a present reality (v. 18). What people are doing now results in a present preliminary judgment and determines what will happen when they stand before Christ on judgment day. All this has obvious christological implications. Clearly John has a high view of Jesus' Person. His teaching on judgment is yet another way in which he brings out the messiahship of Jesus, his great central aim.

In this verse "judge" has a meaning much like "condemn" (KJV), as the contrast with "be saved" shows. Some people will, in fact, be condemned, and that as the result of Christ's coming into the world (v. 19). But the purpose of his coming was not this. It was, on the contrary, "to save the world." So John brings out his positive corresponding to the negative at the
beginning of the verse. Salvation was central to the mission of Jesus, a truth that is brought out also in the Synoptists (Matt. 27:42; Mark 8:35; Luke 19:10, etc.). We should not overlook "through him" at the end of the verse, for this attributes the salvation in question ultimately to the Father. It is also worth noticing that we have here another example of John's habit of giving emphasis to certain words by the simple device of repetition. He uses "world" three times in this verse.

18 John proceeds to bring out the importance of faith. He has said that Christ died for people, but that does not automatically bring salvation. No one is saved without believing. John asserts this with another example of a favorite construction, the same truth being put both positively and negatively. Anyone who exercises faith is not condemned (or "judged"; see on previous verse). For that person judgment is not to be feared. But anyone who does not believe (persistence in unbelief is meant) does not have to wait until Judgment Day. That person is condemned already. Unbelief has shut him or her up to condemnation. John goes on to remove all doubts as to why this should be. That person has not believed "in the name of God's one and only Son." For believing "in the name" see on 1:12, and for "one and only" on 1:14. Notice another example of emphasis by repetition; the verb "believe" is mentioned three times in this one verse and is thus shown to be important. John goes on to bring out the enormity of a refusal to believe with his description of Jesus as "God's one and only Son." Though the expression does not in itself necessarily refer to a metaphysical relationship, there can be no doubt but that here John is affirming emphatically that Jesus has community of nature with the Father. When people do not believe on such a Person they condemn themselves. The coming of Jesus divides people into the saved and the condemned. This verse is of the utmost importance for our understanding of the paradox that Jesus both came to judge and did not come to judge. His coming gives people the opportunity of salvation and challenges them to a decision. To refuse his good gift is to call down judgment on oneself.

19 NIV's "verdict" is misleading; the word denotes the process of judging, not the sentence of condemnation. Faced with the light (see on 1:4) that has come into the world people may prefer the darkness. John is not saying that God has decreed that people who do such and such things are condemned. It is not God's sentence with which he is concerned here. He is telling us rather how the process works. People choose the darkness
and their condemnation lies in that very fact. They shut themselves up to darkness; they choose to live in darkness; they cut themselves off from the light. Why? "Because their deeds were evil." Immersed in wrongdoing, they have no wish to be disturbed. They refuse to be shaken out of their comfortable sinfulness. So they reject the light that comes to them and set their love (aorist tense) on darkness. Thereby they condemn themselves. There is a certain emphasis on "light" in this section. In characteristic fashion John makes the concept prominent by repeating the word (it occurs five times in vv. 19-21). We should probably give it a twofold meaning in this verse. There is the usual metaphorical meaning whereby "light" stands for "good" over against "darkness," which means "evil." But in this Gospel Christ is the light (1:9; 8:12; 9:5), and John is here speaking of Christ's coming to this world. The supreme condemnation of the people of his day, John says, was that when Christ, the Light of the world, came to them, they rejected him. They loved the darkness.

This is a place where the teaching of the Qumran scrolls diverges from that of this Gospel. In the scrolls there is a rigid and hopeless determinism. The men of darkness belong to the spirit of error. Their fate deprives them of any power of choice. Willy-nilly they belong to the spirit of error. But John is concerned with meaningful choice, not blind fate. People preferred darkness to light. It was not forced on them; they themselves chose darkness. And in that lies their condemnation.

20 John amplifies his explanation. Why did those who do evil not come to the light? Because all who make a practice of wrongdoing hate the light. John does not hesitate to use the strong term "hates," a verb he employs 12 times, almost a third of all its New Testament occurrences. This is accounted for largely because he so often sees the sinful world as hating God or Christ or, as here, what they stand for. The strife between good and evil is no tepid affair, but one that elicits the bitter hatred of the forces of evil. One reason for this is brought out here. To come to the light means to have one's darkness shown for what it is, and to have it rebuked for what it is. No one likes this uncomfortable process, persistent wrongdoers least of all. The fear of salutary reproof keeps them away from the light. There is a moral basis behind much unbelief.

21 Not so "whoever lives by the truth" (for "truth" see Additional Note D, pp. 259-62). More literally this means "he that does the truth," an unusual expression. We generally speak of "telling the truth." It may be
that John's choice of verb is partly due to the need for a contrast with "does evil" (v. 20). But there are actions that are true as well as words. Anyone who habitually performs the actions that can be described as true comes to the light. The deeds of such a person are not those that must be reproved. They are "done through God" (more exactly "in God," as NRSV), and the light will make this clear to all. John does not, of course, mean that some people by nature do what is right. He is not teaching salvation by works or by nature. In this very chapter he has reported the words of Jesus that emphasize that not good works, but rebirth is the way to God. The person John has in mind here is the one who responds to the gospel invitation, the one who has life in Christ (v. 15). Perhaps we could bring out his meaning by saying that the truth conveyed elsewhere in the New Testament by the doctrine of election underlies this verse. It is only the person on whom God has laid his hand who can truly say that his works are "wrought in God." And that person will not avoid the light.

3. Jesus and John the Baptist (3:22-36)

a. A Question about Purifying (3:22-26)

22 After this, Jesus and his disciples went out into the Judean countryside, where he spent some time with them, and baptized,
23 Now John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim, because there was plenty of water, and people were constantly coming to be baptized. 24 (This was before John was put in prison.) 25 An argument developed between some of John's disciples and a certain Jew over the matter of ceremonial washing. 26 They came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, that man who was with you on the other side of the Jordan — the one you testified about — well, he is baptizing, and everyone is going to him."

It is often suggested that verses 22-30 are out of their proper place. Some advocate transferring them to a position after 2:12, others after 3:36. The arguments usually revolve around their suitability to the context in which we find them. There are suggestions of displacement at various points in this Gospel, and more or less plausible arguments are produced to support such theories. But we must always bear in mind that what we think is an
appropriate sequence is not necessarily the one the writer of this Gospel would have adopted. And in any case our first duty is to see whether the verses in question make sense in the Gospel where they are traditionally found. Only if we find compelling reason should we place them elsewhere. In the case of these verses no such compelling reason appears to have been urged.\textsuperscript{94}

In verses 1-21 John has recorded a conversation in which Jesus sets forth the way of salvation and has added some comments of his own. Already in his opening chapter, he has insisted that John the Baptist regarded his function as that of bearing witness to Jesus. Now, after making it plain what Jesus stands for, the Evangelist returns to the Baptist to show that he bears witness to the Jesus of whom John is writing. The readers of the Gospel now know what Jesus wants of people. They know that he demands a radical rebirth. They know that he will die for his people's salvation. They know that those who believe in him have eternal life while those who do not are condemned already. Now John brings them to see that in the light of all this the Baptist maintains his unwavering support. He is still a witness to Jesus.

\textbf{22} After the events previously recorded\textsuperscript{95} Jesus moved with his disciples from Jerusalem into the country districts of Judea.\textsuperscript{96} The locality is not closely specified, but it appears to be somewhere in the Jordan plain, perhaps not so very far from Jericho. "Spent some time" translates another word that is not very specific,\textsuperscript{97} but we get the impression of an unhurried period during which Jesus and his followers got to know each other better. We do not read of Jesus as baptizing in any other Gospel, and from 4:2 we learn that the actual baptizing was carried out by the disciples, not by Jesus in person. It is difficult to think of this as Christian baptism in the later sense. More probably it represents a continuation of the "baptism of repentance" that was characteristic of John the Baptist, though with some implication of adherence to Jesus. Both Jesus and his first disciples had come from the circle around John, and it may well be that for some time they continued to urge people to submit to the baptism that symbolized repentance. We know that Jesus' first preaching was the same as that of John, "Repent" (Matt. 3:2; 4:17). It may well be that the symbol of repentance was retained for a time also. Cf. Schnackenburg, "As they practised it, it remained a baptism of repentance, but at the same time, it admitted to the group of those who wished to join Jesus."
23 From Jesus the spotlight moves to John. At that time he was at work\(^98\) at Aenon, which is located "near Salim."\(^99\) either place can now be identified with certainty. One suggestion for Aenon is a site about seven miles south of Beisan.\(^100\) If this is correct, there is a striking accuracy in the statement that there was "plenty of water" or, more literally, "many waters" there, for in this locality there are seven springs within a radius of a quarter of a mile.\(^101\) some such place John pursued his activities. The tense of the last two verbs is continuous and we might give the force of this as "they kept coming and being baptized."

24 The Evangelist tells us nothing about the imprisonment of John the Baptist apart from this laconic statement. Apparently he regarded this as so well known that he had no need to do other than simply mention it. We must turn to the fuller accounts in the Synoptists for information about it (Matt. 14:1-12; Mark 6:14-29; Luke 3:19-20). John is concerned to give us information about Jesus, not the Baptist. The latter is mentioned for his witness to Jesus, and for that alone. His imprisonment does not clarify his witness in any way, so it does not fit in with our Evangelist's plan. But the present incident does, so he records it. He adds to the information given in the Synoptic Gospels by indicating that between the temptation of Jesus and the arrest of the Baptist there was an interval during which Jesus and John worked side by side. We should not have known this from Mark 1:13-14 and the parallels.

25 The particular incident that triggered John's statement was a dispute his disciples\(^102\) had with a Jew\(^103\) about purifying. This verse is compressed to the point of obscurity. A little light may be shed on however, by the Qumran scrolls. These show that there were Essene-type sects with a deep interest in ceremonial purifications. If the suggestion that John the Baptist had had contacts with such a sect and had broken with it are well grounded, such a dispute as the one mentioned here would be very natural. It is also a natural touch that the dispute involved John's disciples and not John himself. They would probably be more aggressive than their master, and possibly more accessible for such a dispute.

26 The discussion must have taken a curious turn, for when John's disciples bring it to him there is no mention of differing views about purification. It is now a complaint that Jesus was having great success.\(^104\) For "rabbi" see on 1:38. Jesus is not mentioned by name, but described as "that man who was with you on the other side of the Jordan — the one you
testified about." This perhaps indicates that Jesus stayed with John rather longer than we would have gathered from a cursory reading of chapter 1. We should also notice that John's disciples recognize the place that witness (see on 1:7) to Jesus occupied in their master's teaching. At a later time disciples of John might refuse to give allegiance to Jesus, but his immediate disciples knew what he had said about him. "You" is emphatic and stands in sharp contrast with "he." John's disciples believe that John had behaved generously in bearing his witness to Jesus. They find it intolerable that Jesus should then act in independence, so to speak, and gather more disciples than his illustrious predecessor. "Everyone" is an indignant exaggeration, very natural in the circumstances.

b. The Reply of John the Baptist (3:27-30)

27To this John replied, "A man can receive only what is given him from heaven. 28You yourselves can testify that I said, 'I am not the Christa but am sent ahead of him.' 29The bride belongs to the bridegroom. The friend who attends the bridegroom waits and listens for him, and is full of joy when he hears the bridegroom's voice. That joy is mine, and it is now complete. 30He must become greater; I must become less.

a. 28 Or Messiah

27 John's reply is an immediate justification of Jesus' success. His first words are very general. They may be applied to John himself. He has what God has given him, that and no more. He cannot be anything more than the forerunner. God has not given it to him to intrude on the place of the Messiah. They apply also to Jesus. He has had this success given him (the verb is a perfect with the idea of a permanent gift) from God himself ("heaven" was a common circumlocution to avoid the use of the divine name). John sees the hand of the Father in everything. If people were flocking to Jesus, that was because the Father willed it so. The words also apply to the believer whose salvation is a gift from God. It could never have been acquired otherwise. It is unlikely that the Baptist meant the words in this sense; his intention is to show the reason for Jesus' greater success. But the language he uses is certainly capable of this further application.
John is able to appeal to what was well known about his preaching. "You yourselves" is emphatic. "You," John is saying, "have the answer already if you will only think of the significance of what you have already heard." He had spoken on this subject before and had explicitly disclaimed being the Christ (1:20). They should have remembered that. His "I" is also emphatic; there is to be no doubt about his disclaimer. "I... am sent" is in the perfect tense, which may indicate that his permanent character was that of a man sent from God (1:6) to be the forerunner of the Messiah. Nothing can alter that. The success of Jesus is not at all difficult to explain if John was truly sent from God. On the contrary, it was the most natural thing in the world. For Jesus is the One before whom John came, and to prepare whose way John came.

So far from being downcast at what is happening, John rejoices. He now employs the illustration of a wedding to bring this out. At a wedding the bridegroom is the important man. His friend may stand by him and rejoice with him. Indeed, in the Jewish scene he could do more. "The friend who attends the bridegroom" was an important person. He was responsible for many of the details of the wedding, and in particular it was he who brought the bride to the bridegroom. But when he had done this, his task was over. He did not expect to take the center of the stage. "The bride belongs to the bridegroom." But a wedding is a happy occasion for others than the bridegroom. The bridegroom's friend "is full of joy." The joy of his friend brings joy to him, too. In the same way, says John, his own joy, not simply that of Jesus, fills him completely. The news his disciples brought him was what he had been longing to hear. It filled his cup of joy to the full. Elsewhere Jesus used the wedding illustration to explain why his disciples did not fast (Mark 2:19). The present passage shows that the joy of his coming was not confined to his immediate circle. There may be more to the present passage than a happy illustration. The Baptist would have been well aware that in the Old Testament Israel is regarded as the bride of Yahweh (Isa. 54:5; 62:4-5; Jer. 2:2; 3:20; Ezek. 16:8; Hos. 2:19-20). This imagery made its appeal as a way of referring to the Messiah, and we find it applied to Christ, for example in 2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:32. "In some real sense the Baptist testified that God Himself was in Christ betrothing His bride to Himself afresh" (Murray). At the time the Evangelist records the saying it
would be impossible to miss the overtones that Jesus, not the Baptist, is the Bridegroom. The church is his bride, not that of his forerunner.\(^{114}\)

30 The last words of the Baptist to be recorded in this Gospel form surely one of the greatest utterances that ever fell from human lips. It is not particularly easy in this world to gather followers about one for a serious purpose. But when they have been gathered it is infinitely harder to detach them and firmly insist that they go after another. It is the measure of John's greatness that he did just that. Jesus, he says, "must" become greater. It is not merely advisable, nor is it the way events might happen to turn out. There is a compelling divine necessity behind the expression (cf. v. 27). John sets "he"\(^{115}\) and "I" over against one another in emphatic contrast. They are not cast for identical or even similar roles. It is God's plan that the Messiah must continually increase. The servant, however, must of necessity decrease. It is never the part of the servant to displace the Master. This lesson is something that must be learned in every age.

c. Reflection (3:31-36)

31 "The one who comes from above is above all; the one who is from the earth belongs to the earth, and speaks as one from the earth. The one who comes from heaven is above all. 32 He testifies to what he has seen and heard, but no one accepts his testimony. 33 The man who has accepted it has certified that God is truthful. 34 For the one whom God has sent speaks the words of God; to him God gives the Spirit without limit. 35 The Father loves the Son and has placed everything in his hands. 36 Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him."

a. 36 Some interpreters end the quotation after verse 30.

Once again we are confronted with the difficulty of knowing exactly where a speech ends. Some hold that John the Baptist is the speaker to the end of the chapter (e.g., Murray). Others think the words were spoken by Jesus (usually, like Bultmann, they think of a transposition of order of some of the verses). It seems more probable that verses 31-36 are from the Evangelist.\(^{116}\) They come more naturally as his reflection on the
significance of Jesus in the light both of the Baptist's words and of subsequent happenings, than as a comment of the forerunner or of the Master. There are some stylistic points of a minor nature that perhaps indicate the hand of the Evangelist. There is also the difficulty of seeing how the Baptist could say, "no one accepts his testimony" (v. 32) in the very speech in which he is answering the affirmation that "everyone is going to him" (v. 26). Whoever originated them, the words bring out the community of Jesus with the Father and the importance of being in right relationship with him.

31 "The one who comes from above" is another reference to the heavenly origin of Jesus, in which this Evangelist delights (others, of course, also remind us of this as Paul in 1 Cor. 15:47). It may even be a title of Jesus, but in view of the later "the one who is from the earth" it probably is not. It is John's plan in writing this book to show "that Jesus is the Christ" (20:31), and one way he does this is to emphasize that Jesus does not take his origin from the earth. Being "from above," he is superior to all on earth. "The one who is from the earth" is a general term that has its application to the whole human race. None such can ever do other than speak "from the earth" ("from" here denotes origin; it must not be understood as though it meant "about"; he may speak "about" heavenly realities, but it is still true that what he says originates on earth). But there is particular reference to John the Baptist. His followers may think of him as the Messiah, but the Evangelist cannot but contrast him with the Messiah. The Baptist is "from the earth." He does not come "from above." His teaching is important (cf. the stress placed on John's "witness"), but it must always be borne in mind that it is of earthly origin. The repeated affirmation that Christ is "above all" is impressive. He is absolutely preeminent. The words refer to all things and all people.

32 Jesus earlier assured Nicodemus that he and those with him speak only of what they know and have seen. John now gives his readers a similar statement about the Master. "What he has seen and heard" is another way of expressing certainty. The teaching of the Master is not a hypothesis put forward as a basis for discussion. He teaches what he knows. The particular form in which John casts this certainty agrees with the heavenly origin referred to in the previous verse. It is of what he has seen and heard in the heavenly sphere that he bears his witness among people (for witness, see on
1:7). But though what he says is thus seen to be supremely reliable, people in general do not accept it. "No one" is not to be taken literally, as the very next verse shows. The passage is reminiscent of 1:11-12, where a statement that might be understood to mean that nobody at all received Jesus is immediately explained. John has already made it clear in this chapter that we must all be reborn. In our natural condition we will not accept Christ's witness. The world, as a whole, is not interested in the truth that Jesus came to bring. John sorrowfully makes it plain that people do not receive his witness.

33 "The man who has accepted" translates an aorist participle. John is thinking not of a continuous, day-by-day receiving of the witness of Jesus (though that, too, is important), but of the decisive act whereby one decides to accept Jesus and Jesus' witness. Anyone who does this does more. That person sets a seal on the proposition that God is true. The seal was used a good deal in antiquity, when there many who could not read. A design affixed by a seal conveyed a clear message even to the illiterate. Great men used distinctive seals that stamped articles as belonging to them. The seal came to be used not only to denote ownership but also to authenticate, to give its owner's personal guarantee. It is something of the sort that is meant here (Moffatt: "certifies to the truth of God"). Those who accept Christ are not merely entering into a relationship with a fellow human being (as they would be doing, for example, if they attached themselves to John the Baptist). They are accepting what God has said. They are recognizing the heavenly origin of Jesus. They are acknowledging the truth of God's revelation in Christ. They are proclaiming to all their deep conviction that God is true. This probably means more than "God is truthful." Elsewhere John reports that Jesus said, "I am . . . the truth" (14:6). It is something like this that is in mind here. Truth is rooted in the divine nature. But there is also an emphasis on Jesus who bears the decisive witness to God. The God who is true will not mislead them in the witness borne to Jesus.

34 This is brought out with the express assertion that Jesus (note the change from "the one who comes from above" to "the one whom God has sent"; for this last expression see on v. 17) speaks "the words of God." His words are not merely human words, but divine. Therefore, to receive his witness is the same thing as to receive the words of God. Haenchen here rejects the view that this Gospel is "dominated by christology." Rather,
"Everything in the Gospel of John is about God and only about God and therefore about Jesus."\textsuperscript{129} It is to agree that God is true. The end of the verse ("he does not give the Spirit by measure")\textsuperscript{130} has been understood in different ways.

(i) The Father gives the Spirit to the Son without measure (NIV inserts the word "God" to bring out this meaning). There is perfect communion between them, and no limit to the gift.\textsuperscript{131} His perfect endowment with the Spirit guarantees the truth of his words. For the Father's various gifts to the Son see on verse 35.

(ii) The Son gives the Spirit to believers without measure. The verse is often understood in this way, but caution must be exercised. It is true that believers receive the Spirit in abundant measure and that their consequent illumination enables them to speak aright (cf. 16:14, where Jesus says of the Spirit: "He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you"). But it is not true that the New Testament regards believers as receiving the Spirit without measure. In the first place, no one else has the Spirit in any way comparable to Jesus.\textsuperscript{132} And in the second, there is an implied limitation when we are told that "to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it" (Eph. 4:7; both Augustine and Calvin draw attention to the importance of this verse).

(iii) The Spirit does not give by measure, in other words, when the Spirit gives he does so liberally. This is a barely possible interpretation of the Greek.

The first of these seems preferable, though there is probably also a hint that Jesus gives the Spirit to his followers. Elsewhere John speaks of the Spirit as given by the Father (14:26), but also by the Son (15:26).

35 The mutual love of the Father and the Son means much in this Gospel. John pictures for us a perfect unity in love. Here the point is that the love of the Father for the Son guarantees the Son's plenipotentiary powers. People may trust the Son in all things, for the Father "has placed everything in his hands."\textsuperscript{133} In the context this refers especially to the gift of life in the Spirit. People may come to Christ as they would come to God. Christ, with the full authority of the Father, gives the Spirit bountifully, as the previous verse hints, and gives life eternal, as the following verse makes clear. The words also indicate the dependence of the human Jesus on the Father. This is one of John's great themes,\textsuperscript{134} and he lays great stress on it. While he is sure of Jesus' preeminent place (he is the Logos, the Son, etc.),
he is also sure of his real humanity. As a man Jesus depended on the Father as other men do. In this we see his lowliness, and his perfect example to us.

36 For "believes in" see on 1:12 and for "eternal life" on v. 15. Eternal life is here, as often, regarded as the present possession of believers. When people put their trust in Christ they are reborn from above, they enter a new life. The decisive thing has happened. They will in due course pass through the portal of death, but that does not alter the fact that abiding eternal life is theirs already. In the things that matter they are alive eternally. The present participle indicates a continuing trust. "The Son" is used absolutely, as often in this Gospel. People may in some sense become children of God (1:12), but Christ is "the" Son. 135 The absolute use emphasizes the uniqueness of his position. In typical Johannine fashion the positive is followed by the negative. We might have expected "whoever does not believe," and indeed, some hold that the verb John uses should be translated that way. 136 It seems that "does not obey" is the meaning, but this is not so markedly different, for those who believe do in fact obey the Son, and those who do not believe do not in fact obey him. The verb is a present participle indicating a continuing attitude. This verse is important in view of the idea held by some that John's concept of faith is an intellectual one, the assent to certain truths. This verse shows that for him faith and conduct are closely linked. Faith necessarily issues in action. The thought is like that in verse 18ff., where those who are not saved are the people who choose darkness rather than light, who hate the light, and do not come to it. Of such a person it is now said that he "will not see life" (see on vv. 3 and 5 for "seeing" and "entering" the kingdom). Disobedience cuts people off from that life which is life indeed. Far from seeing life (NIV's "for" renders a strong adversative), they can look for nothing but the continuing wrath of God. 137 "The wrath of God" is a concept that is uncongenial to many modern students, and various devices are adopted to soften the expression or explain it away. This cannot be done, however, without doing great violence to many passages of Scripture and without detracting from God's moral character. Concerning the first of these points, I have elsewhere pointed out that there are literally hundreds of passages in the Bible referring to God's wrath, and the rejection of them all leaves us with a badly mutilated Bible. 139 And with reference to the second, if we abandon the idea of the wrath of God we are left with a God who is not ready to act against moral evil. It is true that the wrath of God has sometimes been
understood in crudely literal fashion, but of which of God's attributes and activities is this not true? The remedy is not to abandon the concept, but to think it through more carefully. It stands for the settled and active opposition of God's holy nature to everything that is evil.\textsuperscript{140} We may not like it, but we should not ignore it. John tells us that this wrath "remains." We should not expect it to fade away with the passage of time. Anyone who continues in unbelief and disobedience can look for nothing other than the persisting wrath of God. That is basic to our understanding of the gospel.\textsuperscript{141} Unless we are saved from real peril there is no meaning in salvation.

\textsuperscript{1} D. Rensberger argues that throughout this Gospel "Nicodemus appears as a man of inadequate faith and inadequate courage, and as such he represents a group that the author wishes to categorize in this way" (\textit{Johannine Faith and Liberating Community} [Philadelphia, 1988], p. 40). But to say that when Nicodemus is referred to John means a group of secret believers is sheer dogmatism. There is no evidence for this in the Gospel, and it does not fit what John has to say about Nicodemus.

\textsuperscript{2} Cf. L. S. Thornton: "The Christian doctrine of a new life stands in contrast to the contemporary Jewish expectation of a new world. Doubtless the two doctrines overlap in the New Testament. But the relation between them might be not inappropriately described in terms of kernel and husk. Within the sheltering husk or shell of Jewish apocalyptic expectations there appeared first the gospel revelation and then the pentecostal gift of the Spirit and the new life in Christ" (\textit{The Common Life in the Body of Christ} [London, n.d.], p. 188).

\textsuperscript{3} The expression "a man of the Pharisees" is as unusual an expression in Greek as in English. The use of άνθρωπος is probably meant to link the opening words of this chapter with the closing words of the preceding one, and so bring out Jesus' knowledge of "man." This will also be behind the use of αὐτόν rather than Ἰησοῦν in the first reference to the Lord.

\textsuperscript{4} "The silence of Jewish sources about a scholar of this name is sufficiently well explained by the rabbinical tactics of never mentioning an outlaw" (Schnackenburg).

\textsuperscript{5} John often speaks of "the Jews," and he uses the expression "ruler" (ἄρχων) not infrequently (e.g., 7:26, 48), but this is the only place where he links the two. There seems to be little doubt that by the expression he means a member of the Sanhedrin, for it is difficult to find any other reasonable explanation.
6. B. Gerhardsson cites examples; see *Memory and Manuscript* (Lund, 1964), p. 237. As is well known, the men of Qumran provided that the Law should be studied by night as well as by day. Bultmann notices the view that night study lies behind the present passage, but thinks it even more probable that John is simply creating an atmosphere of mystery.

7. Thus Barrett thinks "it is perhaps more probable that he intended to indicate the darkness out of which Nicodemus came into the presence of the true Light (cf. vv. 19-21)." Cf. also Augustine: "Because he came by night, he still speaks from the darkness of his own flesh" (11.5; p. 76). Newbigin remarks, "he is a man who is drawn to the light but not yet able to leave the darkness."

8. But we should not overlook the timidity that marks Nicodemus in 7:50-51. Even in 19:39 he simply follows Joseph of Arimathea. The repetition of the statement that he came "by night" (19:39) perhaps indicates that it is to be taken literally. It may connect with the fact that Joseph is said to have been a secret disciple for fear of the Jews.

9. T. H. Gaster sees a reference to the "Teacher of Righteousness" of the Qumran scrolls: "The spiritual leader of the community is called 'teacher' or 'right-teacher'. In John 3.2, Jesus is hailed as the teacher sent by God — that is, the teacher who, it was held, would arise in the last days" (SDSS, p. 23). The absence of the article in the Greek is, however, against such a specific identification.

10. The word order ἀπὸ Θεοῦ ἑλθαίς διδάσκαλος perhaps puts an emphasis on "from God."

11. Plummer, commenting on οἴδαμεν, remarks: "there is a touch of Pharisaic complacency in the word: 'some of us are quite disposed to think well of you.' "

12. In Egerton Papyrus 2 the words of Nicodemus are linked with some from the quotation about paying tribute to Caesar (Matt. 22:15-22): "... came to him to put him to the proof and to tempt him, whilst they said: 'Master Jesus, we know that thou art come from God, for what thou doest bears a testimony to thee which goes beyond that of all the prophets. Wherefore tell us: is it admissible to pay to the kings the charges appertaining to their rule? Should we pay them or not?" (cited from E. Hennecke, *New Testament Apocrypha*, ed. W. Schneemelcher, trans. R. McL. Wilson, I [London, 1963], p. 97). This appears to indicate a view that Nicodemus's words may be regarded as part of an attempt to trap Jesus. But I know of no other evidence for this interpretation.

13. F. P. Cotterell regards the plural as due to the improbability "that Nicodemus, an eminent Rabbi, should be walking about Jerusalem without any of his disciples in attendance. It is similarly unlikely that Jesus would be without any of his disciples" (ExT, 96 [1984-85], p. 238).

14. He says, ταύτα τὰ σημεία μοιεῖν άσύ ποιείς. This looks like the doing of a number of signs, a reference, probably, to those mentioned comprehensively in 2:23. Although thus far John has recorded no specific signs in Jerusalem, we must bear in mind that he expressly tells us that he has omitted many things (21:25).

15. We may discern something of the force of this passage by noticing what is possibly the closest Jewish parallel, the passage that tells us that Wisdom "guided (Jacob) on straight paths; she showed him the kingdom of God" (Wis. 10:10). But the thought in Wisdom does not go beyond an increase of knowledge. In the Johannine passage we have something quite different, a rebirth brought about by the very Spirit of God.

16. άνωθεν. Abbott argues that here it means "from above" (1903-8), as does SBk, II pp. 420-21. It is pointed out that there is no Aramaic adverb with the meaning "again." Westcott, by contrast, has an additional note in which he urges that "anew" is the meaning; "The reality of the new birth has to be laid down first, and then its character (v. 5)." It must be borne in mind that άνωθεν means "from above" in every other place where it occurs in this Gospel (3:31; 19:11,23). Against this meaning in the present passage is the fact that Nicodemus evidently took Jesus to mean "again," for he speaks of entering his mother's womb a second time (v. 4). Yet this is a clear misunderstanding. If the meaning "from above" be rejected we must translate "anew" rather than "again"; it is a new thing, not the repetition of an old one, of which Jesus speaks. Yet we should probably not try to pin John down exclusively to either meaning. This seems to be another example of his habit of using expressions that may be understood in more ways than one with a view to both senses being accepted. We should
perhaps notice that ἀνωθεν can also mean "from the beginning" (as it does in Luke 1:3), though this can scarcely be the meaning here.

17. The verb is γεννάω, which properly signifies the action of the male parent, and would here give the meaning "be begotten." It is, however, used also of the female parent (e.g. 16:21), so that the translation "be born" can certainly be justified. But it is somewhat more probable that John means "be begotten" (cf. the use of the same imagery in 1 John 3:9). Matthew uses the verb freely in his genealogy, but apart from this he has it only 5 times, Mark once, Luke 4 times, and Acts and Paul 7 times each. John's 18 times are thus significant; it is an important word for him. The same essential idea is found in Tit. 3:5; 1 Pet. 1:23. But John is more fond of this imagery than is any other New Testament writer.


19. This is disputed, however, by S. Aalen in an important article, "'Reign' and 'House' in the Kingdom of God in the Gospels" (NTS, VIII [1961-62], pp. 215-40).

20. Cf. Barrett, John "set out from an exceptionally clear perception of the two 'moments' of Christian salvation, that of the work accomplished and that of the work yet to be consummated; and he perceived that the language of Judaism (the kingdom of God) and the language of Hellenism (γεννηθαν εν ανωθεν) provided him with a unique opportunity of expressing what was neither Jewish nor Hellenistic but simply Christian."

21. It has been suggested that the reason for the omission of any emphasis on the kingdom in this Gospel is the fact that John had earlier so thoroughly misunderstood its nature and tried to get the best place in it (Mark 10:35ff.). Now he was ashamed of his previous conduct and preferred not to dwell on what reminded him of it.

22. For λέγει προς αύτόν see on 2:3.

23. SBk, II, p. 423.

24. Cf. Findlay, "as though in modern times an Anglican dignitary or eminent Nonconformist divine were told to go and get converted in an evangelical mission hall!" (p. 57).

25. Cf. Strachan, "His question is not hopeless so much as wistful. Can human nature be changed?"

26. Though John does not use the noun δύναμις at all he employs the verb δύνομαι more often than does any other book in the New Testament (Matt. 27 times, Mark 33 times, Luke 26 times, John 36 times). He is quite interested in what is and is not possible.

27. The question introduced by μή expresses his incredulity: "Surely he cannot... ?"

28. Some exegetes (e.g. Bultmann) regard ὅδητος καὶ as a later insertion. Interestingly, Brown is able to cite a group of learned Roman Catholics who take this line, as well as certain Protestants. But there are no textual grounds for the omission, and the doctrinal and contextual considerations adduced seem inadequate. We should take the text as it stands.

29. A Jewish parallel sometimes cited is Wis. 9:17: "Who has learned thy counsel, unless thou hast given wisdom and sent thy holy Spirit from on high?" But in this passage the thought is that of enlightenment, whereas John is writing of regeneration.

30. Cf. Morgan, "Mark the continuity. You have been attending the ministry of one who baptized you in water, and told you Another would baptize you in the Spirit. Except you are born of all that the water baptism signified, repentance; and that which the Spirit baptism accomplishes,
regeneration, you cannot enter into the Kingdom of God." J. A. T. Robinson says forthrightly, "If the words have a setting in the life of Jesus, then the allusion must be to the teaching of John," and he proceeds to cite Armitage Robinson: "the whole of John's mission lies behind the saying" (NTS, IV [1957-58], p. 273). Notice also that Ezek. 36:25-26 combines the ideas of water purification and the giving of "a new spirit." Cf. also Isa 44:3.

31. FG, pp. 48-71. Here we may take notice of the fact that the mystery religions make use of the terminology of rebirth. But any connection between them and this Gospel is purely verbal. In them the worshipper may be brought more surely into relationship with his god, but there is no idea of a transformation of his whole nature such as the Christian conception signifies. In this Gospel, as MacGregor notes, "The entrance upon eternal life is conditioned not by a magical renewal of the physical nature to be obtained by prescribed rites, but by a birth from above, from God" (on v. 3).

32. This is rendered all the more likely in that neither noun has the article and one preposition governs both.

33. Cf. Odeberg: "One may even venture the hypothesis, that γεννηθῆναι ἐξ ὕδατος καὶ πνεύματος is identical in sense with the γεννηθῆναι ἐκ πνεύματος" (FG, p. 48). He argues that this view is also favored by the contrast between physical birth (3:4) and birth "of water and the Spirit." It is of interest that this was the view of Calvin: "he used the words Spirit and water to mean the same thing. ... By water ... is meant simply the inward cleansing and quickening of the Holy Spirit." It must be borne in mind that it is John's habit in repeating a statement to make minor variations. This happens in twofold variation (compare 7:30 and 44; 3:17 and 12:47). For threefold variation with two the same see 6:35, 48, 51, and with all three different 1:32, 33, 34 (three different Greek verbs for seeing), or 5:8, 11, 12. For multiple variation consider the references to Judas Iscariot in 6:71; 12:4; 13:2, 26, 29. Even when he is expressly quoting, John does this kind of thing, as we see by comparing 1:48 and 50, or 6:44 and 65. Many more examples could be cited. It is clearly a mark of Johannine style. It is fair to say that the sense is not distorted by the stylistic variations, but the variations are real. See further, SFG, ch. 5. In this chapter the four references to rebirth, vv. 3, 5, 6, and 7 all probably mean much the same thing.

34. Luther says: "here Christ is speaking of Baptism, of real and natural water such as a cow may drink. . . . Therefore the word 'water' does not designate affliction here; it means real, natural water, which is connected with God's Word and becomes a very spiritual bath through the Holy Spirit or through the entire Trinity" (vol. 22, p. 283). J. D. G. Dunn firmly rejects such views: "The argument that no Christian reader could fail to see Christian baptism, though powerful, must give precedence to the argument drawn from John's theology . . . John seems to be challenging any sacramentalism which he assumes on the part of his readers" (Baptism in the Holy Spirit [London, 1970], pp. 189-90).

35. This does not necessarily mean a doctrine of "baptismal regeneration" in the sense that baptism effects an operation of the Spirit within the baptized. The whole passage emphasizes the work of the Spirit, not the performance of any rite (there is no other expression in the whole passage that can be construed as a reference to baptism). Wright, who accepts the reference to baptism, says, "it is clear that while the Evangelist is probably thinking of the symbolic rite of baptism, his thought is at the farthest possible remove from any magical sacramentalism. In other words, he does not mean that the physical act of immersion in water is indispensable to spiritual quickening. Those who so interpret this reference isolate it from the whole context of the mind of Jesus as expressed in this Gospel. The passage does not say that the Spirit necessarily comes to those who are immersed in water."

36. D. W. B. Robinson examines and refutes the idea that baptism is in mind (RThr, XXV [1966], pp. 15-23). Haenchen says the expression "can only refer to Christian baptism." Two or three sentences later he says, "the connection of the gift of the Spirit with baptism contradicts the conviction of the Evangelist" and refers to 20:22. The latter statement is surely true, but I do not see how he can reconcile that with the former.
See, for example, the discussion by Brown. He finds the argument that "of water" was not in the original text inconclusive. But accepting it still leaves him with uncertainties: "Accepting 'water' at its face value, we do not think there is enough evidence in the Gospel itself to determine the relation between begetting of water and begetting of Spirit on the level of sacramental interpretation. Begetting of Spirit, while it includes accepting Jesus by faith, is primarily the communication of the Holy Spirit" (p. 144). In other words, though Brown inclines to seeing a reference to baptism he puts his emphasis on the activity of the Spirit. This is surely the significant thing. Any understanding that sees a reference to baptism must be taken as giving us John's understanding, not Jesus' meaning; "if we think of John iii as based on a historical scene, Nicodemus could have understood nothing of Christian Baptism" (p. 142).

Westcott, it is true, senses a "marked contrast" between the two. He equates "see" with "outwardly apprehend" (on v. 3), and "enter" with "become a citizen of the kingdom, as distinguished from the mere intelligent spectator" (on v. 5). Barrett, by contrast, finds it impossible to distinguish between the two. Among the witnesses of antiquity Hermas distinguishes sharply between the two (though not by way of a comment on the present passage). He says that those bearing certain names ("Faith," "Continence," etc.) will enter the kingdom, while others ("Unbelief," "Intemperance," etc.) "shall see the kingdom of God, but shall not enter into it" (Sim. 9:15).

Hoskyns, p. 204.

John uses σάρξ 13 times (more than the three Synoptists put together). Most of the examples come from ch. 6, where Jesus speaks of giving his flesh for the life of the world. John does not use the term to convey the notion of moral frailty as does Paul. For him it may denote the physical weakness inseparable from human existence, but not wickedness or sinfulness. It may point to limitations of vision (8:15), but on the other hand it may refer to the incarnation (1:14) or to the gift of God (6:51).

"There are two levels of existence; the one is the sphere of flesh and the other of spirit. On each level like produces like. A man can only pass from the lower order, the realm of flesh, into the higher order, the realm of spirit, by being born again" (G. Appleton, John's Witness to Jesus [London, 1955], p. 29).

In both cases he uses the neuter participle τὸ γεγεννημένον, "that which," rather than the masculine, "he who."

John uses it again of the necessity of the crucifixion (v. 14; 12:34), of the resurrection (20:9), of the things Jesus did in the execution of his ministry (4:4; 9:4; 10:16), and of the eclipse of John the Baptist before Jesus (3:30). The term is also used of worship (4:20, 24).

Yet it should be borne in mind that elsewhere in the New Testament πνεύμα does not seem to have its primitive meaning "wind" (άνεμος is used where this sense is required).

The verb πνέω always refers to the blowing of the wind in its six other New Testament occurrences.

For this curious expression see the note by E. F. F. Bishop, BT, 7 (1956), pp. 81-83.

The verb is λαλο[μέν[ for which see the note on 1:37.

According to A. G. Hebert this is done only here, 9:4; in Mark 9:40 and parallels, and in Matt. 17:27 (The Form of the Church [London, 1944], p. 46n.).

Hoskyns understands it differently: "Jesus is no isolated person (v. 11). There are, and have been, men who speak because they know, and bear witness because they have seen. There have been prophets: there is a man named John baptizing in the desert: and there are men who have left all and followed Jesus. These all say the same thing; and it is with their testimony that Nicodemus and his like must first concern themselves" (p. 204). Abbott thinks that the plural means "the Father and I" (2428).

In the expression Δ[α ίο[ πιστεύετε we have another example of Δ[α in the sense καίτοι, "and yet" (see on 1:5).
51. Notice the difference between the two conditional clauses, εἰ τά ἐπίγεια εἴπον implies fulfillment. It refers to what has actually happened, whereas ἕόν εἴπω ύμίν τά ἐπουράνια has no implications about the fulfillment of the condition. It refers to what is as yet future.

52. For the contrast between earthly and heavenly things cf. Wis. 9:16, "We can hardly guess at what is on earth ... but who has traced out what is in the heavens?"

53. The perfect ἀναβέβηκεν is unexpected. Perhaps the meaning is "no man has gained the heights of heaven." There is the thought of continuing possession. But the primary reference of the words may well be spiritual rather than physical. Cf. Godet, "No one has entered into communion with God and possesses thereby an intuitive knowledge of divine things, in order to reveal them to others, except He to whom heaven was opened and who dwells there at this very moment."

54. "The reference to the descent out of heaven, which preceded the ascent, is noteworthy. It is the first hint of our Lord's consciousness of pre-existence" (Murray). W. C. Grese finds here the rejection of the idea of a heavenly journey found in a number of documents in antiquity: "Verse 13 rejects all other heavenly journeys ... and reserves the claim to heavenly knowledge exclusively for Jesus" (JBL, 107 [1988], p. 687).

55. Bultmann explains the present passage in terms of the Gnostic myth of the descent of the Redeemer (in addition to his Commentary see his Theology of the New Testament, II [London, 1955], p. 37; also see I, pp. 166ff. for an outline of the myth). He cites no evidence, and takes the truth of his assumption for granted. But weighty objections may be urged against it. First, there is no real evidence that the Gnostic myth existed at the time this Gospel was written. As Alan Richardson says, "the only first-century literature to which Bultmann appeals is the NT itself, and this is capable of a simpler explanation. There is no real evidence for the existence of 'the Gnostic myth' in the first century A.D." (An Introduction to the Theology of the New Testament [London, 1958], p. 143). Second, the picture John gives is not that of the myth. As Theo Preiss says, the setting "radically differentiates from the oriental and gnostic idea of the anthropos and the mystical body, the Jewish and Christian figure of the Son of Man and the Body of his Church. The difference can be summed up very briefly: in the gnostic myth, Man is the divine principle substantially and eternally identical with the sum of the souls of men scattered but predetermined to salvation. In the thought of Jesus the Son of Man freely identifies himself with each of the wretched ones by an act of substitution and identification, and he will gather them together at the last day" (Life in Christ [London, 1954], p. 53). Third, the heavenly origin of Christ is brought out by John with terminology that is not Gnostic. His idea is independent of Gnosticism.

56. "It is well to note this text, which hurls a thunderbolt against all the work-saints (wercckhellige)" (Luther, vol. 22, p. 330).

57. See Odeberg, FG, pp. 72-98.


59. Augustine puts this succinctly: "Born of a mother, not quitting the Father" (12.8; p. 84). Cf. Calvin: "Christ, who is in heaven, put on our flesh that, by stretching out a brotherly hand to us, He might raise us to heaven along with Himself."

60. To the objection that Jesus could not have known of the cross as early as this, and that the Synoptists do not represent him as speaking of it until the incident at Caesarea Philippi, Murray replies: "If Jesus knew what was coming six months or six hours before it came to pass, it is clearly possible that He was Himself familiar with the thought from the first, and was only waiting to communicate it to His disciples till their faith was strong enough to bear the revelation." There are hints in the Synoptists even before Caesarea Philippi (e.g. Matt. 9:15; 10:38). Murray has a long note on Jesus' foreknowledge of the cross. He stresses the courage of our Lord in living out his ministry with the knowledge of what lay before him. An impressive, though unobtrusive witness to the factuality of this saying is the effect on Nicodemus of the crucifixion. When all the disciples fled, it was this hesitant and timid man who assisted Joseph of Arimathea at the burial. If, when Jesus died,
he was able to recall that in his first contact with him Jesus had prophesied that he would die in this way the situation is easier to understand.

61. T. F. Glasson points out that the idea of looking is central in Num. 21. It is not mentioned explicitly here, but Glasson thinks it is implied, all the more so since the idea of seeing is so pronounced in this Gospel (Moses in the Fourth Gospel [London, 1963], pp. 34-35).

62. The Jewish understanding of this passage insisted that Yahweh, not the snake, brought deliverance. "He who turned toward it was saved, not by what he saw, but by thee, the Savior of all" (Wis. 16:7); "But could the serpent slay or the serpent keep alive! — it is, rather, to teach thee that such time as the Israelites directed their thoughts on high and kept their hearts in subjection to their Father in heaven, they were healed; otherwise they pined away" (Mishnah, Rosh. Hash. 3:8). T. W. Manson points out that this saying is ascribed in other Jewish writings to R. Eliezer b. Hycanmus and comments: "Since Eliezer is a first-century Palestinian Rabbi, it seems clear that we have to do in John 111-14 and Mishnah R.H. iii.8 with Palestinian Christian proofs and Palestinian Jewish rebuttals. So, whatever we may think about the authorship, date, and place of writing of the Fourth Gospel, here is one more piece of evidence of its dependence on Palestinian materials" (JThS, XLVI [1945], p. 132). The Rosh. Hash, passage understands the incident in which Israel prevailed while Moses' hands were held up in the same fashion. Interestingly, Justin Martyr also joins these two passages, but he understands them of Jesus: "And shall we not rather refer the standard to the resemblance of the crucified Jesus, since also Moses by his outstretched hands, together with him who was named Jesus (Joshua), achieved a victory for your people?" (Dial. Try. 112; ANF, I, p. 255). They are linked also in Ep. Barn. 12:2-7. Dodd cites from the Hermetic tractate called The Bowl a passage in which the author speaks of "the image of God (το θεος εις τον αγορα), which if you behold exactly and contemplate with the eyes of the heart... you will find the way to the higher sphere ( τ ινπρος τ νω δον ); or rather, the image itself will guide you"(IFG, p. 307). Even Hellenistic thinkers who would not perceive the allusion might well comprehend the essential meaning of the words.

63. John uses καθως 31 times, which compares with 3 times in Matthew, 8 times in Mark, and 17 times in Luke. Clearly he is fond of making comparisons.

64. See on v. 7; 4:4 for the use of "must" with respect to Jesus' mission.

65. John uses the verb ψωω again in 8:28; 12:32, 34. Particularly important is 12:32, where Jesus says, "I, when I am lifted up from the earth..." and John explains,"He said this to show the kind of death he was going to die." There can be no doubt as to the significance John attaches to ψωω. Black notes and rejects the view that this points to Syriac influence. He cites G. Kittel, who points out that the equivalent verb is used in this sense in Ezra 6:11 and the Targums on 1 Chron. 10:10; Esth.1.9.13; 2.7.10. He concludes, "The Johannine use is therefore an Aramaism" (AA, p. 103). H. Hollis argues that the expression reflects the "lifting up" of the heads of Pharaoh's chief butler and chief baker (Gen. 40:20-22).

66. This is a very different idea from that of the Qumran sectarians who looked for a "prince of the congregation" who would "tread down peoples like the mire of the streets" (1QSb 5. 28; ML, p. 398).

67. Cf. Vincent Taylor, "There could be no vainer controversy than the dispute whether in these passages (i.e. John 3:14; 8:28; 12:32) the crucifixion or the exaltation is meant. "The death is the exaltation" (The Atonement in New Testament Teaching [London, 1946], p. 147). The cross of shame is the throne of glory. Cf. H. Blair: "the suffering and struggle of Jesus are only alternative names for his glory. In fact, glory hurts. It is when it hurts and is accepted that it becomes glory" (The Ladder of Temptations [London, 1960], p. 100). Strangely Odeberg does not see a reference to the cross. Instead he thinks of the spiritual experience that leads toward the spiritual birth: "this spiritual experience is described as an elevation of the Son of Man, scil. by earthly man, and a directing of man's spiritual gaze towards that lifted-up Son of Man by believing in him" (FG, p. 111). Admittedly
the passage may profitably be employed to start us on such a meditation, but that is not to say that
that was John's meaning. Wherever he uses ύψωω he has the cross in mind (see n. 62 above).

68. It is almost certain that we should take πας ὁ πιστεύων ἐν αὐτῷ ἔχει ζωήν αἰώνιον in this
fashion. John never elsewhere follows the verb πιστεύω with ἐν so that ἐν αὐτῷ is to be taken with
τάκη. πιστεύω is often used absolutely in this Gospel. See Additional Note E, pp. 296-98. There is a
valuable note on ἐν in the New Testament by N. Turner (BT, 10 [1959], pp. 113-20), In another place
Turner gives the meaning of this passage as "every believer whose life is hid in Christ possesses
eternal life' (Grammatical insights, p. 121). There are variant readings ἐπ' αὐτῷ, ἐπ' αὐτόν, and εἰς
αὐτόν. These are probably due to the difficulty caused by what scribes deemed to be the construction
πιστεύω ἐν. This is rendered all the more probable since some MSS have imported μή ἀπόληται ἄλλῳ
from v. 16, and have placed it between ἐν αὐτῷ and ἔχει.

69. The word is αἰωνίος. John employs it 17 times, nearly three times as often as in any other

70. Salmond says that "eternal" is used "not in order to add to the 'life' the idea of perpetuity,
but to express more fully the quality which belongs to the 'life' itself. In John's writings 'death' is an
ethical condition, the condition of failure and evil in which men exist by nature, and out of which
they are raised by Christ. The 'life' is the new condition — the spiritual order of being, the existence
of fellowship with God into which Christ brings men; and the 'eternal life' is this 'life' in its quality of
the divine order of life, the life which fulfils the whole idea of life, the good of life, the perfection of
life, the satisfaction of life in God." He is careful to add, "It lies in the nature of the 'life' as eternal, a
life of the divine order, that it is superior to change, decay, or extinction" (The Christian Idea of
Immortality [Edinburgh, 1907], p. 391).


72. "Eternal life" is always in this Gospel the life of the believer. Neither the Father nor the Son
is said to have it. The Father "has life in himself," and he has granted this also to the Son (5:26). The
Son is "the life" (11:25; 14:6). But "eternal life" is reserved for the gift of life bestowed on believers.

73. The term μονογενής (v. 16, 18) is applied to Christ elsewhere in the New Testament only
by John (1:14, 18; 1 John 4:9). The expressions πιστεύω εἰς τὸ ὄνομα (v. 18) and ποιεῖ τὴν ἀλήθειαν
(v. 21) are not found elsewhere in speeches of Jesus, but are Johannine. The repeated use of γάρ,
while not conclusive (it is found in the speeches of Jesus), is quite in the Johannine manner.

74. This is John's first use of ἀγαπάω, a verb he will employ 36 times, more than twice the
number in any other book of the new Testament except 1 John (which has it 31 times; next is Luke
with 13 times). He also uses φιλέω more than anyone else, though the figures are smaller (John 13
times, then Matthew 5 times; the New Testament total is 25 times). It is interesting that John uses
both verbs more than twice as often as anyone else. For the supposed distinction between the two
verbs see on 21:15. Clearly love matters a good deal to this author (though we should notice that
Paul's total use of all the love words is higher than John's). I have examined the idea of "Love in the
Fourth Gospel" in the Richard C. Oudersluys Festschrift, Saved by Hope, ed. James I. Cook, (Grand
Rapids, 1978), pp. 27-43. See also my Testaments of Love (Grand Rapids, 1981).

75. Cf. Odeberg: "The relation of the Holy One to 'his world' is, as far as we know, never
expressed by the term 'love' " (FG, p. 116).

76. FG, p. 130. For the idea of love in the Bible see my Testaments of Love (Grand Rapids,
1981) and the literature there cited.

77. Cf. Dodd, "The statement in iii. 16 is quite fundamental to our author's position, and the
reader is intended to bear it in mind during the following discussions, though little further is said
about the love of God until with ch. xiii it becomes a dominant theme" (IFG, p. 307). Bruce
comments, "I f there is one sentence more than another which sums up the message of the Fourth
Gospel, it is this. The love of God is limitless; it embraces all mankind. No sacrifice was too great to
bring its unmeasured intensity home to men and women: the best that God had to give, he gave — his
only Son, his well-beloved." So also Marsh, "The magnitude of the love is matched by the magnitude of the gift . . . . God loved all there was, and gave all he had" (p. 183).

78. John uses the indicative ὥστε . . . ἔδωκεν (not the infinitive, ὥστε . . . δοῦναι, which might have been expected). This is John's only use of ὥστε, so we have no means of knowing how often he would have used the one construction in preference to the other. But ὥστε is found in the New Testament 84 times, only 21 times with the indicative, 15 of which are in Paul. Outside the Pauline epistles it is thus infrequent. John's use accordingly is rather unusual and probably emphatic.

79. "This is the heart of the Gospel. Not 'God is Love' — a precious truth, but affirming no divine act for our redemption. God so love that He gave" (Temple).


81. The verb is ἀποστέλλω. Westcott distinguishes this verb from πέμπω in that it "conveys the accessory notions of a special commission, and so far of a delegated authority in the person sent. The simple verb πέμπω marks nothing more than the immediate relation of the sender to the sent" (Additional Note to 20:21; K. H. Rengstorf makes a similar distinction, TDNT, I, pp. 398ff.). Abbott reverses the distinction: "we are perhaps justified in thinking that ἀποστέλλω means 'sending away into the world at large,' but πέμπω 'sending on a special errand' " (Johannine Vocabulary [London, 1905], 1723g). More recently Calvin Mercer has argued that the Westcott-Rengstorf distinction is correct (NTS, 36 [1990], pp. 619-24), but he does not notice that variation in expression without significant difference in meaning is a characteristic of Johannine style (see SFG, ch. 5). It may be doubted whether a sharp distinction between the two words is legitimate. C. C. Tarelli has pointed out that John uses ἀποστέλλω in the aorist and perfect indicative active and the perfect participle passive, whereas he uses πέμπω in the present, the future, and the aorist active participle (JThS, XLVII [1946], p. 175). The difference is notone of meaning but of John's consistent choice of certain parts only of each of these verbs. That there is no difference of meaning is further to be seen in the way the verbs are used. Both are used of purely human sending (ά. in 1:24; π. in 1:22), of the sending of John the Baptist (ά., 1:6; π., 1:33), and of Christ's sending of the disciples (ά., 17:18; π., 13:20). In both the preponderance is for the Father's sending of the Son (ά. 17 times out of 28 occurrences; π., 24 times out of 32). The verbs occur together in 7:28-29; 20:21 and both roots in 13:16. No real difference of meaning is apparent. Both words occur in John more often than in any other New Testament book, ἀποστέλλω 28 times as against 22 times Matthew, Mark 20 times, and 25 times in Luke; πέμπω 32 times, as against 4 times in Matthew, once in Mark, and 10 times in Luke. These statistics show that the thought of mission is important to John.

82. "It will be observed that the title Son (the Son, not his Son), which is that of dignity, takes the place of only begotten Son, which is the title of affection" (Westcott). Moloney notices that John uses "the Son" absolutely 20 times, as against 3 times in the Synoptics, once in Paul and 5 times in Hebrews (Moloney, p. 208).

83. John uses the verb κρίνω 19 times, as against 6 times each in Matthew and Luke and none at all in Mark. The only New Testament book to use the verb more often than John is Acts, where it is found 21 times. John also uses the word κρίσις (11 times) and κρίμα (once). Such statistics show that the idea of judgment interested him more than it did most writers.

84. This is all the more likely in that John never uses the word κατακρίνω (though it is found in the story of the woman taken in adultery, 8:10, 11).

85. MacGregor cites Holtzmann that Christ comes to judge the world "as little as the sun comes to throw a shadow. But "judgment like the shadow is the natural consequence of the world's constitution and circumstances."

86. Godet cites H. Jacottet: "Here is justification by faith, and condemnation by unbelief."

87. Note the perfects κατακρίνει and πεπίστευκέναι. The one of whom John writes has passed into a continuing state of condemnation on account of a refusal to enter a continuing state of belief. On μή πεπίστευκέναι, which may be contrasted with οὐ πεπίστευκέναι in 1 John 5:10, Abbott comments: ὅτι
μή "states it subjectively, as the judgment pronounced by the Judge, 'This man is guilty in that he hath not believed,' so that the meaning is almost 'hath been pronounced guilty of not believing' " (2187). Moulton puts it this way: the present passage "states the charge, quod non crediderit," whereas 1 John 5:10 states "the simple fact, quod non credidit" (M, I, p. 171).

88. χρίσις, not κρίμα. LS gives the meaning of the word as "separating, distinguishing"; the word can mean "judgment," but it is surely the process of judging that is in mind here. E. Stauffer says, "History is krisis, is separation of souls" (NTT, p. 42).

89. This is John's one use of σκότος. He prefers σκοτία; see on 1:5.

90. "Who does evil" renders ὁ φαλάρᾳ πράσσων. Both adjective and verb are found again in 5:29 and nowhere else in John. In strictness ψαλέω expresses that which is worthless (we might render it "paltry" or "mean"), and πράσσω conveys the thought of "practice." But probably the meanings should not be pressed unduly. In 5:29 the expression used here is set in contrast with τα ἀγαθά ποιέω as here with ποιέω τὴν ἀλήθειαν.

91. It is found, however, more than once in the Qumran scrolls; see 1QS 1:5; 5:3; 8:2. But the Qumran covenanters connected truth with the Law as when they explain Hab. 2:3: "This means the men of truth, the doers of the law, whose hands do not grow slack from the service of the truth" (DSS, p. 368).

92. But against this is the fact that the Greek verbs are different: "does" is πράσσων in v. 20 and ποιάν here.

93. The expression is δτι έν Θεω έστιν είργοισμένα, which puts an emphasis on "in God." The perfect participle may point to the permanence of such works.

94. On the general subject of dislocations in the text see Introduction, VI. Dislocations. In the present passage v. 31 does not really follow very smoothly on v. 21. Cf. Dodd, "It is pretty certain that if our MSS. had given verse 31 immediately after verse 21, critics would have pointed out a disjuncture; for there is no immediate connection between the thought of judgment by the light in verses 17-21 and the supremacy of Christ as the One who descends from heaven and bears witness to what He has seen, which is the theme of 31-2" (IFG, p. 309).

95. For μετὰ ταῦτα see on 2:12.

96. εἰς τὴν Ἰουδαίαν γῆν. The expression is found nowhere else in the New Testament. It may denote the country districts as contrasted with Jerusalem itself.

97. διέτριβεν. John uses the verb again in 11:54, but otherwise it occurs only in Acts in the New Testament.

98. "Was baptizing" is ἦν . . . βαπτίζον. There is probably no great difference from ἐβαπτίζεν of the previous verse; John is fond of the periphrastic construction. I f the two are differentiated the thought will be that John gave himself to baptizing more continually than did Jesus.

99. The meaning of the former is "fountains," and of the latter "peace." Those who delight to allegorize have not failed to point out the significance of "fountains near to peace": the work of the Baptist leads people near to that peace which Christ alone can give. This is edifying, but it is quite another thing to maintain that John's meaning is wholly symbolic. He appears to be using the terms because they were in fact the names of the places in question.

100. This is accepted, for example, by R. D. Potter (SE. I, p. 333). He objects to Albright's idea that the site was three miles to the east of Sychem on the ground that there is not much water there (for Albright see BNT, p. 159). The Westminster Historical Atlas mentions both sites and says, "no decision is possible" (p. 85). The Rand McNally Bible Atlas likewise leaves the question open.


102. It is possible to take ἔξ τῶν μαθητῶν Ἰωάννου as a partitive genitive, "some of John's disciples." But it is better to take it as an indication that the dispute originated with these disciples.

103. μετὰ Ἰουδαίου seems to be the correct reading, though there is strong support for the plural. Some have conjectured μετὰ τῶν Ἰησοῦ, but there seems little in favor of this. While it would
suit the context admirably, it is difficult to think that, if it were original, it would have no support in the MSS.

104. Godet comments: "Perhaps in response to the disciples of John who invited him to have himself baptized, reminding him of the promises of the Old Testament (Ezek. xxxvi.25, etc.), he answered ironically that one knew not to whom to go: 'Your master began; here is a second who succeeds better than he; which of the two says the truth?' The question was embarrassing. The disciples of John decide to submit it to their master." The difficulty about this is that it scarcely gives sufficient weight to the statement that the dispute originated with John's disciples. But if we can picture them as taking the initiative, perhaps as picking an argument with a Jew who was rather impressed by Jesus, we may have the situation.

105. The perfect μεμαρτύρηκας may well be meant to indicate the continuing effects of John's witness.

106. John uses the verb δίδωμι 76 times, which is more often than any other New Testament writer. He has an especially interesting number of things the Father gives the Son (see on v. 35).

107. Cf. Calvin, "he denies it is in his power or theirs to make him great, because the stature of us all is that we are what God wanted us to be." For John's development of the messianic idea see on 1:41.

108. Characteristically there are small variants from the former statement. He reverses the order of ἐγώ and οὐκ εἶμι from that in 1:20, and the expression "am sent ahead of him" is not found in the earlier statement, though the sense of it is there (e.g., 1:15, 30).

109. For ἐκεῖνος see on 1:8.

110. See I. Abrahams, Studies in Pharisaism and the Gospels, II (Cambridge, 1924), p. 213; SBk, I, pp. 500ff. He was the יָשֶׁב , "the best man." Abrahams cites Mishnah, Sank. 3:5, "A friend is his shoshbin." He also says, "There was anciently a shoshbin for the bridegroom and another for the bride . . . but, adds the Talmud, this was not the custom in Galilee."

111. Calvin draws out the implication for the Christian teacher: "Those who win the Church over to themselves rather than to Christ faithlessly violate the marriage which they ought to honour."

112. χαρά χαίρει, "rejoices with joy," is probably a Semitism reflecting the use of the infinitive absolute (though the construction is sometimes found also in the classics).

113. The expression ή έμή is probably not emphatic; G. D. Kilpatrick has shown that this is the normal way of denoting possession in John. When emphasis is required the possessive goes between the article and the noun (e.g. 4:42; 5:47; 7:16). See BT, 11 (1960), p. 173. The form used here carries more emphasis than the genitive of the personal pronoun, but it is not John's emphatic form. John uses ἐμός 40 times, and, as no other book has it more than 9 times (1 Corinthians; next is Matthew which uses it 5 times) it is quite a feature of Johannine style. Cf. his frequent use of ἐγώ (see on 1:20).


115. For ἐκεῖνος see on 1:8.

116. See the note in Lagrange, p. 96.

117. The expression is ὁ ἔρχομενος. Jesus is called ὁ ἔρχομενος by the Synoptists (e.g., Mark 11:9; Luke 7:19-20), as also in this Gospel (e.g., 11:27; cf. 1:15). The expression is a title of the Messiah. Notice John's habit of small variations (see on v. 5). Jesus is called "the one who came from heaven" (v. 13), "the one who comes from above" (v. 31), and "the one who comes from heaven" (v. 31).

118. Chrysostom makes the point that his accreditation is not earthly: "it is impossible for One who cometh from heaven to have His credit strengthened by one that inhabiteth earth" (30. 1; p. 103).

119. πάντων is ambiguous. It might be masculine, with the meaning "above all men" (i.e., superior to all teachers), or it might be neuter, "above all things." Perhaps John would not care to be tied exclusively to either meaning.
120. Black maintains that the present passage is a translation of sayings that originally formed an Aramaic poem. He points out that "he that is of the earth is of the earth" is pure tautology and has no meaning" in Aramaic, as in Greek or English. He suggests that there has been a misreading of an expression meaning "he that is of the earth is inferior to Him" (AA, pp. 109-10). This makes sense and completes the parallelism required by the poem. But we should bear in mind that John loves to repeat words for emphasis, and this may be the significance of the threefold "of the earth."

121. εἰναι ἐ is a common Johannine construction. Besides being ἐ τις γης people may be said to be ἐ τοῦ κόσμου (15:19), x τῆς ἀληθείας (18:37), ἐ τοῦ Θεοῦ (8:47), ἐ τοῦ πατρός τοῦ διαβόλου (8:44), or ἐ τῶν κάτω (8:23). By contrast with the latter, Jesus is ἐ τῶν ἀνω. In 1 John people may be ἐ τοῦ διαβόλου (3:8) or ἐ τοῦ πονηροῦ (3:12), while certain ἐπιθυμίαι are not ἐκτοῦ Πατρός but ἐκτοῦ κόσμου (2:16). The construction is occasionally found in other parts of the New Testament, but nowhere is it characteristic as it is in John.

122. John does not use γη in a derogatory sense as he does κόσμος. To be "of the earth" is very different from being "of the world"; the word denotes limitation rather than evil. John here uses the expression "of the earth" three times, literally, "he who is of the earth is of the earth and speaks of the earth" (translations insert words to give acceptable English). The effect is to emphasize the "earthiness" of this person in contrast to Jesus, who is "from above."

123. The expression is ἐπάνω πάντων. Paul similarly speaks of Christ as ὁ ὃν ἐπὶ πάντων (Rom. 9:5, and cf. Eph. 1:21). An important group of MSS omits the words (N* D f l 565 it syr). This would take the preceding words with the next verse and give the sense, "He who comes from heaven testifies to what he has seen and heard." A decision is difficult, but perhaps the retention of the words is slightly more probable. The sense then will be as NIV.

124. The change of tense from the perfect ἑώρακεν to the aorist ήκουσεν is unexpected. Perhaps, as Westcott thinks, the former points us to "that which belonged to the existence" and the latter to "that which belonged to the mission" of the Son. Abbott considers a similar explanation possible, but he points out that in this Gospel ἀκούω is in the aorist when Christ is described as "hearing" from the Father, and that "(apart from forms of ὄφθηναι, δψομαι etc.) the perfect of ὀραν is the only part of the verb used by John" (2451). BDF thinks that the combination "puts the chief emphasis on seeing." In 5:37; 1 John 1:1, 3 the same two verbs occur, but both tenses are perfect. In these cases BDF views that hearing as equally essential with seeing and the coordinated verbs bring this out (342[2]).

125. Abbott thinks that the reference is not general, but refers to a particular person, probably John the Baptist (2501). If the reference must be confined to one person there is no more likely candidate. But nothing in the context limits it in this way. It seems more probable that the verse applies to anyone who receives the testimony.

126. BAGD gives as one of the meanings of σφραγίζω "attest, certify, acknowledge (as a seal does on a document: pap.; Jer 39:10f; Esth 8:8, 10)" (2.c). The most common use of the verb in the New Testament is for God's marking out of people as his own (cf. 6:27).

127. Cf. Luther: "Among men nothing is safer and more certain than that which is given under one's hand and seal. I feel sure when I have a sealed document.... Anyone who really accepts the message of the Gospel resolutely sets his seal to it and says: 'This seal and document mean that I can stake life and limb and all I possess on this.' His heart is certain and harbors no doubts" (vol. 22, pp. 471-72).

128. It is possible that the text should be amended, in which case these comments would not stand. Black thinks that the original Aramaic has been misread and that the passage originally read "He that hath received his testimony Hath set to his seal ('ashar) that God sent him" (AA, p. 110). This would give an excellent sense, but it scarcely seems that the amendment is required.

129. The opening essay in C. K. Barrett's Essays on John (London, 1982) stresses this. Barrett concludes, "The figure of Jesus . . . makes sense when in hearing him you hear the Father, when in looking at him you see the Father, and worship him" (p. 16).
130. ἐκ μέτρου is an unusual expression, which does not appear to occur elsewhere. Probably it is correctly understood as "by measure" (which is usually simply μέτρφ).

131. Cf. the saying in The Gospel according to the Hebrews (described by M. R. James as "a divergent yet not heretical form of our Gospel according to St. Matthew" [The Apocryphal New Testament (Oxford, 1926), p. 1]): "And it came to pass when the Lord was come up out of the water, the whole fount of the Holy Spirit descended and rested upon him" (James, The Apocryphal New Testament, p. 5).

132. Cf. the rabbinical saying attributed to R. Acha (c. 320), "The Holy Spirit, who rests on the prophets, rests (on them) only by weight ἐκ μέτρου (= by measure)" (SBk, II. p. 431). If this view is as early as the Fourth Gospel there may be in mind a deliberate contrast between Jesus and the prophets.

133. We read again of the Father as having put "all things under his power" (13:3; more literally "has given him all things, into his hands"; cf. Matt. 11:27; Luke 10:22). Specifically the Father gave Christ the Spirit (v. 34), the work he accomplished (17:4), the works he did (5:36; cf. 14:31), his message (12:49; 17:8), his authority (17:2), his name (17:11), his glory (17:22-24), his disciples (6:37-39; 10:29; 17:6, 9, 12, 24; 18:9), the cup he must drink (18:11), "all judgment" (5:22), "to have life in himself" (5:26), and power over all flesh (17:2). In these passages the perfect is the usual tense (17 times), the aorist being used less than half as often (8 times), and the present twice only. This may point to the permanence of the gifts. John uses the verb δίδωμι 76 times, which is more than any other New testament writer (next is Luke with 60 times).

134. L. Hodgson speaks of this dependence as the "keynote of our Lord's thought" (And Was Made Man [London, 1933], p. 198). J. E. Davey puts great emphasis on John's treatment of the theme of dependence (The Jesus of St. John [London, 1958], ch. 5).

135. As we have noted before, John never uses ὥς when he speaks of people as sons of God. He reserves this word for Jesus, and the terminology points to his view that the nature of Jesus' sonship is different from that of ours.

136. Thus BAGD says: "since, in the view of the early Christians, the supreme disobedience was a refusal to believe their gospel, á. may be restricted in some passages to the mng. disbelieve, be an unbeliever. This sense, though greatly disputed (it is not found outside our lit.), seems most probable in J 3:36. . . ." (3). Bernard thinks the meaning is "strictly, 'to be disobedient,' . . . but rather implies a rebellious mind than a series of disobedient acts." Godet says that it "brings out the voluntary side in unbelief, that of revolt." F. F. Bruce in his commentary on Acts (London, 1951) under 14:2 says, "unbelief and disobedience are both involved in the rejection of the Gospel."

137. ἀλλά'.

138. This is John's one use of ὄργη. But the idea is expressed in other terms that show the certainty of the punishment of the finally impenitent (cf. the use of the concepts of perishing and of judgment earlier in this chapter).


140. Strachan quotes from Westcott that God's wrath "is not an arbitrary sentence, but the working out of a moral law," and objects: "This tends to make us think that moral laws are forces which come automatically into operation when men do wrong, or cherish wrong aims. . . . The New Testament writers . . . think in much more personal terms of the nature and consequences of wrongdoing. . . . God is not thought of as handing over the wrongdoer to an impersonal blind force which automatically punishes. The 'wrath of God' is an expression of God's holy personality." Our God is active in opposing the wrong. Cf. also L. Hodgson: "The wrath of God and divine punishment are essential elements in a doctrine which is to face the facts of evil and retain a fundamental optimism.
The belief that God has sworn in His wrath that men who do certain things shall not enter into His rest enables the Church to open its worship each day with the words, 'Come, let us sing unto the Lord, let us heartily rejoice in the strength of our salvation' " (The Doctrine of the Atonement [London, 1951], p. 60). The last reference is to the use of Ps. 95 in the morning worship of the Anglican church.

141. Filson maintains that "verse 36 is as basic as the famous 3:16." A little later he says, "The wrath of God, the divine judgment, immediately and relentlessly rests on the unrepentant sinner who stubbornly rejects the offer of grace and life. There is no place for neutrality. Man was made as a moral being who can really live only by being obedient to his Father. He must either believe, obey God, and find eternal life, or refuse and so suffer the ruin that his evil choice makes inevitable."
F. THE SECOND DISCOURSE — THE WATER OF LIFE (4:1-42)

1. Jesus’ Departure for Galilee (4:1-3)

The Pharisees heard that Jesus was gaining and baptizing more disciples than John, although in fact it was not Jesus who baptized, but his disciples. When the Lord learned of this, he left Judea and went back once more to Galilee.

Jesus had been at work in Judea. The next incident John narrates took place in Samaritan territory; therefore John inserts a brief section to explain this change of scene.

"Therefore" (which NIV omits) is at first sight a little curious, for in the immediately preceding section John has not mentioned the Pharisees, nor, of course, how they came to know what Jesus was doing. We can take it only as marking a stage in Jesus' journeyings. For "Jesus" many MSS read "the Lord," and this should probably be accepted. The expression might be used as an ordinary polite form of address (much like our "Sir"), but it could also be used with reverence and awe, for example, when it was used of the Deity. After the resurrection it was used of Jesus habitually, though during his lifetime it was apparently not much used of him other than in the ordinary polite sense. He was usually referred to by name as "Jesus" or else as "Teacher" ("Rabbi"), and this whether in direct address or in the third person. In this Gospel he is often called "Sir" (vv. 11, 15, 19, 49 etc.), or "Rabbi," by people who have not come to understand the significance of his Person. At first the disciples do this as well as others. But in 6:68 Peter calls him "Lord," which we may not unfairly associate with the heightened appreciation shown in the words that follow. After this the disciples sometimes use "Rabbi" (9:2; 11:8), but they also use "Lord" (11:3, 21; 13:6; 14:5, etc.; of course some of these may well be examples of "Sir" rather than "Lord"). The climax is reached in Thomas's magnificent exclamation: "My Lord and my God"! (20:28). After the resurrection the
disciples habitually use "Lord." It is also worth noticing that the Evangelist himself speaks of Jesus as "the Lord" only here and in 6:23; 11:2; 20:20; 21:12. His reserve may be a mark of acquaintance with the primitive state of affairs.\(^3\) We should, however, notice that while the title "Lord" was not characteristic during the earthly ministry the lordship of Christ was there. The relationship established during the days of his flesh prepared the way for the full use of the title in later times.

The Pharisees\(^4\) have already been mentioned as taking a close interest in John the Baptist (1:19, 24). It is not surprising that they took steps to acquaint themselves with Jesus' activities also. The situation reflected in 3:26 (where see note) is continued here. Jesus drew many more adherents than did the Baptist.

2 In an aside the Evangelist makes it clear that, though\(^5\) baptism was practiced in Jesus' circle and with his approval,\(^6\) he himself did not perform\(^7\) the rite. That was left to the disciples.\(^8\)

3 John does not say that the Pharisees took any action against Jesus, or even that they were planning any such action.\(^9\) But it is not likely that they would view with equanimity the rapid increase in the number of Jesus' followers. Jesus, however, forestalled any action on their part by withdrawing from Judea and setting out for Galilee. He would not precipitate a clash until the right time. Probably also he did not wish to enter into a controversy on baptism. John's word for "left" is unusual in the sense of leaving a place. It often has the meaning "abandon" (as in v. 28 of the woman's waterpot), and there may be something of this meaning here.\(^10\)

2. Living Water (4:4-14)

4Now he had to go through Samaria. 5So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph. 6Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about the sixth hour. 7When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, "Will you give me a drink?" 8(His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.) 9The Samaritan woman said to him, "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?" (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.\(^9\)) 10Jesus answered her, "If you knew
the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water." 11"Sir," the woman said, "you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water. 12Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his flocks and herds?" 13Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

a. 9 Or do not use dishes Samaritans have used

Nicodemus was an eminent representative of orthodox Judaism. Now John records an interview Jesus had with one who stood for a class that was wholeheartedly despised by orthodox Judaism. From the point of view of the orthodox Jew there were three strikes against her: she was a Samaritan, a woman, and a sexual sinner. Curiously Marsh speaks of her as "a representative of her people at their best" (p. 209), but it is difficult to think that the Samaritans could do no better than this specimen of matrimonial maladjustment! But the rivalries and hatreds that were meat and drink to the Jews of his day mattered not at all to Jesus. His was a ministry for all people. John is clear that Jesus came to bring salvation for people of all races, and this incident strikingly brings out this truth. In the former incident Jesus spoke of the importance of the new birth. Here his theme is the living water that he came to bring to needy people. The terminology is different, but the basic message is the same. A feature of this story is the way the woman persistently attempts to avoid the issues Jesus raises. But just as persistently Jesus brings her back to them until finally he secures the desired result.

R. H. Lightfoot points out that there are parallels with the passion narrative. In both we read of Jesus' physical distress (4:6; 19:1-2), and of his thirst (4:7; 19:28). In both there is a time note mentioning "the sixth hour" (4:7; 19:14) and a reference to the completion of his work (4:34; 19:30; the Greek verbs are related). There may be nothing to all this, but in 4:42 Jesus is called "the Savior of the world," John may accordingly be recalling of set purpose incidents that point to the Passion, wherein the world's salvation was wrought out.
The necessity for Jesus to pass through Samaria was not absolute. Strict Jews, like the Pharisees, disliked the Samaritans so intensely that they avoided their territory as much as possible. Their route from Jerusalem to Galilee lay through the region beyond the Jordan. This was considerably longer, but it avoided contact with the Samaritans. Those who were not so strict went through Samaria. For those in a hurry the shorter way was a necessity. Josephus uses exactly the expression here rendered "had to" when he says, "for rapid travel, it was essential to take that route (i.e. through Samaria)" (Vit. 269). John may possibly wish us to take the expression in this fashion. More probably the necessity lay in the nature of the mission of Jesus. John often uses the word "must" of this mission (3:14; 9:4; 10:16; 12:34; 20:9; see on 3:7). The expression points to a compelling divine necessity. Jesus had come as "the light of the world" (9:5). It was imperative that this light shine to others than Jews.

The reason for the hostility of the Jews to the Samaritans goes back a long way. When the Assyrians took Samaria captive they deported large numbers of the inhabitants and replaced them by people from all over their empire (2 Kings 17:23-24). These people brought their own gods with them (2 Kings 17:29-31), but they added the worship of Yahweh to their other practices (2 Kings 17:25, 28, 32-33, and 41). In time their polytheism disappeared, and they worshiped Yahweh alone, though their religion had its peculiarities. For example, they acknowledged as sacred Scripture only the Pentateuch. They thus cut themselves off from the riches in the Psalms, the Prophets, and other books. Their religion was also marked by a pronounced bitterness toward the Jews. When the Jews returned from exile in Babylon the Samaritans offered to help them rebuild their temple, but the offer was refused (Ezra 4:2-3). This naturally engendered great bitterness. One might have expected that the Jews would have appreciated the fact that the Samaritans worshiped the same God as they did. But it did not work out this way. The Samaritans refused to worship at Jerusalem, preferring their own temple built on Mt. Gerizim c. 400 B.C. When this was burned by the Jews c. 128 B.C. relations between the two groups worsened. Occasions of friction were not lacking, and by New Testament times a settled attitude of hostility had resulted. At the time with which we are dealing the hostility between Jews and Samaritans was bitter and widespread, though not universal. Properly "Samaria" was the name of the capital city, but the term was used also of the territory of which it was the capital. Here the latter, of
course, is the meaning. "A Samaritan woman" (v. 7) means a member of the race that inhabited the general area, not a lady from the city of Samaria (which was many miles away).

5 Sychar is perhaps to be identified with the village called Askar, near Shechem. There is a reference to Jacob’s buying of a piece of ground in this vicinity (Gen. 33:19). He also gave some land to Joseph (Gen. 48:22), and he was buried there (Josh. 24:32). There is no Old Testament reference to his having dug a well there, but there is nothing improbable about it.

6 The word for "well" is not the usual one (which is used later, vv. 11, 12). It signifies rather a spring or fountain. As applied to a well it may mean a well fed by a spring. But probably we should not look for too great precision. Some scholars think that the choice of word is linked with the "spring of water welling up to eternal life" (v. 14), where the other word would be impossible. But since the water is contrasted with that, the reason is not exactly impressive.

The well top was apparently furnished with a wooden or stone wall, which formed a seat for the weary traveler. In speaking of the weariness of Jesus, our Evangelist points to his true humanity. While he consistently depicts the full deity of Jesus, he is insistent also that he really became man, with all that that means in terms of human limitation. NIV omits John's "thus"; the passage may indeed mean "tired as he was" (with NIV), or perhaps, "thus as he was," that is, without selecting a good place. Chrysostom explains it as "Not upon a throne, not upon a cushion, but simply, and as He was, upon the ground" (31.3; p. 109). The note of time is quite in the Johannine manner (see on 1:39). The sixth hour is noon on our reckoning, which seems an unusual time for a woman to be drawing water; sunset seems to have been the favored hour. However, we should not overlook the fact that Josephus speaks of the damsels that Moses helped (Exod. 2:15ff.) as coming to draw water at noon (Ant. 2.257ff.), so the practice was not unknown. Perhaps even more curious is the fact that the woman should have come to this well at all, for there was plentiful water nearer her home. It may be that the water at Jacob’s well was thought to be of better quality; being so deep it goes below the water table and may have yielded better water than more shallow wells. More likely there was some superstitious veneration for a place hallowed by associations with the great patriarch. But the woman had a bad reputation, and the explanation may be very simple — she chose the time and the place to avoid other women.
It was probably Jesus' weariness that led the disciples to leave him while they went into the village to buy food. He was thus at the well, possibly alone, when the woman came to draw water. He asked for a drink (the impossibility of his providing for his own need is brought out in v. 11). On this request Godet sagely remarks, "He is not unaware that the way to gain a soul is often to ask a service of it." But we should not think of the question as simply a device to get into conversation. Jesus really was thirsty. But his request startled the woman into asking, "What? You are a Jew, and you ask me for a drink — me, a Samaritan!" (Moffatt). That he should ask a woman for water is perhaps not so surprising, since it was women who generally drew water. But this particular request involved using the Samaritan woman's utensil, and Jews could be very scrupulous about contracting defilement. The words "For Jews do not associate with Samaritans" are probably the Evangelist's comment and not part of the woman's speech. The words seem to refer to the use of vessels for food or drink.

The customary rendering "have no dealings with" is difficult to sustain, for the narrative informs us that the disciples had gone into the village to buy food. It is hard to find what meaning we are to put into "have dealings with" if it does not cover buying food, all the more so in view of the importance the Jews attached to food laws.

Jesus immediately lifts the conversation to a higher plane by speaking of God's gift, and of seeking "living water." His word for "gift" (here only in the Gospels) stresses the freeness of it all. It is a matter of bounty. Jesus is referring to the new life he brings. Had the woman been aware of the realities of the situation in which she found herself, and especially of the fact that she was speaking to him whom God had sent to give life to the world, the asking would have been the other way around. This is indicated by the use of the emphatic "you." In the ordinary usage of the time "living water" was water that flowed. It was water in a river or stream as against water in a pond or cistern, which did not flow. This usage is almost invariable. And it is worth noting that, while the rabbis freely use "water" in a metaphorical sense, they rarely employ "living water" in this way. For the meaning of the present passage there may possibly be significance in the fact that "living water," water that flowed, was greatly preferred for purposes of ritual purification. It was "living water" that took away defilement and made acceptable worshipers out of unclean people.
But Jesus is giving the expression a deeper meaning than that. The living water that flows from within the believer is later explained in terms of the Holy Spirit (7:38-39), and something similar is required here. Jesus is speaking of the new life that he will give, a life connected with the activity of the Spirit. He calls himself "the bread of life" (6:35), but not "the living water." Living water rather symbolizes the Spirit, whom he would send, than the Christ himself. Odeberg shows that in a number of Jewish writings water symbolizes teaching or doctrine. It seems likely that the primary meaning here is the Holy Spirit. But, in the manner so typical of this Gospel, there may be also a reference to Jesus' teaching. If so, it will be to his teaching as issuing forth in spiritual life.

In the Old Testament living water is sometimes associated with Yahweh. He is called "the spring of living water" (Jer. 2:13; 17:13). Again, an invitation can be issued in these terms: "Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters" (Isa. 55:1). We should also bear in mind the waters that issued from the temple in Ezekiel's vision (Ezek. 47:1-12); perhaps the application of "a garden fountain" and "a well of flowing water" to the bride is also relevant (Song 4:15). And with Yahweh "is the fountain of life" (Ps. 36:9). We should not miss the claim implied in Jesus' words.

11-12 Up to this point the woman has no desire to talk about profound spiritual realities. She accordingly chooses to understand Jesus' words as referring to nothing more than water of the kind she came to draw (for similar misunderstandings see on 2:20). "Sir" (see on v. 1) is a respectful form of address, and may be meant to put a polite barrier between them. The well so deep (about a hundred feet) that it would be impracticable to secure water from it without some implement for drawing it up. And, as the woman points out, Jesus has nothing of the sort.

She sees a further reason for skepticism in the unimportance of her acquaintance; to her way of thinking there was nothing extraordinary about him. So she asks whether he is greater than Jacob, renowned as the great progenitor of the race, and particularly important in the present connection, since he was responsible for the well. "You" is emphatic, and the question is framed in a way that looks for the answer "No" (cf. GNB, "You don't claim to be greater than Jacob, do you?"). The woman is incredulous. The people of the day had a deep reverence for Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (cf. 8:53, where Jesus is similarly asked whether he is greater than Abraham). The claims Jesus made sometimes seemed to them
to imply that he was greater than the patriarchs, but in their eyes this was impossible. If he made the claim he was automatically wrong. In the woman's attitude there appears to be something of a sense of outrage. She was content with her patriarchal well. How dare a mere stranger claim to produce anything better than that? "The irony (for John and for most of his readers Jesus is of course greater than Jacob) is continued and is characteristically Johannine." 33

13-14 Jesus' response contrasts the impermanent result of drinking water from the well with the permanent consequences of receiving water from him. 34 Water from Jacob's well might quench a thirst, but it could not prevent thirst from rising again. The living water that Jesus gives is such that those who receive it are permanently 35 satisfied (cf. Matt. 5:6). 36 The living water becomes in them a vigorous stream (the word for "spring" 37 is that used in v. 6, where see note) issuing forth in eternal life (see on 1:4; 3:15). The movement of a fountain is brought out in the vigorous "springing up" 38 (or "leaping"; NIVs "welling up" is inadequate; the word in a compound form is used of the formerly lame man leaping up, Acts 3:8). The life that Jesus gives is no tame and stagnant thing. It is much more than merely the entrance into a new state, that of being saved instead of lost. It is the abundant life (10:10), and the living Spirit within people is evidence of this. It is more than possible that the words are also an indication that the life within believers goes into action (cf. 7:38; Isa. 58:11). Life has a way of begetting life.

3. **The Woman and Her Husbands (4:15-19)**

15The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water." 16He told her, "Go, call your husband and come back." 17"I have no husband," she replied. Jesus said to her, "You are right when you say you have no husband. 18The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true." 19 "Sir," the woman said, "I can see that you are a prophet."

Until this point it is probable that the woman was not serious. Perhaps she thought of the stranger as a little bit mad, and humored him accordingly.
But there is no indication that she took seriously the important things he has been saying. Jesus now proceeds to show such knowledge of her and her affairs that she is startled into a recognition that he is more than he seems.

15 If the woman has any inkling of the meaning Jesus is giving the living water she chooses not to display it (cf. the way Nicodemus took the new birth literally, 3:4; cf. also the Galileans who asked Jesus to give them "the bread of God," 6:34). She understands his words with a crass literalism, and asks for the water "so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water." Her concern is with her own personal convenience. It would be nice not to have the need to make frequent journeys to the well and go the trouble of drawing water. Though the thing is impossible it is a pleasant thought to play with.

16-18 Jesus' request that she go and fetch her husband has no apparent connection with what precedes. It is best taken as his way of bringing the woman's sin into the open. He is met with the curt response that she has no husband. "Her volubility is checked: in the fewest possible words she tries to stop a dangerous subject at once" (Plummer). Jesus' reply is devastating. It shows that he knows all about her marital misadventures. He knows that she has had five husbands and that the man with whom she now lives is not her husband. This may mean that she had availed herself liberally of the provisions for divorce, but that after all that she was living with a man who was not legally her husband. Or it may mean, in accordance with the standards taught by Jesus (e.g. Matt. 19:3-9), that her last union was not really a marriage. In either case the woman recognized that she was in the wrong. How did Jesus know all about her? It is possible that the conversation is not reported in full, and that she had herself given him this information. While it is not likely that John has recorded everything that was said, this inference is precarious, especially in view of the woman's later words, "Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did" (v. 29). It is more likely that we have here an example of Jesus' more than human knowledge that John brings before us from time to time. This does not cast a reflection on Jesus' genuine humanity, but it indicates that there was revealed to him all that was needful for his ministry.

Some exegetes interpret the five husbands allegorically and find a reference to the false gods brought to Samaria by the colonists of 2 Kings 17:24. They suggest that Samaria now professed to worship Yahweh, but that he is not "your husband." But this interpretation will not stand. In the
first place, though it is true that five nations are mentioned in 2 Kings 17:24, the fact is that when their gods are listed in 2 Kings 17:30-31 there are seven of them. The number is wrong. Moreover, the false gods in 2 Kings are not worshiped one after another (as the husbands followed one another), but simultaneously. Again, it is impossible to think that Jesus (or John) thought of the false gods as the legitimate husbands of the Samaritans and held that Yahweh, the one true God, was no "husband" but a paramour. And, as Beasley-Murray says, "more importantly the Evangelist does not allegorize in this manner." Moreover, it is difficult to understand how John's readers could have been expected to detect such an allusion. It is much better to take the passage at its face value, as a factual statement about the men with whom the woman had lived.

19 What Jesus has just said has forced on the woman the realization that he is no ordinary being. She gives expression to this conviction by calling him a "prophet." The function of a prophet in the Scriptures was usually to tell forth a message he had from God. But there is evidence that among the people of this time a prophet was sometimes held to have a special insight into people (cf. Luke 7:39, "If this man were a prophet, he would know who is touching him and what kind of woman she is"). It is possible that the woman was already groping toward the recognition that Jesus was the Christ. The Samaritans acknowledged no prophet after Moses other than the one spoken of in Deuteronomy 18:18, and him they regarded as the Messiah (see further on 1:21). For her to speak of Jesus as a prophet was thus to move into the area of messianic speculation.

4. True Worship (4:20-26)

"Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem." Jesus declared, "Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth." The woman said, "I know that Messiah" (called Christ) "is coming. When
he comes, he will explain everything to us." 26Then Jesus declared, "I who speak to you am he."

The woman may have been genuinely interested in the topic she now raises. She is clearly impressed by Jesus. She has recognized him as a prophet. The right place for worship was a prominent topic of dispute between Samaritans and Jews. She may have been genuinely interested in what a prophet would say about this ancient and bitter controversy. But it seems more probable that she is simply trying to change the subject. She wants to steer the conversation away from the unpleasant subject of her sin, so she introduces a distraction. She points to the different ideas held by Jews and Samaritans about the place God has chosen in which people may worship him. But this gambit serves to open up the way for Jesus to speak of the essential nature of God and of the worship that should be offered him. Genuine worship is spiritual. It is not dependent on places and things.46

20 The woman introduces her controversial topic. As we saw earlier (on v. 4), there was bitter division between Jews and Samaritans over the rival claims of Jerusalem and Gerizim as places for worship. Both the building of the temple on Mt. Gerizim (which the Jews regarded as an illegitimate rival to the only temple there could be, that in Jerusalem) and its destruction increased the bitterness between the two peoples. The woman, now convinced that Jesus was a prophet, but unwilling to apply his message to herself, refers to this great religious division. "Our fathers" points back to the building of altars in this region by Abraham (Gen. 12:7) and Jacob (Gen. 33:20). Mt. Gerizim was the scene of the blessing of the people when they came into the promised land (Deut. 11:29; 27:12). The Samaritans also read in their Bibles that an altar was commanded to be set up in this mountain (Deut. 27:4ff.).47 They had a tradition that Abraham's offering of Isaac took place on this mountain and they held that it was here that Abraham met Melchizedek. In fact, most of the blessed events in the time of the patriarchs seem to have been linked with Gerizim! The Samaritans were helped in this by seeing references to their holy mountain in such expressions as "the house of God," "the goodly mount," etc.48 All these associations, added to the building of the Temple on this height, made it a place especially holy for the Samaritans.49 "You" is in emphatic opposition to "our fathers." Far from accepting all this the Jews held that people must worship in Jerusalem.50 They held that the Law teaches that
there can be only one place for the temple (Deut. 12:5). Though it is not specifically said in the Pentateuch that Jerusalem is this one place, this is laid down in other parts of Scripture (2 Chron. 6:6; 7:12; Ps. 78:68), and these passages carried conviction to Jews. But they meant nothing to the Samaritans, for they acknowledged no writings as sacred save the Pentateuch.

21 For "Woman" as a form of address see on 2:4. Jesus refused to be drawn into an argument. Rather, he solemnly predicts that a time is coming when worship will be possible in neither place. There may be a reference to the troubled times that lay ahead for the whole region of Palestine (cf. Luke 21:20ff., etc.). God is often called "the Father" in this Gospel (see on 1:14). Usually, however, it is the Father of Jesus Christ that is meant. Here he is thought of as the Father of all. The woman had appealed to the example of "our fathers"; Jesus points her to the one Father.

22 Jesus' concern is with the essential nature of worship. He accordingly points out to the woman the inadequacy of Samaritan worship. Though they worshipped the true God the Samaritans did so very imperfectly. When we consider that they rejected the writings of the Prophets, the Psalms, the historical books of the Old Testament, and much more we realize that their knowledge of God was, of necessity, very limited. Jesus says that they do not know what they worship (cf. Acts 17:23).

51 Both his "you" and his "we" are emphatic. He sets Jews and Samaritans in sharp contrast. And he associates himself quite definitely with the Jews. They do know what they worship. Jesus uses the neuter, "that which," and not the masculine, "him whom," as might have been expected. This may point to the whole system of worship (cf. Goodspeed: "You worship something you know nothing about"), and not confine itself specifically to the knowledge of God. The reason for the superior knowledge of the Jews is that salvation (this is John's one use of the term) comes from among them. This might perhaps be understood to mean that people enter salvation by following the Jewish system rather than that of the Samaritans. But, quite apart from the difficulty of fitting this into Jesus' teaching as a whole, there is an article with "salvation" that is probably significant. It is "the" salvation of which Jesus speaks. That is to say, the messianic salvation comes from this nation ("from" them, "not in them, or by them" [Marsh, p. 217]). The Messiah is a Jew.
It is probable that in this verse Jesus is pointing to the new way that he would inaugurate. "A time is coming and has now come" is a reference to a crisis, to something new. In the person of Jesus we see not only a repetition of old truths (be they held by the Jews or the Samaritans), but the appearing of God's definitive revelation. In due course he would die that atoning death which would bring salvation to the world. We cannot take his words as simply the enunciation of a principle that was always true (this, of course, is the case; but that is not what Jesus is emphasizing). Disputes between Jews and Samaritans will fade away. People will worship on neither pattern. Jesus has already spoken of the destruction of the temple (2:19ff.). Primarily he referred to the destruction of the temple of his body, but, as we saw there, there is probably also a reference to the new system of worship that Jesus would inaugurate, a system not tied to any particular holy place. So here he teaches that the distinction of which the woman speaks is outmoded.

True worshipers worship "in spirit and truth." It is not likely that "spirit" here means the Holy Spirit (though the Spirit does help our worship, Rom. 8:26ff.). It is the human spirit that is in mind. One must worship, not simply outwardly by being in the right place and taking up the right attitude, but in one's spirit. For "truth" see Additional Note D (pp. 259-62). The combination "spirit and truth" points to the need for complete sincerity and complete reality in our approach to God. There is an important point in the concluding statement that the Father seeks such to be his worshipers. It is not simply that he accepts such worship when it is brought to him. He is a God of love, a God who seeks the best for people, and therefore a God who actively seeks them out.

We should omit the indefinite article, which some translations (e.g., KJV, Knox) place before "Spirit." Greek has no such article, and we insert it or not in English as the sense requires. Here Jesus is not saying, "God is one spirit among many"; rather his meaning is "God's essential nature is spirit." The indefinite article is no more required than it is in the similar statements, "God is light" (1 John 1:5) and "God is love" (1 John 4:8). We must not think of God as material, or as bound in any way to places or things. The word order puts an emphasis on "Spirit." The statement is emphatic. Since he is essentially spirit it follows that the worship brought to him must be essentially of a spiritual kind. Notice the word "must." Jesus is not speaking of a merely desirable element in
worship. He is speaking of something that is absolutely necessary. In view of the references to living water (which symbolizes the life-giving Spirit) in the context it is probable that this verse contains an allusion to the life-giving activity of God. This is all the more likely in that when the Old Testament refers to the Spirit of God, the usual idea is that of divine activity, not of opposition to things material. John not infrequently combines the ideas of Spirit and life (cf. 6:63). God is the living God. He is ceaselessly active as the life-giving Spirit, and he must be worshiped in a manner befitting such a Spirit. People cannot dictate the "how" or the "where" of worship. They must come only in the way that the Spirit of God opens for them.60

25 This appears to be the woman's last attempt to evade the challenge Jesus is forcing upon her. She does not dispute what he has been saying. But her "he" is emphatic; it suggests that these are matters that really come within the province of none but the Messiah (for this term see on 1:20, 41). There are messianic prophecies in the Pentateuch, and thus the Samaritans expected the Messiah. But their rejection of the rest of the Old Testament meant that their information about him was meager.61 But the woman recognized his authority and looked to him to tell people "everything."62

26 In words of simple dignity Jesus discloses the truth of his Person (cf. 9:37). This is the one occasion on which he admitted his messiahship prior to his trial (though cf. Mark 9:41). He knew that he was the Messiah, but to affirm it openly in Jewish circles would have been to arouse associations of that political Messiah which so many people expected. But in places like this country district of Samaria the term could be used with safety.63 Jesus' "I am" raises problems. It may be that we have here nothing more than a simple affirmation. On the other hand, the use of the emphatic pronoun in this expression is in the style of deity (see on 8:58).64 There is no "he" in the Greek. Jesus says, "I that speak to you, I am." Hoskyns comments, "Jesus is more than either Jew or Samaritan had comprehended in the word 'Christ'. He is the answer of God to the sin of the world." But if this is so, it is also the case that in this context the words cannot be only an affirmation of greatness. They are a challenge to respond. As Strachan puts it, they "are really another form of the invitation, 'Come unto me'."65

5. The Woman's Witness (4:27-30)
27 Just then his disciples returned and were surprised to find him talking with a woman. But no one asked, "What do you want?" or "Why are you talking with her?" 28 Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people, 29 "Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Christ?" 30 They came out of the town and made their way toward him.

a. 29 Or Messiah

With the affirmation of Jesus' messiahship the conversation has been brought to its climax. There remains to be recounted only the effect of all this on others. John shows us both the surprise of the disciples and the evangelistic zeal of the woman. She bore such an effective testimony that people went out of the village to meet Jesus.

27 "Just then" means that the disciples returned just as Jesus made his great affirmation. For "his disciples" see on 2:2. They were astonished to find him carrying on a conversation with a woman. Whatever might be thought of the propriety of asking for a drink (see on v. 7), no rabbi would have carried on a conversation with a woman. One of their sayings ran, "A man shall not be alone with a woman in an inn, not even with his sister or his daughter, on account of what men may think. A man shall not talk with a woman in the street, not even with his own wife, and especially not with another woman, on account of what men may say." Yet, though the disciples were astonished, they did not question the action of the woman (the first hypothetical question) or that of their Master (the second). They had learned enough to know that, while Jesus did not always respect the conventions of the rabbis, he had good reasons for what he did.

28-29 The woman had come to the well expressly to obtain water. It is thus an indication of the deep impression that Jesus had made upon her that she left her waterpot there. She completely abandoned the business in hand (though the abandoned waterpot meant that she would certainly return). She set about telling what had happened to her instead. She went back to the village and invited the men there to come and meet Jesus. Her recommendation is couched in the terms "see a man who told me everything I ever did." This pardonable exaggeration indicates the profound impression that Jesus' knowledge of her private life had made on her. The question, "Could this be the Christ?" is put tentatively. It is as though a
negative answer might be expected, but a positive one is hoped for.\footnote{For Messiah see on 1:20, 41.}

30 Her news and her invitation evoked a response. The people went out from the city, and kept coming to Jesus ("The tense is vividly descriptive," Westcott). No indication is given of the number who came, but the impression left is that a considerable group was involved.\footnote{For "rabbi" see on 1:38.}

6. Christ's Food (4:31-38)

31\textit{Meanwhile his disciples urged him, "Rabbi, eat something."} 32\textit{But he said to them, "I have food to eat that you know nothing about."} 33\textit{Then his disciples said to each other, "Could someone have brought him food?"} 34\textit{"My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work.} 35\textit{Do you not say, 'Four months more and then the harvest'? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest.} 36\textit{Even now the reaper draws his wages, even now he harvests the crop for eternal life, so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together.} 37\textit{Thus the saying 'One sows and another reaps' is true.} 38\textit{I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labor."

The disciples' suggestion that Jesus should eat some of the food they had brought becomes the occasion for him to teach them something of his priorities. It was meat and drink to him to do the divine will, and the urgent task is not to be postponed.\footnote{For "rabbi" see on 1:38.}

31 While\footnote{For "I" and "you" are in emphatic contrast. "Food" is used generally of anything that can be eaten, but Jesus says he has sustenance of which the disciples have no knowledge.} the woman was about her business another scene was being enacted at the well. The disciples' suggestion that Jesus eat was eminently natural. The whole purpose of their trip into the village had been to buy food. They had left the Master weary, and presumably hungry. Now they brought food and asked him to eat. For "rabbi" see on 1:38.

32 Jesus' reply puts a distance between them. His "I" and "you" are in emphatic contrast. "Food" is used generally of anything that can be eaten, but Jesus says he has sustenance of which the disciples have no knowledge.

33 Following a pattern that we have seen in the conversations with the Jews after the Temple cleansing (2:20, where see note), with Nicodemus
(3:4) and with the woman (v. 15), the disciples misunderstand Jesus by taking his words in a literal and material fashion. Their question expects the answer, "No." "Surely no one has brought him anything to eat?" But the point is that they are thinking only in terms of material food. However, their complete misunderstanding opens up the way for Jesus to teach them valuable truths.

34 "My" is emphatic. Whatever be the case with others, Jesus' food is to do the divine will. The words are eloquent of a sense of mission and devotion. They speak, too, of the satisfaction it was to the Son to do the will of the Father. Notice that God is characterized as "him who sent me" (as often in this Gospel). The work that Jesus did was no mere human work. It was that of one sent by God. Quite often in this Gospel Jesus declares that the work he does is that which the Father has for him to do (e.g., 5:30; 6:38; 7:18; 8:50; 9:4; 10:37-38; 12:49, 50; 14:31; 15:10; 17:4). Obedience to the divine will is for him the major concern. Single-mindedly he presses on. Here he adds the thought of "finishing" his work (for "work" see Additional Note G, pp. 607-13). The verb is cognate with that used on the cross, when Jesus cried, "It is finished" (19:30). It reminds us of the awful cost of that work, and underlines the devotion implied in the expression. There is a sense in which each stage of his work may be regarded as perfect and complete. And there is a deeper sense in which nothing is complete without the cross.

35 It is not easy to interpret the saying Jesus quotes. "You" is emphatic, which shows that it is not a saying of his. At first sight we would take it for a proverb. It is objected that such a proverb is nowhere attested, and that in fact it takes longer than four months for a harvest to ripen in Palestine. Accordingly the suggestion is made that Jesus is referring to a chance remark of the disciples as they looked at the fields green with the crops in their early stages. But it is even more difficult to think of this incident as taking place four months before harvest. Jesus' request for water points to a time of heat. Moreover, four months before harvest there would be plenty of surface water. A weary traveler would not depend on the charity of a chance acquaintance. A proverbial saying is rendered more likely in that the introduction "Do you not say" is not suited to a casual remark about the state of the crops. It is favored also by the metrical form of the saying. Its lack of attestation may be due to a rustic provenance. How many literary people today can cite all the rural adages now current?
Modern rural sayings exist that are not embodied in formal literary works, and we have no reason for thinking it was otherwise in the first century. There is evidence, moreover, that the agricultural year was divided into six two-month periods, seedtime, winter, spring, harvest, summer, and the time of extreme heat. Thus four months elapsed between the end of seedtime and the beginning of harvest. This might well have given rise to a proverbial saying indicating that there is no hurry for a particular task. The seed may be planted, but there is no way of getting around the months of waiting. Growth is slow and cannot be hurried. But Jesus did not share this view when applied to spiritual things. He had an urgent sense of mission and these words convey something of it to the disciples. They must not lazily relax, comfortable in the thought that there is no need to bestir themselves. The fields are even now ready for harvest. There may even be the thought that in the kind of harvest in which they were engaged (unlike those on farms and the like) there is no necessary interval between sowing and reaping. The disciples must acquire a sense of urgency in their task. 

"Even now" should probably be taken with this verse rather than the preceding (as KJV, "white already to harvest"). Already the man who is keen and active in his reaping is receiving his wage. Since payment was commonly made only for work completed, (or at least with a stage completed) this indicates something of the urgency of the task confronting the disciples. They must not delay when others are so far ahead of them that they are already receiving wages. Just who these reapers are is not said, and it is difficult to identify them. Perhaps Jesus does not mean that others are actually at work, but is simply continuing the thought of the previous verse. The harvest is ready. The wages are there. Let no one hang back. A harvest will not wait; unless it is reaped while it is ripe it will spoil and there will be no harvest.

Jesus is not thinking only of the wages. The reaper "harvests the crop for eternal life." Anyone who wins souls for Christ is at work on something with lasting consequences; this work is for eternity. The reaper is not in any way competing with the sower; in fact, he is cooperating with the sower, for reaping is simply completing the work that sowing commenced. So it is that the sower and the reaper rejoice together. Sometimes when there is a distinction between the sower and the reaper the thought is that the sower has lost all his labor (e.g., Deut. 28:33; Judg. 6:3; Mic. 6:15). But here there is cooperation. Sowing was hard and wearisome work, and it could be
contrasted with reaping, which, though also hard, was joyful (Ps. 126:5-6). But here the interval between seedtime and harvest is done away (cf. Amos 9:13). Sower and reaper rejoice together.

37-38 Another proverb is pressed into service. In farming, while it is usually the case that the sower looks forward to reaping, it also sometimes happens, as we have just seen, that "one sows and another reaps." This is also true in a wide variety of situations outside agriculture, not least in the field of Christian service. It must almost always be the case that those who reap precious souls profit from the work of those who have been before them. Each Christian worker is dependent for success on the labors of predecessors. This general truth is clear enough. But its detailed application is not so clear. One difficulty concerns the particular reaping Jesus had in mind. One would most naturally take it to refer to what the disciples were then doing, but the trouble is that they are not represented as doing anything at all about the reception of the Samaritans. Perhaps they did something that is not recorded. Or Jesus may be referring to such activities as those recorded in verse 2.

Again, the meaning of "others" is not clear. It may be that the plural is not meant to be significant and that Jesus refers to himself only. If the saying refers only to the contemporary scene the "others" will be Jesus and the woman. J. A. T. Robinson has argued, convincingly to my mind, that the reference is primarily to the work of John the Baptist and his followers. Their work in this very area had prepared the way for Jesus and his band. Another possibility is that the labors of the prophets in days of old and of people like John the Baptist in more recent times are taken together as the basis for the work of the disciples. What is clear is that Jesus expected them to be reapers. The time spent with him was not only a time of training. It was a time in which they were meant to be rendering significant service.

The Christian will necessarily read this saying in the light of the cross. It was there, above all, that Christ sowed the seed (cf. 12:24). It is only because he so sowed the seed that eternal life may be reaped by anyone.

7. Samaritan Believers (4:39-42)

39 Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me everything I ever did." 40 So
when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days. 41 And because of his words many more became believers. 42 They said to the woman, "We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world."

John rounds off the section dealing with the Samaritans with a short statement of the woman's witness and of Jesus' brief stay. There is a magnificent climax as the Samaritan believers acclaim Jesus as "the Savior of the world."

39 For "believed in him" see on 1:12, and for "testimony" on 1:7. Because the woman bore her testimony to Jesus faith was enkindled within the Samaritans. Many came to believe. The particular words that impressed them form a pardonable overstatement, but they certainly indicate that Jesus' unexpected knowledge of the intimate details of the woman's life had made a profound impression on her. Through her it was passed on to others. 95 It is an example of John's irony that he lets the words that reflect such a limited conception of messiahship pass, without drawing attention to what is really involved (cf. vv. 31ff.).

40 The new believers did not part readily with their newfound Lord. They pressed Jesus to remain with them ("urged" is in a continuous tense: they kept on asking him). Nor was their insistence without result. Jesus stayed with them for two days.

41-42 The result of this stay was an increase in the number of followers of Jesus. The absolute use of the verb "believe" is significant; so fundamental to Christianity is faith that it is not necessary to specify the object (see further Additional Note E, pp. 296-98). "His words" here means some-thing very much like "the gospel" (as in Mark 2:2). It is the whole message for which Jesus stands. Even in the case of those who believed because they heard Jesus for themselves there was some influence stemming from the woman as their "no longer" indicates. They had been impressed by what she had said, though their faith was not fully formed. The woman might introduce them to Jesus, but faith is not faith as long as it rests on the testimony of another. There must be personal knowledge of Christ if there is to be an authentic Christian experience. The incident forms something of an exemplification of Jesus' words in verses 37-38.
Their belief about Jesus is crystallized in the expression "the Savior of the world" (for "world" see Additional Note B, pp. 111-13, and for Jesus' messiahship see on 1:41). This expression occurs again in 1 John 4:14 and nowhere else in the New Testament. The word "Savior" is applied to the Father (Luke 1:47; 1 Tim. 1:1, etc.) as well as to the Son, though John never uses it outside the passages mentioned. It is used in the Septuagint of God the Father. Secular Greek writers employ it of a multitude of deities.98 "Savior" is a very general word, but it certainly contains the idea of deliverance, of saving from serious disaster. Jesus is more than our perfect example.99 He really saves. The addition "of the world" elevates the title to one of infinite grandeur. Jesus is not concerned with petty, minor issues. Nor is he the Savior of a few unimportant individuals. He is the Savior of the world.100 Newbigin has an apt comment: "And so what was hidden from the wise and understanding Nicodemus is revealed to these spiritual babes, and while scribes and Pharisees stand aside, the pagan world flocks into the kingdom."

**INTERLUDE IN GALILEE (4:43-45)**

43 After the two days he left for Galilee. 44 (Now Jesus himself had pointed out that a prophet has no honor in his own country.) 45 When he arrived in Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him. They had seen all that he had done in Jerusalem at the Passover Feast, for they also had been there.

The scene of action shifts to Galilee, and John inserts a verse or two to explain this. He brings out two points: the one that a prophet is not honored in his own land, the other that the Galileans who had been in Jerusalem at the feast gave Jesus a welcome.

43-44 These two verses are joined by "for" (NIV has "Now"), but it is not easy to understand how the second gives the reason for the first. Verse 43 simply tells of the completion of Jesus' brief ministry in Samaria and the resumption of his journey to Galilee (cf. v. 3). The saying about a prophet being without acceptance in his own country is reported in all three Synoptists (Matt. 13:57; Mark 6:4; Luke 4:24), and in connection with Jesus' visit to Nazareth.101 Perhaps the "for" is meant to indicate that Jesus
must show that this is, indeed, the case. He had come unto his own, not under a delusion that he would be welcomed, but knowing full well that he must expect rejection. This would not take him by surprise, for it was in the divine plan. So, to fulfill all this implies he went to Galilee.

Some, it is true, argue that "his own country" refers to Judea, which he was just leaving. "Both by fact and the current interpretation of prophecy, Judaea alone could receive that title" (Westcott). Similarly Hoskyns maintains that Jerusalem was the home of every Jew; preeminently must it be so in the case of the Messiah. It is often added that only this interpretation accords with the circumstances. Jesus had been rejected in Judea, his own country, so he turned to another region, Galilee. Against this is the fact that the reason given for his leaving Judea was not failure but success (v. 1). Moreover, John nowhere indicates that Jesus is "of Judea," whereas several times he links him with Galilee where he had been brought up (2:1; 7:3,41,52, and especially 1:46; 19:19). This agrees with the witness of the Synoptists. It is also the case that if Judea were meant the words ought to be found when Jesus left that part of the country and not between his Samaritan and Galilean visits. Brown makes the further point that "there is an implication in this explanation that Jesus was disappointed with the reception he had received in Judea and had come back to Galilee to be accorded the honor denied him in Judea. Such a search for human praise is abhorrent to the ideals of the Fourth Gospel (II 24-25, v 41-44)." R. H. Lightfoot argues powerfully that heaven is meant. He asks, "Does not St. John perhaps wish to teach that, if the Lord's patris is sought anywhere on earth, nowhere does He receive the honour due to Him, even as a prophet? For He is not of this world (8:23) and His patris is in heaven." This view is much to be preferred to that which sees John as locating Jesus in Judea. But his earthly patris is surely Galilee, where he had lived almost all his life.

When he reached Galilee Jesus was welcomed by the Galileans. Large numbers of them habitually went up to Jerusalem at the feasts, and some had been there for the events narrated in 2:13-25. "The Passover feast" (John says only "the feast," but the Passover is surely meant) is the one mentioned in that passage. Once again we are reminded that Jesus did many things that are not recorded. He cleansed the Temple, but the record is in-complete, as 2:23 plainly shows. It is not John's purpose to attempt a complete chronicle, but only to select such events and teachings as will
bring out his thesis that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God (20:31). So now he does not mention what the things were that so impressed the Galileans, but contents himself with pointing out that their attitude to Jesus was conditioned by what they had seen in Jerusalem. This is not quite what we would have expected after the words about a prophet having no honor (v. 44). This is probably another example of the Evangelist's irony. He does not stay to explain that the enthusiasm of the Galileans was not soundly based. It was dependent on the wonder arising from their sight of the signs, not on a realization that Jesus was indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world. Their very acceptance of him was thus in its way a rejection. They gave him honor of a sort, but it was not the honor that was due to him.  

G. THE SECOND SIGN — HEALING THE NOBLEMAN'S SON (4:46-54)

46Once more he visited Cana in Galilee, where he had turned the water into wine. And there was a certain royal official whose son lay sick at Capernaum. 47When this man heard that Jesus had arrived in Galilee from Judea, he went to him and begged him to come and heal his son, who was close to death. 48"Unless you people see miraculous signs and wonders," Jesus told him, "you will never believe." 49The royal official said, "Sir, come down before my child dies." 50Jesus replied, "You may go. Your son will live." The man took Jesus at his word and departed. 51While he was still on the way, his servants met him with the news that his boy was living. 52When he inquired as to the time when his son got better, they said to him, "The fever left him yesterday at the seventh hour." 53Then the father realized that this was the exact time at which Jesus had said to him, "Your son will live." So he and all his household believed. 54This was the second miraculous sign that Jesus performed, having come from Judea to Galilee.

The second sign of which John gives a report is a miracle of healing. It has some interesting features, notably that it is a case of healing at a distance. Jesus spoke the healing word in Cana and the boy was cured at Capernaum. It is quite in John's manner that the wonderful happening is spoken of as eliciting faith (v. 53). It is a "sign" that effects the divine purpose. The
Synoptists relate two healings at a distance, that of the centurion's slave, (Matt. 8:5-13; Luke 7:2-10) and that of the Syrophoenician woman's daughter (Matt. 15:21-28; Mark 7:24-30). Some exegetes have held that this is a variant of the story of the healing of the centurion's slave but about the only things in common are some interesting verbal parallels (noted, e.g., by Barrett and Hoskyns), and the healing at a distance. There the man is a centurion and thus a Gentile, here he is in Herod's service and probably a Jew; there the person healed is a slave, here a son; there Jesus speaks his word of power in Capernaum, here in Cana; there the centurion's faith evokes Jesus' praise, here the father's faith is weak; there the centurion asks Jesus not to come to his home, here the father begs him to come. There the illness is paralysis, here a fever. There the elders plead for the man, here he pleads in person. This story takes place just after Jesus' return from Judea, which is evidently much later. The most notable difference, perhaps, is in the attitude of the man seeking healing. In the Synoptists when Jesus proposes going to his home, the centurion strongly opposes the idea and utters his notable words about his giving of commands and having them carried out without being present, whereas here the man asks Jesus to come to his home and when Jesus makes a comment without indicating a move he utters a peremptory "Sir, come down. . . ." The two attitudes are very different. Despite the verbal parallels the two stories are distinct.

46 In Galilee Jesus made his way once more to Cana (see on 2:1). The statement that it was "where he had turned the water into wine" is a further indication that John means the earlier narrative to be taken as fact, and not simply as an allegory constructed to convey helpful spiritual truths. "Royal official" denotes one of the king's officers. He would have been an official attached to Herod's court. Evidently he had heard of the previous "sign" at Cana, so that when his son became ill with a fever (v. 52) he sought Jesus out.

47 The officer heard of Jesus' arrival and went to him. "Begged" is in a continuous tense, conveying the thought of a persistent request. The man's need was urgent. He pressed his plea. John makes the situation quite plain by telling us that the boy was "close to death." "Come" is really "come down" and is a minor mark of accuracy. Cana was on high ground, Capernaum by the lake.

48 Jesus' reply at first sounds rather harsh. But it is addressed to a wider audience than the officer, as the plural "you people" indicates. It is
not so much Jesus' answer to the nobleman's request as "a reflection which He makes on the occasion of that request" (Godet). This is the typical attitude of the Galileans. "Signs" (see on 2:11 and Additional Note G, pp. 607-13) is a usual word in this Gospel for Jesus' miracles and a word that brings out the truth that these miracles have meaning. They point people to God. In this context, however, that thought is not prominent. Here the word means little more than "miracles" (NIV inserts "miraculous" to make this clear), while "wonders" directs attention to the sheerly miraculous. The word denotes a portent, something beyond explanation, at which people can only marvel. Jesus is affirming that people such as the man who had come to him were lacking in that deep trustful attachment which is of the essence of faith. They looked for the spectacular, and sought him out only because they loved the sensational. "Never" renders an emphatic double negative. For the people of which he speaks, signs and wonders are an absolute necessity. In this Gospel it is clear that Jesus accepted people who came only because of the miracles (cf. 6:26; 14:11). But such faith is not the highest kind of faith (cf. 2:23-24).

49 The nobleman's deep concern comes out in this plea. He does not defend himself. He does not argue. He simply urges Jesus to do something before the child dies. The word for "child" is not that used in verses 46 and 47, but a term expressive of affection (Barclay, "my little lad"). The father is so deeply anxious for the welfare of his son that no other consideration weighs with him.

50 Jesus' reply must have been totally unexpected. The man had been urging him to come down to Capernaum, evidently thinking that the Master's presence was necessary if he was to perform a cure (contrast the centurion of Matt. 8:5ff. who asked Jesus not to come to his house, since he could easily heal without doing so). Jesus' words impose a stiff test. He gives the man no sign. The officer has nothing but Jesus' bare word. But this is enough and he rises to the implied demand for faith. He believes what Jesus says and goes his way.

51-53 As he journeyed his slaves (this is the meaning of "servants") met him with the good news that the lad was well. On inquiring when the boy "got better" he was given a precise time: "yesterday at the seventh hour." This presents us with something of a difficulty. If John is using the normal method of computing time this will be about one o'clock.
in the afternoon. But since it is only twenty miles or so between Cana and Capernaum many feel that it is unlikely that the officer would still be on his way as late as this. They suggest accordingly that John was using the alleged Roman time system so that the time meant is 7 p.m. If the man reached Jesus at such a time he might well delay his return until the next day, but, they ask, Why would he do this if the encounter took place in the early afternoon? This suggestion has its attractions, but there are strong objections to the view that John ever uses the "Roman" system (see on 1:39). In the present case the man is expressly said to have believed Jesus, so that his anxiety was relieved and he may have been in no hurry to return. Practical considerations may also have weighed with him, such as the need to rest his horse (he would certainly have ridden the animal hard on the way to Jesus). Or the delay may have been accidental. In any case sunset would bring him into a new day, though admittedly "yesterday" would sound a little strange if used in the evening of an event that had occurred around midday.

At any rate the statement of the time coincided with the time when Jesus had told the nobleman that his son lived. This is the third time that we have been told that the boy "lives." John does not let his readers miss the emphasis on Me, that life which Jesus gives. The slaves' words were sufficient to cause the nobleman and his house to believe. In verse 50 this verb had been used of giving credence to Jesus' words (NTV translates, "took Jesus at his word"). Here it is used in the sense of becoming a Christian. Previously the man had known enough about Jesus to regard him as a talented wonder-worker. But the "sign" pointed him beyond that. He plainly saw the hand of God in it, and his whole attitude was modified accordingly. He became a believer. The "sign" transformed his faith into a greater faith.

This cannot mean the second of all Jesus' signs, for in 2:23 John has spoken of other signs. The sense is as Rieu renders it, "Thus once again Jesus wrought a miracle after leaving Judaea for Galilee." John has described two signs and both took place after a visit to Judea. Evidently he intends to link this sign with the preceding. In both cases there is divine power at work, but there is a progression. There there was a mighty miracle where Jesus was; here a healing at a distance. There there was a transformation in things (water into wine); here life is given to a boy as good as dead. See further Additional Note G, pp. 607-13.
In Greek writings generally the basic idea of truth is much like our own. It is truth as opposed to falsehood, reality as opposed to mere appearance. But in the New Testament the use of the term is complicated by the fact that it has imported some features from the Old Testament as well. There words like and refer to truth, but they also refer to faithfulness, reliability, trustworthiness, sureness, and the like. Especially are they used of God, and it is probably not too much to say that they derive part of their meaning from the connection with God. He may in fact be called "the God of truth" (Ps. 31:5; Isa. 65:16). Truth is characteristic of God, and it is only as we know God that we know truth. But we may know truth, for God has revealed it. Thus Jacob can speak of "all the kindness and faithfulness (or "truth") you have shown your servant" (Gen. 32:10). Such a prayer as "in your faithfulness (or 'truth') destroy them (i.e. my enemies)" (Ps. 54:5) is perplexing until we remember that truth includes the complete reliability and integrity of God. He will certainly act in accordance with the highest conceivable morality.

In the New Testament truth is associated with God (Rom. 3:7; 15:8). In a very interesting passage Paul refers to idolatry as exchanging the truth of God for a lie (Rom. 1:25), which makes truth very close to God's essential nature. Truth is also associated with Christ (2 Cor. 11:10), and significantly in the expression, "as truth is in Jesus" (Eph. 4:21). This is often misquoted as "the truth as it is in Jesus" (and even translated this way in REB; NIV has "the truth that is in Jesus"). But Paul is not talking about that aspect of truth which he finds in Jesus. He is saying that the very truth of God, truth itself, resides in him. It is but a step to what Christ has done, and so we read of "the truth of the gospel" (Gal. 2:5), while "the word of the truth" can be explained as "the gospel of your salvation" (Eph. 1:13). Many passages could be cited here. Now all this affects the conduct of the believer. "The belt of truth" is to be "buckled around your waist" (Eph. 6:14). Christians are to "keep the Festival" with "the bread of sincerity and truth" (1 Cor. 5:8). Truth is to be as characteristic of the saved as it is of the Savior.

The summit of this development is reached in the Fourth Gospel. Truth for John is a very important concept. He uses the noun ἀλήθεια 25 times, over against once in Matthew and 3 times each in Mark and Luke (Paul has it 47 times, and it is found 20 times in the Johannine Epistles). There is a
similar disparity with the adjectives ἀληθής (14 times in John, once each in Matthew and Mark, not in Luke, 4 times in Paul), and ἀληθινός (9 times in John, not in Matthew or Mark, once each in Luke and Paul). Plainly this concept matters to John.

Bultmann takes "the basic meaning of 'truth' in John" to be "God's reality, which, since God is the Creator, is the only true reality." Especially important is the fact that truth may be linked with Jesus. He is "full of grace and truth" (1:14), and the source of grace and truth to people (1:17). John the Baptist bore witness to the truth (5:33), and, since he is depicted simply as a witness to Jesus (see on 1:7), this may also link the truth closely with Jesus. The Master could say, "I am ... the truth" (14:6). "So truth is not the teaching about God transmitted by Jesus but is God's very reality revealing itself — occurring! — in Jesus." Truth understood in this way has a special connection with the cross. As the Gospel comes to its climax Pilate asks, "What is truth?" (18:38). No answer is given in words, but the Passion narrative gives the answer in deeds. As A. Corell puts it, "There can only be one meaning of ἀλήθεια in the Fourth Gospel: it is the truth about the death and resurrection of Jesus, to which witness is borne in 16.7 and 17.19. This is in accordance with the whole theology of the Fourth Gospel, the central point of which is the 'lifting-up' of Jesus." Truth as Jesus understood it was a costly affair.

All this has consequences for his people. "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free" (8:31-32). To know the truth is not to enter intellectual freedom as such, but it is to enter into the liberating experience of being disciples of the Lord, with all that that means in terms of freedom from sin and guilt, and of fellowship with and knowledge of God. Jesus is not describing truth as an ethical virtue or a philosophical concept. The thought is close to that of 17:3, which describes eternal life in terms of the "true" God and of Jesus Christ. We should probably consider here, too, the fact that "grace and truth came through Jesus Christ" (1:17), for this indicates a close link between truth and the gospel of God's grace. The whole of Jesus' ministry was exercised in order that he might bear witness to the truth (18:37; cf. 8:40, 45, 46; 16:7). By contrast the evil one does not stand in the truth, and, indeed, there is no truth in him (8:44).

Truth can be associated with the Spirit (who was to continue Christ's work). Indeed, this forms a distinctive feature of the teaching of this
Gospel. The Spirit is "the Spirit of truth" (14:17; 15:26; 16:13; John can even say, "the Spirit is the truth," 1 John 5:6). Part of the work of the Spirit is to guide people "into all the truth" (16:13).

So significant for believers is truth that they can be said to be "of the truth" (18:37; NIV, "on the side of truth"). Only those who are "of the truth" hear Christ's voice (18:37). They are sanctified "in the truth" (17:17; NIV, "by the truth"). Indeed, Christ's sanctification of himself (which most exegetes agree involves a reference to setting himself apart for a sacrificial death) was "that they too may be truly sanctified" (17:19). They "do" the truth (3:21, NIV "lives by the truth"); contrast 1 John 1:6). Truth is a quality of action, not simply an abstract concept. Believers worship "in spirit and truth" (4:23-24). So important is this that the Father seeks such worshipers (4:23). Worship must be in conformity with the divine reality as revealed in Jesus.

The connection with Jesus is essential to the idea of truth as we see it in this Gospel. It starts from the essential nature of God, it finds its expression in the gospel whereby God saves people, and it issues in lives founded on truth and showing forth truth.127

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1. See on 1:21 for John's use of οὖν. It is so much a mark of his style that we cannot insist on an inferential sense. It simply links this stage of the narrative loosely with the preceding.

2. ό Κύριος is read by ρ66 ρ75 A B C f13 syr5 co etc. NIV follows Ρ D Θ f1 syrC bo etc.


4. Westcott comments, "It is worthy of notice that St. John never notices (by name) the Sadducees or the Herodians. The Pharisees were the true representatives of the unbelieving nation."

5. This is John's only use of χαίτοιγε (a strengthened form of χαίτοι). See on 1:5 for his use of χαί in the same sense.
6. W. F. Flemington examines the doubt cast by some on the authenticity of this statement (The New Testament Doctrine of Baptism [London, 1948], pp. 30-31). He thinks the association of both Jesus and his disciples with the Baptist to be significant. The silence of the Synoptists is understandable for they have nothing to say about this early ministry in Judea, while John does not speak of such baptism as is here attested at any later period.

7. The imperfect tense may indicate the habitual practice. Cf. Barclay: "although it was not Jesus Himself who was in the habit of baptizing." Godet comments on the significance of Jesus' practice: "By baptizing, He attested the unity of His work with that of the forerunner. By not Himself baptizing, He made the superiority of His position above that of John the Baptist to be felt."

8. Calvin comments on the significance of baptism by Christian ministers: "He calls Christ's Baptism that which He administered by the hands of others, to teach us that Baptism is not to be valued from the person of the minister, but that its whole force depends on its author, in whose name and by whose command it is administered . . . our Baptism has no less efficacy to cleanse and renew us than if it had been given directly by the Son of God."

9. E. Stauffer even thinks that the Pharisees were friendly. They had never liked the Baptist, but they "could see an ally in Jesus, the man who observed the sabbath so conscientiously, and who enforced so strictly the prohibitions against carrying anything in the temple area; they spoke amongst themselves with satisfaction at his unparalleled success at his baptism ... to Jesus this was a sign that he should retire" (Jesus and His Story [London, 1960], pp. 62-63). But this seems to be an unlikely reading of the evidence.

10. The verb is ἀφίημι. Morgan comments: "We should not misinterpret the thought if we said He abandoned Judaea. He did go back, but very seldom. He had been to Judaea. He had gone to the Temple. He had exercised His ministry in the surrounding country with marvellous success; but hostility was stirring there, and He left Judaea; He broke with it." So also Plummer: "First the Temple, then Jerusalem, and now Judaea has to be abandoned, because He can win no welcome." Loyd moves on from this position to notice the relevance of Rom. 11:15, "the casting away of them is the reconciling of the world." Jesus goes to Galilee, and goes by way of Samaria. John's use of the verb is unusual in another respect. He employs it with the meaning "forgive" (relatively common elsewhere) only in 20:23 in the whole Gospel.


12. I cannot follow Cullmann when he asserts that this conversation is "concerned in the first instance with worship" (Early Christian Worship [London, 1954], p. 80), and in particular with baptism. The references to baptism he regards as "certain" (p. 84). It is much more probable that the living water refers to the Holy Spirit (7:38-39) and the life he brings. There is a reference to worship, but this is secondary, and in fact it is a result of the divine nature and activity.

13. Findlay appositely cites Ephraem the Syrian's summary of this incident: "Jesus came to the fountain as a hunter. ... He threw a grain before one pigeon that He might catch the whole flock. ... At the beginning of the conversation He did not make Himself known to her . . . but first she caught sight of a thirsty man, then a Jew, then a Rabbi, afterwards a prophet, last of all the Messiah. She tried to get the better of the thirsty man, she showed her dislike of the Jew, she heckled the Rabbi, she was swept off her feet by the prophet, and she adored the Christ" (Findlay, p. 61).

14. There is practically no mention of Samaria in the first two Gospels, but Luke speaks of a journey of Jesus through this region (Luke 9:51-52) and of the gratitude of the Samaritan leper (Luke 17:15-19), as well as recording the parable of the Good Samaritan. Both Luke and John were very sensitive to the place of the Gentiles, and it is significant that they record activities of Jesus in Samaria. For a very useful account of the Samaritans in general and of the references to them in this Gospel in particular see the article "Samaritan Studies" by J. Bowman, BJRL, 40 (1957-58), pp. 298-327; also Macdonald, The Theology of the Samaritans.
15. Morgan says, "Those of Judaea practically never travelled to Galilee through Samaria." He thinks that Jesus chose this road "as a protest against their reason for not taking it." This is attractive and may be right. But unfortunately Morgan cites no evidence that the Jews avoided Samaria as a general rule. That strict Jews did so is clear, but the general practice may not have been the same. Less fussy people may not have been prepared to go the extra miles involved. See the next note.

16. Josephus says that it was the custom of the Galileans to pass through Samaria when they went up to Jerusalem for the feasts (Ant. 20.118).

17. Something of the feeling between the two groups may be gauged from the words of Ben Sira: "With two nations my soul is vexed, and the third is no nation; those who live on Mount Seir, and the Philistines, and the foolish people that dwell in Shechem" (Sir. 50:25-26).

18. Biblical Shechem is the modern Balata, near Nablus. Some scholars hold that Sychar was really Shechem, Sychar being a mocking corruption, meaning either "drunken-town" (ܢܲܲܥܪܐ) or "lying-town" (ܢܲܟܪܐ). Against this are the facts that (a) we know of nothing to justify either title, and (b) from early times Sychar has been distinguished from Shechem. W. F. Albright argues that the town was Shechem and that the corruption into Sychar was accidental (so also Brown). He regards the evidence of the Old Syriac as significant and accounts for the differentiation between the two places by the fact that Shechem was destroyed C. A.D. 67 and rebuilt a few miles away under the name Neapolis (corrupted to the modern Nablus). See The Archaeology of Palestine (Harmondsworth, 1949), pp. 247-48; BNT, p. 160. R. D. Potter favors Askar. Of the topographical references in this chapter he says, "No passage could show better that our author knew this bit of Samaria well" (SE, I, p. 331). The Westminster Historical Atlas, opposite "Sychar," has "Askar?" On the whole it seems that Askar is the most probable site.

19. πηγή. The other word is φρέαρ. On the difference between the two Loyd comments: "A spring is a God-given thing. God creates the spring; man only digs the well, It is a curiosity that such a deep well should have been dug in a country where there are many springs.(Godet says that there are as many as eighty springs in the region.) The well must originally have been well over a hundred feet deep, so that digging and lining it was no small task. This has been worked into an argument that the well really was dug by Jacob. Only "a stranger in the land" would have gone to all the trouble to construct such a well in a land as plentifully endowed with springs! Many commentators give the depth of the well as about seventy-five feet, but according to Hendriksen a great deal of debris has been cleaned out and the well restored to its original depth.

20. Any band of travelers would probably have an άντλημα or skin bucket for drawing water. But in this case the disciples would have had it with them.

21. Yet the rabbinic attitude to talking with women was very strict. See on v. 27.

22. The verb συγχράομαι has traditionally been understood in the sense "to have familiar intercourse with." However, D. Daube has shown that this sense is not found elsewhere and that it is highly unlikely in the present passage (JBL, LXIX [1950], pp. 137-47). The verb means properly "to use with," and this appears to be the meaning in the present passage. Jews do not use (utensils) with Samaritans. This was built into a regulation in A.D. 65 or 66: "The daughters of the Samaritans are (deemed unclean as) menstruants from their cradle" (Mishnah, Nidd. 4:1); in other words, they are all regarded as ceremonially unclean. Barrett has difficulty with the date of promulgation, but such regulations do not spring from thin air, and the saying before us indicates that there must have been widespread scruples in Jesus' time. D. R. Hall examines and rejects Daube's view in favor of "have dealings with, associate on friendly terms with τινι someone" (ExT, LXXXIII [1971-72], pp. 56-57). Like most who object to Daube's view he takes no notice of the fact that the disciples were at that moment having dealings with Samaritans.

It is, however, difficult to be sure of exactly how Jews viewed Samaritans. On the one hand, if three men eat together we are told that they must say the Common Grace and that a Samaritan may be included in the number (Ber. 7:1). Similarly, "They may answer 'Amen' after an Israelite who says a Benediction, but not after a Samaritan until they have heard the whole Benediction" (Ber. 8:8). This
presupposes that Jews and Samaritans eat together. Samaritans and the 'Am-ha'aretz are classed together as distinct from Gentiles, even if not completely acceptable (Dem. 3:4). On the other hand, R. Eliezer used to say: "He that eats the bread of the Samaritans is like to one that eats the flesh of swine" (Sheb. 8:10). Again, Samaritans may offer free will offerings, but not any statutory offering (Shek. 1:5); and further, "No writ is valid which has a Samaritan as witness excepting a writ of divorce or a writ of emancipation" (Git. 1:5). Danby summarizes the complicated situation: "(a) a Samaritan conveys uncleanness by what he lies, sits, or rides on, by his spittle (including the phlegm of his lungs, throat, or nose) and by his urine; and (b) the daughters of the Samaritans even from their cradles (convey uncleanness in like manner), as do the gentiles" (Danby, p. 803; see also SBk, I, pp. 538-60).

23. τροφάς. This is the only place in the New Testament where the word is used in the plural, though the singular is common. We cannot conclude from the fact that the disciples were buying food that the laws about uncleanness were being disregarded, for certain dry foods did not convey defilement. It was otherwise with water and wet foods.

24. δωρεά. The accusative δωρεάν occurs elsewhere as an adverb with the meaning "freely," but this is the only place in any of the Gospels where the noun occurs in the sense "free gift."

25. Cf. Stauffer, "The spiritual man understands the wisdom of God's way, he recognizes the hidden plan of salvation which comes to its climax in the cross, and he lays hold of the beneficia of God (1 Cor. 2:1-16; John 4:10)" (NTT. p. 173). But the woman was not in this sense "spiritual."

26. For the rabbinic use see SBk, II, pp. 433-36. The rabbis sometimes refer to the Holy Spirit when they use "water" metaphorically, but more often they mean the Torah.

27. Actually we sometimes come quite close to it in the Old Testament; for example "The law of the wise is a fountain of life" (Prov. 13:14); "The words of a man's mouth are as deep waters; the wellspring of wisdom is as a flowing brook" (Prov. 18:4). Macdonald informs us that "living water" is common in a sense like that in John in Samaritan writers (The Theology of the Samaritans, p. 425).

28. Cf. the Qumran teaching, "Like purifying waters He will sprinkle upon him the spirit of truth" (1QS 4:21).

29. FG, pp. 149-69. Some of the passages are striking, for example "And speaking waters . . . drew near my lips from the. fountain of the Lord . . . plenteously. And I drank and was inebriated with living water that doth not die" (Od, Sol. 9:6 7, FG, p. 156). The Qumran covenanters say explicitly, "The well is the law," but they add, "and those who dug it are the captivity of Israel, who went out from the land of Judah and sojourned in the land of Damascus" (DSS, p. 353). They also speak of apostates who "departed from the well of living water" (DSS, p. 356). R. E. Brown can say, "For Qumran the water of life comes from the community's discipline and lore; for John it is given by Christ to those who believe in him" (SNT, p. 200).

30. Water was widely connected with life in antiquity, and this is rooted in the very language. Thus ἀλίβας, "a dead body," was apparently derived from ἀ-privative and λιβάς, "a stream," "water" (see LS), while σκέλετος, "skeleton," has the notion of "dried up" (cf. σκέλλω, "to parch"). Jesus' symbolism is very natural and would have a wide appeal.

31. The word is φρέαρ, a change from πηγή in v. 6 There is a similar change in Gen. 16:7, 14, where the source of water is first called "a spring" and then "the well." So also with Gen. 24:11, 13, 16 where we have "well," "spring," "spring." In all these passages where NFV has "spring" LXX has πηγή, and where NIV has "well" LXX has φρέαρ, the same two Greek words as in our passage.

32. Josephus tells us that the Samaritans claimed to be descended from Joseph, through Ephraim and Manasseh (Ant. 11.341). Jesus, however, referred to the Samaritan leper as ἄλλογενής, "foreigner" (Luke 17:18). Yet it should not be overlooked that neither here nor in v. 20 where the woman refers to "our fathers" does Jesus deny the claim as he does that of the Jews in 8:39ff. Odeberg comments: "The Samaritan woman, who is ready, seemingly to desert her traditional religion (vs. 15b), is in reality faithful toward the element of truth received from the fathers, whereas the Jews, who were apparently unswervingloyal to the inheritance from their father Abraham and
to the Tora of Moses, in opposition to the demands of J [i.e. Jesus], had already severed themselves spiritually and intrinsically from the way of Abraham and the Tora of Moses" (FG, pp. 178-79). On the appeal to a great one of the past Ryle pungently remarks, "Dead teachers have always more authority than living ones" (on 6:31).

33. Barrett. MacGregor thinks that the woman came to this well, "Possibly because of 'the fondness of tradition which... drew Jacob's fanatic children to its scantier supplies' (G. A. Smith, p. 374); for the same reason, John may have felt, that men cling to dead ritual when they might draw from the Spirit of the living Christ" (on v. 7).

34. Note the contrast between the present participle, πας ὁ πίνων ("everyone who drinks continually"), and the aorist subjunctive, δς δ'αν πίη ("whoever has drunk once for all"). Abbott sees the contrast between "the multitude of those that go wrong" and "the individual that goes right" (2574).

35. They will not thirst εις τόν αἰώνα, an expression that John uses 12 times, which is more than anyone else in the New Testament (next is 8 times in Hebrews).

36. Calvin notes that this does not exclude a legitimate thirsting after God: "Christ's words do not contradict the fact that believers to the very end of their lives ardently desire more abundant grace. For He does not mean that we drink so that we are fully satisfied from the very first day, but only that the Holy Spirit is a constantly flowing well. So there is no danger of those who are renewed by spiritual grace becoming dry."

37. On the contrast between φρέαρ and πηγή Strachan comments: "A contrast is intended which goes deeper than the natural one between 'spring' and 'pit'. It is between the 'water of life', and the human labour that is spent on conserving it by means of traditional institutions." R. H. Lightfoot asks, "Is it possible, therefore, that in St. John's thought Jacob's Well can be described by the more living word until the coming of the Lord, but that with His arrival it becomes no better than a cistern, in contrast to the fount of springing water which His coming brings?"

38. The verb is βλλομαι, which does not appear to be used elsewhere of the action of water. There may be the thought of the Spirit as working violently within a person.

39. Temple, however, finds a logical sequence. He connects Jesus' words with the woman's request for the water for her own convenience (v. 15): "But the gift of God (10) cannot be received to be merely enjoyed. It must always be shared... If we are not sharing with others the gift of God, that is proof that we have not received it. So the Lord tells this woman to call the person with whom she would naturally share first."

40. Although the woman had said, Ούκ έχω ανδρα, Jesus reports her words as Άνδρα ούχ έχω, thus putting the emphasis on ανδρα. Similarly πέντε is stressed.

41. A woman could not divorce her husband in Jewish law. But under certain circumstances she could approach the court, which would, if it thought fit, compel the husband to divorce her (see, for example, Mishnah, Ket. 7:9, 10). Or she might pay him or render services to induce him to divorce her (Git. 7:5, 6). In theory there was no limit to the number of marriages that might be contracted after valid divorces, but the rabbis regarded two, or at the most three, marriages as the maximum for a woman (SBk, II, p. 437).

42. Similar to this passage are those telling us that Jesus knew that Lazarus was dead (11:14), and that Peter would deny him (13:38). Not very different is his foreknowledge of the feeding of the multitude (6:6) and of what would befall him after he was arrested (18:4). He knew the truth of witness borne of him (5:32). He knew his sheep (10:14, 27). He knew who did not believe and who would betray him, and he knew this "from the beginning" (6:64). He knew the extent of the Father's gift to him (13:3). Above all, he had such a knowledge of the Father as no one else had or could have (7:29; 8:55; 10:15; 17:25). Plainly the knowledge John attributes to Jesus is part of the way in which he shows us the divine Christ.

43. Cf. Wright: "What, therefore, the Evangelist wishes to say here, is to remind his readers of the 'religious adultery' of Samaria's past, personified in this 'woman of Samaria,' and of the 'irregular'
union of Samaria in the time of our Lord to the service and worship of Jehovah." J. Estlin Carpenter
thinks that "the figure may outwardly imply the supernatural knowledge of the Incarnate Son; but
inwardly it points (as has long been recognised) to the gods brought by the five groups of settlers
transported from Mesopotamia by the Assyrian conquerors." He rejects the reference of "the
contemporary who was no true husband" to Yahweh, and favors "some representative of false
teaching." As possible candidates he nominates Dositheus (mentioned by Jerome) and Simon Magus
(The Johannine Writings [London, 1927], p. 245). Augustine reports that some interpret the passage
of the five books of Moses; he himself understands it of the five senses of the body (15.21; p. 104).

44. It is often said that Josephus refers to the number of gods as five, but this is not so. He says
that there were five tribes and that each brought its own god (Ant. 9.288). It might be inferred that
there were five gods, but Josephus does not say so. We could draw the same inference from 2 Kings
17:29, but when we turn to v. 30 we find not five gods, but seven. This kind of inference is
precarious.

45. Abbott says that τοῦτο ἁληθές εἴρηκας is quite different from τοῦτο ἁληθώς εἴρηκας. The
latter might mean, "Truly, i.e. in truth, thou hast said this," or "Thou hast said this truly, i.e. with
truth." John's expression, however, means "This, at all events, among all that thou hast said, is true"
— implying that hitherto the woman has talked in a reckless and trifling way" (1894).

46. In these verses the verb προσκυνέω is used absolutely (v. 20), with the dative (vv. 21, 23)
and with the accusative (v. 23; this is unusual). It seems that these variations are stylistic only. Abbott
thinks that there is a difference between the last two, the construction with the dative signifying
prostration (before God or people), bowing down to, and that with the accusative indicating
adoration, the worship proper to God alone (Johannine Vocabulary [London, 1905], 1640-51).
Moulton also sees a distinction (M, I, p. 66). But few recent writers agree. In view of John's habit of
introducing slight variations without distinction of meaning (see on 3:5) the differences should not be
pressed.

47. It is usually accepted that MT is correct in reading "Mount Ebal," and that the Samaritans
altered the text to suit their own purposes. This may well be the case. But the possibility that the
alteration was made by Jews should not be overlooked. If Gerizim were original, it might well have
been altered by Jews as part of an anti-Samaritan polemic.

48. The Samaritans thought there were thirteen different names for their holy mountain. Where
any of them occurs in Scripture they applied the passage to Gerizim. See J. Macdonald, The
Theology of the Samaritans, pp. 327-33, for Samaritan views about Gerizim.

49. The feelings aroused by the controversy may be gauged from the following incident: "R.
Ishmael b. Jose was going up to Jerusalem to pray. He was walking past a plane tree (by Gerizim)
where a Samaritan found him. He said to him, 'Where are you going?' He answered, 'I am going up
to Jerusalem to pray.' The former said, 'Would it not be better for you to pray in this blessed mountain
rather than in that dunghill?' " (SBk, I, p. 549).

50. SBk cites a midrash on Ps. 91: "He who prays in Jerusalem is as one who prays before the
throne of glory; for there is the gate of heaven and the open door to the hearing of prayer" (Π, p.
437).

51. Cf. Calvin, "we are not to essay anything in religion rashly or unthinkingly. For unless there
is knowledge present, it is not God that we worship but a spectre or ghost. Hence all so-called good
intentions are struck by this thunderbolt, which tells us that men can do nothing but err when they are
guided by their own opinion without the Word or command of God." On v. 20 he has said, "The
Samaritans took the example of the fathers as a precedent; the Jews were grounded on the
commandment of God."

52. Cf. Bernard, "Jesus, here, definitely associates Himself with the Jews; He is a Jew. Their
God is His God. Nowhere in the Gospels is there another passage so emphatic as this, in its assertion
of the common nationality of Jesus and the Jews who rejected Him." In passing we may notice that
John possibly recorded this saying with a certain form of heretical teaching in mind. Some held that
the God of the Old Testament was an inferior being. Jesus firmly accepts the Old Testament and rules out any such interpretation.

53. Murray thinks that the significance of this is that "In neither case did worship rise to the height of personal communion."

54. Cf. Lenski, "Though in the Greek abstract nouns may have the article as a matter of course, here 'the salvation' denotes the specific and only salvation contemplated in God's promises and to be realized in his incarnate Son. This salvation is in no way promised to the Samaritans, so that it would emanate from their midst, but to the Jews alone. The Messiah could not be a Samaritan, he had to be a Jew."

55. Cf. Westcott: "Worship is necessarily limited by the idea of the being worshipped. A true idea of God, even if still διά κατόπτρου, is essential to a right service of Him."

56. For άληθινός see on 1:9. On only two occasions in this Gospel does attributive άληθινός precede its noun, so it must be regarded as emphatic in those two places (here and at 17:3).

57. There is an ambiguity connected with τοιούτους. The meaning might be, "the Father seeks such to be his worshippers" or, "The Father seeks that his worshippers be such." Most authors take the former meaning, but Phillips translates, "Indeed, the Father looks for men who will worship Him like that."

58. For the unusual accusative after προσκυνέω see n. 46 above.

59. That God seeks people is a new and distinctively Christian idea. Cf. C. G. Montefiore's comment on the parable of the lost sheep: "The virtues of repentance are gloriously praised in the Rabbinical literature, but this direct search for, and appeal to, the sinner, are new and moving notes of high import and significance. The good shepherd who searches for the lost sheep, and reclaims it and rejoices over it, is a new figure" (The Synoptic Gospels, II [London, 1909], p. 985).

60. Cf. G. S. Hendry, "it has commonly been taken to mean that God, being Spirit, is present everywhere and can be worshiped anywhere; the important thing is not where men worship, but how they worship." This he vigorously denies. The saying "means the precise opposite; it means that God is present in his own realm, to which man as such has no access. To worship God in spirit is not a possibility that is always and everywhere open to man.... But this is just the gospel of Christ, that this possibility has now been opened to men. . . . The meaning is that the location has been redefined, and God is now to be worshiped in the place where he is present, i.e., in Him who is the truth incarnate" (The Holy Spirit in Christian Theology [London, 1957], pp. 31-32).

61. The Samaritan name for the Messiah was Taheb (תַּהְב), "He who returns" or "He who restores." According to Odeberg, "A prominent feature in the Taeb traditions was that the Redeemer, in accordance with Deut 18:18 would teach the faithful concerning all things" (FG, p. 183). Dodd reminds us that we should not build too much on this figure, for our information about him is late and we do not know whether or not the Taheb was known in New Testament times (IFG, p. 240, n. 2). But Josephus recounts an incident wherein a man gathered armed men to Mt. Gerizim, saying that he would show them sacred vessels hidden there by Moses (Ant. 18.85). This looks very much like messianic expectation during the New Testament period.

62. For the Messiah as a teacher cf. Enoch 49:3, and cf. SBk II, p. 438. "Everything" may refer to Deut. 18:18. This incidentally is John's only use of &πα.
63 There is no reason for thinking that Samaritan ideas of the Messiah were out
nationalistic aspects. But the Taheb was primarily a teacher, a restorer of true worship, a priest.
Macdonald says, "no king was looked for and no royal prerogatives" (The Theology of the
Samaritans, p. 362). Clearly to accept the title "Messiah" in Samaritan surroundings in a discussion
with a woman about worship was a very different matter from accepting the title among Jews.
64. E. Stauffer gives six reasons for affirming that Jesus' words are "to be understood as the
theophanic formula ANI HU" (Jesus and His Story [London, 1960], p. 152). He later says, "There is
no doubt that the evangelist wishes this to imply that Jesus pronounced the first significant, but as yet
half-veiled, words concerning the secret of his person not in Judea or Galilee, but on that occasion in
Samaria" (p. 153). Hamer is impressed by Stauffer's argument but sees a double meaning here: "On
the one hand it is used absolutely, but on the other hand it takes the word 'Christ' as an implied
predicate" (Hamer, p. 47).
65. C. K. Barrett insists that this Gospel is theocentric rather than christocentric. He concludes
an article with, "The figure of Jesus does not (so John in effect declares) make sense when viewed as
a national leader, a rabbi, or a θείος άνήρ; he makes sense when in hearing him you hear the Father,
when in looking at him you see the Father, and worship him" (Essays on John [London, 1982], p.
16).
66. The verb "were surprised" is θαυμάζω, which denotes "incredulous surprise" (MM).
67. SB k, II, p. 438. Nor was it only discourse in public places that was disountenanced.
"Jose b. Johanan of Jerusalem said: Let thy house be opened wide and let the needy be members of
thy household; and talk not much with womankind. They said this of a man's own wife: how much
more of his fellow's wife! Hence the Sages have said: He that talks much with womankind brings evil
upon himself and neglects the study of the Law and at the last will inherit Gehenna" (Ab. 1:5). R.
Jose the Galilean once asked a woman, "By what road do we go to Lydda?" only to be rebuked by
her: "Foolish Galilean, did not the Sages say this: Engage not in much talk with women? You should
have asked: By which to Lydda?" (Erub. 53b; Soncino trans., p. 374). Perhaps the greatest blot on
the rabbinic attitude to women was that, though the rabbis held the study of the Law to be the greatest
good in life, they discouraged women from studying it at all. When Ben Azzai suggested that women
be taught the Law for certain purposes R. Eliezer replied: "If any man gives his daughter a
knowledge of the Law it is as though he taught her lechery" (Sot. 3:4). The rabbis regarded women as
inferior to men in every way. A very ancient prayer (still found in the Jewish prayer book) runs,
"Blessed art thou, O Lord . . . who hast not made me a woman." The corresponding prayer for a
woman was "Blessed art thou, O Lord, who hast fashioned me according to thy will." Temple
comments, "If we now feel that the women had the best of the exchange, that is a Christian and not
an ancient Jewish sentiment!"
68. Barrett thinks the reason "presumably in order that Jesus might drink" (so Hendriksen and
others). This seems most unlikely. Hoskyns's view is better, namely that it was partly as I have
indicated and partly "in order to contrast her behaviour with that of the disciples (vv. 31-3). She went
as quickly as possible, unencumbered by having to carry a pot full of water on her head, and without
difficulty persuaded the Samaritans to come and see the man whom she had good reason to suppose
was the Christ." It is, of course, also possible that the woman had not yet filled the pot. She would
then leave it to save carrying it back and forth. But my point still stands. She abandoned the bringing
of water for the bringing of men. Temple comments: "The water-pot is a little bit of sheer realism. As
Scott Holland used to say 'You cannot allegorise that water-pot. It is a perfectly empty water-pot. No
one ever found the old Law at the bottom of it.'"
69. "And it is the nature of faith that we want to bring others to share eternal life with us when
we have become partakers of it. The knowledge of God cannot lie buried and inactive in our hearts
and not be made known to men. For that word must be true: 'I believed, and therefore will I speak'
(Ps. 116.10)" (Calvin).
70. That she should call Jesus "a man" is not remarkable. But John often uses ἄνθρωπος of Jesus, as in 5:12; 8:40; 9:11, 24; 10:33; 11:47, 50; 18:14, 17, 29; 19:5. He may wish to stress the real manhood of Jesus, to depict him as "the Man."

71. The question is introduced by μήτι. BDF gives the force of this as "that must be the Messiah at last, perhaps this is the Messiah" (427 [2]).

72. D. Gordon has a suggestive comment: "The disciples had just been down to the town — they who knew the Master much longer and better. They brought back some loaves. That was all. The woman went down; she brought back some men" (The Sychar Revival [London, n.d.], p. 25).

73. The words remind us of the temptation narrative, where Jesus refused to use his powers to satisfy his physical hunger. It is worth pointing out that John has parallels to the other two temptations also, namely Jesus' refusals to be made a king (6:15) and to do the kind of sign that his brothers demanded (7:3ff.). John does not have a specific temptation narrative, but he makes the point in his own way.

74. μεταξύ is not a common adverb, and may well be used to put some stress on the idea of the interval: "'During the interval' Jesus utters His doctrine about the interval between the sowing and the harvest" (Abbott, 2668).

75. The word is βρώσις. Strictly it denotes the process of eating, but here (and elsewhere in John) it is used in the sense of βρώμα (which occurs in v. 34), i.e., of food in general.

76. Augustine comments, "What wonder if that woman did not understand about the water? See; the disciples do not yet understand the meat" (15.31; p. 107).

77. They think also in terms of someone bringing him food. Their question throws light on Jesus' use of his miraculous powers. As Wright says, "It never entered their minds that He would or could work a 'miracle' in order to feed Himself; as, for example, that he could or would turn stones into bread." The miracles were never wrought for selfish ends.

78. Moulton cites this as one of his examples that "will show anyone who is free from predisposition that Iva can lose the last shred of purposive meaning" (Μ, I, p. 208).

79. "Jesus, whose hunger is to do the Father's will, sees the satisfaction of His hunger in the prospect of the universal Church foreshadowed by the conviction of the Samaritan woman. But His words are not only to be taken symbolically. Everyone knows how the enthusiasm of achievement can make a man rise superior to his bodily needs" (Bailey).

80. The verb used here is τελειόω and in 19:30, τελέω.

81. A rather similar expression is used to introduce a proverbial saying in Matt. 16:2. Knox translates here: "Is it not a saying of yours, It is four whole months before harvest comes?" In a footnote he comments, "this may have been a proverb, meaning that there was no hurry, like our 'Rome was not built in a day'". Cf. also Dodd: "That it is to be understood as a banal remark upon the time of the year (as many commentators have assumed, in their anxiety to discover data for a calendar of the Ministry of Jesus) if ind entirely incredible; such remarks did not find a place in the gospel tradition" (HTFG, p. 394).

82. See John Lightfoot, HHT, p. 277. He cites a Talmudic saying: "Half Tisri, all Marchesvan, and half Chisleu, is יָלָל the seed's time," and so on for the periods called "the winter," "the winter solstice," "the harvest," "the summer," and "the great heat." There is support for this also in the Gezer Calendar, our oldest Hebrew inscription. Between its "Two months of sowing" and its month for the general harvest it has "Two months of late sowing (or spring growth). Month of pulling flax. Month of barley harvest" (trans, by J. Mauchline, in Documents from Old Testament Times, ed. D. Winton Thomas [London, 1958], p. 201). Again there is a period of four months between the end of sowing and the beginning of harvest.

83. Calvin sees a hint "at how much more careful men's minds are for earthly things than for heavenly. For they are so consumed with looking for harvest that they carefully count up the months and days. But it is surprising how lazy they are in reaping the wheat of heaven."
84. The use of λευκαί is somewhat puzzling, for few crops are white at harvest time, and certainly not wheat (cf. "the golden grain"; Stauffer thinks that rye is meant, Jesus and His Story, p. 63). The expression clearly means "ready to reap." H. V. Morton tells of an incident at this spot: "as I sat by Jacob's Well a crowd of Arabs came along the road from the direction in which Jesus was looking, and I saw their white garments shining in the sun. Surely Jesus was speaking not of the earthly but of the heavenly harvest, and as He spoke I think it likely that He pointed along the road where the Samaritans in their white robes were assembling to hear His words" (In the Steps of the Master [London, 1935], p. 154). This may well be the explanation of it. Incidentally the same explanation was given long ago by John Lightfoot, who depicts our Lord as "pointing without doubt towards that numerous crowd of people that, at that time, flocked towards him out of the city" (HHT, p. 277). Morgan comments on this verse: "If those disciples had been appointed a commission of enquiry as to the possibilities of Christian enterprise in Samaria I know exactly the resolution they would have passed. The resolution would have been: Samaria unquestionably needs our Master's message, but it is not ready for it. There must first be ploughing, then sowing, and then waiting. It is needy, but it is not ready." BAGD classes πρός here under the heading, "of the result that follows a set of circumstances" (III.3.b); the fields "are white, so that the harvest may begin."

85. There is a fine sense of urgency in a saying attributed to R. Tarfon (c. A.D. 130) and that reminds us of the present passage: "The day is short and the task is great and the labourers are idle and the wage is abundant and the master of the house is urgent" (Mishnah, 'Ab. 2:15).

86. There are, of course, few or no punctuation marks in the oldest MSS, and we are dependent on our sense of the fitness of things. It seems that the note of urgency throughout the passage requires us to take "even now" with the words about reaping rather than those about harvest.

87. For άληθινός, "true," see on 1:9. G. D. Kilpatrick argues that we should read here ὅσον with the meaning, "the true saying consists in this" (BT, 11 [1960], p. 174).

88. Notice the double use of άλλος. John is fond of this word, which he uses 34 times.

89. "This world is not merely directed and guided by those of us who happen to be alive. We inherit not only the sins of the dead, but their faith and sacrifice also as a spiritual heritage. It is ours to bear the one without murmuring as our opportunity, and to thank God for the other" (Strachan).

90. Plummer takes this view. The plural, άλλοι, he thinks, is used to balance the plural ομείς. Similarly, he argues, in v. 37 "both are in the singular for the sake of harmony; ὁ σπείρων, Christ; ὁ θερίζων, His ministers." An objection to the latter part of his interpretation is that Jesus was simply quoting a current proverb (or so it would seem). It may not be without significance that, in the expression "have done the hard work we have the same verb and the same tense as that which tells us that Jesus sat weary, κεκοπιακώς, by the well (v. 6).

91. Cf. Bernard: "Primarily, Jesus and the woman were the άλλοι into whose labours the disciples had entered, not to speak of every prophet and pious teacher of the past who had prepared the way in Samaria for the message of Christ." The difficulty in the way of interpreting the words too strictly of the Samaritans is that it is hard to see how the disciples reaped at all in this case. All the work, sowing and reaping, seems to have been done by Jesus and the woman (unless we look forward to Acts 8).

92. "The Others' of John 4,38" (SE, I, pp. 510-15). Robinson takes this passage as a test of exegetical method. He refutes Cullmann's view that the passage is best understood, not of any situation in the life of Jesus, but of the mission of the apostolic church. Cullmann, who is supported by M. Simon (St Stephen and the Hellenists [London, 1958], pp. 36ff.), regards the "others" as the Hellenists of Acts 8 (preeminently Philip), who took the gospel to Samaria, after which the apostles Peter and John entered the fruits of their labors. Robinson shows that the connection between Jesus and the Baptist movement, and between the Baptist movement and the location of this chapter, make it reasonable to infer that Jesus was speaking of the way his followers were reaping the fruits of the
earlier work. (This argument might be used in support of Albright's identification of "Aenon near to Salim" in 3:23; cf. p. 343, n. 99.)

93. "The parable of sower and reaper is so narrated as to cross various planes of interpretation. First, no doubt, the seed sown in the woman bears fruit in the harvest of the advancing Samaritans; then the work of the prophets, and especially of John the Baptist, is embraced by and completed in the work of Jesus; then the Samaritans disappear in the thought of the apostolic mission to the world based upon the mission of Jesus; and finally, the Evangelist addresses his contemporaries and exhorts them to reap the harvest, so that the others who have laboured become, as Bauer has noted, less Jesus and the prophets of Israel than Jesus and the apostolic generation" (Hoskyns).

94. That is "witness." Actually John does not use the noun "testimony" but the participle μαρτυρούσης. Without the article this means "as she testified" rather than "who testified"; there is the thought of persistence in testifying rather than the designation of the woman as the one "who" testified.

95. "She spoke a word, the word, to them; and we have already noticed that this confession or word (4:25,29,39) was very far from perfect; but such as it was, for its purpose and at that moment it was adequate; and it brought many of her countrymen to belief in Him" (Lightfoot).

96. ούκετι. In the note on 1:5 we saw that John uses ού and ούδε more than any other New Testament writer. The same is true of ούκετι, which he uses 12 times; next come Mark and Romans each with 7 times.

97. The expression is διίχ τήν σήν λαλιάν, which Findlay renders "not because of your chatter." Calvin also comments severely: "the Samaritans seem to be claiming that they now have a stronger support than a woman's tongue — which is usually untrustworthy." The word λαλιά undoubtedly often denotes speech that is not to be taken seriously, gossip. Thus Thorlief Boman dismisses the term when he is studying the concept of "the word" in Greek, saying "λαλιά signifies disorderly utterance, mere prattle" (Hebrew Thought compared with Greek [London, 1960], p. 67). Yet too much should not be read into the use of this word, for in the New Testament the unfavorable sense found elsewhere is not marked, if present at all. The word may even be used of Jesus' speech (8:43). See further on 1:37 for the cognate verb, λαλέω. σήν is emphatic. G. D. Kilpatrick has shown that in John the normal order for personal possessives with the article is article, noun, article, possessive (see on 3:29). The order in the present passage is found three times only, and in each case there is emphasis (5:47; 7:16). It should, perhaps, be noted that p75 supports B and Origen in reading λαλιάν σου. But even with this reinforcement the reading will scarcely commend itself.

98. Deissmann cites "Saviour of the world" as a title frequently used of the Emperor (LAE, p. 364; see also TDNT, III, p. 892, n. 88). That such an expression was common in the Hellenistic world is clear. But John does not derive it from such a milieu; its Old Testament roots are sufficient to show this. But granted such an origin, it is not impossible that John is mindful of the contemporary use for the Emperor when he records the title. Craig R. Koester has examined the expression (JBL, 109 [1990], pp. 665-80). He concludes, "The title 'Savior of the world' was used by Caesar, but the Samaritans recognized that it truly belonged to Jesus, whom they received in a manner appropriate for a king" (p. 680).

99. Cf. Barclay, "A great example can be merely a heart-breaking and frustrating thing when we find ourselves powerless to follow it. Jesus was Saviour. That is to say, He rescued men from the evil and hopeless situation in which they found themselves; He broke the chains that bound them to the past and gave them a power and a presence which enabled them to meet the future."

100. The expression "sums up the main point of this chapter — that the conversion of Samaritans is the first sign of the universality of salvation in Christ" (Bailey). This is "a great insight from a little people" (Beasley-Murray).

101. This is a very difficult passage, as the following discussion will make clear. D. A. Carson mentions R. T. Fortna's view (and notes others who hold this view); he then lists eight ways other scholars have interpreted it (JBL, 97 [1978], p. 424, n. 50). There cannot be said to be any consensus.
"It was not in accord with the mind of Jesus, says the Evangelist, to stay where the welcome was greatest, or the difficulties least" (Wright). "He had to go on and get on with the business of being rejected by the many and accepted by only the few . . . He goes on into Galilee, to receive the kind of welcome which He knew so well to be hollow and worthless" (Loyd).

Bernard finds both interpretations so difficult that he thinks the verse a gloss, the meaning of which is not clear. This seems no better an explanation. It also poses the question why a straightforward text should be complicated by a perplexing gloss. Other suggestions are that "his own country" is Palestine in general as opposed to Samaria, or upper Galilee as opposed to lower Galilee. For a thorough discussion see J. Willemse, "La Patrie de Jesus selon Saint Jean iv.44" (NTS, 11 [1964-65], pp. 349-64). Willemse thinks that Judea or Jerusalem is meant.

Lightfoot, p. 35.

έδέξαντο, "received," has about it the air of welcome. It is used, for example, of welcoming guests. Hoskyns cites Quesnel: "To have believed without miracles was the excellency of the faith of the Samaritans; to believe, as the Galileans did, because of them is, at least, to yield to the authority of God and to advance further than did the generality of the Jews."

It is perhaps significant that John's word for "honor" here is τιμή, a term he uses nowhere else. When he refers to the honor due to Jesus he prefers δόξα.

This is not certain. But (a) there is nothing in the story that hints at the presence of a Gentile, and (b) in v. 48 the man appears to be included in the crowd of miracle-seeking Jews. Cf. Brown, "In John he is in Herod's service, and nothing is said to indicate that he is not a Jew." Brown, however, thinks the same incident lies behind the three accounts.

E. Haenchen maintains that "the story which John used" is identical with that in the Synoptics on the grounds that it "differs only in one, though most important point" (SE, I, p. 497). The hollowness of this position is demonstrated by the list of differences. In his commentary on John, Haenchen has altered his position: "The differences between this story and the synoptic parallels are admittedly large" (p. 236). But he still sees the same event as underlying all the accounts. Edward F. Siegman discusses the problem (CBQ, XXX [1968], pp. 182-98). He says, "It is possible to reconcile each of the varying details in the three accounts. It must be admitted, however, that the cumulative effect of the differences tends to weaken the thesis that only one incident is the basis for the three pericopes" (p. 194; Siegman's italics).

Attention is often drawn to a rabbinical story: "Once the son of R. Gamaliel fell ill. He sent two scholars to R. Hanina b. Dosa to ask him to pray for him. When he came down he said to them: Go, the fever has left him. They said to him: Are you a prophet? He replied: I am neither a prophet nor the son of a prophet, but I learnt this from experience. If my prayer is fluent in my mouth, I know that he is accepted: but if not, I know that he is rejected. They sat down and made a note of the exact moment. When they came to R. Gamaliel, he said to them: By the temple service! You have not been a moment too soon or too late, but so it happened: at that very moment the fever left him and he asked for water to drink" (Ber. 34b; Soncino edn. pp. 215-16). This is a typical rabbinic story, the purpose being to excite wonder at the extraordinary power exercised by the man of God. The story John tells has a quite different purpose. It is a "sign." It shows us God at work. At the same time v. 48 vigorously opposes the view that faith should be bound up with miracles. In this Gospel the faith elicited by miracles is never despised. But it is not the highest kind of faith.

βασιλικός is the adjective "royal"; "a certain royal one" could denote a man of royal blood, but the present passage seems to rule this out. More likely the meaning is as NIV, "royal official," one who serves the king. It has been conjectured that he was Manaen, foster brother of Herod the tetrarch (Acts 13:1), or Cuza, "the manager of Herod's household" (Luke 8:3). But there is no evidence for either identification. Strictly speaking Herod was not a king at all, but a tetrarch. He was, however, of the royal house, and exercised kingly rule, so on occasion he could be called King (e.g., Mark 6:14). The word probably denotes, then, one of Herod's officers.
111. ἠμέλλεν γαρ ἀποθνήσκειν. The auxiliary μέλλω conveys the thoughts of, imminence and certainty. It is worth noticing that ἀποθνήσκω is used by John more frequently than in any other book in the New Testament, namely 28 times (next is Romans, 23 times, then Luke, 10 times).

112. τέρατα. The word is always plural in its 16 New Testament occurrences, and it is always linked with σημεία. The miracles of which the New Testament treats are never merely wonders. They have meaning and they point people to God.

113. Moulton has a valuable note on the use of the emphatic οὐ μή in the New Testament (Μ, I, pp. 187-92). He disagrees with the contention of such scholars as Gildersleeve that "the stress" of this construction "has been lost by overfamiliarity" (p. 189). He points out that it occurs 93 times in all, of which 12 are citations from LXX, 60 are in the Gospels, 4 in Paul, 1 in the Catholic Epistles, and 16 in Revelation. Apart from the last-mentioned (where he finds special factors), the construction is thus uncommon outside the Gospels. Of the 60 occurrences in the Gospels 54 are in the words of Jesus, and they are distributed over all the Gospels and all the sources postulated by critics. It is clear that the New Testament writers used the construction sparingly apart from passages coming from the Old Testament and words of the Master. Moulton concludes, "Since these are just the two elements which made up 'Scripture' in the first age of Christianity, one is tempted to put it down to the same cause in both — a feeling that inspired language was fitly rendered by words of a decisive tone not needed generally elsewhere."

114. The word is παιδίον. Although the diminutive is often used conventionally, here it is a real term of affection. υΙός is used in vv. 46, 47, 50, and παις (according to the better reading) in v. 51. On the latter verse Godet comments: "The servants, in their report, use neither the term of affection (παιδίον), which would be too familiar, nor that of dignity (υΙός), which would not be familiar enough, but that of family life: παις, the child." G. D. Kilpatrick argues that παΙς is "a harmonization to Matthew and Luke" and that υΙός is to be preferred (JThS, n.s. XIV [1963], p. 393). But the MS evidence is strong against this reading, and further, it scarcely seems as though Kilpatrick does justice to John's love of variation, as Edwin D. Freed points out (JThS, n.s. XVI [1965], pp. 448-49).

115. Translations like NIV's "Your son will live" (so NRSV, Schonfield), "Your son is going to live" (Goodspeed), or "thy son is to live" (Knox) miss the point that Jesus is not simply prophesying the outcome of the disease. He is speaking a word of power, a healing word. It is a "sign" that John is recording, not a word of prophecy or clairvoyance.

116. αύτοϋ καταβαίνοντος is a somewhat free use of the genitive absolute in view of the following αὕτω. But such constructions are found elsewhere in the New Testament and in other writings of this period. No special significance attaches to it.

117. The verb is ἐπύθετο. Normally the imperfect of this verb is used where an answer is sought, and BDF goes so far as to say that the aorist here is "incorrect" (328). This seems to be going too far. The aorist will give a touch of peremptoriness to the question.

118. We might have expected the dative (as in v. 53) to express the point of time instead of the accusatives, τήν ώραν and ώραν έβδόμην. But Moulton points out that the accusative was encroaching on this section of the sphere of the dative (M, I, p. 63). BDF sees the construction as classical with ώρα (161 [3]). Perhaps we should notice that in place of παρ' αύτων ρ75 and Β read έκείνη.

119. κομψότερον ἰχω appears to be a colloquialism (like our "He is doing nicely!"). MM cites the expression from the papyri (cf. also New Documents, 4.69). It occurs here only in the New Testament. The aorist suits a sudden recovery.

120. MacGregor comments: "it is certain that John is not the least concerned with problems of time and distance. It is enough for him that the healing occurred simultaneously with the word of Jesus." Plummer examines the various possibilities and decides that the balance is in favor of the normal Jewish method of reckoning time.

121. The construction is unusual, τούτο . . . δεύτερον σημείον ἐποίησεν, "This he did (as) a second sign" (cf. 2:11).
Cf. Bultmann, "As in judicial language the αλήθεια is the actual state of affairs to be maintained against different statements, so historians use it to denote real events as distinct from myths, and philosophers to indicate real being in the absolute sense" (TDNT, I, p. 238).


126. G. E. Wright says, "the 'grace and truth' of Jesus Christ (John 1.14) are not abstract virtues but the active ḥesed and 'emeth, rooted in the covenant conception" (God Who Acts [London, 1954], p. 114). It is valuable to be reminded that these are dynamic concepts, rooted in the Old Testament. But we should not overlook the fact that they are not simply Old Testament ideas restated. They have a new content, and that content comes from Jesus Christ. There is a valuable note on truth in E. Hoskyns and N. Davey, *The Riddle of the New Testament* (London, 1931), pp. 35-43. Their conclusion is: "Truth, in short, is knowledge of God through Jesus; such knowledge of God as through Jesus makes men veritably Sons of God."

127. See also the note in Strachan, pp. 141-43, and that by S. Aalen, SE, II, pp. 3-24.
THE ORDER OF CHAPTERS 5 AND 6

Of the various suggested rearrangements of the text of this Gospel none has more probability than the transposition of chapters 5 and 6. The opening words of chapter 6 ("Sometime after this, Jesus crossed to the far shore of the Sea of Galilee") read strangely after a chapter set in Judea, but naturally after chapter 4 (which ends with Jesus in Cana). The Passover is near in 6:4, and may be present in 5:1. The reference in 7:1 to Jesus' walking in Galilee because the Jews sought to kill him is not what we expect after a narrative set in Galilee, but would be in place after chapter 5. Such a transposition has seemed to many to be possible.

Against it is the point made by MacGregor (who nevertheless accepts the transposition): "the crisis of the Galilean ministry described at the end of chapter 6 comes too early if placed before chapter 5, its appropriate setting being immediately before Jesus' final departure from Galilee at 7:10, in which position it provides a fitting conclusion to the first Section of the Gospel." Moreover, it must be borne in mind that John is not giving a complete history.

We ought not to expect everything to fit into a neat geographical or chronological picture. John draws his incidents from where he chooses. It may not be without relevance that in 21:1 there is an abrupt and unexplained transition from Judea to Galilee, so that the phenomenon is found elsewhere. We have no manuscript evidence for any order other than the traditional one. Nor is it easy to see how such a transposition could have taken place, despite the claims of those who advocate displacement so strenuously. There is also the point made by Godet (on ch. 6) that a removal to Galilee would follow naturally on the conflict mentioned in chapter 5. Finally, there is the theological point that in chapter 6 Jesus speaks of himself as the bread of life, the bread that came down from heaven, the living bread, and makes it clear that people have eternal life only through him. The establishment of Jesus' position as the divine Son in 5:19-47 seems to be required as the basis for the claims made in chapter 6.\footnote{Certainty in such a matter is not possible, but the case for reversal of order}
has not been made out and until it is, it is best to try to understand the Gospel in the traditional order. See further Introduction, 6.


I. The Healing (5:1-9a)

1Some time later, Jesus went up to Jerusalem for a feast of the Jews. 2Now there is in Jerusalem near the Sheep Gate a pool, which in Aramaic is called Bethesda and which is surrounded by five covered colonnades. 3Here a great number of disabled people used to lie — the blind, the lame, the paralyzed. 5One who was there had been an invalid for thirty-eight years. 6When Jesus saw him lying there and learned that he had been in this condition for a long time, he asked him, "Do you want to get well?" 7Sir," the invalid replied, "I have no one to help me into the pool when the water is stirred. While I am trying to get in, someone else goes down ahead of me. 8Then Jesus said to him, "Get up! Pick up your mat and walk." 9At once the man was cured; he picked up his mat and walked.

a. 2 Some manuscripts Bethzatha; other manuscripts Bethsaida

b. 3 Some manuscripts paralyzed — and they waited for the moving of the waters; some less important manuscripts continue 4 From time to time an angel of the Lord would come down and stir up the waters. The first one into the pool after each such disturbance would be cured of whatever disease he had.

Until this point John has been almost exclusively concerned with Jesus' dealings with individuals. There is still individual contact, but the healing of the lame man leads to a conflict with the Pharisees, the religious leaders. We are thus introduced to a theme that is important in the rest of this Gospel. Jesus does his mighty works, his "signs." But, instead of faith, strenuous opposition is aroused among the national religious leaders. The conflict grows and intensifies. Eventually, as a result of it, Jesus will meet
his death. Here we see the first example of this motif, the emergence of an implacable hostility. This has, of course, been foreshadowed in the Prologue ("He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him" [1:11]), and it will be developed in chapters 8, 12, and 13 especially.

1 Some time later came a feast that is not further defined. If this chapter be held to follow chapter 6 it will most certainly refer to the Passover mentioned in 6:4. If not, there seems no way of identifying it with certainty. "Of the Jews" is an explanation John commonly adds for the benefit of his Gentile readers. Jesus followed the practice of the pious men of his day by going up to Jerusalem to observe festivals. Indeed, John's indefinite reference to "a feast" may be intended to convey as much (it may imply that it was not only for specific, outstanding feasts that Jesus went up).

2 If the present tense "is" is significant it points us to a time before the destruction of Jerusalem. This cannot be pressed, but neither should it be overlooked. "Sheep" is an adjective, which we should probably take with "pool" to give the meaning "There is by the sheep-pool, (the pool) which is called. . . ." The alternative is to supply "gate" (as NIV; cf. Neh. 3:1; 12:39), or perhaps "market" (KJV). The name of the pool is likewise beset with difficulty. This may be due in part to the fact that the name is given "in Hebrew," which would have been unfamiliar to the Greek scribes who copied the Gospel; it would be easy for them to make mistakes in a strange language. "In Hebrew" is usually understood to mean, "in the language spoken by the Jews," that is "in Aramaic" (so NIV). This is probably the way to understand it, but the matter is not simple. "Bethsaida," "Bethzatha," and "Bethesda" are all well attested, and "Belzetha" is also found. The textual problem is a complicated one, and none of these variants can be ruled out as impossible. However, the copper scroll found at Qumran reads "Beth Esadatain," which makes "Bethesda" almost certainly correct. The clue that the pool had five "porches" (better "colonnades") makes it probable that it is correctly identified as the double pool now known by the name of St. Anne.

3 Many sick people were gathered there. The true text says nothing about why they came, but a very ancient explanation has somehow crept into the text (vv. 3b-4). The manuscript evidence makes it certain that this is no part of the original Gospel. But there is no reason for doubting that it
explains the presence of the people (cf. v. 7). They thought that a periodic disturbance of the waters was due to an angel and that the first to enter the pool after such a disturbance would be healed. Accordingly they lay there, each hoping to be the speedy one and thus to receive healing. The disturbance may have been caused by the intermittent bubbling up of a natural spring.\textsuperscript{15}

5 John speaks of a certain man among the unwell. He does not tell us what his trouble was, but from verse 8 it would appear to have been some form of paralysis or lameness.\textsuperscript{16} It was a complaint of long standing, thirty-eight years, no less.\textsuperscript{17} The supposedly healing water had effected no cure in all those years. It is against this background that John sets Jesus' healing word of power.

6 John does not say how Jesus knew of the length of time the man had suffered. He may wish us to understand it as another example of Jesus' supernatural knowledge (see on 4:17).\textsuperscript{18} But it would have been quite possible for Jesus to have asked the man or someone else. John simply takes up the story at the point where the Lord asks the question, "Do you want to get well?" It is noteworthy that Jesus takes the initiative (as in the case of all the "signs" in this Gospel except the healing of the nobleman's son). He does not wait for this man to approach him. He begins by inquiring as to his willingness to be cured.\textsuperscript{19}

7 The man does not regard Jesus as a possible healer.\textsuperscript{20} This is not surprising, for he did not even know who he was (v. 13). His thoughts were all on the curative properties of the pool. He explains that his failure to be cured during the long years of illness arises from his inability to get into the pool quickly enough when the waters are disturbed. He really needs someone to help him down. Because he lacks such assistance he is always beaten by someone else.

8-9a Jesus immediately commands the man to rise, take up his pallet,\textsuperscript{21} and walk.\textsuperscript{22} Immediately\textsuperscript{23} he does so. The cure is instantaneous and complete. This healing differs from many others in that, not only is there no mention of faith on the part of the man, but there seems to be no room for it. He did not even know Jesus' name (v. 13). Moreover, until Jesus uttered the critical words his thoughts were centered on healing through getting into the pool (v. 7). We must feel that, while faith was
commonly the prerequisite of healing, it was not absolutely necessary. Jesus is not limited by human frailty as he works the works of God.

2. Dispute over the Sabbath (5:9b-18)

The day on which this took place was a Sabbath, and so the Jews said to the man who had been healed, "It is the Sabbath; the law forbids you to carry your mat." But he replied, "The man who made me well said to me, 'Pick up your mat and walk.'" So they asked him, "Who is this fellow who told you to pick it up and walk?" The man who was healed had no idea who it was, for Jesus had slipped away into the crowd that was there. Later Jesus found him at the temple and said to him, "See, you are well again. Stop sinning or something worse may happen to you." The man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well. So, because Jesus was doing these things on the Sabbath, the Jews persecuted him. Jesus said to them, "My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I, too, am working." For this reason the Jews tried all the harder to kill him; not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God.

This is the first open hostility to Jesus recorded in this Gospel. As in the Synoptists the cause is Jesus' attitude to the Sabbath. Those Gospels have several references to disputes between Jesus and his Jewish opponents on the question of Sabbath keeping. It is a little curious that the issue should loom so large in Galilee, where, on the whole, Jews were not as strict as those in Jerusalem. But sometimes we read of religious men from Jerusalem appearing in Galilee (Matt. 15:1; Mark 3:22; 7:1), and this may be the explanation. Some such incident as the one John relates here aroused the vehement opposition of the religious leaders, and they sent their emissaries into Galilee seeking evidence of similar breaches of the law. The Jews regarded the Sabbath as a joyful day, but nevertheless they hedged it about with a multitude of restrictions, which cannot but have been burdensome. Work of all kinds was prohibited, and the attempt to define work with precision, so as to be certain what was disallowed, was sometimes fantastic. Jesus persistently maintained that it is lawful to do
good on the Sabbath. He ignored the mass of scribal regulations, and thus inevitably came into conflict with the authorities.

9b-10 John draws attention to the fact that the day of this cure was the Sabbath. Jesus' act of compassion had not been inhibited because there were scribal regulations forbidding works of healing on that day. Perhaps he even chose the day for his deed in order that the issues might be made clear. At any rate, the reaction was not long in coming. The leaders of the opposition are called, as is John's custom, simply "the Jews" (see on 1:19). Since the healed man was a Jew, clearly the term is used in a sense other than ethnic. The Jews in question will probably have been mostly Pharisees. But we should bear in mind Newbigin's point: "the Jews, as they are portrayed in the Gospel, are not uniquely blind or stubborn people. They represent established religion. They represent us" (on v. 4). These Jews reminded the man who had been cured that it was the Sabbath (their word order stresses this word), and that therefore it was not lawful for him to lift up his pallet, let alone carry it. They probably had in mind such passages as Jeremiah 17:21ff. and Nehemiah 13:15. These were in origin protests against the tendency to secularize the Sabbath. It is not just another day of business. It is God's day. It must be kept free from worldly pursuits. So the regulations began in the laudable attempt to safeguard the holiness of the day. But in time they became so many, and drew so many absurd distinctions, that the true character of the day was lost in the manner of its observance. Jesus' attitude recalled people to the real meaning of the Sabbath.

11-13 The man was not of the stuff of which heroes are made. He put the whole blame on the shoulders of him who had healed him. He did not know his name (v. 13), but he managed to put a certain emphasis on the fact that it was the one who had spoken the healing word and not himself who was to blame. Not unnaturally the authorities immediately sought to know who this was. Their reference to "this fellow" (the Greek means "the man") is significant. It implies "a contemptuous contrast with the law of God" (Plummer). But their informant could not oblige them. He did not know the name. Nor could he point Jesus out, for he had "slipped away." The crowd in the place would certainly have thronged around the healed man and made concealment easy.
"Later" is an indefinite term. It does not mean immediately afterward, but leaves the time uncertain. Jesus sought the man out and found him in the Temple. We may not unfairly conjecture that the man had gone there to offer thanks to God (cf. Mark 1:44; Luke 17:14). Jesus first drew attention to the cure. "You are well again" employs the perfect of the verb, indicating that the cure was permanent. No doubt some of the "cures" that were reported from the pool did not last very long. Jesus' healing of the man was not in such a category. "Stop sinning" implies that the man has sinned and continues in his sin. Jesus enjoins him to break with it and be reconciled to God. In a later passage (9:1ff.) Jesus repudiates the idea that disasters like blindness are inevitably caused by sin. But he does not say that they are never caused by sin. In this present verse he seems to imply that the man's sin had brought about his infirmity. Sinning again may bring a worse fate. Jesus may mean a worse physical fate, but it is more likely that he is referring to the eternal consequences of sin. They are indeed "something worse" than any physical handicap.

The man who had been healed seems to have been an unpleasant creature. It is obvious from the attitude of "the Jews" (v. 10) that they were incensed at the breach of the Sabbath. Yet as soon as he found out the identity of his Benefactor he betrayed him to the hostile authorities. There is an interesting difference between question and answer. The Jews asked the man who it was who told him to take up his mat (v. 12). He answers that it was Jesus who made him well. They emphasize the offense, he the healing.

The result was inevitable. The Jews took action against Jesus, though we are not told exactly what form their "persecution" took. Earlier there was an emphasis on Jesus as the one who had caused the action (v. 11); now there is stress on the fact that it was the Sabbath on which the deed was done. It was this that aroused the opposition. "Was doing" is a continuous tense, and John may imply that there were other Sabbath incidents that he had not recorded, or that the Jews discerned what Jesus' habitual attitude was (cf. REB, "It was for doing such things on the sabbath that the Jews began to take action against Jesus").

There are no words that Jesus is said to "answer" (NIV changes the sense a little with "said"); he answered their deed of persecution. In the Synoptic tradition in such a situation Jesus defended his action by saying, "the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath" (Mark 2:28). This is often
taken as indicating that anyone is entitled to do as he wishes on the Sabbath, but this is almost certainly a misunderstanding. Jesus is there laying it down that he, the Son of man, is lord over even the divinely instituted Sabbath.\textsuperscript{41} Here his defense rests on his intimate relationship to the Father.\textsuperscript{42} In the end both defenses amount to much the same. But it is interesting to observe that Mark reports the saying with the emphasis on the position of authority that belongs to the heavenly Son of man, and John that which brings out the close personal relationship between Jesus and his Father. The expression "My Father" is noteworthy. It was not the way Jews usually referred to God. Mostly they spoke of "our Father," and while they might use "My Father" in prayer, they would qualify it with "in heaven" or some other expression to remove the suggestion of familiarity. Jesus did no such thing, here or elsewhere. He habitually thought of God as in the closest relationship to himself. The expression implies a claim that the Jews did not miss.\textsuperscript{43} Jesus points to the unceasing activity of the Father.\textsuperscript{44} Without him this whole created universe would cease.\textsuperscript{45} Unless he works continually no one could survive. And because of his close relationship with the Father Jesus works in the same way. The Sabbath cannot interfere with the work of such a one. This has its implications for Christian service. The basic reason given in the Fourth Commandment for keeping the Sabbath is that on that day God rested. God's people must rest as he rests. But Jesus "repudiates the thought that the divine rest from Creation took the form of idleness" (Temple). The compassion of God must be reflected in compassion in God's people.\textsuperscript{46}

18 The Jews did not miss the significance of Jesus' words. He had called God "his own Father," and this meant that he was "making himself equal with God" (cf. 10:33). "His own" interprets what was said in the previous verse. Jesus was not teaching that God is the Father of all. The Jews would have accepted that. His claim meant that God was his Father in a special sense. He was claiming that he partook of the same nature as his Father. This involved equality. So the Jews held that he was guilty of blasphemy as well as of Sabbath breaking.\textsuperscript{49} They discerned that the Sabbath breaking was no isolated, rootless phenomenon. It proceeded from Jesus' view of his person and was consistent with it.\textsuperscript{50} But to them this was nothing less than blasphemy. It led them to unremitting efforts ("tried" is in a continuous tense) to secure his death.\textsuperscript{52} For other references to attempts to kill Jesus cf. 7:19, 25; 8:37, 59. "Breaking" and "calling" are both in
continuous tenses. The Jews looked to the habitual attitude, not one isolated act and word.

I. THE THIRD DISCOURSE — THE DIVINE SON (5:19-47)

1. The Father and the Son (5:19-24)

19 Jesus gave them this answer: "I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does. 20 For the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does. Yes, to your amazement he will show him even greater things than these. 21 For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom he is pleased to give it. 22 Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son, 23 that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him. 24 I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.

The third discourse turns attention explicitly to the person of Christ. This is a passage of critical importance, the significance of which is not always realized. It perhaps lacks striking expressions like "the bread of life" or the "I am" sayings. But its central theme is crucial. "Nowhere else in the Gospels do we find our Lord making such a formal, systematic, orderly, regular statement of His own unity with the Father, His divine commission and authority, and the proofs of His Messiahship, as we find in this discourse" (Ryle). In the end it was this kind of claim that aroused the implacable hostility of the Jewish hierarchy and brought about Jesus' death. And it is only because his relationship to the Father is what he said it was, only because he is what he claimed to be, that he is able to bring the new birth and the water of life that were the subjects of the preceding discourses. Similarly his claims to be the living bread, the Good Shepherd, and much beside depend on the truth here set forth. All this gives peculiar interest to this discourse.
We may divide it into three sections (though these divisions are not hard-and-fast): in the first Jesus speaks of his relationship to the Father, in the second of his function as Judge of all people, and in the third of the witness borne to him that establishes his claims.

19 The introduction to the discourse underlines its importance. There is the "gave them this answer" and the solemn "I tell you the truth" (see on 1:51, and notice its recurrence in vv. 24 and 25). The language Jesus uses is thoroughly rabbinic. He begins with a very strong affirmation of community of action with the Father. It is not simply that he does not act in independence of the Father; he cannot act in independence of the Father. He can do only the things he sees the Father doing. There is a continual contemplation of the Father by the Son, an uninterrupted communion. The result of this is that it is the things the Father does that the Son does, too, "not in imitation, but in virtue of His sameness of nature" (Westcott). The verse contains the thought of subordination, for the Son is pictured as completely obedient to the Father. But there is also a mighty claim, for the Son does "whatever the Father does." Neither the lowly obedience nor the implication of deity should be overlooked. John often reverts to the thought of Jesus' close relationship to the Father (6:57; 7:16; 8:26, 38; 10:30; 14:9-10, etc.). The implication is that the authority with which he teaches and acts is nothing less than the authority of God.

20 The disclosure of the relationship between the Father and the Son is taken a step farther. The Father loves the Son (the tense denotes a continuing, habitual love; the Father never ceases to love the Son). Now love always gives. Love does not withhold. Thus the Father shows (again the tense is present, denoting continuous action) the Son all the things he does. This carries the implication that the Son does the things he is shown. Jesus' actions do not proceed from merely human motivation. He acts only in accordance with the divine revelation. Thus he looks forward to doing greater works, for he will be shown greater works. The result will be that his hearers will be astonished. The following verses show that these "greater things" are the Son's activities in giving life and in judging.

21 The thought moves on to judgment. The Father (he and no other) raises people from the dead and gives them life. This is the teaching of the Old Testament (Deut. 32:39; 1 Sam. 2:6; 2 Kings 5:7). It would have been accepted without question by Jesus' hearers. There was no matter for marvel
in this. What is marvelous is the next assertion, that the Son also gives life. This should be understood in the first place of the present gift of life that is the result of Jesus' activity. He is to go on and speak of himself as the Judge of people at the last day (vv. 28-29), and that is not out of mind in the present verse also. He will raise people up. But in this Gospel the thought recurs that there is a sense in which judgment takes place even now. The condemnation of the lost lies in the fact that they love darkness rather than light (3:19). He that believes on the Son has (present tense) life (3:36). Just as the Father takes dead bodies and raises them to new life, so the Son takes people who, though their bodies are alive, are yet in a state of death, and raises them to spiritual life. Notice the significance of "to whom he is pleased to give it." People may not command the miracle. The Son gives life where he chooses, not where people choose.

22-23 The thought moves on to that of judgment. Arising out of the life-giving activities of the Son comes the thought that the Father does not judge people. This was something new to Jews. They held that the Father was the Judge of all people, and they expected to stand before him at the last day. Jesus tells them now that the Father will exercise his prerogative of judging for the express purpose of ensuring that people give the Son the same honor as they do to himself (see on 3:35 for the things the Father gives the Son). This is very close to an assertion of deity. Those who fail to honor him fail to honor the Father who sent him (for the "sending" of the Son see on 3:17). This probably means more than that the Sender is dishonored if his messenger is dishonored. The whole stress of this present passage is on the unity of the Father and the Son. What is done to one is done also to the other. The inherent dignity of the Son and his intimate relationship to the Father make the dishonoring of him a very serious matter indeed.

24 The unity of the Father and the Son is seen also in the way people are saved. This very important saying is introduced with the emphatic "I tell you the truth" (see on 1:51). The person who receives the blessing is the one who hears Christ and believes the Father, in itself a striking way of affirming the unity between the two. "Word," as often in the New Testament, stands for the whole message of Jesus. "Believes him who sent me" is unusual. It is more common to have a reference to believing "in" than simply to believing, in the sense of giving credence to, accepting as true. And it is more usual to have Christ as the object of faith than the
Father. Yet the form of the expression here is important. All those who believe the Father, who really believe the Father, accept Christ. It is not possible to believe what the Father says and to turn away from the Son. The theme of this whole passage is the unity of the Father and the Son. Consequently it is natural to refer faith to the Father, the ultimate Object, with whom the Son is one (see further Additional Note E, pp. 296-98).

Anyone who gives heed to the Son and the Father in this way "has" eternal life. The life is that person's present possession. For "eternal life" see on 1:4; 3:15. The implications of the present possession of eternal life are brought out in the assurance that its possessor "will not be condemned" or, more accurately, "does not come into judgment." This is the usual Johannine thought that judgment takes place here and now. People who accept the way of darkness and evil have already been judged. Their judgment lies in that very fact. So with those who have eternal life. Their vindication is present in the here and now. They have already passed right out of the state of death, and have come into life. Though this is a present state it has future implications. Those who do not come into judgment will not come into judgment on the last great day either (Moffatt translates with a future: "he will incur no sentence of judgment"). The saying points to their permanent safety. To have eternal life now is to be secure throughout eternity.

The words of this verse should not be taken simply as a statement of fact. They are that. Anyone who hears and believes has eternal life. But the words also constitute an invitation, a challenge. They are a call to hear Christ and to take the step of faith.

2. The Son and Judgment (5:25-29)

25"I tell you the truth, a time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. 26For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son to have life in himself. 27And he has given him authority to judge because he is the Son of Man. 28Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice 29and will come out — those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned."
It is not possible to insist on a hard-and-fast division here, and some would take verse 25 closely with verse 24. It certainly repeats much the same thought, but "I tell you the truth" seems to indicate a new start. Some scholars hold that this whole section is no more than a repetition of the thought of the preceding one, arguing that the raising of the dead means the raising of the spiritually dead.\(^7^4\) But the language of verses 28-29 seems too strong for this. Jesus has been thinking of his close relationship to the Father, culminating in the statement that whoever heeds his word and believes the Father has everlasting life. From that he proceeds to the thought foreshadowed in verse 22, that the Father has given him the prerogative of judgment.\(^7^5\) The plain meaning of his words is that he will be our Judge on the great Day of Judgment.

25 For "I tell you the truth" see on 1:51. It marks the statement following as emphatic and important. We might understand it of the raising of the dead at the last day were it not for "has now come."\(^7^6\) This shows that what is primarily in mind is the present giving of life that characterizes the ministry of the Son. In him the last age is vividly present. Our eternal destiny is determined by our attitude to him. Those who are spiritually dead hear his voice, and those who have heard it live. "Hear," of course, means "hear with appreciation," "take heed."\(^7^7\) Notice that Jesus refers to himself here as "the Son of God," this being one of only three places in this Gospel where he uses this title (the others are 10:36; 11:4; cf. also 19:7). Apart from this chapter, where "the Son" is so common (v. 19 bis, 20, 21, 22, 23 bis, 26; elsewhere 6:40; 8:35, 36; 14:13: 19:1), Jesus' favorite way of referring to himself is as "the Son of Man" (1:51; 3:13, 14; 5:27; 6:27, 53, 62; 8:28; 9:35; 12:23, 34; 13:31; see Additional Note C, pp. 150-52). In view of John's declared aim in writing "that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God" (20:31), the sparing use of "the Son of God" by Jesus is noteworthy. John prefers to make his point by the events that occurred rather than by Jesus' express claim.

26 The Old Testament makes it clear that life derives from the Father. It is he who breathes life into people (Gen. 2:7), and life is always thought of as his gift (Job 10:12; 33:4). With him is "the fountain of life" (Ps. 36:9). It is he who shows people "the path of life" (Ps. 16:11) and who "has preserved our lives" (Ps. 66:9). Moses can go so far as to say, "the Lord is your life" (Deut. 30:20), and similarly the Psalmist says, "The Lord is the
stronghold of my life” (Ps. 27:1), and he makes his prayer "to the God of my life" (Ps. 42:8). Jesus' words must be understood against this background. The Jews accepted unhesitatingly the truth that all life takes its origin from the Father, all life except his own. His own life is inherent in his being. Goodspeed translates, "the Father is self-existent." But it is characteristic of this Gospel to bring out the thought that the Son has been given (see on 3:35) a share in this life. To him it is given to have the same kind of life within himself as that which the Father has within himself. John's interest is in that life which is associated with the Son. Again and again he records sayings and incidents that bring this home (see on 1:4). Cf. 1 John 5:11, "God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son."

In the Old Testament judgment is so typical of God that he can be spoken of as "the Judge of all the earth" (Gen. 18:25), and "the Lord [i.e., Yahweh], the Judge" (Judg. 11:27). While he commits present aspects of judging to people so that they are frequently exhorted to do just judgment and the like, yet the final verdict on the entire race is in the hands of one Judge alone. It is this that makes the present passage startling. It is like the earlier expression that spoke of the Father as granting to the Son that he might have life within himself. Both point to divine prerogatives in the Son. For the giving of judgment to the Son cf. verse 22, and for authority cf. 17:2. Judgment is committed to him "because he is the Son of Man." There is uncertainty about this last expression as nothing in the Greek corresponds to "the"; usually in this expression both "Son" and "man" have the definite article; here neither has it. It is possible accordingly to take the expression to mean that Jesus will be the final judge of us all because he, too, is man. He shares our nature. This is not an impossible understanding of the text, but one would have expected more than this as a qualification of our final Judge. On the whole it seems likely that we should understand the expression (with NIV) as equivalent to the frequently occurring "the Son of Man" (see Additional Note C, pp. 150-52). This is Jesus' favorite self-designation and, moreover, it gives an excellent reason for judgment being committed to him. He is the heavenly figure to whom is given "authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed" (Dan. 7:14).  

The climax to this section is reached with the explicit declaration that it is the voice of the Son that will call the dead from their
The Johannine emphasis is on the present aspect of judgment. Here and now those who love darkness receive their condemnation. Here and now those who believe on Christ enter into eternal life. But this does not mean that the concepts of a future resurrection of the dead and of a judgment day are done away. John may perhaps not emphasize that future day, but he recognizes that it will come. This passage is most explicit. At the consummation of the age the voice of the Son will usher in the resurrection. All the dead will rise. Judgment, as always in Scripture, is on the basis of works. It is "those who have done good" who will "rise to live" (cf. 6:39-40), while "those who have done evil" rise only "to be condemned" (see on 3:17-18). This does not mean that salvation is on the basis of good works, for this very Gospel makes it plain over and over again that people enter eternal life when they believe in Jesus Christ. But the lives they live form the test of the faith they profess.

3. Witness to the Son (5:30-47)

30"By myself I can do nothing; 1 judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me. 31If I testify about myself, my testimony is not valid. 32There is another who testifies in my favor, and I know that his testimony about me is valid. 33You have sent to John and he has testified to the truth. 34Not that I accept human testimony; but I mention it that you may be saved. 35John was a lamp that burned and gave light, and you chose for a time to enjoy his light. 36I have testimony weightier than that of John. For the very work that the Father has given me to finish, and which I am doing, testifies that the Father has sent me. 37And the Father who sent me has himself testified concerning me. You have never heard his voice nor seen his form, 38nor does his word dwell in you, for you do not believe the one he sent. 39You diligently study the scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the scriptures that testify about me, 40yet you refuse to come to me to have life. 41I do not accept praise from men, 42but I know you. I know that you do not have the love of God in your hearts. 43I have come in my Father's name, and you do not accept me; but if someone else comes in his own name, you will accept him. 44How can
you believe if you accept praise from one another, yet make no effort to obtain the praise that comes from the only God.\textsuperscript{b} 45But do not think I will accuse you before the Father. Your accuser is Moses, on whom your hopes are set. 46If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me. 47But since you do not believe what he wrote, how are you going to believe what I say?"

\begin{itemize}
\item a. 39 Or \textit{Study diligently} (the imperative)
\item b. 44 Some early manuscripts \textit{the Only One}
\end{itemize}

The thought of witness is prominent in this Gospel (see on 1:7). John insists that what he writes is well attested. Here he records some words of Jesus that stress the witness borne to him. Jesus speaks of a fivefold witness. Witness is borne to him by (i) the Father (vv. 32, 37); (ii) the Baptist (v. 33); (iii) his works (v. 36); (iv) Scripture (v. 39); and (v) Moses (v. 46). The Evangelist has earlier put some emphasis on the witness borne by John the Baptist. Here Jesus mentions this witness, but puts little stress on it. He is not interested in human witness of any kind (v. 34). He refers his hearers rather to the witness of his own works, and most of all, to that of the Father. He does not expect them to respond to this witness, for, although they profess a profound reverence for the Scriptures, they do not in their heart of hearts believe them. For this reason they do not accept the testimony that they afford to Jesus.

This stress on the witness borne by God has implications that should not be overlooked. Witness commits. As we pointed out in the note on 1:7, when people get into a witness box and bear witness they are committed and no longer have freedom to come down on either side of the question at issue. They have burned their boats. They have destroyed their freedom. Now it is something like that that God has done in Christ. Jesus is the supreme revelation of God. If we want to know what God is like, we must look to Jesus. God, so to speak, has gone on record that this is what he is like. He has committed himself in Jesus.

\textbf{30} Up to this point Jesus has mostly spoken of himself in the third person as "the Son" or "the Son of Man," but from this point on he uses the first person, a number of times with the emphatic "I" (vv. 30, 31, 34, 36, 43, and 45). Once again Jesus stresses his dependence on the Father. As in verse 19, he confesses his inability to do anything completely of his own
volition. There he spoke of "seeing" the Father, here of hearing him. There is no essential difference between these. In both places the language is metaphorical and points us to the Son's complete dependence on the Father. In the present context the activity being discussed is judging. So Jesus says that his judgment is "just" (or "righteous"); the same Greek word does duty for both meanings). He is always in touch with the Father. His perfect obedience means that his judgment is divine. As in the earlier section, there is the combination of a great claim and the taking of a lowly place. Nothing more could be said for his judgment. But the reason that he exercises this "just judgment" is that he does not seek his own will but that of the Father (the Father being characterized in typical fashion as "him who sent me").

31-32 Jesus points to the impossibility of anyone's being accepted on the basis of his own word. Witness to anyone must always be borne by someone else; the law demands two or three witnesses (Deut. 19:15). So in his own case he agrees that if he bears witness to himself, that witness is not to be accepted. By saying "my testimony is not valid" he does not mean that it is, in fact, false. It is, in fact, true, but it is true because it is witness borne in conjunction with the Father. NIV and others translate "valid." but this seems to miss some, at any rate, of Jesus' point. He is not discussing the terms on which witness may be held to be legally valid. He is asserting that if of himself he were to bear witness to himself, that would make it untrue. The kind of witness he is bearing is true only if it is supported by the Father. In 8:13-14 the Jews maintain that his witness is in fact false. This he denies. His witness is indeed true. But here the point is rather that in view of the kind of witness he is bearing with its stress on oneness with the Father (cf. vv. 19ff., 30), the witness cannot possibly be true if it is unsupported. Independent confirmation is required. And that independent confirmation is available. Jesus does not name that Other who bears witness, but it is plain enough that he is referring to the Father; the suggestion that John the Baptist is in mind (accepted, i.e., by Marsh [p. 268]) is negated by v. 34. Jesus' consciousness of mission and of his relationship to the Father does not rest simply on his own convictions. The Father bears witness to him. The witness of the Father may not be acceptable to the Jews; it may not even be recognized by them. But it is enough for Jesus. He knows that this witness is "true." His word order puts
emphasis on "true." For him it is important that there is a witness apart from himself. His ministry does not arise from any human volition. And the witness is such that he can rely on it. "I know that his testimony... is true." It is the witness of the Father and nothing else that brings conviction to him.

33-35 The Jews did not receive this witness that meant so much to Jesus. But he goes on to make it plain that they could have done so. They had not been overlooked. A witness had been given to them that they could understand and appreciate. They had even regarded him highly. But they had not in the end accepted his witness to Jesus. "You" is emphatic, as though to say, "You yourselves had a witness. My position is not so strange after all." "Have sent" (rather than simply "sent") is somewhat unusual. The Greek perfect puts the stress not so much on their act of sending as on its continuing result. Not only did they send to John, but the result of their embassy remained permanently with them. Yet they did nothing with it. Similarly when it is said of John "he has testified," the thought is that of a continuing message (Weymouth, "and he both was and still is a witness to the truth"). John's words were not spoken into empty air and forgotten. He bore his witness and it continued (cf. 1:15 and note). There is a note of permanence about it. John's witness was "to the truth."98 This will have its full meaning here and point to Christ as the very embodiment of truth (cf. 14:6).

Now comes a little aside in which Jesus explains his reason for referring to John's witness. It is not because he himself bases his position on it. His "I" is emphatic. It sets him in contrast to them. The99 witness he receives is not "human testimony" (cf. 2:24-25). The whole emphasis of this passage is on the divine attestation of Jesus. His purpose in referring to John, then, is not to adduce further confirmation of what he already knows from God. It is to direct the attention of his hearers to that which might put them on the right way. John's witness, if heeded, could start them out on the path that leads to salvation. This had, in fact, happened to some of the Twelve. They had been numbered among John's followers, but had left him to follow Jesus, in accordance with John's own witness (cf. 1:35-37).

Jesus, in his turn, bears witness to John. The past tense, "was," may indicate that John was now dead, or at the least that he was in prison. His work was past. Jesus likens him to a lamp100 "that burned." There is a hint here at "burning up." John's witness was costly to himself.101 But the verb is used also in the sense of "kindle."102 John's lamp was not self-sufficient (as
was Jesus; cf. 1:4; 8:12). It was kindled from on high. "Gave light" points to John's unwavering testimony. A lamp shows people the way. John bore clear and consistent witness to Jesus. And Jesus recalls them to their reaction to John ("you" is emphatic — this was what you did). "Enjoy" is a word denoting an overflowing, enthusiastic happiness, not simply "joy." They had exulted for a time in his light. It may be that there is an idea of lighthearted merrymaking where there should have been serious purpose. The Jews never did take John seriously. They never came to grips with his message. John was steadily, unflickeringly, pointing the way in his stern call to seriousness of purpose. And these Jews, who professed to be the people of God and to be seeking the way of God, just as steadily ignored his essential message. Instead they took him to be part of the ecclesiastical furniture, so to speak. They exulted in God's gift of a prophet to their generation. As a result they promptly turned their backs on him.

36 Jesus' emphatic "I" (the Greek reads "But I") stresses his separation from people. There is all the majesty of his Person in the expression. Great though John undoubtedly was, gladly though Jesus attested his worth, his witness could not establish the position of such a one as the Son. He says, "I have testimony weightier than that of John." In fact he has a twofold witness. Jesus begins with his "works" (see on v. 20, and Additional Note G, pp. 607-13; NIV has "work," but the word is plural). He did this previously when John sent messengers to ask whether he were the Messiah (Matt. 11:4; Luke 7:22). These works are not simply the product of his own assessment of what is required. They are "given" him by the Father (see on 3:35). And they are tremendously important. Jesus repeats the word to fasten attention on it (NIV omits the second occurrence of "works"). The works that he does are not ordinary works. They are "what no one else did" (15:24). They are the Father's works, and, indeed, it is the Father abiding in him who does them (14:10). These works bear upon them the hallmark of their divine origin. They show that Jesus is not of human origin, but that the Father has sent him (for "sent" see on 3:17). Jesus' words have particular force, set as they are in the context of the healing of the lame man. Before the very eyes of the Jews there was evidence of divine power. And they rejected it!

37-38 From the works, the product of the Father, Jesus turns to the Father himself, who is described in terms of his sending of the Son. He has borne his witness to the Son (cf. 1 John 5:9). The past tense shows that this
witness is no new thing. The entire revelation of the Father from the very beginning has prepared the way for the coming of the Son. Rightly understood it bears witness to him. This is the witness that means so much to Jesus. Because he has the witness of God he is not troubled by the opposition of people. But though this witness is so clear and so valuable to him, he does not anticipate that the Jews will respond to it. Their ignorance is threefold, (i) They have never heard God's voice. Moses heard that voice (Exod. 33:11), but they are no true followers of Moses, otherwise they would have heard God's voice in Jesus (3:34; 17:8). (ii) They have never seen God's form. Israel saw that form (Gen. 32:30-31), but they are no true Israelites. Were they, they would have seen God in Jesus (14:9). (iii) They do not have God's word abiding in them. The Psalmist laid up God's word in his heart (Ps. 119:11), but they do not share his religious experience. Had they done so they would have received that word from Jesus (17:14). "For" may give the evidence or the cause of the preceding. The evidence is plain and simple. They do not believe him whom the Father sent. Their unbelief excludes the possibility of intercourse with God. But their unbelief is also the reason why they do not have the word abiding in them. Both senses are true and probably both are meant. There is a contrast between emphatic pronouns: He sent the Son, but you do not believe (for "believe" see Additional Note E, pp. 296-98). From all this we see that the Father's witness is accessible only to those who believe on the Son. As Barrett says, "the observer cannot sit in judgement upon it and then decide whether or not he will believe in Jesus. He must believe in Jesus first and then he will receive the direct testimony from God. . . . What John means is that the truth of God in Jesus is self-authenticating in the experience of the believer; but no such convenient phrase lay to his hand." The Greek here is ambiguous. It could mean "You study the Scriptures" or "Study the Scriptures." We should almost certainly take it as indicative. Throughout this section Jesus is taken up with the Jews and their attitude. Here he points out that they search the Scriptures constantly (which we know from other sources they did most diligently), thinking in this way to find eternal life. And, indeed, they might have found it thus, for the Scriptures, like the "works" (v. 36) and the Father (v. 37), bear witness to him. Had they rightly read the Scriptures they would no doubt have come to recognize the truth of his claims. But they read them with a
wooden and superstitious reverence for the letter,\textsuperscript{118} and they never penetrated to the great truths to which they pointed. The result is that in the presence of him to whom the Scriptures bear witness,\textsuperscript{119} in the presence of him who could have given them life, they are antagonistic. The words convey a rebuke for the wrong attitude of the Jews to scripture, coupled with a profound respect for the sacred writings. Cf. Moffatt: "You search the scriptures, imagining you possess eternal life in their pages — and they do testify to me — but\textsuperscript{120} you refuse to come to me for life." "You refuse to come to me" stresses the activity of the will; the Jews set themselves against Jesus. It is not unlike Luke 13:34: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!" There is the same thought of a tender eagerness to save, met by a stubborn refusal to be saved.

\textbf{41} In verse 34 Jesus disclaimed receiving witness from people. In the same spirit he now disclaims receiving "praise" (or "glory") from them. The word "glory" is patient of several meanings. Here Jesus means something like "esteem" or "praise." He does not set before himself the idea of pleasing people, but that of pleasing the Father. Therefore it is nothing to him whether people praise him or not. He does not receive the glory that they might wish to bestow on him.

\textbf{42} This verse is connected closely with the preceding; indeed, some editors make it part of the same sentence. Be that as it may, Jesus' refusal to accept glory from the Jews is bound up with his intimate knowledge of them (see on 2:24). This intimate knowledge enables him to say that they do not really love God.\textsuperscript{121} They make a profession of loving him, but in fact there is no real love. This is always the case where religion is basically self-willed. The Jews worked out their pattern of religion and tried to fit God into it. They did not seek first the way of God and then try to model their religious practices on it.\textsuperscript{122} They succumbed to the perennial temptation of religious people.

\textbf{43-44} Jesus returns to the thought of his rejection by the Jews, though in a form that connects it closely with the preceding sentence dealing with the Jewish love for the glory of people. It arises from this that they would receive one who came in his own name.\textsuperscript{123} Such a one they would understand and appreciate. He came from their world and spoke of their world. But Jesus is not of this type. Again his "I" is emphatic. It
differentiates him from his hearers and all their ilk. He takes his origin from the Father. He comes "in the name" of his Father (for "the name" see on 1:12). This means that he is intimately connected with the Father, that in some way he expresses what the Father stands for. It is an affirmation of community of purpose, and it roots his mission squarely in the will of God. But despite all this he knows that he will not be acceptable to the people of his generation. "How can you (the pronoun is emphatic) believe?" he asks. The thing is impossible with people whose habit it is to receive glory from each other, and who do not make a practice of seeking the glory of the one God. The issue is the glory of self or the glory of God. It is an issue that divides people still.

45-47 The discourse closes with an unexpected twist. The Jews prided themselves on their knowledge of Scripture, and Jesus had dealt with that (v. 39). Now he turns to their pride in Moses. They were proud of their connection with the great lawgiver. But Moses, not Jesus, is their accuser before God. The present tense signifies that Moses is a standing witness against them, a present accuser. They thought that they followed Moses, and could even make this their point of departure when disputing with the man born blind (9:28). They had "set (their) hope" on him. But just as they misunderstood the Scriptures in general, so they perverted the writings of Moses in particular. "The law of Moses is not a religion of salvation, it is the categorical imperative of God by which men are accused and exposed as sinners" (Hoskyns). Had they really paid heed to Moses they would have been convicted of their sin and eager to recognize the Savior. If they had really believed (notice the change from "set your hope" of the previous verse) what Moses said they would have believed what Jesus said, too. Moses' writings were prophetic. They pointed forward to Christ (cf. 1:45). Therefore those who rejected the Christ did not really believe what Moses had written. And if these people who professed to be Moses' disciples, who honored Moses' writings as sacred Scripture, who gave an almost superstitious reverence to the letter of the law, if these people did not really believe the things that Moses had written and which were the constant objects of their study, then how could they possibly believe the words, the spoken words of Jesus?

ADDITIONAL NOTE E: BELIEVING
One of the mysteries of the Fourth Gospel is that while the verb πιστεύω is found 98 times, the corresponding noun πίστις is completely absent. The reason for this is not known. It is usually held that the use of the noun in some of the pre-Gnostic systems of the day gave it unhealthy associations and rendered it suspect with John. This may be so, but if it is the case it still remains curious that he made such a large use of the verb. Matthew uses it but 11 times, Mark 10 (plus 4 more in the ending of ch. 16), and Luke 9 times, so that John's use is remarkable.

Broadly we may say that he uses the word in four ways. He uses it of believing facts and the like 12 times, of believing people (or Scripture, etc.) 19 times, of believing "in" Christ 36 times, while 30 times he uses it absolutely (the remaining passage is that wherein Jesus refused to "trust" himself to people, 2:24). There is nothing unusual about believing "that" such and such things happened, nor in believing people (dative). More significant is the use of the verb with the preposition είς, to believe "into."

While it may be overpressing the use of the preposition to insist on its literal meaning, yet John's idea is not unlike that of Paul when he speaks of people as being "in" Christ. Faith, for John, is an activity that takes people right out of themselves and makes them one with Christ. It is important to notice that the construction is a literal translation of the Hebrew קָפָן. This strengthens the hand of those who see a Semitic original behind this Gospel. But it also points us to an important aspect of the subject on which Dodd has well commented, "It would seem that πιστεύειν with the dative so inevitably connoted simple credence, in the sense of an intellectual judgment, that the moral element of personal trust or reliance inherent in the Hebrew and Aramaic phrase — an element integral to the primitive Christian conception of faith in Christ — needed to be otherwise expressed." This "moral element of personal trust" is of the first importance for any understanding of Christianity, and there had to be some way of bringing it out. πιστεύειν είς is the construction that does this.

It may be no coincidence that it is this Gospel that speaks so much of believing that also speaks often of "abiding" in God or in Christ. While believing and abiding are not connected in so many words (though cf. 12:46), they clearly mean much the same. In fact it might be held that the abiding in Christ that is stressed in the opening verses of chapter 15 is practically equivalent to believing, and that it is this fact that explains the otherwise strange absence of the verb "believe" from that passage.
So important is this conception of believing "in" Christ that the verb can be used absolutely, with no object expressed. There is no need in this Gospel to say who is in mind when "believing" is spoken of. Believing and Christ are so much part of one another that the former inevitably implies the latter. This is well illustrated in Jesus' conversation with the man born blind. To Jesus' question "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" the man replies, "Who is he, sir? Tell me so that I may believe in him." But when he finds the answer to his question he says not, "I believe in him," but simply, "I believe" (9:35-38).137 Again, there is not really a great deal of difference between believing the facts about Christ (really believing them) and believing, as we see from John's reason for writing his Gospel, "that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name" (20:31). In the same way simple credence of the Father is connected with the gift of eternal life (5:24).

The conclusion to which we come is that, while each of the various constructions employed has its own proper sense, they must not be too sharply separated from one another. Basic is the idea of that activity of believing which takes the believer out of himself and makes him one with Christ. But really to believe the Father or really to believe the facts about Christ inevitably involves this activity. Whichever way the terminology is employed it stresses the attitude of trustful reliance on God that is basic for the Christian.138

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1. Cf. Dodd: "It is God alone of whom it can properly be said that through union with Him (mutual indwelling) man enjoys eternal life (vi.53, 56). Here therefore, as unequivocally as in v. 17 sqq., specifically divine functions and prerogatives are ascribed to Christ. We see therefore how important it is for our author's argument that the discourse in ch. v should precede the present discourse" (IFG, p. 340). D. M. Smith, Jr., argues that Bultmann has not made out his case for
reversing the order of the two chapters (The Composition and Order of the Fourth Gospel [New Haven, 1965], pp. 128ff.).

2. Wright is impressed by the absence of external evidence and thinks a verdict must be "not proven." He also says, "The conjecture is interesting, but it may well be dictated by a desire to confer a chronological accuracy and concern to the Evangelist of which there are few signs in the Gospel."

3. Cf. Morgan, "On the human level, what Jesus did that day, and what He said that day, cost Him His life. They never forgave Him,"

4. Cullmann sees in the incident a reference to baptism (Early Christian Worship [London, 1954], pp. 84ff.). But he admits that "It may seem at first sight that we are forcing a system" (p. 84). It does so seem, all the more so in that the only evidence he offers is: "After the previous chapters which refer explicitly or implicitly to Baptism in the Christian community, the connexion with Baptism here too is quite compelling" (p. 86). But if we do not see baptism in the previous chapters we will scarcely find it here.

5. For μετά ταύτα see on 2:12.

6. For a discussion of the whole question see Westcott’s Additional Note (pp. 204-7). He favors the Feast of Trumpets, but few have been found to support him. Most commentators favor Purim or Passover. The theological context of John’s treatment of the theme does not help us for the thought of judgment, which is prominent in this chapter, is associated with no less than four of the feasts. Thus we read: “At four times in the year is the world judged: at Passover, through grain; at Pentecost, through the fruits of the tree; on New Year’s Day all that come into the world pass before him like legions of soldiers, for it is written, He that fashioneth the hearts of them all, that considereth all their works; and at the Feast (of Tabernacles) they are judged through water” (Mishnah Rosh. Hash, 1:2). Some manuscripts have the article, "the" feast, notably Κ C L fl co. If it be accepted, the feast will probably be Tabernacles; cf. 7:2 (though some scholars think of the Passover). The article is, however, omitted by p66 p75 A B D W Θ fl 3 etc. There seems little doubt that we should read "a feast." But it does not seem possible to identify the feast with any certainty.

7. For the article with Τεροσολύμως see on 2:23.

8. The problem is complicated by the fact that κολυμβήθρα might be either nominative or dative; the most ancient manuscripts do not differentiate. Some manuscripts read "in the sheep — " (ἐν τῷ προβατικῷ), but most have "by the sheep — ," a reading attested by p66 p75 B C K W suppl f1 f1 3 28 33 565 700 sa bo, and some omit it. But the attestation is strong and "by the sheep —' should be accepted. Both nominative and dative are difficult, and in either case a noun must be supplied. If we take it as nominative we must supply a noun to go with προβατική ("gate" is supplied by NIV, NRSV, GNB, REB, etc., but other suggestions have been made). If we view the term as dative it must be taken with προβατική, but then we must supply a subject for the verb, e.g. "Now at the Sheep-Pool in Jerusalem there is a place with five colonnades" (NEB); "Now at the Sheep Pool in Jerusalem there is a building" (JB). On the whole it seems as if we should take the word as dative and see the modern widespread acceptance of "gate" with "sheep" as mistaken, Barrett may well be right in regarding as perhaps decisive the fact that "the whole ancient tradition takes together προβατική κολυμβήθρα, and that no ancient writer (none in fact before A.D. 1283) supplies πύλη with προβατική." Abbott finds no evidence anywhere for the ellipsis of "gate" (2216). He points out that in Nehemiah, for example, where the sheep gate is referred to, the word "gate" is explicit. Moulton and Howard cite a Christian amulet, possibly of the fifth century, which appeals to "the God of the sheep pool" ὁ θεός τῆς προβατικῆς κολυμβήθρας (M, II, p. 85n.). A κολυμβήθρα would be quite a large pool. The word is cognate with κολυμβάω "to swim" (used in Acts 27:43), and is defined in AS as "a swimming-pool."

9. See J. N. Sevenster, Do You Know Greek? (Leiden, 1968) and articles such as "Did Jesus speak Hebrew?" by J. A. Emerton (JThS, n.s. XII [1961], pp. 189-202); "The Words of Jesus according to St. John," by A. J. B. Higgins (BJRL, XLIX [1966-67], pp. 363-86); "Hebrew as the Spoken and Written Language in the Last Days of the Second Temple," by Jehoshua M. Grintz (JBL,
LXXX [1961], pp. 32-47). These writers show that there is no certainty in the matter. Some hold that a variety of Hebrew was spoken in first-century Palestine, and this may well have been the case. Scripture was read in Hebrew, and the learned at any rate understood it. We cannot rule out Hebrew as impossible here, but Aramaic seems, on the evidence, to have been in all probability the language in common use, and thus the language John meant.

10. Probably the last mentioned is a variant of "Bethzatha." The strongest attestation seems to be that of "Bethsaida" (p^66 p^75 BW pc c f^2 z vg co Tert), but it is not strong enough to be decisive. "Bethesda" appears to be a Greek form of the Aramaic "Bethzatha," meaning "House of Mercy." "Bethsaida" may be a corruption of "Bezetha," which Josephus tells us was the name of the quarter of the city in which the pool lay, or it may come from ספתה "House of Olives." Schonfield thinks it probably means "Place of Alkaline Salt." Since, however, John gives no indication of attaching significance to the meaning of the name this does not help us in our quest for the original reading. David J. Wieand points out that Bethesda, the best-attested reading, probably means "House of Fish" or "House of the Fisher," and that there was a good deal of fish symbolism in the early church ("John v.2 and the Pool of Bethesda," NTS, XII [1965-66], pp. 392-404). This would favor the acceptance of this reading once it was introduced. He thinks Bethesda is likely to have been the original reading, that this was corrupted into Bethsaida, and that the fish symbolism assisted the acceptance of the reading once established.


12. Augustine interprets the passage allegorically. He sees in the five porches a reference to the five books of Moses, utterly unable to bring healing (17.2; p. 111).

13. This identification is accepted by The Westminster Historical Atlas to the Bible (see p. 99 and plate XVII:B), the Rand McNally Bible Atlas (pp. 392-93), et al. See especially the discussion by E. J. Vardaman (BT, 14 [1963], pp. 27-29). He points out the importance of the discovery of a reference to this pool in the copper scroll at Qumran. Not only does the discovery point to the true name as Bethesda, but the fact that the form is dual points to twin pools. Wieand discusses six suggested sites and agrees that the identification of the twin pools of St. Anne with Bethesda is "virtually established" (p. 397). This site is now several feet below ground level, the natural result of the rebuilding that has taken place through the centuries. Many commentators point out that the identification is apparently ancient, for a Crusader church built over the pool has a mural depicting an angel arising out of the pool. G. Adam Smith is rather doubtful of the identification and inclines to the Virgin's spring (Jerusalem, II [London, 1908], pp. 564-67). St. Anne's twin pools, however, seem more likely. J. A. T. Robinson agrees that the twin pools give us the location of Bethesda, but argues that the pools there are unlikely to be those of which John writes. They were rather reservoirs supplying water to the Temple but unsuitable for healing activities. Instead he refers to a number of small grottoes, immediately to the east of the pools, with steps leading down to them, stone basins apparently used for washing, and evidence of a healing sanctuary (Priority, pp. 54-59). It may well be that the twin pools are not the place where the man was trying to get down to the water, but it would seem that they show us the general locality where people thought healing could be obtained.

14. It is not found in p^66 p^75 B C*D W 33 157 f l q v g co etc. The authorities that include it (the more important being A C^3 K L Θ f1 f13 Tert) differ among themselves.

15. R. D. Potter says that there is no spring there now. He argues from fragments of stone piping that water was piped in from the Temple area or elsewhere. "Then the 'moving of the water' would be the necessary renewals" (SE, I, p. 336). But if Robinson is correct (n. 13 above) the "moving of the water" would have taken place in an adjacent grotto, not the pool of which Potter writes.
16. It may not be without significance that in the Old Testament the leaping of lame men is sometimes associated with the end time when the Messiah would come (e.g. Isa. 35:6). John may have selected this miracle to bring out something of the messiahship of Jesus.

17. Those who delight in allegories have not failed to point out that this is the number of the years wherein Israel wandered in the wilderness (Deut. 2:14). They see in the man a symbol of the Jews at the time of Jesus, paralysed in their lack of faith. Or, with Wright they ask, "Is it not that the author inserts this period of time because it symbolises to him a period of spiritual impotency prior to the full enrichment of life which Jesus is now bringing to those who have faith in Him: a period of 'homelessness' prior to the unveiling of the Father's heart which constitutes the Mission of Jesus?"

But while John may not have been unmindful of symbolic meanings, his mention of the thirty-eight years seems primarily to be a way of emphasizing the intractability of the complaint. Perhaps also he means us to infer that it was the years of suffering that aroused Jesus’ compassion. Chrysostom uses the persistence of the man in seeking a cure through all those years to point a moral: "while we if we have persisted for ten days to pray for anything and have not obtained it, are too slothful afterwards to employ the same zeal" (XXXV.2; p. 126). For the use of an accusative after ἔχω to denote the length of time cf. v. 6; 8:57; 9:21; 11:17.

18. The aorist, γνοὺς, is rather against this. It is better understood as "having come to know," "having found out."

19. Barclay has a helpful comment: "The first essential towards receiving the power of Jesus is the intense desire for it. Jesus comes to us and says: 'Do you really want to be changed?' If in our inmost hearts we are well content to stay as we are there can be no change for us. The desire for the better things must be surging in our hearts." Findlay reminds us that "an eastern beggar often loses a good living by being cured of his disease."

20. Cf. Calvin: "This sick man does what we nearly all do. He limits God's help to his own ideas and does not dare promise himself more than he conceives in his mind."

21. The word is κράβαττος (also spelled κράββατος; in it is usually κράβακτος). It is apparently Macedonian in origin and denotes a campbed, a pallet (cf. Latin grabatus). Moffatt and NIV translate it "mat." MM speaks of it as "the poor man's bed or mattress." It is a late word. Dods comments, "He was commanded to take up his bed that he might recognise that the cure was permanent."

22. Notice the significance of the tenses, ἀρον, ἠρεν, of the single action of rising, περιπάτει, περιεπάτει, of his continuing to walk.

23. The immediacy of the cure is stressed by the use of εύθέως. This word is common in Matthew and the very similar εύθύς is frequent in Mark. But both are rare in this Gospel (three times each), and the rarity puts all the greater emphasis on the use in the present passage.

24. Cf. C. G. Montefiore, "in spite of the many restrictions and regulations, the Sabbath was upon the whole a joy and a blessing to the immense majority of Jews throughout the Rabbinic period" (The Synoptic Gospels, I [London, 1909], p. 93).

25. Some of the detailed regulations are passing wonderful. For example "(On the Sabbath) a man may borrow of his fellow jars of wine or jars of oil, provided that he does not say to him, 'Lend me them' " (Shab. 23:1). This would imply a transaction, and a transaction might involve writing, and writing was work and therefore forbidden. Or again, "I f a man put out the lamp (on the night of the Sabbath) from fear of the gentiles or of thieves or of an evil spirit, or to suffer one that was sick to sleep, he is not culpable; (but if he did it with a mind) to spare the lamp or to spare the oil or to spare the wick, he is culpable" (Shab. 2:5). The attitude to healing on the Sabbath is illustrated by a curious provision that a man may not put vinegar on his teeth to alleviate tooth ache. But he may take vinegar in the ordinary course of a meal, and the rabbis philosophically concluded, "if he is healed he is healed" (Shab. 14:4).

26. There is no article with σάββατον (nor is there one in vv. 10 and 16, though one appears in v. 18). John does not so much draw attention here to the Sabbath as to the fact that it was a sabbath.
kind of day, a day when certain regulations applied, ἕν ἐκεῖνή τῇ ἡμέρᾳ is also hardly what we would have expected. Westcott finds the whole expression "very remarkable." It "suggests the idea that the sabbath was a day of rest other than the weekly sabbath."

27. The perfect τῷ τεθεραπευμένῳ puts some stress on the permanence of the cure. By contrast in v. 13 ἵαθείς points to the single act of healing.

28. Mishnah, Shab. 7:2 lists thirty-nine classes of work forbidden on a Sabbath, the last being "taking aught from one domain into another." An interesting regulation provides that if a man took out "a living man on a couch he is not culpable by reason of the couch, since the couch is secondary" (Shab. 10:5). This clearly implies that the carrying of the "couch" by itself is culpable. And, of course, it would have been in order to carry the man on his couch; it was the man's carrying of the couch that was blameworthy!

29. Cf. Strachan, "The rabbinic legal regulations were dealing with what is also a modern social problem. The religious authorities were aware that destruction of the Sabbath rest-day created a real danger to the higher values of human life. It is as well that we should remember this when we criticize their methods."

30. "Well" is the translation of ὑγίης, an adjective meaning "healthy." It is curious that John uses the word five times in this chapter and once only in the rest of his Gospel. It is not a very common word, being found five times in the rest of the New Testament.

31. McClymont comments: "The very form of the question showed how entirely their thoughts were occupied with the infringement of their rule to the exclusion of the miracle of healing. They put the question for the purpose of dealing with the offender."

32. Cf. Temple: "Christianity founds hospitals, and atheists are cured in them, never knowing that they owe their cure to Christ. Prisons are reformed under the influence which flows from the Gospel; and the prisoners never know — sometimes the reformers themselves do not know — that Christ is the Author of the reform."

33. The verb is ἐκνεύω (here only in the New Testament); it means "to bend the head aside" (AS), and so "to dodge."

34. The genitive absolute, ὁχλοῦ ὄντος is ambiguous. It may give the reason for the withdrawal, or the means of the withdrawal. Augustine has an interesting comment on this verse: "It is difficult in a crowd to see Christ: a certain solitude is necessary for our mind; it is by a certain solitude of contemplation that God is seen" (17.11; p. 115). Of the man he says, "He did not see Jesus in the crowd, he saw Him in the temple" (ibid.).

35. For μετά ταύτα see on 2:12.

36. For this use of the present tense see on 2:16.

37. Yet we should not overlook the fact that there was a certain amount of danger for the man. He was still under the accusation of Sabbath breaking, an offense for which the death penalty was possible. His defense was that his healer had told him to carry his pallet. By producing the name he made his case.

38. Cf. Augustine, "They sought darkness from the Sabbath more than light from the miracle" (21.6; p. 140).

39. Similarly C. B. Williams renders: "because He persisted in doing such things. . . ." The imperfect, ἐποίει, may of course signify "began to do," but even so it implies continuity. However we understand it, the verb indicates more than a single action.

40. Here and in v. 19 the verb is in the aorist middle, the only examples in 78 occurrences of ἀποκρίνομαι in this Gospel (there are a few places where the present might be either middle or passive). Abbott suggests that the middle here has something of a legal force, "made answer to the charge," "made his defence" (2537). So Marsh, "the word means to make a public and formal defence" (p. 256). MM says that examples of the aorist middle are frequent in the papyri, "but they are without exception legal reports."
41. In Mark 2:27-28 the word "man" occurs both simply and in the expression "Son of Man." On this Moffatt comments, "Had the original Aramaic simply meant 'man' in both sentences of Mark, it would have been translated as such uniformly, and, besides, Jesus would not have claimed that man was master of the sabbath which God had instituted" (The Theology of the Gospels [London, 1928], p. 152). Cullmann agrees that an Aramaic bamasha, meaning "man," might be mistranslated υίος τού ἀνθρώπου, "son of man," but he points out that Mark cannot have given the expression a meaning different from that which he employs elsewhere. "He himself has thought, in any case, of Jesus as Lord of the Sabbath" (pp. 88-89).

42. There is an account of a visit to Rome by four eminent rabbis who on being asked why God does not keep the Sabbath retorted that it is lawful to carry things within one's own courtyard and this whole universe is God's courtyard (Midrash Rabba: Exodus, 30.9). That the Father works on the Sabbath was accepted.

43. I have dealt with this more fully in The Lord from Heaven (London and Downers Grove, 1974), pp. 31-35.

44. It is somewhat curious that he says, "to this very day" (really "until now," έος άρτι) rather than "continually" or the like. Godet gives the force of it by supposing Jesus at work in the carpenter's shop at Nazareth. Should some suggest that he cease he might well reply: "My Father works until now, and I also (consequently) cannot cease to work."

45. Dodd cites a Hermetic saying, "God is not idle, else all things would be idle, for all things are full of God" (IFG, p. 20).

46. Cf. Plummer, "to cease to do good is not to keep the Sabbath but to sin."

47. Πατέρα ίδιον.

48. Cf. Stauffer: "Jesus does not displace God, he represents him, he can make himself equal, indeed identical, with God (John 5.18; 10.30). The incarnate Word is the completely valid bearer of divine revelation in the form of this world" (NTT, p. 122). Odeberg sees the words as corresponding to a rabbinic expression "which to a Rabbinicean is equivalent to 'makes himself independent of God', i.e. by usurping for himself the Divine power and authority. . . . From the Rabbinic point of view the profanation of the Holy One . . . consisted not in his calling the Holy One his Father, but in his presuming upon a peculiar relationship in virtue of which he had the right of performing the same 'continual work' as his Father" (FG, p. 203).

49. "Was ... breaking" translates ἐλυεν, a verb that has a meaning like "destroy," so that BAGD can say, "Jesus is accused not of breaking the Sabbath, but of doing away w. it" (4). In their view his attitude meant the abolition of the Sabbath.

50. Hoskyns comments on the importance of the Jews' accusation: "The Evangelist recognizes that the accusation of the Jews is a thrust at the very heart of the mission of the Church; for their accusation overthrows the work of Jesus by making of it a thing to be set beside, and compared with, the work of God."

51. έζήτουν. The verb is a favorite one with John, who uses it 34 times (Matthew 14 times, Mark 10 times, Luke 25 times). He uses it, as here, of seeking to kill Jesus 8 times and of seeking to arrest him twice more.

52. μάλλον is usually rendered "the more" (NIV, "all the harder"), which is a little strange since there has been no suggestion of killing Jesus up to this point. We should probably take it in the sense "rather." Until now they had been "persecuting" him in a fairly mild way. Now that they realized what his claims were, they tried rather to kill him.

53. Ryle adds, "To me it seems one of the deepest things in the Bible." Similarly Phillips in his translation inserts a subheading: "Jesus makes His tremendous claim."

54. It is, as Barclay says, "an act of the most extraordinary and unique courage.... He must have known that to speak like this was to court death. It is His claim to be King; and He knew well that the man who listened to words like this had only two alternatives — the listener must either
accept Jesus as the Son of God, or he must hate Him as a blasphemer and seek to destroy Him. There is hardly any passage where Jesus appeals for men's love and defies men's hatred as He does here."

55. For ἀπεκρίνατο see n. 40 above.

56. Cf. Odeberg, "This is exactly how one versed in Rabbinic thought would try to make his compere understand the relation between the Father and the Son. The expressions reflect, as has been pointed out already by Schlatter, characteristic Rabbinic thought and language" (FG, p. 203).

57. Dodd sees here a genuine parable: "In John v. 19-20a (down to . . . οὐτός ποιεῖ) we have a perfectly realistic description of a son apprenticed to his father's trade. He does not act on his own initiative; he watches his father at work, and performs each operation as his father performs it. The affectionate father shows the boy all the secrets of his craft" (HTFG, p. 386, n. 2). It is possible that the words have their origin in such a situation, but if so the meaning has been transformed and deepened.

58. Of the absolute use of ὁ υἱός Westcott says: "The idea is simply that of the absolute relation of the Divine Persons, of the Son to the Father, and consequently this term is used (19-23), and not (as below vv. 30ff.) 'I' — the Christ whom you reject — or 'the Son of God' (v. 25), or 'Son of man' (v. 27), which emphasise the divine or human nature of the Lord relatively to man." Murray points out that the Jews recognized the divine sonship of the Messiah, "But, somehow, they had never regarded it as more than an honorific title, familiar enough on the lips of the courtiers of an oriental despot, but never meant to be taken literally. They were, therefore, not a little startled when Jesus refused to regard it as a mere metaphor, and declared that His divine Sonship, so far from being a mere adjunct of His earthly sovereignty, was in fact the living root and ground of it." It is noteworthy that Jesus uses ὁ υἱός absolutely eight times in vv. 19-26 and only five times in all the rest of this Gospel. His usual self-designation is "the Son of Man." But here he is giving strong emphasis to his divine sonship. See further on v. 25.

59. For the emphatic ἐχεῖνος see on 1:8.

60. Abbott finds significance in the use of χάι here. John "dwells on the principle of correspondence between the visible and the invisible, between the incarnate Son below and the Father above" (2148).

61. Schonfield misses the point with his translation, "What he does the Son copies." It is not a question of copying: the Son does the same deeds as the Father does. Cf. Barclay: "The things that God does are the things that Jesus does; and the things that Jesus does are the things that God does. The great, salient truth about Jesus is that in Jesus we see God." R. H. Lightfoot comments: "The union, therefore, is absolute. It is not, for instance, as though the Son reveals the Father in certain particular ways or in certain remarkable actions; no moment of His life, and no action of His, but is the expression of the life and action of the Father."

62. Chrysostom points out that "'can do anything of Himself' is the expression of One not taking away His (own) authority, but declaring the unvarying resemblance of His Power and Will (to those of the Father)" (38.4; p. 136). Augustine goes from the thought that the Father and the Son are inseparable to the thought of the eternal generation of the Son. "The generating flame is coeval with the light which it generates: the generating flame does not precede in time the generated light; but from the moment the flame begins, from that moment the light begins. Show me the flame without light, and I show thee God the Father without Son. Accordingly, 'the Son cannot do anything of Himself, but what He seeth the Father doing,' implies, that for the Son to see and to be begotten of the Father, is the same thing" (20.8; p. 135).

63. For φιλέω see on 3:16. This is the only place where John uses it for the love of the Father for the Son.

64. In 14:10 the works Jesus does can even be said to be done by the Father. Notice that John often uses the term "works," ἔργα, to denote the miracles (cf. 5:36; 7:3, 21; 10:25, 32, 37-38; 14:10-11; 15:24). The word does not denote something spectacular, but normal daily work; what passes
with us as miracle is to Christ no more than a "work." The term is wider than the miracles, and includes all that Jesus does. But its application to the miracles is the important thing. See Additional Note G, pp. 607-13.

65. ὑμεῖς is emphatic. There will be nothing astonishing to Jesus in all this, but his attitude is in sharp contrast to that of his unbelieving hearers.

66. Jesus does not often speak of arousing wonder. But wonder may lead to faith (14:11), and thus be commended. Clement of Alexandria has recorded a statement attributed to Jesus: "he that wondereth shall reign, and he that reigneth shall rest" (Strom. 1.9.45; cited from M. R. James, The Apocryphal New Testament [Oxford, 1926], p. 2). James also cites an amplified version of the saying from Clement himself, and from the Oxyrhynchus Sayings; it occurs also in the Gospel of Thomas, 1.

67. The idea was accepted throughout Judaism. SBk cites a rabbinic saying: "Three keys are in the hand of God and they are not given into the hand of any agent, namely that of the rain (Deut. 28:12), that of the womb (Gen. 30:22), and that of the raising of the dead (Ezek. 37:13)" (I, p. 523). Cf. also the Shemonet Esreh (one of the most ancient Jewish forms of prayer: "Blessed art Thou, O Lord, the shield of Abraham. Thou art mighty for ever, O Lord; Thou restorkest life to the dead . . . who sustainest the living with beneficence, quickenest the dead . . . who can be compared unto Thee, O King, who killest and maketh alive again . . . ? And faithful art Thou to quicken the dead. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, who restorkest the dead" (E. Schürer, A History of the Jewish People, II, ii [Edinburgh, 1885], pp. 85-86).

68. For this use of χαί see n. 60 above.

69. There is a double negative οὐδὲ . . . οὐδὲν to emphasize the point. Similarly there is an air of finality about the perfect δέδωχεν.

70. Cf. SBk: "According to the Rabbinic view it is exclusively God who will judge the world.... In Rabbinic literature there is no passage which unambiguously places the judgment of the world in the hand of the Messiah" (II, p. 465). S. Mowinckel stresses the point (He That Cometh [Oxford, 1959], pp. 313, 319, 336, etc.).

71. Phillips actually translates "believes in...." But this obscures the construction used.

72. Wright brings out the force of this. "To stop the ears is one way of listening: it is to pass a sentence of judgement upon oneself.

Still, as of old,
Man by himself is priced.
For thirty pieces Judas sold
Himself, not Christ."

73. Bultmann points out that "Jesus' words are not didactic propositions but an invitation and a call to decision" (Theology of the New Testament, II [London, 1953], p. 21). He sees this not only in constructions like the present one with a participle stating the condition (see also 6:35; 8:12, etc.), but also in sayings where an if-clause precedes (e.g., 6:51; 7:16-17; 8:51, etc.).

74. Wright, for example, says forthrightly, "It should be manifest to every reader, not wholly devoid of the historical imagination, that by the 'dead' the Evangelist neither means those who are physically dead nor the completely annihilated. . . . The Evangelist — true to his Hebrew mentality — is giving expression to the fact of the life-giving mission of Jesus; he is not indulging in speculations about a problematical future. . . . Those who are 'in the tombs' are those who are in need of spiritual quickening." But this ignores the language used. As Plummer points out (on v. 29), "A passing from spiritual death to judgment is not spiritual resurrection."

75. Hoskyns emphasizes the eschatological significance of all this: "In the Fourth Gospel the history of Jesus possesses its proper, final, eschatological form — son of man, good and evil, death and life, judgement and salvation. But this form has not been imposed upon Jesus or upon the earlier tradition by the Evangelist: it is the meaning which the Father has impressed upon His Son and which Jesus, the son of man, understood, accepted, obeyed, and made known."
When the reference is to the future judgment in verse 28 the expression is ἔρχεται ὡρα, but here there is added χαι νῦν ἐστίν. A similar expression is found in 4:23 where the reference is clearly to the present, while in 4:21 ἔρχεται ὡρα applies to the future.

John to a large extent follows the usual custom of employing an accusative after ἀκούω where a thing is heard, and a genitive when a person is heard. But ten times he uses the genitive of the thing (here; 5:28; 6:60; 7:40; 10:3, 16, 27; 12:47; 18:37; 19:13). It is likely that this construction means "to hear with appreciation." Bernard (on 3:8) accepts this use wherever the genitive is found, but he does not notice that John always uses the genitive with persons.

This seems to reflect the meaning of the Greek better than such translations as those of Knox, "The Father has within him the gift of life," or Rieu, "the Father, being as He is the source of Life."

Augustine says that God "does not, as it were, borrow life, nor, as it were, become a partaker of life, of a life which is not what Himself is; but 'hath life in Himself,' so that the very life is to Him His very self. . . . God lives, and the soul also lives; but the life of God is unchangeable, the life of the soul is changeable" (19.11; p. 126). He illustrates from light. People require an external source of light, "but since you remain in darkness when the candle is withdrawn, you have not light in yourselves" (ibid.). He concludes his discussion with the point that there is equality between the Son and the Father, with only this difference, "that the Father hath life in Himself, which none gave Him, whilst the Son hath life in Himself which the Father gave" (ibid.).

Chrysostom refuses to take δτι as meaning "because" ("since then what hindered all men from being judges?"). He understands it to mean "that," giving the sense, "That He is the Son of Man, marvel not at this" (39.3; p. 140). He has not convinced very many, however, either in the meaning he assigns to δτι or in his sentence division.

Dods accepts this meaning. He lists several ways in which the passage has been interpreted: the judgment is to take place with human publicity, Christ redeems men as man, people should be judged by the lowliest and most loving, the Judge must share the nature of the judged, only a man could enter the sphere of judicial office and have the compassion a judge of men ought to have, and the judgment is an act of homage to God and must proceed from within humanity. He finally accepts the view of Beyschlag that men judge themselves by their attitude to the man, Jesus.

Bernard thinks that the reason for the omission of the definite article is that "Official titles have a tendency to become anarthrous." But this tendency is not marked in connection with this title. It may be better to see in it an emphasis on the nature rather than the personality of the Son of man. The expression is anarthrous also in Heb. 2:6; Rev. 1:13; 14:14, but these all seem to be quotations from or, at least, references to LXX. But almost certainly we should see the real reason in the rule formulated by E. C. Colwell that if a predicate noun precedes the verb (as it does in the case of the present passage) it usually does not take the article even though it is definite (see on 1:1). This supports the view that we should understand the expression here as meaning "the Son of Man." It is also worth noting that the expression is anarthrous in LXX of Dan. 7:13 (which is usually taken as the origin of the expression "Son of Man"), and in the original בֵּן-חַיִים.

There is an ambiguity about δτι. If we take it to mean "that," τούτο will refer to the following and the passage will mean, "Do not be amazed at this, that a time is coming . . ."; if we understand it as "because," then τούτο will refer to the preceding: "Do not be amazed at this, because a time is coming, . . ." The second alternative is preferable.

Cf. Bernard: "Such a doctrine, no doubt, has its roots in Jewish eschatology, but the Fourth Gospel cannot be understood unless it be realised that Jn. has not abandoned this, while he lays his emphasis on the spiritual conceptions of eternal life and judgment in the present." Similarly Barrett: "There is no reason whatever for regarding vv. 28f. as a supplement to the original Johannine discourse unless it is held incredible that John should have thought of resurrection and judgment under both present and future aspects." S. D. F. Salmond discusses John's teaching on life and judgment (The Christian Doctrine of Immortality [Edinburgh, 1907], pp. 387-95). He concludes that,
"Though they occupy a smaller place in John's writings, and are subordinate to other truths, the Second Coming, the Resurrection, the Judgment, the Life Eternal appear in John's teaching as they do in that of the New Testament generally" (p. 395).

85. Mowinckel points out that there is not much evidence in Jewish writings to link the Messiah with the raising of the dead: "the thought that the Son of Man will raise the dead is overshadowed by the more theocentric view, that God himself will work the miracle; and we never find a clear and emphatic statement that the Son of Man will raise the dead" (He That Cometh, pp. 400-401). It is distinctively Christian doctrine that is set forth here.

86. For οί τὰ φαύλα πράξαντες see on 3:20.

87. Cf. Calvin, "He marks out believers by their good works, just as elsewhere He says that a tree is known by its fruit. . . . The Papists' inference from these passages, that eternal life repays the merits of works, may be refuted without any difficulty. For Christ is not here treating of the cause of salvation, but only distinguishing the elect from the reprobate by their own mark."

88. Both here and in verse 19 "the order of words lays great stress on οὐδέν. If he were to act independently of God (supposing such a thing to be possible), Jesus would be completely powerless. The whole meaning and energy of his work lie in the fact that it is not his work but God's" (Barrett).

89. Cf. Bultmann: "All these different phrases, that the Son does or says what he has seen or heard with the Father, give expression to the same idea, namely, that he is the Revealer in whom we encounter God himself speaking and acting" (p. 253; on v. 20).

90. Chrysostom gives Christ's meaning thus: "As therefore none could object to the Father judging, so neither may any to Me, for the sentence of Each is given from the same Mind" (39.4; p. 141).

91. There is a noble saying attributed to Rabban Gamaliel: "Do his will as if it was thy will that he may do thy will as if it was his will. Make thy will of none effect before his will that he may make the will of others of none effect before thy will" (Ab. 2:4). Yet there is a suspicion of using God to secure one's ends in the rabbinic saying that is quite absent from the Gospel saying. For Jesus' concern to do God's will see on 4:34.

92. Cf. the rabbinic sayings in Ket. 2:9, "none may be believed when he testifies of himself. . . . None may testify of himself."

93. ἕγώ is emphatic. This is the case also in the preceding verse: "By myself I can do nothing" and in verse 34, "Not that I accept human testimony." In the present verse the force of the emphasis is, "If I alone and in fellowship with no other" (Westcott). To attempt to assert himself (were that conceivable) would be to break the harmony between himself and the Fattier.

94. Cf. Odeberg, "self-testimony is not only not valid, but it is eo ipso not true ... the very existence of J's (i.e. Jesus's) μαρτυρία is conditioned by his absolute unity with and dependence on his Father. Thus self-testimony, in the sense in which it is spoken of in 5:31, means not merely testimony concerning oneself but an act of severance from the centre and fountain-head of the spiritual world, the establishment of oneself as an independent or self-dependent being; such an act of self-assertion in the spiritual realm at once relegates the subject of that act to the class of beings 'who are of the lie', 'who hate the light' or, to use another technical expression of Jn for this category, 'who seek their own glory' (8:50), or who 'come in their own name' (5:43, 5:30)" (FG, p. 219).

95. Cf. Temple: "if His word stood alone, it would not be true at all. For divine revelation did not begin and end in Him, though it reached its crown and finds its criterion in Him. There must be other evidence, not only to support His own, but because the nature of His claim is such that it can only be true if all the work of God — the entire universe so far as it is not vitiated by sin — attests it" ; cf. Carson, "if the burden of evidence to support the tremendous claims he has been making exclusively depends on his own self-attestation, his witness must be false."

96. It is uncertain whether we should regard the use of ἄλλος rather than ἕτερος as significant. Many commentators maintain that the former denotes "another of the same kind," the latter "another of a different kind" (see on 14:16). If this distinction holds the meaning, here will be "another of the
same kind as myself’ . . . by which the evangelist suggests Christ’s unique unity with the Father” (Abbott, 2730). But many writers do not observe the distinction, and, as John employs έτερος once only (in 19:37), we do not have enough information to be sure that he did. See further on v. 43. Chrysostom understands ἄλλος to refer to John the Baptist (40.1; p. 144), but there is little to be said for this view.

97. ό μαρτύρων and μαρτυρεῖ indicate that the witness is a present fact, and that it continues. The word is cited from a papyrus (New Documents, 3, p. 15).

98. The Qumran sect regarded themselves as “witnesses of truth” (1QS 8:6). Since the idea of bearing witness to the truth occurs in the New Testament only in this Gospel (here and 18:37; though cf. 3 John 3, 12) this is a further example of the kinship between John and Qumran.

99. Godet explains the article thus: "'the testimony,' means here: 'that of which I have need, the only one which I would allege as confirmation of my own.'"

100. The article ό λύχνος may point to a definite, well-known lamp. If so, it will probably be the lamp prepared by the Lord for his anointed (or, "Christ," Ps. 132:17).

101. "The lamp is exhausted by shining; its illuminating power is temporary, and sensibly consumed" (Westcott). There may possibly be a reference to Elijah, whose word ώς λαμπάς έκάιετο (Sir. 48:1). We should also refer to our Lord’s words, "In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds, and praise your Father in heaven" (Matt. 5:16). There is also a Talmudic injunction, "Let thy light shine forth like a lamp" (Shab. 116b), though this may conceivably depend on the Matthean passage.

102. The verb is χαίω. The meaning "kindle" is plain in Matt. 5:15, "Neither do people light a lamp. . . ." Knox translates here, "He . . . was the lamp lit. . . ."

103. Josephus tells us that the people "were aroused (a variant reads 'overjoyed') to the highest degree" by John's sermons (Ant. 18.118).

104. "Like children, they were glad to disport themselves in the blaze, instead of seriously considering its meaning. And even that only for a season: their pilgrimages to the banks of the Jordan had soon ended" (Plummer). Dods comments: "the expression seems intended to suggest the thoughtless and brief play of insects in the sunshine or round a lamp." He cites Hausrath, "As gnats play in the sunshine," and concludes "the type of sentimental religionists revelling in their own emotions."

105. This seems better than understanding it in the sense "I have witness (pointing to me) greater than that which John had (pointing to him)," though this is grammatically possible.

106. There is no "that of" in the Greek, which reads simply "greater than John." The meaning is certainly as NIV, but Black discerns a Semitic idiom (AA, p. 87). Once again Jesus’ words reflect the Aramaic.

107. Cf. R. H. Lightfoot: "all life, in and from the beginning onwards, when rightly understood, has borne witness, as the activity of the Father, to the Lord. . . . But the Jews throughout have proved deaf and blind to the Father’s revelation of Himself."

108. Knox renders, "You have always been . . . blind to the vision of him."

109. LXX translates both ἡμᾶς and ἡμῶν as Είδος Θεοῦ (Gen. 32:30, 31; in the latter case both nouns have the article; in both Hebrew and LXX the verses are 31 and 32), "the form of God." Both Hebrew words mean "the face of God," the second form apparently representing the survival of the old nominative ending 1 (see Gesenius, Hebrew Grammar, ed. E. Kautzsch, rev. A. E. Cowley [Oxford, 1946], pp. 251-52).

110. Elsewhere Jesus speaks of his own word abiding in people (though with the use of τά ἡμῶν as Eiðoc θεοῦ as here): "If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish" (15:7). Closely allied is the saying in 8:31: "If you hold to my teaching (ἐν τω λόγω τω ἐμῷ), you are really my disciples." In such passages the word stands for the whole message. Whether the word abides in the person or the person in the word, either way there is the thought of a continuing commitment to the totality of the message. In the present passage there is probably also a
glance at the thought that Jesus is the true Word. Cf. Dodd, "λόγος is never merely a 'word'. It is in the widest sense God's self-disclosure, in word or deed, or in silent operations within the mind of man" (IFG, p. 330).

111. For the emphatic έκείνος see on 1:8.

112. Cf. Bernard: "The believer has an internal witness, which is in reality the witness of God. We are not to think of voices from heaven or visible epiphanies. ... It is the confident assurance of the believer which is here in question."

113. Goodspeed, Phillips, and other modern translations bring out the idea of diligent search implied in ἔραυνάω with "You pore over the Scriptures..." Chrysostom points out that it is not "read" but "search," and he thinks the word means "dig down with care that they might be able to discover what lay in the depth below" (41.1; p. 147). This is the only place in this Gospel where the plural γράφαι is found.

114. "And yet, when this is said, an imperative lurks behind the indicative, for the Saying encourages the steady investigation of the Scriptures" (Hoskyns). For a discussion of the textual evidence see Dodd, IFG, p. 329, n. 1, and for a cogent argument for the imperative see Field, pp. 89-90.

115. The subordinate clause is cited as an evidence of an underlying Aramaic. The Aramaic could be translated into Greek by ότι, as in most texts here, or by a relative as in some Old Latin texts, the Curetonian Syriac, and the Armenian. The relative is also found in the apocryphal Gospel in the Egerton Papyrus, which is generally held to depend on John at this point. All this strengthens the evidence for an Aramaic source behind the sayings in this Gospel.

116. Cf. the saying attributed to Hillel: "the more study of the Law the more life ... if he has gained for himself words of the Law he has gained for himself life in the world to come" ('Ab. 2:7). There are several sayings like Baruch 4:1-2, "This is the book of the commandments of God, and the law endureth for ever: all they that hold it fast are appointed to life."

117. Cf. Morgan, "There is no life in the Scriptures themselves, but if we will follow where they lead, they will bring us to Him, and so we find life, not in the Scriptures, but in Him through them."

118. In the early centuries of our era this reverence for the letter of Scripture was taken to extreme lengths. Sir Frederic Kenyon says that scribes "numbered the verses, words, and letters of every book. They calculated the middle word and the middle letter of each. They enumerated verses which contained all the letters of the alphabet, or a certain number of them" (Our Bible and the Ancient Manuscripts [London, 1939], p. 38). In copying out the Scriptures the scribe was not to write more than one letter before looking at his exemplar again (Meg. 18b). This kind of thing cannot be attested for the New Testament period, but it undoubtedly had its roots there. It leads to a profound reverence for the letter of Scripture, coupled with a failure to grapple with its thought.

119. The present αί μαρτυρούσαι, carries a double meaning. The Scriptures now bear witness of me. The Scriptures always bear witness of me.

120. Moffatt here renders καί as "but." John often uses this coordinating conjunction in an adversative sense, yielding the meaning "and yet." See, for example, vv. 43, 44; 6:36; 7:36.

121. τῆς ἀγάπης τοῦ θεοῦ might denote love from God or love for God. In this passage it seems likely to be the latter, but we should not forget that "God is at once the Author and the Object of this love" (Westcott). Abbott argues at length for the meaning "the love that proceeds from God" (2032-40). It may incidentally be worth pointing out that John uses χάριν seven times (here; 13:35; 15:9, 10 bis, 13; 17:26). A. Nygren in his classic Agape and Eros (trans. P. S. Watson [London, 1953]) has shown that the basic idea of ἀγάπη is that of self-giving love for the unworthy. His linguistics have been assailed, and it may be that he has drawn the distinction between two types of love too finely and equated it too narrowly with the use of particular Greek words. But that there is such a love as he describes as Agape and that it is the Christian understanding of love seems clear. God's love for us is evoked by God's own inner nature, not by anything worthy in us. God loves us
despite our unworthiness, and we see the cost of his love in the cross. Moreover, this love of God is creative. It evokes a corresponding love within people. C. S. Lewis has a very important book, The Four Loves (London, 1960). Perhaps I may be permitted to 121. τήν αγάπην του θεού might denote love from God or love for God. In this passage it seems likely to be the latter, but we should not forget that "God is at once the Author and the Object of this love" (Westcott). Abbott argues at length for the meaning "the love that proceeds from God" (2032–40). It may incidentally be worth pointing out that John uses αγάπη seven times (here; 13:35; 15:9, 10 bis, 13; 17:26). A. Nygren in his classic Agape and Eros (trans. P. S. Watson [London, 1953]) has shown that the basic idea of αγάπη is that of self-giving love for the unworthy. His linguistics have been assailed, and it may be that he has drawn the distinction between two types of love too finely and equated it too narrowly with the use of particular Greek words. But that there is such a love as he describes as Agape and that it is the Christian understanding of love seems clear. God's love for us is evoked by God's own inner nature, not by anything worthy in us. God loves us despite our unworthiness, and we see the cost of his love in the cross. Moreover, this love of God is creative. It evokes a corresponding love within people. C. S. Lewis has a very important book, The Four Loves (London, 1960). Perhaps I may be permitted to 121. τήν αγάπην του θεού might denote love from God or love for God. In this passage it seems likely to be the latter, but we should not forget that "God is at once the Author and the Object of this love" (Westcott). Abbott argues at length for the meaning "the love that proceeds from God" (2032–40). It may incidentally be worth pointing out that John uses αγάπη seven times (here; 13:35; 15:9, 10 bis, 13; 17:26). A. Nygren in his classic Agape and Eros (trans. P. S. Watson [London, 1953]) has shown that the basic idea of αγάπη is that of self-giving love for the unworthy. His linguistics have been assailed, and it may be that he has drawn the distinction between two types of love too finely and equated it too narrowly with the use of particular Greek words. But that there is such a love as he describes as Agape and that it is the Christian understanding of love seems clear. God's love for us is evoked by God's own inner nature, not by anything worthy in us. God loves us despite our unworthiness, and we see the cost of his love in the cross. Moreover, this love of God is creative. It evokes a corresponding love within people. C. S. Lewis has a very important book, The Four Loves (London, 1960). Perhaps I may be permitted to refer to my own Testaments of Love (Grand Rapids, 1981). But, despite the wonder of God's love, the Jews were so engrossed in their own self-love, their own darling ideas about religion, that they did not react to God's love. 122. "They did not really love God; they loved their own ideas about God" (Barclay); "They valued themselves on what they presented to Him, and yet they presented not that which most of all He sought, — the love in which self is lost" (MiM). 123. Attempts to identify this "other" seem futile. Some students have seen a reference to Bar-Koseba (c. A.D. 132), and find this evidence, accordingly, for a late date for the Gospel. This allusion, however, is rightly rejected by nearly all commentators. Jesus' words are very general, and are probably meant so. McClaymont and others say that Jewish historians enumerate no less than sixty-four messianic claimants. There was a tendency for Jews to accept such men, and it is to this tendency that the words apply. If one figure is especially in mind it is the Anti-Christ. If we are to attach significance to the use of ἄλλος (we might have expected ἐτέρος) the meaning will be, as Abbott, "If another come (professing to he of the same kind as myself)," like the Pauline (2 Cor. xi.4) ἄλλον Ἰησοῦν" (2677). Odeberg thinks the reference is to the devil (FG, p. 226). 124. The aorist πιστεύσαι points to the act of putting one's trust in, rather than the continuing belief (which we see in the present, πιστεύειν, in 12:39). 125. Strachan understands this of the rabbinical schools: "Scripture study had become a world in which men sought fame by showing their intellectual prowess. One big authority was set over against another, and the result was barren logomachy where men sought honour one of another." We might cite Masefield (as Strachan does in another connection): "The trained mind outs the upright soul, As Jesus said the trained mind might, Being wiser than the sons of light, But trained men's
minds are spread so thin They let all sorts of darkness in; Whatever light man finds they doubt it, They love not light, but talk about it." (The Everlasting Mercy [1936 edn.], p. 47).

126. Cf. Calvin: "the door of faith is shut against all whose minds are filled with a vain desire for earthly glory." So also Ryle: "If a man is not thoroughly honest in his professed desire to find out the truth in religion, — if he secretly cherishes any idol which he is resolved not to give up, — if he privately cares for anything more than God's praise, — he will go on to the end of his days doubting, perplexed, dissatisfied, and restless, and will never find the way to peace. His insincerity of heart is an insuperable barrier in the way of his believing."

127. The perfect ἡλπίκατε points to a continuing state. Their hope is a present hope, and not simply a past state.

128. "Every true disciple of Moses is on the way to becoming a Christian; every bad Jew is on that towards rejecting the Gospel" (Godet).

129. εμοίς is emphatic (see on 4:42). Jesus' words are set in strong contrast with Moses' writings.

130. Loyd reminds us that the fault of not discerning the drift of Bible teaching is not confined to the Jews: "When we read the Bible, how little compunction and honest heart-searching it often arouses in us! When we hear sermons, how much more apt we are to apply their rebukes and warnings to our neighbours than to ourselves! And therefore the sermon is only just one more sermon, and not Jesus Himself speaking in our heart."

131. See the important discussion in Dodd, IFG, pp. 179-86.

132. L. Doohan finds seven attitudes toward faith in this Gospel: faith based on signs, the faith of secret disciples like Nicodemus, faith in Jesus as a wonder-worker, faith based on signs as a preparation for faith (e.g. the blind man, 9:35-38), mature faith as of the royal official (4:50), faith seeking greater clarification (the disciples at the Last Supper), and the faith that does not need signs (John: Gospel for a New Age [Santa Fe, 1988], pp. 146-47).

133. Dodd finds no parallel to this construction either in profane Greek or in the LXX (IFG, p. 183).

134. Cf. Moulton: "εἰς recalls at once the bringing of the soul into that mystical union which Paul loved to express by ἐν Χριστῷ" (M, I, p. 68). He does not see a great deal of difference between πιστεύειν εἰς and πιστεύειν ἐπί, but insists on the important difference between both of these on the one hand and πιστεύειν with the dative on the other. Bultmann thinks that πιστεύειν εἰς Χριστόν Ἰησοῦν and similar expressions mean nothing else than πιστεύειν διʼ Ἰησοῦς ἐπέθεαν καὶ ανέστη (1 Thess. 4:14). He takes πιστεύειν εἰς to be an abbreviation, taken from the vocabulary of missionary preaching, for "to be converted from (Jewish or) heathen faith to Christian faith" (TDNT, VI, p. 204). Later he says that this expression it is understood as "the reception of the Christian kerygma, and thereby as the saving faith which recognizes God's saving work effected in Christ, and makes it its own. Naturally πίστις here too contains the sense of to give credence to; and the concepts of obedience, trust, hope and loyalty can also be conveyed with it " (p. 209). Burney, of course, is greatly attracted by Moulton's suggestion that this Greek idiom reflects the Hebrew הַמִּשְׁמַע הַלִּשׁוֹן אֲרָמוּי and that it thus signifies personal trust (AO, p. 34).

135. Cf. R. Kysar, In John, "Faith is not something one has. Faith is something one does. Faith is not a static being but a dynamic becoming" (John, the Maverick Gospel [Atlanta, 1976], p. 81).

136. IFG, p. 183.

137. In view of the warm tone of this passage and the fact that believing here cannot be separated from personal trust we must reject the contentions of those who maintain that for John believing means "intellectual assent" or the like (cf. E. F. Scott, The Fourth Gospel [Edinburgh, 1906], pp. 52, 267).

138. Cf. Dodd, commenting on πίστις in 1 John 5:4: "The way to victory is not a confident assertion of our own better selves, but faith, and faith necessarily refers us to something beyond ourselves. The victorious faith of the Christian is trust in God as He is revealed in Jesus Christ His
Son. It means committing ourselves to the love of God as it is expressed in all that Jesus Christ was and all that He did."
JOHN 6


1Some time after this, Jesus crossed to the far shore of the Sea of Galilee (that is, the Sea of Tiberias), 2and a great crowd of people followed him because they saw the miraculous signs he had performed on the sick. 3Then Jesus went up on the hillside and sat down with his disciples. 4The Jewish Passover Feast was near. 5When Jesus looked up and saw a great crowd coming toward him, he said to Philip, "Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?" 6He asked this only to test him, for he already had in mind what he was going to do. 7Philip answered him, "Eight months wages' would not buy enough bread for each one to have a bite!" 8Another of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, spoke up, 9"Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many? " 10Jesus said, "Have the people sit down." There was plenty of grass in that place, and the men sat down, about five thousand of them. 1 Jesus then took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted. He did the same with the fish. 12When they had all had enough to eat, he said to his disciples, "Gather the pieces that are left over. Let nothing be wasted." 13So they gathered them and filled twelve baskets with the pieces of the five barley loaves left over by those who had eaten, 14After the people saw the miraculous sign that Jesus did, they began to say, "Surely this is the Prophet who is to come into the world." 15Jesus, knowing that they
intended to come and make him king by force, withdrew again into the hills by himself.

a. 7 Greek two hundred denarii

This is the one miracle, apart from the resurrection, that is recorded in all four Gospels. We can only conjecture why this story was thus singled out, but obviously it made a strong appeal to the Gospel writers. In this account we see that the reason for the multitude's presence was the attraction of the "signs" that Jesus wrought (NIV translates "miraculous signs," which brings out the truth that Jesus performed miracles but obscures the fact that the word could be used for signs that were not miraculous). John also records Philip's perplexity as to the feeding of the great crowd, and his little piece of mental arithmetic that showed so clearly the impossibility of a solution out of the disciples' own resources. And he tells us that it was Andrew who brought the boy forward. It is in this Gospel that we read of the nearness of the Passover, of the bread as "barley loaves," of the reason for gathering up the fragments, of the effect on the people, and of Jesus' dismissal of the disciples and of the people in general. Clearly John has quite a lot of information not derived from the Synoptists. Characteristically, John describes what happened as a "sign." The effect of the sign is to make some people think of Jesus as a prophet, and some to wish to make a king out of him.

There are three principal ways of understanding what happened. One is that a "miracle" took place in people's hearts. Christ induced the selfish to share their provisions, and when this was done there proved to be more than enough for them all. Lindars rightly remarks that this "can scarcely be regarded as a serious possibility." A second view is that the feeding should be understood as a sacramental meal, rather like Holy Communion, wherein each received a tiny fragment. This view has been severely criticized by G. H. Boobyer. Though it is defended by Alan Richardson, for example, it seems untenable. Indeed, both the views we have noticed seem to rely too much on presupposition and to overlook what the writers actually say. It is much better, accordingly, to hold to the third view, that Jesus, the Son of God incarnate, did do something that we can describe only as miracle. Undoubtedly, it inculcates spiritual truth (it is a "sign"). But this does not
alter the fact that the Gospel writers speak of something wonderful that actually happened.

For the significance of the story we must bear in mind that the figure of eating and drinking is widely used in the Old Testament. It is a figure of prosperity ("nothing is better for a man under the sun than to eat and drink and be glad"; Eccl. 8:15; cf. also Eccl. 3:13; 5:18), and it is often used of the blessings the people of God would enjoy in the promised land (Deut. 8:9; 11:15; Neh. 9:36, etc.). Contrariwise, not to be able to eat is disaster (Eccl. 6:2). The metaphor of eating is used also of spiritual blessing. There are some interesting passages where people are said to eat God's word (Jer. 15:16; Ezek. 2:8; 3:1, etc.), but these are probably not the most apposite for our purpose. Eating is sometimes associated with the vision of God (perhaps because it was so characteristic of the sacrificial system), as when Moses and his companions "saw God, and they ate and drank" (Exod. 24:11; cf. also Deut. 12:7; 15:20; 27:7; Ezra 6:21; Neh. 8:10; Ezek. 44:3). There may also be some link with the experiences of Israel in the wilderness at the time when God "rained down manna for the people to eat, he gave them the grain of heaven" (Ps. 78:24). So the prophet holds out before the people the promise of God: "If you are willing and obedient, you will eat the best from the land" (Isa. 1:19; cf. Ezra 9:12). On the other hand, disobedience to God will lead to the absence of satisfaction in eating (Lev. 26:23-26). So also the gracious invitation goes forth: "come, buy and eat! . . . Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy? Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good" (Isa. 55:1-2). So, too, the Psalmist can look forward to the day when "The poor will eat and be satisfied" (Ps. 22:26). From all this it is not surprising that the messianic banquet was one of the ways in which the delights of the age to come were set forth (e.g. Enoch 62:14).

This "sign," then, shows Jesus to be the supplier of people's need. John's mention of the Passover (v. 4) is evidently meant to awaken associations of the wilderness as well as to locate the event in time. Later in the chapter the references to "living bread" (v. 51), "the true bread from heaven" (v. 32), "the bread of God" (v. 33), etc., are clearly to bring the same things before us. What the manna in the wilderness foreshadowed is perfectly given in Jesus. He is the Messiah who gives us the richest banquets to enjoy. The "sign" has to do with the Kingdom. The Jews misinterpret it, and think in terms of a prophet (v. 14) and of an earthly
kingdom (v. 15). Both times they were on too low a plane. The miracle, rightly understood, pointed them to the Messiah, not a prophet, and to the heavenly Kingdom, not a kingdom on earth. There is probably another thought. Paul tells us that in the wilderness the Israelites "all ate the same spiritual food and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ" (1 Cor. 10:3-4). It is likely that John has a similar thought. Christ has always been the perfect provider of his people's need. It was he who was their "bread of God" in the wilderness, and it is he who is the bread of God now.

There are one or two coincidences of language in John's account with the story of Elisha and the feeding of a hundred men (2 Kings 4:42-44). But with the Synoptic narratives before us we will be slow to accept any theory of dependence on the Old Testament story. While we need not think of John as necessarily dependent on them, they show us that a story of miraculous feeding was current in Christian circles.

1 "Some time after this" is an indefinite note of time. It does not pinpoint the following narrative. If we follow the text behind NIV the name of the lake is given twice. "Galilee" was probably the name by which it was known locally and referred to in the Christian church. But it was officially called "Tiberias" from the town on its shores named after the Emperor. This town was founded about A.D. 20, so it is unlikely that the lake was called "Tiberias" during Jesus' ministry. John then adds the name by which it was known when his Gospel was written. There is some support for reading "to the region of Tiberias" after "Sea of Galilee," and Brown, for example, thinks this may be original. NIV, however, has much greater support and is to be preferred.

2 There is a succession of imperfect tenses here, denoting continuous action. The multitude "kept following" Jesus because they "continually saw" the signs that he "habitually did" on the sick. John does not record a great number of miracles, but this statement shows that he knew that there were many. Characteristically he refers to them as "signs" (see Additional Note G, pp. 607-13).

3 The place of these happenings is defined as "the mountain" (NIV, "the hillside"), which raises the question whether there was a particular mountain that Jesus and his immediate followers knew as "the" mountain. If so, we have no means of identifying it. In any case, the expression need mean 110 more than "the hill country."
Here we have a number of Johannine characteristics: an interest in feasts,\(^{12}\) and in time notes, and the reference to "the Jews" (see on 1:19).\(^{13}\)

5-7 John does not record that Jesus and the disciples had withdrawn to a deserted place to be alone, and that the multitude sought him out. Nor that he spent the day teaching and healing. Nor that it was in the evening that the crowd was fed. It may be that he presumed that these facts would be known. For whatever reason he takes up the story at the point where Jesus sees\(^{14}\) a large number of people coming toward him. Philip was the natural person to ask where food might be found to feed them all, for he was a native of nearby Bethsaida (1:44). John makes it clear that the question was a test for Philip\(^{15}\) (perhaps a test of his faith; did he believe that Jesus would provide?). It was not because Jesus did not know (for Jesus' knowledge see on 4:18).\(^{16}\) Philip's reply stresses the hopelessness of the situation judged from the meager resources of the little band. Two hundred denarii's worth of bread would not suffice to give all this crowd a little taste.\(^{17}\) Philip does not point to a solution, but to an impossibility.

8-9 For Andrew see on 1:40, 42. Here, as there, he is introduced as "Simon Peter's brother," and there as here he is bringing someone to Jesus. It is possible that his knowledge of the lad came as the result of a reconnaissance with a view to finding out what food resources could be mustered, for he definitely relates the boy's supply (evidently provisions for his own personal use) to the needs of the multitude. Or the boy may have offered his food to Jesus. But, like Philip, Andrew is baffled by the emergency. The word for "boy" is a double diminutive, probably meaning "little boy."\(^{18}\) Barley bread\(^{19}\) was bread of a cheap kind,\(^{20}\) So the boy was probably poor. The two fishes were something of a tidbit\(^{21}\) that would make the coarse barley bread more palatable.

10-11 Jesus now takes charge. He instructs the disciples to get the people\(^{22}\) seated (strictly the word means "recline"). John tells us that there was a good deal of grass (so that reclining would present no difficulty), and says that the number\(^{23}\) was five thousand. Then he says that Jesus took the loaves and gave thanks ("said grace").\(^{24}\) After this he distributed the food to the people. John lets us understand that the disciples were the medium of this act of distribution, and does not mention them explicitly as the Synoptists do. "As much as they wanted" indicates that this was a satisfying repast, not a token meal.
12-13 The thought of plentiful supply is continued in the reference to their having "had enough to eat" (cf. Mark 6:42). But though there was abundance there was no waste, for Jesus commanded that they gather up the pieces left over. MiM thinks that the reason for this was "to bring out the preciousness of the food which Jesus had given." Twelve baskets were filled in this way, from the pieces of loaves that remained after the people had eaten.

14 Once more John refers to a "sign" (some MSS read "signs," but the singular is more likely; for "sign" see Additional Note G, pp. 607-13). It pointed people to God. But these folk saw only a reference to a prophet, though admittedly the prophet that they held would be the greatest of them all, namely the one foretold in Deuteronomy 18:15. It is somewhat curious that they thought of this prophet rather than the Messiah, unless, contrary to usual Jewish opinion, they thought of this prophet as the Messiah. But perhaps this is part of the confused state of mind of so many at that time. Various ideas about the Messiah were current, and various prophets were expected (see further on 1:20-21), some being linked with nationalist, militarist views.

15 Jesus saw the effect on the crowds, and perceived that they would try to make a king of him. There were fierce nationalistic longings among the Jews of that period, and doubtless many of those who saw the miracle felt that here was a divinely accredited leader, who was just the one to lead them against the Romans. So they set themselves to make him king. Like many others since, they wanted to use him to further their own ends. But to Jesus the prospect of an earthly kingdom was nothing other than a temptation of the devil, and he decisively rejected it (Luke 4:5-8). So, on this occasion he simply withdrew into the mountain until he was alone, thus effectively stopping the enthusiasm of the would-be king-makers. Bailey points out that there is "much of S. John's irony in the passage; He who is already King has come to open His kingdom to men; but in their blindness men try to force Him to be the kind of king they want; thus they fail to get the king they want, and also lose the kingdom He offers."

K. THE FIFTH SIGN — WALKING ON THE WATER (6:16-21)
When evening came, his disciples went down to the lake, where they got into a boat and set off across the lake for Capernaum. By now it was dark, and Jesus had not yet joined them. A strong wind was blowing and the waters grew rough. When they had rowed three or three and a half miles, they saw Jesus approaching the boat, walking on the water; and they were terrified. But he said to them, "It is I; don't be afraid." Then they were willing to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat reached the shore where they were heading.

a. 19 Greek rowed twenty-five or thirty stadia (about 5 or 6 kilometers)

This incident is recounted also in Matthew 14:22-33; Mark 6:45-52. In both cases the account is somewhat fuller than here (Chrysostom thinks of two different miracles, but the evidence does not indicate this). Matthew speaks of Peter's attempt to walk on the water, a detail not found in either of the other two accounts. Some interpreters hold that John is not giving an account of a miracle, but that he thought that Jesus was walking by the shore. In the uncertain light the disciples, who in any case were scared by the storm, thought that he was walking on the water. But that is not the way the narrative reads. The disciples' terror at the sight of Jesus is inexplicable if he were on the shore and they were thus safe. Some of them, at least, were used to the lake and its storms, and there is no indication that they were afraid before they saw Jesus. It seems clear that John recounts this as one of the "signs" of which he is so fond, even though he does not apply that word to it. In fact he makes no comment on the story at all. He apparently records it because it happened at this juncture, and not because he wants to point an edifying moral. This does not mean that it is without significance in this place. Its appropriateness as an introduction to the discourse that follows has often been pointed out.

16-17 John's account is highly compressed. We do not learn from him, as we do from Matthew and Mark, that Jesus had sent the disciples away. Clearly he preferred to deal with the would-be kingmakers without the presence of his own close followers. But this has to be inferred; John says nothing about the reason for the embarkation. He simply tells of the journey. He mentions the coming of darkness, which is understandable.
But it is not easy to see why he tells us that "Jesus had not yet joined them." They scarcely expected him to come walking on the sea, as their subsequent terror shows. Probably, with Westcott, we should take the meaning to be: "Jesus had directed the apostles to wait for Him at some point on the eastern shore on their way to Capernaum, but not beyond a certain time." The statement that Jesus "made his disciples ... go on ahead of him to Bethsaida while he dismissed the crowd" (Mark 6:45) is not irreconcilable with this view. The disciples were sent away by ship, but Jesus might well have rejoined them at some point further along the shore. His delaying is related to the dismissal of the crowd. The disciples knew this and may have expected him accordingly.  

18 John indicates something of the difficulties of the mariners. A storm was rising. The Synoptists tell us that the wind was contrary. John merely says that it was "a strong wind."

19 Rowing under these circumstances was very hard work, but they made fairly good progress. Twenty-five to thirty stadia must have taken them the best part of the way across the lake. Then they see Jesus. John's language becomes vivid with the use of the present tense. The sight of Jesus walking on the sea and nearing their boat filled them with fear. Again we must supplement this narrative by that of the Synoptists to find the reason — they thought that they saw a phantom.

20 Jesus immediately reassured them. His well-known voice with its words of comfort identified him to them. What they saw was real. It is possible that his words are meant to give a hint of deity. Certainly spoken in these circumstances at the culminating point of the miracle they must have been impressive, and it is probably no coincidence that all three accounts tell us that he said, "It is I; be not afraid" (the Synoptists prefix "Take courage").

21 The narrative ends rather curiously. The disciples wanted to take Jesus into the boat, which is natural enough. But did they actually do so? John's words may be intended to mean that they did (so translations like KJV, GNB, Knox, Phillips, and Schonfield). The choice of expression may be dictated by the wish to show that their attitude was completely changed from the fear of a short time back. Bernard thinks the meaning is that they were so close to the shore that they were not able to translate their wish into action. They finished the voyage before this could happen. But it may well
be that John's very short account is intended to be understood in the same way as that of Mark, who tells us that Jesus was received into the ship, and that there was then a lull in the wind. This could facilitate the speedy end of the voyage, which John tells us actually came to pass. Or John may wish us to think of a second miracle, as Barrett suggests, in the spirit of Psalm 107:22-32 (especially v. 30, "he guided them to their desired haven"). This is brought out in Moffatt's version: "so they agreed to take him on board, and the boat instantly reached the land they were making for." 

L. THE FOURTH DISCOURSE — THE BREAD OF LIFE (6:22-66)

There are three main lines of interpretation of this discourse. Most expositors these days apply it to the Lord's Supper. Unlike the Synoptists, John does not mention the institution of the sacrament. He has a lengthy account of Jesus' farewell discourse, but gives no hint of the institution of the Supper though this occupied an important place in the life of the church at the time the Gospel was written. However, in this chapter John uses language that many scholars feel applies to the sacrament as it applies to nothing else. They hold accordingly that John, for reasons of his own, has omitted all mention of the sacrament at the point where one would naturally have expected it, and has instead given us his sacramental teaching in the form of a discourse of our Lord inserted at this point. Little evidence is cited for this view. It is taken as axiomatic that language like that used here (especially in vv. 53ff.) refers to the sacrament.

But there are some strong reasons against it. First of all, there is the setting. Jesus is speaking in the synagogue at Capernaum to a crowd that includes opponents and lukewarm disciples. It is difficult to hold that John wants us to think that to such an audience Jesus gave teaching about a sacrament whose institution lay well in the future. References to such a sacrament could not possibly have been discerned by this audience, and the only result could have been profound mystification. Second, there is the strength of the language used. Take as an example verse 53: "unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you." This language is absolute. There is no reference to repentance or conversion or believing. There is no qualification of any sort. No loophole is left. But it
is impossible to think that Jesus (or for that matter the Evangelist) should have taught that the one thing necessary for eternal life is to receive the sacrament. Those who think of the discourse as referring to Holy Communion usually do not face the logic of their position at this point, but introduce some qualification. Third, the consequences of the eating and drinking spoken of here are also said by John, both elsewhere and in this very context (see vv, 35, 40, 47) to follow from receiving Christ and believing in him. Fourth, the words, considered as the utterance of a first-century Jew, would most naturally have quite a different meaning. The metaphor of eating and drinking was quite common among the Jews, as Odeberg, for example, has shown. It points to a taking within one's innermost being. Westcott can say that language like that used here "cannot refer primarily to the Holy Communion; nor again can it be simply prophetic of that Sacrament. The teaching has a full and consistent meaning in connexion with the actual circumstances, and it treats essentially of spiritual realities with which no external act, as such, can be co-extensive." Such considerations have led some commentators to hold that the sacramental view is untenable. They hold to the second view, namely, that the chapter refers to purely spiritual realities. Eating Christ's flesh and drinking his blood point to that central saving act described otherwise in, say, 3:16. Christ's death opens the way to life and people enter that way by faith. So in this chapter Christ speaks of giving his flesh (v. 51), which signifies the same act as God's giving his Son. But people must appropriate this gift by faith (v. 47). Eating the flesh and drinking the blood represent a striking way of saying this. The Son of man "must enter into and be assimilated with the spiritual organism of the believer." People must take Christ into their innermost being if they would have the life he died to bring them. J. D. G. Dunn can say, "the primary emphasis is on Jesus himself. The central theme is that Jesus himself is the source and sustenance of eternal life . . . [John] also takes great care to emphasize that it is the incarnate Jesus only as given up to death who is the bread of life." The third line of interpretation (which seems preferable) is a mediating one. It sees in the words primarily teaching about spiritual realities (as outlined in the preceding paragraph), but does not deny that there may be a secondary reference to the sacrament. This teaching about spiritual
feeding on Christ must be seen to have its primary reference to something other than any liturgical observance. It refers to the spiritual appropriation of Christ, however that takes place, whether in sacraments or in any other way. But in a secondary sense the discourse may well show us how we should receive the Holy Communion. It is not impossible that Christ should have had some thought of the sacrament in his mind. He certainly did not institute it on the spur of the moment, and we have no means of knowing how long he premeditated it. John, moreover, may have had in mind some who gave undue emphasis to the externals of sacramental religion. So he left out all formal mention of Holy Communion, which would certainly discourage overemphasis. But communion is important, so he included a discourse of the Lord Jesus that sets forth the principles governing worthy reception. But to agree with this is not to see the main thrust of the passage in sacramental teaching. It lies elsewhere.

Perhaps we should also notice the view that in the earliest tradition of the Christian church the bread and wine were not symbols of Jesus' body and blood, but joyful signs of his presence. John M. Perry has argued that "originally the eucharistic memorial of the Johannine community was of an earliest Jewish Christian type that celebrated the resurrection of Jesus and his anticipated return in glory without memorializing his passion and death." He sees vv. 51b-58 as coming from a later stage when the leaders of the Johannine church "decided to adopt a liturgical practice similar to that of the Pauline churches and commemorate both the resurrection and death of Jesus at the Eucharist." But Paul's writings are early; he speaks of the eucharist as it was in the 50's, probably earlier. It is difficult to hold that the practice of the Pauline churches, attested also in the accounts in Matthew, Mark, and Luke, is later than that in a hypothetical early draft of this Gospel. And it is not easy to see why the Johannine church should commemorate the resurrection and parousia but not the passion.

1. The Audience Gathers (6:22-25)

22 The next day the crowd that had stayed on the opposite shore of the lake realized that only one boat had been there, and that Jesus had not entered it with his disciples, but that they had gone away alone. 23 Then some boats from Tiberias landed near the place where the
people had eaten the bread after the Lord had given thanks. 24 Once the crowd realized that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they got into the boats and went to Capernaum in search of Jesus. 25 When they found him on the other side of the lake, they asked him, "Rabbi, when did you get here?"

The next day the multitude looked for Jesus. They discerned that he was no longer on the same side of the lake as they (though they could not see how he could have crossed it). So they followed the disciples across the lake, looking for him. John does not say where they found him. It may have been in the synagogue (v. 59), but it is not at all impossible that the discourse took place in stages, with only the concluding section in the synagogue. 64

22 The crowd had been very determined to make Jesus king, so it is not surprising that with the morning light those that remained of them sought him out again. The meaning of the reference to the boat 65 is not quite clear. The usual interpretation is that the crowd, on reflection, recalled that there had been only one boat there the previous night and that Jesus had not sailed in it (the boats of v. 23 were driven in during the night by the gale). But it is also possible to understand "only one boat" to mean that only one boat had been at the disposal of Jesus and his party, and they knew that Jesus had not traveled in that. Again, it may be that they had one boat before them on the shore, as Lightfoot holds. Jesus had not entered that one (it was still there), nor had he gone with the disciples. Our inability to determine which of these is correct need not trouble us. The main point is that the crowd saw no way by which Jesus could have crossed the lake.

23 The boats from Tiberias 66 may have come before the miracle, and have been there still. More probably they arrived after the disciples left, probably blown in by the storm. The miracle is described in an unusual fashion. Indeed, it is not described as a miracle at all; there are simply references to eating the bread, and to the Lord's giving of thanks. 67 Jesus is not commonly referred to as "the Lord" (see on 4:1). Indeed, there are several unusual features in the Greek of verses 22-23, and we may conjecture that this long sentence was not revised by the author into what would otherwise have been its final form.

24-25 The crowds, seeing neither Jesus nor the disciples, and seeing that there were boats there, decided to sail across the lake to Capernaum, looking for Jesus. There was apparently little difficulty in finding him.
once they reached Capernaum (it was a small town). They greeted him as "Rabbi," which may be significant in the context. John has just described happenings that show that Jesus was far removed from the ordinary. But the crowds have no knowledge of the events nor of his person. They think of him as a teacher (which is curious after their recent attempt to make him a king), not as the divine Son. Somewhat strangely they ask him when he came there. After their puzzlement about the ships we might have expected them to ask "How?" which we know to be the significant question.

2. Food That Abides (6:26-27)

26 Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, you are looking for me, not because you saw miraculous signs but because you ate the loaves and had your fill. 27 Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. On him God the Father has placed his seal of approval."

The long discourse is broken several times by interjections of the Jews. At first these interjections are close together, though later there are more considerable sections of exhortation. Jesus begins by putting his interrogators in the wrong, and urging them to amend their habits. 26 Jesus totally ignores the opening question of the multitude (as he had done earlier with Nicodemus's courtly greeting, 3:1-3). With an emphatic "I tell you the truth" (for this expression see on 1:51) he moves straight into the important thing. He recognizes the real motive of these fellow travelers and speaks sharply. Had they come even on the basis of the "signs" (see Additional Note G, pp. 607-13) they had seen, it would have betokened some faith, however small. Faith that rests on the miracles is not the highest kind of faith, but it is better than no faith at all. But these people were crass materialists. They had not reflected on the spiritual significance of the sign they had seen. 70 "Instead of seeing in the bread the sign, they had seen in the sign only the bread." 71 They came because their hunger had been satisfied. 72 They were moved not by full hearts, but by full bellies. 73

27 So Jesus bids them labor for the right sort of food. 74 The food they were seeking would perish. There is another kind of food, that which
remains forever and issues in eternal life. This Gospel habitually associates life with Christ. If people seek this food, then the Son of Man (see Additional Note C, pp. 150-52) will give them eternal life. Life is not the reward for work. Life is always his gift. They may seek the more confidently because the Father (in the Greek "God" is not prefixed to "the Father" but added at the end of the sentence with emphasis, a most unusual order) has "sealed" him. The affixing of a seal was common in antiquity as a mark of ownership. In an age when many were illiterate the seal attested ownership as a written label could not. But a seal could also authenticate a document or the like; the seal showed that the seal's owner approved. This is the meaning here. The Father has set the seal of his approval on the Son.


Then they asked him, "What must we do to do the works God requires?" Jesus answered, "The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent."

Perhaps in view of Jesus' reference to working, the question in terms of human endeavor is natural enough. Nevertheless "What must we do?" shows that the questioners had not grasped Jesus' point that life was his gift. They looked for salvation as the result of their own effort (as people in their natural wisdom always do). They simply ask what the particular work God requires of them is. The present subjunctive denotes continuity: "What is to be our regular course of action?" Moreover, there are rabbinic passages in which heavenly food is taken to symbolize the Torah, the Law. The Jews may have taken Jesus' words about the food that abides to eternal life as meaning the Law. What, then, does Jesus think, ought they to do by way of law works? "The works of God" (NIV "the works God requires") is an unusual expression, but there seems little doubt that we should take it in the sense "godly works," "works pleasing to God." Jesus replaces their "works of God" with the singular "work of God." But one thing is needful. And this one thing, he makes plain, is faith. They must believe on him (for the construction see on 1:12; the present tense here denotes the continuing attitude, not the once-for-all
In view of the controversy over faith and works reflected in the Epistle of James, it is interesting to find Jesus describing "work" as believing: God does not require that we pile up merits to obtain a heavenly credit. He requires that we trust him. The "work of God" means that which God requires of us. "There is a sense in which 'to believe' is to perform a work" (MacGregor). The object of faith is spoken of in terms of mission. Jesus is sent by the Father ("he" is emphatic — none less than he!), and this makes faith in him eminently reasonable.

4. The Bread of Life (6:30-40)

30 So they asked him, "What miraculous sign then will you give that we may see it and believe you? What will you do? 31 Our forefathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written: 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.' " 32 Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. 33 For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." 34 "Sir," they said, from now on give us this bread." 35 Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty. 36 But as I told you, you have seen me and still you do not believe. 37 All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away. 38 For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. 39 And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. 40 For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day."

a. 31 Exodus 16:4; Psalm 78:24

This section of the discourse is to be understood against the background of a Jewish expectation that, when the Messiah came, he would renew the miracle of the manna. Comfortably filled with the loaves Jesus has provided, the multitude challenge him to give them a permanent supply of bread. Jesus turns their attention to "the true bread" (v. 32), "the bread of
God" (v. 33), "the bread of life" (v. 35). Their thoughts are hopelessly earthbound; he seeks to raise them to heaven and to that eternal life which is inextricably linked with himself. A. M. Farrer captures the central thought of the chapter here: "The whole of ch. vi is a homily on v. 31b, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.' It must be shown (a) that Christ is true Bread, (b) that He came down from the true Heaven, whereas the manna was earthly bread from the visible sky."84

30 "Jews demand miraculous signs," wrote Paul (1 Cor. 1:22),85 and we could scarcely wish for a better example (see on 2:18). At the same time their demand is curious, for they have just seen one sign, and had they been spiritually aware would probably have known of another. Indeed, the plural in verse 26 implies that they had seen several signs. But they had not penetrated to the spiritual significance of what they had seen.86 They observed only the wonders, and for some reason these did not satisfy them. They dared to impose on God the sign they must have before they would believe.87 "You" is emphatic. They do not think for one moment that Jesus can produce the sign they demand. "See it and believe" puts the priority on sight. They do not understand the nature of faith.

31 They bring out the kind of sign they want by citing the manna in the wilderness. In a way this is a strange choice, for the multiplication of the loaves seems to be a sign of exactly the same type. But it took place on one occasion: Moses gave the manna for forty years. Jesus provided bread for five thousand: Moses supplied manna for a whole nation. Jesus gave them ordinary bread, bread such as they ate every day: Moses gave "bread from heaven," and goodness knows what fantasies they had about this (in Matt. 16:1 they asked for a sign "from heaven"). "It appears that the controlling term is not bread but the phrase from heaven" (Michaels). Add to this a Jewish expectation that when the Messiah came he would give people manna once more,88 and we see that there was much that might arouse speculation. Jesus had done something wonderful in supplying bread. But could he go on from there and produce manna? They support their plea with a quotation, apparently from Psalm 78:24 (it is also like Neh. 9:15, and has some resemblances to Exod. 16:4, 15; Ps. 105:40, but agrees exactly with none of these). Though they do not mention his name, they apparently apply the quotation to Moses. The manna accredited Moses.

32 For the second time in this chapter Jesus prefaces his remarks with the solemn "I tell you the truth." What follows is important. He begins by
dispelling their illusion about Moses. It is difficult to find an English translation that will bring out the two meanings of what follows. He is saying first of all that the gift of manna was not Moses' gift. It came from God (which is the real meaning of the words they have quoted; cf. Exod. 16:13ff.). Second, it was not the true "bread from heaven," but an earthly, material type of that bread.\(^8^9\) A third contrast is that between "has given" and "gives"; the gift Jesus brings is ongoing. "My Father" indicates a consciousness that Jesus stood in a relation to the Giver that his hearers did not. He assures them not that God once gave the gift of the manna, but that he continually gives. This would present us with a difficulty if it were the manna that he continually gives, but it is something more; God keeps giving the true bread. The word order puts emphasis on "true."\(^9^0\) The crowd had followed Jesus because of the loaves they had eaten. But they were unmindful of the much more important fact that the Father keeps on giving that bread which is bread indeed.

\(33\) This statement is explained a little further. The bread is now "the bread of God," which fastens attention on another aspect of the gift. It originates with God, and is connected with him in a special way. It is his bread. "He who" might be understood as "that which" (as in NRSV).\(^9^1\) It is unlikely that Jesus' hearers understood it as "he who" (they immediately say, "Sir, from now on give us this bread"). But Jesus did. He knew himself to be the bread of God, and in accordance with this he speaks of this bread not as sent, but as coming down. It has life. And it gives life. The present tense denotes continuing action, and "the world" indicates its scope. Here is no narrow particularism but a concern for the whole human race.\(^9^2\) This is to be interpreted against the background of the grossly materialistic way in which the messianic age was commonly understood.\(^9^3\) Jesus did not come to bring manna or satisfy any other materialistic expectation of the people. His discourse is a vigorous protest against unworthy views of messiahship and a strong affirmation of the essentially spiritual character of the life he came to bring.\(^9^4\)

\(34\) Like the woman at the well who wanted the living water (4:15) these people want the bread of God. They may have had much the same materialistic reason. She wanted the water in order to be relieved of the task of drawing from the well. They had been fed from the loaves and they probably wanted some permanent gift of this kind. And they, like the woman, were ironical. They did not really think that Jesus could provide
The verse "But" introduces a strong contrast with what Jesus would have wished to see, perhaps also with what might have been expected. His hearers had seen him, and were still seeing him, but they were far from appreciating the significance of what they saw. They did not believe. Their attitude was the very reverse of that for which Jesus looks in 20:29. The occasion to which "I told you" refers is not clear. It may point to verse 28.
26, but it is more likely that it refers to a saying on some other occasion altogether.  

37 "All" is neuter, which makes it very general, "everything," although persons are certainly meant. The words stress the sovereignty of God. People do not come to Christ because it seems a good idea to them. It never does seem a good idea to sinful people. Apart from a divine work in their souls (cf. 16:8) people remain more or less contentedly in their sins. Before they can come to Christ it is necessary that the Father give them to him. This is the explanation of the disconcerting fact that those who followed Jesus to hear him, and who at the beginning wanted to make him a king, were nevertheless not his followers in the true sense. They did not belong to the people of God. They were not among those whom God gives him. The second part of the verse brings us Jesus' warm welcome to all. He rejects none. "Never" is emphatic (cf. Amplified, "I will never, no never reject...`). There are difficulties as we try to reconcile the two parts of the verse. But whether we succeed in that or not we dare not abandon the truth in either part.

38 In this whole work of salvation Jesus is in the most perfect harmony with the Father. He came down from heaven specifically to do the will of the Father (see on 4:34). The thought of his coming down from heaven is repeated seven times in this chapter (vv. 33, 38, 41, 42, 50, 51, and 58). In this verse we have the characteristic statement of a proposition in both its negative and positive forms. The perfect unity with the Father ensures that Christ will accept all that the Father gives. It underlines the certainty of the process of the previous verse. For "sent" see on 3:17.

39 The will of God is not left in general terms; the particular aspect of his will that Jesus came to perform has to do with what the Father gives him. Again we have the negative and the positive sides. Jesus is to lose none of what he is given (and at the end of his life he could affirm that he had lost none of them, 17:12). But his keeping of them is not concerned with this life only. Those who are his he will raise at the last day (cf. 5:25ff.). This is a kind of refrain that runs through this address (vv. 40, 44, 54). The salvation Jesus brings is no ephemeral thing. It is ultimate and final. This thought is of the greatest comfort to believers. Their assurance is based not on their feeble hold on Christ, but on his sure grip on them (cf. 10:28f.). "The last day" is an expression found only in John in the New Testament. It is clear evidence that John, like the other New Testament
writers, held a futurist eschatology and looked for Jesus to usher in the final state.

40 For the third consecutive verse the subject is God's will. By a characteristic Johannine construction we have a slight change from the way the thought has been expressed before. Jesus has spoken of people coming to him and believing in him; now he refers to beholding him and believing (contrast the attitude of his hearers in v. 36). "Looking to" the Son is not commonly used in connection with salvation. It reminds us of the necessity for seeing the heavenly vision, and seeing it with a steady, constant gaze.109

Once again Jesus insists that the life he brings is eternal. None other than he ("I" is emphatic) will raise the believer at the last day. The close connection of this with eternal life should not be overlooked. So far from the present possession of eternal life excluding the idea of a future resurrection it demands it in the Johannine understanding of things. It is unthinkable that death should blot out forever the life that Christ gives. Because he is what he is, he will assuredly raise up those to whom he gives life.110

5. Christ and the Bread (6:41-51)

41 At this time the Jews began to grumble about him because he said, "I am the bread that came down from heaven." 42 They said, "Is this not Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can he now say, 'I came down from heaven'?" 43 "Stop grumbling among yourselves," Jesus answered. 44 "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day. 45 It is written in the Prophets: 'They will all be taught by God.' 46 Everyone who listens to the Father and learns from him comes to me. 47 No one has seen the Father except the one who is from God; only he has seen the Father. 48 I tell you the truth, he who believes has everlasting life. 49 I am the bread of life. 50 Your forefathers ate the manna in the desert, yet they died. 51 But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which a man may eat and not die. 52 I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If a man eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."
Jesus' words were not what the crowd expected or wanted. They rebel against the claims implied in what he said, feeling that they know very well who he is. In the face of this Jesus emphatically repeats what he has said, and takes the thought a stage further by speaking of the bread that he will give as his flesh.

41 "The Jews" is a change of subject, and may indicate a change of scene. There is nothing unlikely in the supposition that the earlier words were spoken near the lake, and that the scene now shifts to the synagogue. Yet as the dialogue flows on, it appears that Jesus' opponents are the same as in the previous section. It is unusual to find the expression "the Jews" used of Galileans. More usually it is the Jews of Jerusalem (see on 1:19). But the primary idea is that of the Jews, especially the leading Jews, in opposition to Jesus, so, while it is unusual, it is not out of place to have the expression used of Galilean Jews. "Grumble" indicates discontent. It is the confused sound that runs through a crowd when the people are angry and in opposition. Their words are not an accurate quotation of what Jesus has said, but they do give his meaning.

42 The first question is another example of the Evangelist's irony. Had the Jews known the truth about Jesus' parentage, as they claim, they would have perceived that it illustrates vividly the truth he is here expounding. "We" is emphatic. These people feel that, whatever be the case with others, they can show out of their own personal knowledge that Jesus' statement is false. They do not stop to question their assumptions that because Jesus was lowly, and because he was well known to them, therefore he could not have been from heaven. They fasten their attention on his claim to have come from heaven, and not on that to give life. "Now" means "after all the years he has lived like anyone else." For the pattern of misunderstanding see on 2:20.

43-44 Jesus bids them cease their grumbling among themselves; that is not the way to learn divine truth. Then he repeats the saying of verse 37, but in a slightly stronger form. Now he says that no one "can" come unless the Father draws him. The thought of the divine initiative in salvation is one of the great doctrines of this Gospel, and indeed of the Christian faith. People like to feel independent. They think that they come or that they can come to Jesus entirely of their own volition. Jesus assures us that this is an
utter impossibility. No one, no one at all, can come unless the Father draws him. "This is so because it is impossible that my perceptions, distorted as they are by the fact that I make myself the center of my world, could of themselves recognize and receive the presence of God in this man" (Newbigin). The impossibility was implied in the former statement, but it is explicit here. And even when talking of this subject Jesus refers to the Father as sending him. Not for one moment does he lose his sense of mission. For the third time he refers to his future activity of raising up his people at the last day.

The same truth is put in another way. To show that this is something in the plan of God Jesus quotes from Isaiah 54:13 (or perhaps Jer. 31:34). God will teach his people himself, that is he will teach them within their hearts. Only those who are taught in this fashion come to Jesus. But he makes it quite clear that all those who are taught in this way, who hear God, and learn what they hear, do come to him. Haenchen cites Bultmann's interpretation of the passage: "any man is free to be among those drawn by the Father," and rejects this with decision: "The interpretation that hangs everything finally on the free decision of man turns the sense of the text into its opposite" (p. 292). This is surely correct.

This might be misunderstood as implying that those who have heard God have also seen him. All the more is this the case in the light of the words: "You have never heard his voice nor seen his form" (5:37). This saying might perhaps have been understood to mean that hearing and seeing are firmly linked. To hear him would then guarantee seeing him. This is not the case. As in 1:18, it is insisted that no person has ever seen God. There the exception is described as "God the only Son," here "the one who is from God." Both expressions point to an intimate relationship between the Father and the Son shared by none else. No human has the vision of God, no one apart from the Son. The reality of intimate intercourse is stressed by the addition, "he has seen the Father."

For the third time in this discourse there is the solemn "I tell you the truth" (previously vv. 26 and 32; see on 1:51). Jesus' main concern is with life and how people obtain it, not with his own person. Now he solemnly repeats the way to life. For "believes" see Additional Note E (pp. 296-98), and for "everlasting life" see on 3:15.

For "the bread of life" see on v. 35. The statement stands here in isolation and simplicity, which makes it very impressive. Jesus lets his
claim be seen in all its stark grandeur.

49 The crowd had earlier introduced the subject of the manna, and had intimated that they would like to have such a gift from Jesus. It was this that brought forth the great saying, "I am the bread of life." Now as Jesus repeats his majestic claim he goes on to point out that the manna had its limitations. It was food for the body, but it was no more. Those who ate it died in due course. 121

50 By contrast, Jesus offers bread that brings the life for which there is no death. This bread is not of earthly but of heavenly origin. And when anyone once takes it ("eat" is in the aorist tense, of the once-for-all action of receiving Christ), he will not die. "Died" in the previous verse referred to physical death; here the same verb refers to spiritual death. Anyone who partakes of Christ has the life that is eternal.

51 Once again Jesus refers to himself as bread, this time as "living bread" (cf. 1:4; 5:26). "Came down" is in the aorist, pointing to the single act of the incarnation. As in the previous verse, "eats" (aorist tense) points to the act of appropriating Christ. 122 Anyone who takes this decisive action will live forever, the positive statement balancing the negative of the previous verse. In the manner of verse 35 this constitutes an invitation to eat. In a very startling statement Jesus defines the bread that he will give as his flesh. The future, "I will give," is not a general statement but looks to the gift that would be made on Calvary. 123 Those who understand the verse of the incarnation or the like usually ignore the tense, but it is difficult to understand how it can fit into their theories. "Flesh" is a striking word. In distinction from "my body" or "myself" it puts marked emphasis on the physical side of life. It is a strong word and one bound to attract attention. Its almost crude forcefulness rivets attention on the historical fact that Jesus did give himself for others. He is not speaking simply of a moving idea. Many commentators speak as though the word "flesh" self-evidently marked a reference to Holy Communion. 124 It, of course, does nothing of the sort. The word is not found in the narratives of the institution, nor in 1 Corinthians 10 or 11 in connection with the sacrament. Nor is it common in the Fathers 125 in this sense. The usual word in sacramental usage is "body." The last words of the verse bring before us once more the truth that the mission of Jesus is universal. He did not come to minister to the Jews only. When he gave his flesh it would be "for the life of the world." 126
6. Eating the Flesh and Drinking the Blood (6:52-59)

52 Then the Jews began to argue sharply among themselves, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" 53 Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. 54 Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. 55 For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. 56 Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him. 57 Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me. 58 This is the bread that came down from heaven. Our forefathers ate manna and died, but he who feeds on this bread will live forever." 59 He said this while teaching in the synagogue in Capernaum.

This is the section of the discourse that is claimed most confidently to refer to the Holy Communion. The language of eating the flesh and drinking the blood is said to be explicable only, or at least most naturally, in terms of the sacrament. But is this so? Surely not! The objections already urged remain, and the very strength of the language is against it. The eating and drinking spoken of are the means of bringing eternal life (v. 54), and they are absolutely unqualified. Who is going to argue seriously that the one thing necessary for eternal life is to receive Holy Communion? Nothing is said, for example, about faith; is it not necessary to believe if we are to have life? Again, "flesh" is not commonly used with reference to the sacrament. In every other New Testament passage referring to it the word is "body." Ryle further points out that to take the view we are opposing "is to interpose a bodily act between the soul of man and salvation. This is a thing for which there is no precedent in Scripture. The only things without which we cannot be saved are repentance and faith." I am not contending that we cannot apply the passage helpfully to the sacrament. But I very strongly doubt whether this is the primary meaning. It seems much better to think of the words as meaning first and foremost the appropriation of Christ.

52 Not unnaturally the Jews are perplexed, for the saying is not an easy one. "Began to argue sharply" is not quite what we would have expected. It implies that some were strongly for Jesus, though the following narrative makes it clear that they must have been outnumbered. Their question
indicates that they do not understand how it is possible for Jesus to give them his flesh. The mechanics of it bother them. For the pattern of misunderstanding a saying of Jesus see on 2:20.

53 Jesus does not retract one iota of his statement. He prefixes his reply with the solemn "I tell you the truth" (used for the fourth time in this chapter; see vv. 26, 32, 47 and the note on 1:51). What he says is thus shown to be deliberate and important; he wants there to be no doubt about it. He adds to what he has said before. He has spoken about eating bread that is himself, and as giving his flesh. Now he speaks explicitly of eating his flesh, and he adds the drinking of his blood, an idea that would be especially abhorrent to Jews because they were forbidden to partake of blood (Gen. 9:4, etc.). Both "eat" and "drink" are aorists, denoting once-for-all action, not a repeated eating and drinking, such as would be appropriate to the sacrament. And this eating and drinking are absolutely necessary for eternal life. Those who do not eat and drink in the way Jesus says have no life. Eating and drinking Christ's flesh and blood thus appears to be a very graphic way of saying that people must take Christ into their innermost being. There is, moreover, a reference to the death of Christ, as we saw on verse 51. Flesh and blood in separation point to death. The words, then, are a cryptic allusion to the atoning death that Jesus would die, together with a challenge to enter the closest and most intimate relation with him. They are to be interpreted in the light of verse 47.

54 What has been put negatively is now stated positively in a way typical of this Gospel. Anyone who eats Christ's flesh and drinks his blood has eternal life, and he will be raised up by Christ at the last day. The word for "eats" is different from that used previously, and it is used again in the following verses (56, 57, 58; elsewhere in the New Testament only in Matt. 24:38; John 13:18). It properly applies to somewhat noisy feeding (like "munch" or "crunch"). There is often the notion of eating with enjoyment (so in Matt. 24:38). It is a startling word in this context, and stresses the actuality of the partaking of Christ that is in mind. Some suggest that it points to a literal feeding and therefore to the sacrament. But this does not follow. There is no logic in saying: "The verb is used of literal eating. Therefore eating the flesh of Christ must mean eating the communion bread." On any showing there is a symbolic element in the "eating," and it is better to understand it, as in the earlier reference, to
receiving Christ. The continuing reference to Christ's raising up the believer at the last day is interesting. There may be more to eternal life than life in the age to come, but life in that age is certainly prominent.

55 Other things were not food in the true sense. Jesus has already pointed out that the fathers ate the manna in the wilderness and they died (v. 49). His opponents had altogether the wrong idea of what constituted true bread. With Christ's signs before them they still sought their sustenance apart from him. This verse is an emphatic statement that true food and drink for our deepest needs are to be found in Christ, and by implication in him alone.

56 The close connection between fellowship with Christ and the activity of eating the flesh and drinking the blood is stressed, since Jesus gives what is almost a definition of eating his flesh and drinking his blood. Anyone who so eats and drinks "remains" (the tense is continuous; it denotes more than fleeting contact) in Christ. There is the closest possible relationship so that the eater is in Christ and Christ is in the eater. The thought of abiding is a prominent one in John. It reminds us that the believer enters no temporary state, but a permanent one, with fellowship with the Lord as the predominant note.

57 Jesus comes back to his mission: he had been sent by "the living Father," where the participle stresses the active quality of life that inheres in the Father. "Because of" is patient of two meanings and probably both are in mind here. First of all, the life of the Son is bound up with that of the Father (it is 5:26 in another form): the Son has no life apart from the Father. And, second, the Son lives for the Father. To do the Father's will is his very meat (4:34). This forms an analogy whereby the effect of feeding on Christ may be gauged. Notice that no longer does he speak of eating the flesh and drinking the blood, but simply of eating him. The tense is continuous. This way of putting it makes it clearer than ever that it is the taking of Christ within oneself that is meant by the metaphor of eating and drinking. Anyone who so receives Christ will have the life that comes only from Christ. And that person will live only for Christ; nothing else will matter. Notice that Christ alone has direct access to the Father. Believers receive life only mediatelly through Christ.

58 The thought of verses 49-50 is repeated in another form. Jesus' opponents had expressed their respect for the manna, and, indeed, had challenged him to produce it. Jesus now reminds them that, wonderful
though the manna had been, there had been no life-giving quality in it. Those who ate of it died like other people. But the bread of which he has been speaking, the bread that really came down from heaven,\textsuperscript{141} is different. Anyone who eats of it will not die like others. That person will, to be sure, pass through the gate of death but will live eternally. It is likely that the singular "he who feeds" in contrast with the plural "Our forefathers" is significant. At any rate throughout the discourse the singular is regularly used to denote the person who is in right relationship with Jesus. Faith must be personal. There is more to it than being a member of a group.

59 John adds a note locating the speech he has just recorded; it took place "in synagogue" (cf. our "in church"), as Jesus taught in Capernaum. The absence of the article in the Greek seems to indicate an assembly for worship, not simply the building.

\textbf{7. Words That Are Spirit and Life (6:60-66)}

60 On hearing it, many of his disciples said, "This is a hard teaching. Who can accept it?" 61Aware that his disciples were grumbling about this, Jesus said to them, "Does this offend you? 62What if you see the Son of Man ascend to where he was before! 63The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit\textsuperscript{a} and they are life. 64Yet there are some of you who do not believe." For Jesus had known from the beginning which of them did not believe and who would betray him. 65He went on to say, "This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless the Father has enabled him." 66From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him.

\textsuperscript{a} 63 Or Spirit

During the first part of Jesus' ministry people were attracted by his teaching and flocked around him. Many attached themselves to him, some of them wholeheartedly, some very loosely. But then came a time when their allegiance was tested. The real nature of the claims of Jesus became apparent. The true disciples were sifted from the false, the deep from the shallow. We see something of this process here. Hitherto there has been the dominant theme of witness. Christ has been attested in one way and another
and many people have come to hear him. But in this past discourse it has become painfully obvious that he is not simply another rabbi. His claims for himself and his claims on his followers are such that it is no longer possible to follow him unreflectively and without committing oneself. So John tells us of what happened, not now among his enemies, but among his professed adherents, his disciples (v. 60), and the Twelve (v. 67).

60 For "his disciples" see on 2:2; a wider circle than the Twelve is meant. The reference is to those who had attached themselves loosely to Jesus, but without giving much consideration to the implications of their act. "Hard" means not so much that the saying is hard to understand as that it is hard to accept, as the following words make clear. "Accept" (lit. "hear") means "hear with appreciation," "take in" (see on 5:25). The disciples no doubt found the discourse mysterious. But it was the part they could under-stand rather than the part they could not that bothered them.

61 This is the occasion of another demonstration of Jesus' unusual powers of knowledge (see on 2:24; 4:18). Jesus knew what was going on in his disciples. Whereas earlier the grumblers were the opponents of Jesus, "the Jews" (v. 41), now they are his own followers. They do not like the sound of what he is saying at all. So he asks them, "Does this offend you? His choice of words indicates that he knew exactly how it was with them.

62 The sentence is unfinished, and there is no certainty as to how we should complete it. The meaning might be "If, then, you see the Son of man ascending to where he was before, will you not be convinced?" Or we could supply as the last clause, "will you not then be even more offended?" On the former view the ascension will be the means of ending the difficulty for those who see it. When they see Christ ascend they will know that the eating and drinking are spiritual phenomena, to be interpreted in the light of Jesus' heavenly status. To this it is objected that John does not record the ascension (though he does allude to it, 20:17). In any case in the Lukan account the ascension was witnessed by only a very small band of intimate disciples. It was evidently not meant to be seen by a large group as a means of comfort and a help to them. The other view is that "ascending" is not to be isolated from the cross. John's previous reference to Christ as ascending (3:13) led immediately to one to the "lifting up" on the cross. On this view the ascension is to be seen as the culmination of the entire series of events that was inaugurated by the crucifixion. If people stumbled at the discourse,
much more would they stumble at the cross! To them it would seem like defeat, like a going down to Sheol. In reality it would be victory, the first in a series of events that would bring Christ back to his Father. Difficulties here are the word used for "ascending" and John's later reference to ascension subsequent to the cross (20:17). Neither view is really satisfactory, and it may well be that both are required. The form of question does seem to favor the view that a severe testing is in store, and this will be the cross. But the cross does not stand alone. The crucifixion and resurrection and ascension are linked in an unbreakable sequence. The one implies the others. And what to the shallow-minded is a cause of stumbling and going away becomes to the believer the deepest cause of comfort and assurance. Where he was before" implies Christ's preexistence. It is one and the same Person who was with the Father, who became incarnate, and who would in due course return whence he came.

63 The thought of this verse is complex. There is a contrast between "the Spirit" who "gives life" and "the flesh" that "counts for nothing." The antithesis between flesh and spirit would lead us to think that the human spirit is meant. But the human spirit is not life-giving. There is unquestionably a reference to the Holy Spirit, the Life-giver. This is the case in John's previous contrast between flesh and spirit in 3:6 (cf. also the reference to the Spirit in the discourse on living water in ch. 4 and in 7:38-39). Probably there is also a contrast between the letter of the words and the spirit (in the manner of 2 Cor. 3:6). A woodenly literal, flesh-dominated manner of looking at Jesus' words will not yield the correct interpretation. That is granted only to the spiritual, to Spirit-dominated people. Such words cannot be comprehended by "the flesh" (for this term see on 3:6). The word may be used in this Gospel in a good sense; after all the Word became flesh (1:14), and in this chapter we have seen several references to the flesh of Jesus. But here it is the limitations of fleshly life that is in mind. Those whose lives are taken up with material things, things of the here and now, cannot understand Jesus' teaching. People whose horizon is bounded by the things of earth cut themselves off from his teaching and their kind of living "counts for nothing." Only as the life-giving Spirit informs us may we understand these words. This applies to much more than the words of this discourse. In his teaching as a whole Jesus emphasizes the Spirit, though specific references to the Spirit are not frequent. He is not concerned with the good that people may produce by the
best efforts of the flesh, their earthly nature. All his teaching presupposes the need for a work of the divine Spirit within us. Jesus goes on to equate his words with spirit and with life. This does not mean that we should indulge in whole-hearted allegorical interpretation. It means that Jesus' words are creative utterances (cf. the words of God in Gen. 1). They not only tell of life; they bring life (cf. 5:24). Life is here connected with Christ's words, whereas earlier in the chapter life comes from eating the flesh and drinking the blood. There is no contradiction, for we must not separate the words and deeds of Christ. His words point us to the deed on Calvary whereby life is won for believers. Those words and that deed are one.

Despite the life-giving quality of Jesus' words some people do not accept them (or him). In contrast with what would have been expected ("but" is a strong adversative) some of the hearers, though in a sense disciples, do not believe (see Additional Note E, pp. 296-98); in verses 64 and 65, as in verse 35, believing and coming to Jesus are parallel expressions. The truths of which Jesus has been speaking are accessible only to faith. They are hid forever from such as Judas. Human wisdom can never win an understanding of them, for only those in whom God works come to Christ. John uses this as the opportunity to tell us that Jesus knew those who would believe and those who would not. This was not simply a matter of observation, but right from the beginning he knew. It is a little curious that John should mention also that Jesus knew that Judas would be his betrayer. Perhaps this arises from a combination of Jesus' more than human knowledge and the reference to the passion that underlies the preceding discourse (see v. 51). It is in keeping with John's picture of Jesus as going on his serene way well aware of all that concerned him, and of the crucifixion as divinely predestined.

The predestinarian strain continues. John knows of both the divine act (v. 44) and the human response (which he brings out with the verb "believe"); here he emphasizes the divine. Jesus has already told his hearers that it is only as the Father draws anyone that that person can come to him (v. 44). He explains now that he had told them this so that they might not be perplexed when some did not believe. Unbelief is to be expected apart from a divine miracle. It is impossible for anyone to come to Christ unless the Father gives the grace to do so. Left to themselves, sinners prefer their sin. Conversion is always a work of grace.
"From this time" might also be rendered "for this reason," or John may mean both. A large number of "his disciples" went away, not only from the synagogue where Jesus had been teaching, but from all that discipleship means. The events of this chapter had made it all too clear that following him meant something different from anything they had anticipated. Nothing is said to give us a clear idea of their views, but the probability is that they were interested in a messianic kingdom in line with the general expectation. Instead they found themselves invited to believe, to receive Christ, to eat his flesh and drink his blood, to enter into that eternal life which he proclaimed. It was too much for them. They rejected these words of life. They went back. "Followed," more literally "walked," is a revealing little glimpse of the wandering nature of Jesus' ministry.

M. PETER'S CONFESSION (6:67-71)

"You do not want to leave too, do you?" Jesus asked the Twelve. Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We believe and know that you are the Holy One of God." Then Jesus replied, "Have I not chosen you, the Twelve? Yet one of you is a devil!" (He meant Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, who, though one of the Twelve, was later to betray him.)

John brings his account of Jesus' ministry in Galilee to a close; from now on he will concentrate on Judea. This is a passage of tremendous importance. So far in this Gospel enough has been said about the claims of Jesus to make it clear that he was no run-of-the-mill claimant to messianic honors. His claims for himself and his claims on his followers are becoming clearer. At first people tended to flock around him (2:23). He had chosen to withdraw from Judea because of the problem posed by the number of those who associated themselves with his little band (4:1-3). It had looked as though he might become the head of a very popular movement. But then people began to see what Jesus really stood for and they did not like it. The preceding sections of this chapter have shown how first the multitude and then some of his disciples were repelled. Now comes the big test. What will the Twelve do? Here Peter becomes their spokesman in a magnificent
declaration of allegiance and acceptance. The passage is paralleled in the Synoptics with the crisis at Caesarea Philippi (Matt. 16:13ff.). John has a typical addendum with Jesus' knowledge of Judas's role. Jesus knew what was in a man (2:25), even at the moment when Peter made his great confession on behalf of them all.

67 It is a dramatic moment as Jesus challenges the Twelve. They have heard the sermon. They have seen the reaction of "the Jews." They have observed the defection of many disciples. Now Jesus puts the question to them: "You do not want to leave too, do you?" The form in which the question is put shows that a negative answer is expected. Jesus confidently looks for loyalty from these men.

68-69 The question is addressed to them all, but it does not surprise us that Peter is the spokesman. He often appears in this role in the Gospels. He is impetuous, ready sometimes to jump to conclusions, and capable of incredible ineptitude (for example, his rebuke of Jesus, Matt. 16:22). But he is also capable of reaching astonishing heights. He does so now. "Lord" could mean much or little (see on 4:1). It might be no more than a polite form of address, but it might also be the proper form of addressing deity. In this context there is no doubt that it has the maximum, not the minimum meaning. Peter shows the impossibility of their forsaking Jesus by asking to whom could they go. Then he shows that he has correctly understood what Jesus said in verse 63 by saying that Jesus has "words of eternal life." No one who has come to know Jesus' life-giving word would ever forsake him. When one once knows Jesus, none else can satisfy. "And we" Peter goes on, using the emphatic pronoun: whatever be the case with the others, we, the Twelve, have made our decision. The verbs "believe and know" are both in the perfect tense, and this should be given its full force: "We have come to a place of faith and continue there. We have entered into knowledge and retain it." "You" is also emphatic; Peter stresses Christ's place and person. "The Holy One of God" is an unusual description of Jesus; in fact, it is applied to him on only one other occasion in the New Testament, when the demon-possessed man addressed him in the synagogue in Capernaum (Mark 1:24; Luke 4:34). It is rare in the Old Testament (used of Aaron in Ps. 106:16, and cf. "your Holy One," Ps. 16:10), but it does remind us of the frequently occurring "the Holy One of Israel." There can be not the slightest doubt that the title is meant to assign to Jesus the highest possible place. It sets him with God and not man.
Jesus did not allow himself to be carried away by Peter's enthusiasm. He knew what was in man. He knew that, well meant as they were, Peter's words overstated the case. He himself had chosen the Twelve. and of this inner circle, one would not merely go away as the fringe disciples had gone. He was "a devil," and in the spirit of Satan he would actively oppose what Jesus stood for. John adds an explanatory note. The words apply to Judas, whose name is given in full with solemnity. For "betray" see on verse 64. Here it is preceded by an auxiliary that adds a little touch of certainty. The poignancy of it all is underlined with the addition, "one of the Twelve" (NIVs "though" is an addition to bring out the meaning). It is worth noticing that none of the Evangelists indulges in invective when they speak of Judas's act of treachery. They simply record the fact and let it speak for itself. At most, as here, they mention that he was one of the inner circle, but even then they let their readers work out for themselves how that adds to the enormity of his crime. All four Evangelists speak of Judas as the traitor when they first mention him (Matt. 10:4; Mark 3:19; Luke 6:16).

1. Augustine marvels at the blindness of those who discern God's miracles only in the unusual: "For certainly the government of the whole world is a greater miracle than the satisfying of five thousand men with five loaves; and yet no man wonders at the former; but the latter men wonder at, not because it is greater, but because it is rare. For who even now feeds the whole world, but He who creates the cornfield from a few grains?" (24.1; p. 158).
4. Temple brings out the implications of the narrative for Christology: "It is clear that every Evangelist supposed our Lord to have wrought a creative act; and for myself I have no doubt that this is what occurred. This, however, is credible only if St. John is right in his doctrine of our Lord's
Person. If the Lord was indeed God incarnate, the story presents no insuperable difficulties. But of course such a creative act is quite incredible if He is other or less than God incarnate."

5. Cf. also the passages cited in SBk, IV, pp. 1154ff.

6. Thus in 2 Kings and in John the loaves are said to be of barley bread (which Richardson sees as evidence that John regarded Jesus as "the new Elijah-Elisha" (An Introduction to the Theology of the New Testament [London, 1958], p. 101), whereas the Synoptists do not specify any kind of bread. The word for "servant" in LXX of 2 Kings 4:41 (immediately before our incident) is παιδάριον, which John uses of the boy with the loaves.

7. Edwin D. Johnston discusses the relationship between the Markan and the Johannine accounts and finds five items, which have every appearance of being historical, in John but not in Mark. He concludes that John's account is not derived from that of Mark, but is independent (NTS, VIII [1961-62], pp. 152ff.).


9. For μετὰ ταῦτα see on 2:12.

10. Josephus refers to της προς Τιβεριάδα λίμνης (Bell. 3.57; Loeb notes as v.l. προς Τιβεριάδα and Τιβεριάδος).

11. εἰς τὰ μέρη is read by D Θ, some cursives, itb.d.e.rlgeo Chry. If accepted, this reading would place the feeding to the southwest of the Lake, whereas Luke 9:10 locates it near Bethsaida, on the northeast.

12. Dodd thinks the mention of the Passover significant: "the Christian reader could hardly fail to remember that the Christian Passover was the Eucharist, and it is probable that the evangelist intended at the outset to give a hint of the eucharistic significance of the narrative which follows" (IFG, p. 333). But the Christian Passover was not the Eucharist, but Christ (1 Cor. 5:7). There is no more reason for thinking that the Passover points to the Eucharist here than in 2:23. It is much simpler to hold that John mentioned the Passover because it was, in fact, near. Strachan wonders whether John represents the crowd "as receiving what the Passover could not give them." This is probably justified, for John seems to use the feasts to show how Jesus supplies what the feasts point to. Cf. Lucetta Mowry: "Christ in his signs, discourses, and religious ideas associated with each of the Jewish feasts finds a higher and absolute meaning in them. Thus Jesus is the bread of life and not the mazzah or unleavened bread" (The Biblical Archaeologist, XVII [Dec. 1954], p. 88). Similarly R. Morgan points out that John "sets the content of his message within the framework of Jewish feasts. The long discourses on manna in the sixth chapter of John find their meaning within the perspective of the Jewish Passover" (Interpretation, XI [1957], pp. 155-56). Bertil Gartner has worked out in detail the points of connection between the Passover and this chapter (John 6 and the Jewish Passover [Copenhagen, 1959]). P. Borgen criticizes Gartner (along with others) on the grounds that he does not reckon with the Torah and the theophany on Sinai as an important part of the background of this chapter (Bread from Heaven [Leiden, 1965], pp. 152-53).

13. So, too, εγγύς is a Johannine word, occurring 11 times in this Gospel (the largest number elsewhere is 3 each in Matthew, Luke, and Acts). John uses πάσχα 10 times (7 times in Luke), and έορτή 17 times (3 times in Luke).

14. He says, Jesus, "having lifted up his eyes ..." (NIV, "looked up"). Elsewhere in this Gospel Jesus is said to have lifted up his eyes only in prayer, at the tomb of Lazarus (11:41) and at the beginning of his high-priestly prayer (17:1).

15. πειράζω is used here (John's one use of the verb) in the neutral sense of applying a test. It was often used of testing in a bad sense, testing with a view to failure, so that it came to mean "tempt." By contrast δοκιμάζω came to mean testing in a good sense, testing with a view to commendation, so that it came to mean "prove," "approve."

16. John brings out Jesus' certainty: αὐτὸς sets him in contrast to Philip, ἴδε! δεῖ speaks of knowledge not optimistic speculation, while ἐμελλέν gives a note of definiteness lacking in the
simple future.

17. Westcott, working on the fact that a denarius was a day's wage (Matt. 20:2), and that in normal times its purchasing power was known (eight choenixes of wheat), concludes that two hundred denarii would buy 4,800 quarts of barley, or 1,600 quarts of wheat. Attempts to render the amount into modern currency produce curious results. Goodspeed, RSV and Amplified make it forty dollars, but Berkeley makes it fifty dollars and Good News for Modern Man two hundred dollars. In the sterling area the divergence is also marked. Barclay and Weymouth have £7, Schonfield £8, Rieu, Lightfoot, and Phillips £10, Twentieth Century and NEB £20. More recent translations resist the temptation to provide a precise equivalent. GNB has "two hundred silver coins," REB "two hundred denarii," and NRSV "six months' wages." Allowing for sabbaths, the two hundred days would come to 34 weeks, so NIV is more accurate with "eight months' wages."

18. παιδάριον (here only in the New Testament). The strict meaning cannot be insisted upon, for the word is used in LXX to describe Joseph at the age of seventeen (Gen. 37:30), and several times in Tobit 6 it refers to a young man of marriageable age. MM says it is often used in the papyri with the meaning "slave," and Moffatt translates it here as "servant." Horsley argues from the papyri that the word may mean "lad," "boy," but also "girl" or "manservant" (New Documents, I, p. 87).


20. Philo says of barley meal, "as a foodstuff it is of somewhat doubtful merit, suited for irrational animals and men in unhappy circumstances" (De Spec. Leg. 3.57).

21. The word is ὠψάριον, diminutive of δψον. Both signify what is eaten with bread, "cooked food." ὠψάριον thus has the meaning of a special delicacy, a tidbit (see MM), and sometimes it denotes fish. The parallel passages in the Synoptic Gospels have ἰχθύς, which indicates that its meaning here is "fish." In the New Testament the word is used only by John (five times).

22. There is a change from τους άνθρώπους ("the people") to οἱ ἄνδρες ("the men"). It is unlikely that only men sat, the women and children remaining standing. Abbott suggests dropping οἱ (with WH mg.) to give the meaning, "they sat down therefore (being) men (exclusive of women) to the number of five thousand" (2009). This would agree with Matt. 14:21. Weymouth translates, "the adult men numbering about 5,000."

23. The use of the accusative, τὸν ἄριθμόν, according to Moulton is a survival of the classic use of the accusative of specification, whereas in the papyri and the New Testament the dative is more usual (M, I, p. 63).

24. There is probably no great significance in the fact that John uses the verb εὐχαριστέω, whereas the Synoptists employ εὐλογέω in the parallels. Apart from a quotation in 12:13 John never uses εὐλογέω. Matthew and Mark use εὐχαριστέω in their accounts of the feeding of the four thousand (Matt. 15:36; Mark 8:6). Though in later times εὐχαριστέω came to be associated especially with the Eucharist, John's use does not express this, as we see from 11:41.

25. Those who like to see a symbolical meaning sometimes draw attention to the gathering of believers into the unity of the church as expressed in Didache 9:4, "As this broken bread was scattered upon the mountains and being gathered together became one, so may Thy Church be gathered together from the ends of the earth into Thy kingdom." If John does wish to express a symbolical meaning in recording this detail it is perhaps more likely that he is thinking of the "abiding" bread that Christ supplies: "the pieces which are to be collected symbolize the bread which 'abides' and is not 'lost' " (Dodd, HTFG, p. 207).

26. The word is χόφινος, which is used in all four accounts of this miracle. It is usually thought of as a small wallet, such as might be used by a traveler to carry his provisions, σπυρίς (or σφυρίς), used in the accounts of the feeding of the four thousand, could certainly be large, for one could hold a man (Acts 9:25). But the real difference between the two words, as MM maintains, "is one of material rather than of size." The χόφινος was more rigid and probably of wicker, whereas the σπυρίς was of hemp or similar material and thus flexible. Hort has a lengthy note on the words χόφινος, σπυρίς, and σαργάνη (JTh.S, X [1909], pp. 567-71) in which he denies that a distinction is to be
made on account of size. "The distinction appears to lie in the material, consistency, and use. χόφινος is a word of very comprehensive use, but seems always to denote a stiff wicker basket, σπυρίς always flexible mat-basket made of such materials as rushes" (p. 567). Juvenal apparently regards the χόφινος as typical of the Jews (3:14; 6:542), which might well arise from a Jewish habit of carrying food for reasons of ceremonial purity.

27. The perfect, τοις βεβρωκόσιν, is a little surprising. Perhaps it is used to reinforce the earlier indication of a satisfying meal. The plural ἐπερίσσευσαν, after a neuter plural subject, is unusual. It may be meant to emphasize the multiplicity of the fragments.

28. Lagrange points out that the Pharisees were the ones who distinguished between the Christ and the prophet in 1:21, whereas here the reference is to a group of Galileans. This may point to the explanation. The Galileans may well have had ideas different from those of the Jerusalemites, and they were perhaps influenced by the Samaritans (see on 1:21; for Jesus' messiahship on 1:41). Wayne A. Meeks maintains that "the prophetic and royal elements in the Johannine christology are not to be understood separately, but exactly in their combination and mutual interpretation" (The Prophet-King [Leiden, 1967], p. 25). For John Jesus' prophetic and kingly functions were closely connected.

29. See SBk, II, pp. 479-80.

30. πάλιν is difficult if it be understood as "again." Abbott points out that the word can mean "back" locally as well as "again" temporally. He explains this passage as "he retreated (lit.) back . . . to the mountain.' He had not 'retreated' before; he had 'sat' there; now Heretires 'back' to the mountain" (2649 [i]). Similarly, BAGD takes the word to mean here "go back, return" (πάλιν, la). John uses the word 43 times, which is considerably more than any other New Testament writer (Mark is next with 28 times).

31. αὐτός μόνος, coming at the end of the sentence, is very emphatic. Knox renders "all alone." μόνος is another Johannine word; it occurs 9 times in this Gospel, the most in any New Testament book.

32. Matthew and Mark tell us that Jesus withdrew to pray. But, as Bernard points out, such a motive is not at all inconsistent with that given by John. Again, Matthew and Mark both say that Jesus dismissed the crowds. This, however, does not exclude the possibility that "some, more obstinate and excited than the rest, would not leave" (Bernard).

33. This is another indication that this Gospel is early, or at least that it is faithful to the facts. At the end of the first century, when Christianity was coming into conflict with the state, there would be no temptation to invent and little inclination to record that one result of Jesus' "signs" was that people wanted to make a king out of him.

34. Cf. Barrett: "That he meant to record a miracle, and not that Jesus waded into the sea a few yards from the beach, seems certain" (p. 279). And again, "There can be little doubt that both Mark and John, whether or not they used the best possible Greek, intended to record a miracle" (p. 281).

35. For example, MacGregor comments on the story's "fitness to serve as an introduction to the sacramental discourse on 'the bread of life.' The miracle in part meets the objection of verses 52 and 60, by hinting that Jesus' corporeality was of a peculiar kind that transcended the limits both of gravity and of space." Similarly Wright: "I f . . . in the discourse that follows, the author is seeking to express the real mind of Jesus as to wherein true eucharistic feeding consists, it is exceedingly suggestive that he prefaces it with a narrative pregnant with the allegorical thought that Jesus is to be found when least expected." Even if one has doubts about the application of the discourse to the Eucharist, it still follows that this passage makes a suitable introduction to the later part of the chapter. Morgan points out that it was a miracle seen by the disciples only. He suggests that it is Jesus' way of answering the disappointment they must have felt when he refused to be made king. "So He gave them a demonstration of His present Kingship, and that in the realm of Nature. It was as though He had said, I have refused to be crowned King upon the basis of
bread, but make no mistake, I am King in every realm; King in the realm of Nature, contrary winds cannot hinder Me; the tossing sea cannot overwhelm Me. I am King."

36. ἰχθύς points to a continuity, "they were in process of crossing," unless it is conative, "they were trying to cross."

37. The impression left is that the voyage began shortly before or after darkness set in. Mark says that the walking on the sea took place "about the fourth watch of the night" (Mark 6:48), that is toward dawn (the fourth watch was about 3 a.m.-6 a.m.). The storm had made the four-mile crossing so difficult that it took practically all night.

38. Hendriksen thinks the reason for this way of expressing it is that the Evangelist, writing long after the event, presupposes that his readers will have in their minds the story of Jesus' coming to the disciples: "that coming of Jesus about which you have read in the other Gospels happened later during this same night." But Godet, writing of a similar view, says, "this sense seems quite unnatural."

39. For the way in which sudden storms arise on the lake, and for a description of one such, see W. M. Thomson, The Land and the Book (London, 1880), pp. 374-75.

40. ἔληλακότες may possibly imply this. It is used of a demon "driving" a demoniac into the wilderness (Luke 8:29). There is the thought of a compulsion. LS gives the meaning as "drive, set in motion."

41. Α στάδιον was about 600 feet (according to LS, 606 3/4 feet). The greatest breadth of the lake is 61 στάδια, but they were not crossing at the greatest breadth. They were apparently going from the northeast to the northwest, and the distance, depending on their exact points of departure and arrival, would have been much less.

42. Mark says, "the boat was in the middle of the lake" (Mark 6:47). But this does not pinpoint the location as exactly in the center of the lake. It simply means that they were some distance from the shore.

43. It is natural to take ἐπὶ τῆς θαλάσσης to mean "on the lake," and not "by the shore" as Bernard, Barclay, and others do. Bernard understands the incident in this way: "when the boat got into the shallow water near the western shore, the disciples saw Jesus in the uncertain light walking by the lake, and were frightened, not being sure what they saw." He thinks that "to read ἐπὶ τὴν θαλάσσαν would indicate beyond question that Jesus literally 'walked on the sea.' " This latter point is contradicted by the fact that precisely this construction is used in verse 16, where the meaning is that the disciples came to the seashore. That the construction with the genitive can mean "by the lake" is clear from its use in 21:1. But that is not its only meaning, and here the context puts it beyond reasonable doubt that the meaning is "on" and not "by" the lake. Mark employs the same expression as does John, and there the context leaves no doubt that it means "on" the lake. Moule takes the genitive here to mean much the same as the accusative in Matt. 14:25 (IBNTG, p. 50). In a similar construction in John 17:4 ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς can mean only "on" (not "by") the earth.

44. Εγώ εἰμι is often the style of deity, especially in the Greek Old Testament. Undoubtedly such a meaning is conveyed in some places in this Gospel (e.g., 8:58). But here it is primarily a means of self-identification. What else would he say? Dodd, however, can say, "i t seems more than probable that it is to be understood here as elsewhere as the equivalent of the divine name ἴδων τῷ, I AM" (IFG, p. 345). Schnackenburg finds the story marked "by the authoritative 'It is I', which acquired a mysterious depth from the epiphany on the lake" and which continued to sound in "the revelatory discourse" that follows (II, p. 11). Abbott denies that the expression means "It is I," and brings evidence to support the meaning "I am the Saviour" (2220-22). Bultmann has a long note on the expression (pp. 225-26).

45. McClymont thinks the meaning may be "that the vessel went straight to its destination, and that the remaining mile or two seemed as nothing to the astonished and rejoicing disciples." D. F. Hill
suggests that the boat was near the land and the meaning may be "He wanted to go beside them, that is, walking parallel at the same rate as they were rowing" (ET, 99 [1987-88], p. 269).

46. Cf. Godet, "One can scarcely imagine, indeed, that, after an act of power so magnificent and so kingly as Jesus' walking on the waters. He should have seated Himself in the boat, and the voyage should have been laboriously continued by the stroke of the oar. At the moment when Jesus set His foot on the boat, He communicated to it, as He has just done for Peter, the force victorious over gravity and space, which had just been so strikingly displayed on His own person."

47. Some scholars prefer to think of various strata in the narrative and regard it as it stands as self-contradictory. Of such views Hoskyns says: "The dislocation of the discourse on the assumption that it is possible to separate an original stratum from later interpolations is only a learned method of saying that a scholar is unable to penetrate the author's meaning, and prefers to substitute two or more disjointed fragments for one homogeneous whole" (Detached Note, p. 305).

48. The reason for this omission is far from clear. J. Jeremias thinks that John "consciously omitted the account of the Last Supper because he did not want to disclose the sacred formula to the heathen" (The Eucharistic Words of Jesus [Oxford, 1955], p. 73). He rejects other explanations, such as that John wrote "before it was possible to speak of a Christian Eucharist" (G. Kittel), or that he "rejected the Eucharist or regarded it as superfluous" (R. Bultmann), or that he "did not connect the institution of the Eucharist with the Last Supper, but with the feeding of the five thousand" (H. Windisch and E. Loh-meyer). Perhaps better than any is the possibility that John was confronted with Christians who overstressed participation in the sacrament, and that he accordingly did not even mention the institution. But there is no evidence, and all this is conjecture.

49. It is perhaps worth noting that this interpretation is not early. Cf. M. Wiles, "The Eucharistic interpretation of this passage is so familiar to us that it comes as something of a surprise to find that it takes a comparatively subordinate place in the earliest exegesis, especially from Alexandria" (The Spiritual Gospel [Cambridge, 1960], p. 52). Brown cites Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and Eusebius as specific examples of patristic exegetes who interpreted the whole passage spiritually, not with reference to the Eucharist.

50. O. Cullmann regards the chapter as practically a demonstration of the truth of his method (Early Christian Worship [London, 1954], pp. 93ff). The discourse refers to the Lord's Supper, and the miracle points to the discourse, without mentioning the sacrament; therefore other miracles should be taken as pointing to the sacraments. Characteristically Cullmann does not cite evidence for and against. He treats the sacramental reference as axiomatic (though he does notice some who disagree with his view). In particular he does not notice the implications of taking verse 53 as meaning the sacrament.

51. The Eastern Church, showing an unexpectedly logical attitude at this point, has carried on the practice of infant communion. But I do not think that even that Church goes as far as to say that no one who has not received communion can be saved. But Jesus says bluntly that, apart from the eating and drinking of which he speaks, there is no salvation. Richardson is one who does carry to its logical conclusion the view that the chapter refers to the sacrament, saying that the eucharist "is the indispensable means of salvation (John 6:53; 15:4f.). It is constitutive of the Christian community itself, and where there is no Eucharist there is no Church of Christ" (An Introduction to the Theology of the New Testament, p. 377); "In the Eucharist, St John is saying, the life-giving Spirit of Christ is received; that is why the Eucharist is necessary to salvation" (p. 372). This is more than difficult to reconcile with the testimony of the New Testament (e.g., John 3:16). And it excludes from salvation infants and whole Christian communions like the Salvation Army and the Quakers. It is a pity that Richardson does not examine the catastrophic implications of his position.

52. Additional Note, p. 256. Later he adds: "But, on the other hand, there can be no doubt that the truth which is presented in its absolute form in these discourses is presented in a specific act and in a concrete form in the Holy Communion; and yet further that the Holy Communion is the divinely

53. Cf. Marsh, "it is very doubtful if the discourse is about the eucharist as such" (p. 281).

54. Cf. C. H. Dodd, "the 'flesh and blood' of Christ (all that He is, offered in complete self-sacrifice) are given to nourish the inner life of men. His gift of bread to the hungry was a 'sign,' or symbol, of the greater gift of spiritual life" (How to Read the Gospels [London, 1944], p. 26).

55. Odeberg, FG, p. 239. He goes on to say, "with this understanding of the meaning of the discourse it is obvious, that no part of the discourse, — still less the whole of it — can primarily refer to the sacrament of the Eucharist. In fact, one who understands the words of the eating and drinking of the flesh and blood to refer to the bread and wine of the Eucharist takes exactly the mistaken view of which Nicodemus in ch 3 and the 'Jews' here are made the exponents, viz. that J's (i.e. Jesus') realistic expressions refer to objects of the terrestrial world instead of to objects of the celestial world."


57. C. F. Nolloth speaks of Jesus as having in this discourse "laid down the meaning and necessity of that union with Himself of which the Sacrament was to be the chief effectual sign and means" (The Fourth Evangelist [London, 1925], p. 120).

58. Wright cites F. D. Maurice: " I f you ask me, then, whether he is speaking of the Eucharist here, I should say, 'No.' I f you ask me where I can learn the meaning of the eucharist, I should say, 'Nowhere so well as here' " (p. 180).

59. "Are we to suppose that just a year before the Eucharist was instituted, the Founder of this, the most distinctive element of Christian worship, had no thought of it in His mind? . . . That the audience at Capernaum could not thus understand Christ's words is nothing to the point: He was speaking less to them than to Christians throughout all ages" (Plummer). This writer goes on to say, however, "But while it is incredible that there is no reference to the Eucharist in this discourse, it is equally incredible that the reference is solely or primarily to the Eucharist. . . . Rather the discourse refers to all the various channels of grace by means of which Christ imparts Himself to the believing soul: and who will dare to limit these in number or efficacy?" Bailey argues for the historicity of the discourse: "if we believe that Jesus often spoke words which He knew were too deep for all His hearers, or even for any of them at the time of utterance (see xvi.13), and if we believe, with S. John, that the whole divine plan of salvation lay open to His thoughts from the beginning, we cannot categorically deny that we are given the discourse just as it was first delivered."

60. "Without minimizing the value of the Sacrament, the Evangelist rejects a conception of it that would isolate the presence of Christ in the Sacrament from His presence in the everyday life of the believer" (Strachan).

61. It is often said that the Fathers unanimously interpret this chapter of the sacrament. But long ago Daniel Waterland conducted a thorough examination of the teaching of the Fathers on John 6 (A Review of the Doctrine of the Eucharist [Oxford, 1880], ch. 6). His conclusion is that, while there is some variety, "what prevailed most, and was the general sentiment wherein they united, was, that Christ himself is properly and primarily our bread of life, considered as the Word made flesh, as God incarnate, and dying for us" (p. 123). Any reference to "sacraments, or doctrines or any holy service" he finds to be of secondary importance. See also the discussion in chapter Π of A. J. MacDonald (ed.), The Evangelical Doctrine of Holy Communion (London, 1936).


63. NTS, 39, p. 29.

64. Ryle holds it unnatural to think of the crowd as greeting Jesus in the synagogue in the way reported here. He thinks the first pan of the address was delivered at the landing place or somewhere else near the city, with a break at verse 40, and the remainder in the synagogue. This is possible, but there is no evidence.
65. It is possible, as Bernard thinks, that we are to distinguish between πλοιάριον and πλοϊον (NIV renders the former "boat" and the latter "it"). He speaks of the πλοιάριον as "the skiff or dinghy belonging to the πλοϊον," and the latter as being "the big fishing boat, able to carry Jesus and the Twelve." MM, however, holds that πλοιάριον is "hardly to be distinguished from the ordinary πλοϊον." Most commentators agree. Rieu manages to get three translations out of the two words: "only one dinghy was there... Jesus did not board the ship... small boats from Tiberias."

66. The opening word of this verse could be accented ἀλλά, "but, however" (so REB) or ἀλλα, "other" (GNB).

67. The words εὐχαριστήσαντος τοῦ Κυρίου are omitted by some MSS D 69 pc a d e syrsx. These are mostly Western. Since the Western text tends to insert rather than to omit, and since there seems to be no reason for omitting these words, if original, it may be that they are not part of the true text.

68. The perfect γέγονας is somewhat unexpected after πότε. We might have anticipated an aorist. Perhaps there is a conflation of two thoughts: "When did you come?" and "How long have you been here?"

69. Murray says, "When they find Jesus they naturally ask how He had got there." Barclay makes a similar assumption. It does seem to us the natural question, but it is not the one they ask. Chrysostom sees in their failure to ask the right question an indication that they did not seek "to understand so great a sign" (43.1; p. 156).

70. Barrett points out that Jesus' hearers had certainly perceived that a miracle had taken place. They "are happy to obtain unexpected supplies of free bread, and willing to accord the highest honours to the supplier as a miracle worker; but they do not perceive the parabolic significance of what he does, that the loaves he distributes are the sign of heavenly food, the bread of eternal life... a sign is not a mere portent but a symbolic representation of the truth of the Gospel." So Morgan, "They had seen the wonder wrought, and the power put forth; but they had not caught the significance of the thing." Calvin goes a little further: "Just as today many would eagerly embrace the Gospel if it were empty of the bitterness of the cross and only brought carnal delights."

71. Lange (cited in Godet).

72. The verb χορτάζω applied originally to the coarse feeding of animals. It came to be used of people (as in the Synoptic accounts of the feeding of the multitude, Matt. 14:20; Mark 6:42; Luke 9:17). But John earlier used ἐνεπλήσθησαν of the multitude's satiety (v. 12), and his change of word may be significant.

73. Ryle comments on this motive: "Perhaps those only can thoroughly understand it who have seen much of the poor in pauperized rural parishes. They can understand the immense importance which a poor man attaches to having his belly filled."

74. The word used is βρώσις, which properly denotes the act of eating. Here, however, it is equivalent to βρώμα, what is eaten, food (see on 4:32). On the whole expression Chrysostom compares Matt. 6:34, "Take no thought for the morrow," and this he says in a picturesque phrase means "not to be nailed to the things of this life" (44.1; p. 158).

75. τήν μένουσαν εἰς ζωήν αἰώνιον is an unusual expression, which seems to contain two meanings: that the food, in contrast to that which perishes, remains forever, and that it also has the effect of producing a life that lasts forever. Schnackenburg notes that "In Catholic exegesis the prevailing view" has been "that these verses were an indirect reference to the Eucharist," but he produces some substantial objections. "A primary eucharistic meaning is not possible for 4:14," he concludes, "and therefore improbable for 6:27."

76. Eternal life is usually viewed in this Gospel as a present possession. The future here may point to the action of the Son on the last day (cf. v. 40). Or, as Hoskyns thinks, it may point to the atoning death of Christ, as yet in the future. If the giving refers not to life, but to the food that abides, then that food being his flesh (v. 51), the giving is naturally thought of as yet future. See further on 1:4; 3:15.
77. If the aorist points to a particular act it will probably be Jesus' baptism. In the early church baptism was often described as a seal.

78. Westcott suggests that "the thought of Christ as an accepted sacrifice" may be what is meant. His reason is that "In the Jewish ritual the victims are examined and sealed if perfect" and he gives as reference Mishnah, Shek. 1:5). He is followed by Hoskyns, who adds no other rabbinic reference. The view is attractive, but the passage cited says nothing about sealing perfect victims.

79. See Odeberg, FG, pp. 242-43.

80. It is found in the Manual of Discipline (1QS 4:4; DSS, p. 375), but in the sense "works done by God."

81. Hoskyns comments, "it would be to misunderstand what the Evangelist has here said, if it were supposed that the Act of faith were an act grounded in an independent, individual decision to believe. The Act of faith is itself the work of God (v. 44, cf. Rom. xii.3). Neither the fourth Evangelist nor Saint Paul is driven finally to a Pelagian or even semi-Pelagian conception of faith."

Cf. also Bernard: "The answer of Jesus contains, in small compass, the gist of the Pauline teaching about faith." Brown regards faith as "the all important work of God" (p. 265).

82. Cf. Augustine, "This is then to eat the meat. . . which endureth unto eternal life. To what purpose dost thou make ready teeth and stomach? Believe, and thou hast eaten already" (25.12; p. 164).

83. For εκείνος see on 1:8.


85. SBk cites a rabbinic saying that if a prophet gives "a sign and wonder then one must listen to him; but if not, then one need not listen to him."

86. Dodd sees Johannine irony: "The 'signs' which the people expect from the Messiah are mere miracles; yet when they see a miracle they fail to see the 'sign'; for to the evangelist a σημείον is not, in essence, a miraculous act, but a significant act, one which, for the seeing eye and the understanding mind, symbolizes eternal realities" (IFG, p. 90).

87. "Christ could produce no credential so conclusive but that the Jews would demand one more conclusive still" (MacGregor). "They were always deceiving themselves with the idea that they wanted more evidence, and pretending that if they had this evidence they would believe. Thousands in every age do just the same. . . . The plain truth is that it is want of heart, not want of evidence, that keeps people back from Christ" (Ryle).

88. "It shall come to pass . . . that the treasury of manna shall again descend from on high, and they will eat of it in those years" (2 Bar. 29:8). Similarly in the Sibylline Oracles we read of those who inherit life in the new age "feasting on sweet bread from the starry heaven" (Frag. 3:49). A midrash expresses the idea in terms of Moses: "As the former redeemer (i.e. Moses) caused manna to descend, as it is stated, Behold, I will cause to rain bread from heaven for you (Ex. XVI,4), so will the latter Redeemer cause manna to descend, as it is stated, May he be as a rich cornfield in the land (Ps. LXXII,16)" (Eccl. Rab. 1.9; Soncino edn. p, 33). Peder Borgen shows that there is quite a complex of Jewish ideas behind this chapter, with thoughts of the Law, of the events on Mt. Sinai, and of the wisdom literature underlying much that is said (Bread from Heaven [Leiden, 1965], especially ch. 6). He says, "In John the bread from heaven has been given the life-giving functions of the Torah and wisdom" (p. 157). Jesus does perfectly what the others foreshadow. Borgen rejects the idea that the reference here is adequately explained on the basis of Jewish expectations of the manna in the messianic age, "since it ignores or minimizes the distinction between the external bread and the spiritual bread" (p. 174). That Jesus gives spiritual bread is one of the leading ideas in this discourse.

89. There may be other meanings. Among the rabbis "bread" often symbolizes the Law (see SBk on v. 35), and there could be a reference to Jesus as the true bread in contrast to the Law as the Jews understood it. Barrett notices also Torrey's suggestion that the words are a question, "Did not Moses give you bread from heaven? (Yes, indeed. But the father gives you the true bread from heaven)."
90. For the use of ἀληθινός in this Gospel see on 1:9.
91. Or as "that (bread) which."
92. There are Jewish sayings that parallel this in part. They refer to the giving of the Law on Sinai as the giving of life to Israel or even to the world, e.g. "I f the earth trembled when He gave life to the world . . ." (Exod. Rab. 29.9; Soncino edn., p. 343).
93. This may be illustrated from the prophecy concerning the messianic age in 2 Bar. 29:5:
"The earth also shall yield its fruit ten thousandfold and on each (?) vine there shall be a thousand branches, and each branch shall produce a thousand clusters, and each cluster produce a thousand grapes, and each grape produce a cor (about 120 gallons) of wine."
94. J. Jeremias maintains that "The passages in the Fourth Gospel where Jesus calls Himself the bread of life (John 6.33, 35, 41, 48, 50, 51) and his Gospel bread (6.35; cf. Mark 7.27 par.) and water (John 4.10, 14; 6.35; 7.37-8), are to be understood similarly in an eschatological sense" (The Eucharistic Words of Jesus, p. 156). They point forward to life in the age to come.
95. Cf. Calvin, "Thus unhappy men are not satisfied simply with the sin of rejecting God's promises, but throw the guilt of their unbelief on Christ."
96. πάντοτε is unexpected with the aorist. The verb implies a once-for-all gift, the adverb that it will be with them always (there may be a glance at the gift of the manna every morning). NTV has "from now on," but this loses the sense of permanency implied in πάντοτε.
97. For this expression see Philip B. Harner, The "I Am" of the Fourth Gospel (Philadelphia, 1970). In the present passage Morgan is reminded of the "I AM " that Moses heard from the burning bush. He thinks that Jesus "took the name of the burning bush, and linked it with the symbol of perfect sustenance for human life. 'I am the Bread of life.' Thus He employed the simplest of terms, with sublimest significance." R. Kysar can say that John uses "to assert the divinity of the founder of his faith . . . he uses it to claim that, when Christ speaks, it is God who speaks. . . . The words of Christ are God's words. The actions of Christ are God's actions. The human response to Christ is the response to God" (John, The Maverick Gospel [Atlanta, 1976], p. 44).
98. ἐγώ εἰμι is repeated with "the bread of life" in v. 48, and with similar statements about bread in vv.41 and 51, with "the light of the world" (8:12), with "the door" (10:7, 9; NTV has "the gate"), with "the good shepherd" (10:11, 14), with "the resurrection and the life" (11:25), with "the way, and the truth, and the life" (14:6), and with "the true vine" (15:1, 5).
99. As Hendriksen points out, the use of the article in της ζωής indicates not life in general, but "the life," that is everlasting life. "Bread of life" means primarily "bread that gives life" (Goodspeed), though there will be the secondary meaning "living bread" (cf. v. 51).
100. The subjunctive is used of not hungering, οὐ μὴ πεινάσῃ, and the indicative of never thirsting, οὐ μὴ διψήσει. But there does not seem to be significance in the change.
101. In Sir. 24:21 Wisdom by contrast says, "Those who eat me will hunger for more, and those who drink me will thirst for more." That passage goes on to identify wisdom with the Law (v. 23), which may support the contention that Jewish ideas about the Law underlie this chapter. Jesus is superior to the Law and gives a satisfaction that the Law cannot. But unless we see such a reference to the Law there is no contradiction between the two sayings. Jesus is saying that people will not hunger after anything else once they have tasted of his good gift, the son of Sirach that people can never have too much of wisdom.
102. 'Αλλ'.
103. "They ask again for bread, the earth still and nothing but the earth, while He had desired, by means of this figurative repast, to offer them life, to open to them heaven!" (Godet).
104. Bernard favors the omission of μὲ after ἐφοράξατε with A a b e q syrs.c. Then the words refer to v. 26. If the μὲ be read, he finds an allusion to some unrecorded saying, as in 10:25; 11:40.
Tasker also favors the omission, thinking that "The addition of the word would have seemed very natural; but the implied object of the verb in the context would appear to be the 'sign' which the disciples had recently witnessed" (GNT, p. 426). There is force in this, but it does not carry complete conviction. P. Borgen maintains that the explanation is in terms of current modes of exegesis. In v. 32 Jesus has substituted ὑμῖν for αὐτός in the passage quoted in v. 31. He has authoritatively interpreted this Old Testament verse. Borgen thinks we should accordingly translate v. 36, "But I said 'you' because you have seen me and yet do not believe" (Bread from Heaven, p. 74). This is very attractive and may well be right.

105. MacGregor speaks of "a comprehensive neuter, the thought of the believer's individuality being thus subordinated to that of the Father's grace." Westcott reminds us that "The unbelief of the people was not a proof that the purpose of God had failed. Rather it gave occasion for declaring more fully how certainly the Son carried out the Father's will."

106. The present tense is used here where the Son awaits. In verse 39 the perfect δέδωκεν expresses the gift as completed in the will of the Father. For the things the Father gives the Son see on 3:35.

107. The neuter πᾶν δ (as in v. 37), where we would have expected the masculine.

108. αναστήρω may be an aorist subjunctive dependent on ἴνα (and thus giving us part of the Father's will; cf. Schonfield, "must raise him up"), or future indicative in an independent clause ("I will raise him up"). Concerning this raising Stauffer says, "The coming of Christ is no isolated event for John, but an historical fact which reaches out beyond itself to an explication at the end of history" (NTT, p. 43).

109. Bailey translates "contemplateth" and says that it "implies not mere vision but grasping the significance of a thing, and so it is the precursor of faith."

110. Cf. Westcott, "So far from the doctrine of the Resurrection being, as has been asserted, inconsistent with St. John's teaching on the present reality of eternal life, it would be rather true to say that this doctrine makes the necessity of the Resurrection obvious. He who feels that life is now, must feel that after death all that belongs to the essence of its present perfection must be restored, however much ennobled under new conditions of manifestation." A minor point is that in v. 39 all believers are included collectively, whereas in w. 40, 44 and 54 the reference is more individual.

111. We are reminded of the "grumbling" of the Israelites in the wilderness (Exod. 15:24; Num. 14:2, etc.). These people "preserve the genuine succession of unbelief" (Hoskyns). The imperfect ἐγόγγυζον indicates that "they kept grumbling."

112. Where Jesus used the perfect indicative καταβέβηκα, they have the aorist participle, ὁ καταβάς, and they link "I am the bread" directly with the reference to coming down from heaven as he does not when he identifies himself with the bread (v. 35); though cf. v. 33. Such differences are not important. See further SFG, ch. 5. It is worth noting the tenses used of Jesus' descent. The aorist (3:13; 6:41, 51, 58) points to the decisive action of the incarnation, the present (6:33, 50) to Jesus' character as the One from heaven, the perfect (6:38, 42) to the continuing result of the past act of incarnation.

113. The expression is Ἰησοῦς ὁ υἱός Ἰωσήφ. In a similar expression in 1:45 there is no article. Its meaning here is probably, as Abbott suggests, "the (well-known) son of Joseph" (1970).

114. Odeberg draws attention to the Jewish idea of the divine nešama descending from heaven and joining itself to human beings. He goes on to state with precision the Jewish objection: "(1) The Jews do not reject the idea that a man appearing on earth as an earthly being could be descended from heaven; they maintained that Elijah and other celestial figures appeared on earth and dwelt among men as earthly beings; (2) neither do they reject the idea, that a man, born of known parents, of 'woman', of 'earthly semen', could receive a Divine calling, be a messenger from God, obtain revelations from the Divine world; (3) but they rejected the idea that a man born of earthly semen
could at the same time be a celestial being, of celestial origin, could have 'descended from heaven'" (FG, p. 264, n. 3).

115. Their word order puts stress on ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ. This differs from Jesus' word order in the earlier verses (33, 38; his preposition in the latter is ἅπα, not ἐκ, but the difference does not seem significant). But he follows it subsequently (50, 51, and 58).

116. "Here is a fundamental doctrine of the Fourth Gospel, viz. that the approach of the soul to God or Christ is not initiated by the man himself, but by a movement of Divine grace" (Bernard). Barclay gives a number of examples of the use of the verb ἐλκύω in the New Testament to show that "Always there is this idea of resistance." This is surely true, and indicates that God brings people to himself although by nature they prefer sin. But curiously Barclay adds, "God can and does draw men, but man's resistance can defeat the pull of God." Not one of his examples of the verb shows the resistance as successful. Indeed we can go further. There is not one example in the New Testament of the use of this verb where the resistance is successful. Always the drawing power is triumphant, as here. Calvin speaks of "an effectual movement of the Holy Spirit, turning men from being unwilling and reluctant into willing." Luther has an interesting note on the verse in The Bondage of the Will, trans. J. I. Packer and O. R. Johnston (London, 1957), pp. 310-11. The verb is used in one of the sayings of Jesus in the Oxyrhyncus Papyri, but the text is mutilated. It is impossible to be sure whether it is used in the same sense as here or not. See LAE, pp. 426-28. Borgen sees the verb as a legal term, equivalent to the Hebrew רָשׁוּפִּים (which it often renders in LXX), and which means "to take possession of" (i.e., by drawing the object to oneself). Borgen regards Jesus as the agent of the Father and understands this verse to mean, "only those of whom the sender (through the agent) takes the actual possession are received by the agent, and nobody else" (p. 161). Apart from one example in Acts, the verb is confined to this Gospel in the New Testament (5 times).

117. Cf. Godet: "the God who sends Jesus for souls, on the other hand, draws souls to Jesus. The two divine works, external and internal, answer to and complete each other. The happy moment in which they meet in the heart, and in which the will is thus gained, is that of the gift on God's part, of faith on man's part." Bultmann comments,"faith becomes possible when one abandons hold on one's own security, and to abandon one's security is nothing else than to let oneself be drawn by the Father" (p. 231).

118. The Isaiah passage seems the more likely source. Perhaps both are in mind, for "the prophets" is an unusual way to cite a passage (though cf. Matt. 2:23; 26:56; received text of Mark 1:2; Acts 13:40). It may signify the general tenor of what is written in more than one prophet, no one passage being singled out. Or the plural may be meant to point us to "the prophets" as a division of the Old Testament. In my judgment the reference is to Isa. 54:13, though whether to the Hebrew or LXX is uncertain.

119. Cf. Paul's statement that the Thessalonian Christians were θεοδίδασκοι (1 Thess. 4:9). Odeberg maintains that this term "points to the fact that no real knowledge exists of the Divine world, that does not proceed from God, it points to the externality versus the internality; διδασκοί θεοῦ is to be subsumed under the general γεννηθέντες ἐκ θεοῦ" (FG, p. 258).

120. The previous verse "must not be taken to mean that any man might enjoy a direct mystical experience of God and then, enlightened, attach himself to Jesus. Jesus only has immediate knowledge of God (τον πατέρα έωρακεν), and to others he is the mediator, since he has come forth from the presence of God (ὼν παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ)" (Barrett). Temple speaks or "an error that must be at once repelled, the alluring peril of mysticism, according to which a man may have direct experience of unmediated communion with the infinite and eternal God. That is not so; and any experience taken to be this is wrongly interpreted. Only the Son has that direct communion with the Father."

121. J. Painter comments, "Thus 'from heaven' no longer simply indicates the origin of the bread. Rather it is an indication of the quality of the life. It is the life of the age to come that is offered by Jesus in the present" (NTS, 35 [1989], p. 440).
This aorist makes it difficult to understand the word as referring to the Holy Communion as some suggest.

"For" is ὑπέρ. Barrett examines the use of this preposition in other contexts in John: ὑπέρ των προβάτων (10:11, 15), ὑπέρ τοῦ λαοῦ (11:50), ὑπέρ τοῦ ἐθνοῦς (11:51-52), ὑπέρ των φιλών αυτοῦ (15:13), and ὑπέρ αὐτῶν ἐγὼ ἀμαρτόν (17:19). He concludes: "These passages show conclusively that a reference to the death of Jesus is intended — he will give his flesh in death — and suggest a sacrificial meaning." For the substitutionary force of ὑπέρ in such contexts see my The Apostolic Preaching of the Cross (London and Grand Rapids, 1965), pp. 62-64. R. H. Lightfoot points to another important aspect of this saying, namely that it "will make clear that the Lord's language in 63235 is not to be understood in a sense which would imply that the true bread, the bread of life which He gives, costs nothing to the Giver. On the contrary, His gift involves His death." John's use of ὑπέρ is noticeably more frequent than is that of the other Evangelists, the figures being: Matthew 5 times and Mark twice, Luke 5 times, John 13 times. It mattered to John that Jesus died ὑπέρ ἡμῶν. Considering the wide range of meaning of ὑπέρ it is interesting to notice the way John so often uses it of death; see 10:11, 15; 11:50, 51, 52; 13:37, 38; 15:13; 17:19; 18:14 (elsewhere he has it only in 1:30; 11:4). John's fondness for the word is due to his references to Jesus' death (9 times).

E.g., MacGregor: "no explanation is adequate which fails to recognize that John's main purpose in thus identifying the life-giving bread with Christ's flesh is at last to bring into prominence the sacramental bearing of the whole discourse." By contrast Plumptner finds in the use of the term "flesh" evidence that the reference is not primarily sacramental: "But that the reference is not exclusively nor even directly to the Eucharist is shewn from the use of σάρξ and not σῶμα." Later he says, "The primary reference therefore is to Christ's propitiatory death; the secondary reference is to all those means by which the death of Christ is appropriated, especially the Eucharist."

Ignatius is usually said to use σάρξ in this way, but his words should be looked at very carefully. In Rom. 7:3 he says, "I desire the bread of God, which is the flesh of Christ who was of the seed of David." This might be understood of the sacrament except that he immediately adds, "and for a draught I desire His blood, which is love incorruptible" (the blood is love also in Trail. 8:1). Moreover, the words occur in a passage in which Ignatius is seeking martyrdom ("I write to you in the midst of life, yet longing after death"). He appears to be using a highly colored way of referring to death, when he would enter heavenly blessing. To refer the words to the sacrament, besides ignoring the context, is to make them a commonplace, scarcely worth saying. What Christian does not desire to receive the sacrament? Philad. 4:1 is clear enough, "Be ye careful therefore to observe one eucharist (for there is one flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ . . .), but Philad.

11:2 (which Hoskyns, for example, cites) has nothing to do with the sacrament, the words being, "Jesus Christ, on whom their hope is set in flesh and soul and spirit." Smyrn. 6:2 speaks of allowing that "the eucharist is the flesh of our Saviour Jesus Christ," but immediately goes on to say, "which flesh suffered for our sins, and which the Father of His goodness raised up." Ignatius, moreover, refers to the gospel as "the flesh of Jesus" (Philad. 5:1), and again of faith as "the flesh of the Lord" (Trail. 8:1). It is clear that "flesh" for him is far from being a technical term pointing to the sacrament. In any case, we must bear in mind the verdict of such scholars as Helmut Koester, "Σάρξ does not mean the same to John and Ignatius" (The Bultmann School of Biblical Interpretation: New Directions? Journal for Theology and the Church, I [1965], p. 114). Justin Martyr speaks of Christ as "having been made flesh by the Word of God . . . the food which is blessed by the prayer of His word, and from which our blood and flesh by transmutation are nourished, is the flesh and blood of that Jesus who was made flesh" (Apol. 1.66). But writers like Irenaeus consistently use "body," not "flesh," of the sacrament, and so do ancient liturgies like those of Hippolytus, Serapion, St. James, etc. J. Jeremias suggests that the Aramaic behind the words of institution in the Gospels was Ἡψ3 ἴη, which might readily be rendered in Greek by σάρξ. He regards John 6:51c as "the Johannine tradition of the word of interpretation over the bread" (The
Eucharistic Words, p. 141 and n. 13). The possibility that Jesus used the Aramaic Christ and that this might readily be rendered in Greek by σώμα is undoubted. All that I am contending is that in point of fact, when referring to the Eucharist, the custom was to use σώμα (whatever the original Aramaic may have been), so that the occurrence of σάρξ in itself cannot be held to point to the sacrament.

126. This is another expression not easy to reconcile with the sacramental reference. On Calvary Christ gave himself "for the life of the world," but in the sacrament his gift is to the communicants there present, not to the world. It is perhaps not impossible to apply the words in some sense to the sacrament, but they refer much more naturally to the cross.

127. See n. 125 above. 111 an Appendix on vv. 51b-58 Godet suggests that the broken loaf at the institution of the Lord's Supper corresponds to "His body as an organism (σώμα) broken. In the discourse at Capernaum where the question is only of nourishment, according to the analogy of the multiplication of the loaves, Jesus was obliged rather to present His body as substance (σάρξ) than as an organism. This perfect propriety of the terms shows the originality and authenticity of the two forms" (II, p. 41).

128. Cf. Strachan, "Whilst the Evangelist in vv. 52-57 is using sacramental language, the emphasis and intention of his thinking is to reassert his main central theme in the Gospel, that only through faith in the risen Christ, once an historical personality, is life obtained." Or again, "The primary reference of flesh and blood is not to the sacrament, but to the demand for faith in a Christ, who became 'flesh and blood', i.e. truly man." McClymont sees a reference to the sacrificial death of Jesus, and adds: "To go further than this, however, and apply the passage exclusively to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper is not warranted by anything in the discourse or its circumstances, though it is quite true that in the Lord's Supper we have the symbolic representation of the eating and drinking which is here described." Augustine maintains that our Lord "would have this meat and drink to be understood as meaning the fellowship of His own body and members, which is the holy Church in His predestinated, and called, and justified, and glorified saints and believers."

129. έμάχοντο. The verb is used of men fighting (Acts 7:26), and it is translated"quarrel" in 2 Tim. 2:24. Berkeley and Moffatt have "wrangled," Weymouth, "This led to an angry debate," and Bruce, "held a heated disputation."

130. So does the Person, ούτος is probably used in a somewhat contemptuous sense,"This fellow." It stands in sham contrast to ήμίν. Bailey denies that they took the words literally; "They mean (in our language) 'How can one human personality be incorporated into another?' " This is very difficult to accept. It is much more likely that they thought of the words as meant literally, but could not understand how they could be put into effect.

131. Temple is of opinion that "The blood is the life; especially is it the life released by death that it may be offered to God.... Blood . . . when poured out, is the life released by death and given to God." Such positions are often advocated, though usually with no attempt to adduce evidence. It is true that some passages associate blood and life very closely, for example, Gen. 9:4-5; Lev. 17:11, 14; Deut. 12:23 (though it is not true, as Temple claims, that there are "many similar passages," at least in the Old Testament). It is also true that many primitive peoples regard blood with superstitious awe. But this is a flimsy foundation for the edifice that is built upon it by such writers as S. C. Gayford, Sacrifice and Priesthood (London, 1924), or F. C. N. Hicks, The Fullness of Sacrifice (London, 1930). A close examination of the biblical evidence shows clearly that "blood" points to violent death, not the release of life at all. See A. M. Stibbs, The Meaning of the Word 'Blood' in Scripture
References to drinking blood are rare in Jewish literature. Josephus once says, "it was still possible to feed upon the public miseries and to drink of the city's life-blood" (Bell. 5.344). But this sheds no light on the present passage.

Cf. Dodd: "the expression δούνα τήν σάρκα, however figuratively it is taken, can hardly fail to suggest the idea of death. And the expression πίνειν τό αίμα, again, can hardly fail to suggest shed blood, and therefore violent death. In such veiled terms the evangelist suggests that it is through death that Christ becomes bread of life to the world" (IFG, p. 339). He cites Wettstein, Ubi sanguinis a carne separati fit mentio, violenta morte mortuus intelligitur.

Cf. Westcott, "To 'eat' and to 'drink' is to take to oneself by a voluntary act that which is external to oneself, and then to assimilate it and make it part of oneself. It is, as it were, faith regarded in its converse action. Faith throws the believer upon and into its object; this spiritual eating and drinking brings the object of faith into the believer." The midrash on Eccl. 2:24, "A man can do nothing better than to eat and drink . . .," says, "A I I the references to eating and drinking in this Book signify Torah and good deeds" (Soncino edn., p. 71; so also on Eccl. 8:15).

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Cf. the statements of Augustine, cited in n. 128 above.

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Indeed, Ryle sees the whole point of the verb in this. He cites Leigh, that the word "noteth a continuance of eating, as brute beasts will eat all day, and some part of the night" and adds, "our Lord meant the habit of continually feeding on Him all day long by faith. He did not mean the occasional eating of material food in an ordinance."

That τρώγω does not differ significantly from ἐσθίω is indicated by the fact that in their reports of the activity of the people of Noah's generation Matthew uses the former (Matt. 24:38) and Luke the latter (Luke 17:27). Similarly, in the quotation from Ps. 41:9 in John 13:18 we find τρώγω, but the LXX has ἐσθίω.

The Greek is διά τον πατέρα. Many draw attention to Alexander's dictum that he owed life to his father, but good life to Aristotle, δι' έκεῖνον μεν ζών, διά το ήτον δέ καλώς ζών (Plut. V??. Alex. 8).

"Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood" is identical in vv. 54, and 56. But this third time it is "the one who feeds on me." In threefold repetitions John has the habit of introducing slight variations without appreciable change of meaning (see on 3:5). It is unlikely that eating the flesh and drinking the blood are to be understood in any other sense than "the one who feeds on me." For the meaning Strachan aptly cites the Talmud (Sank. 99a) for a saying that speaks of "eating" the Messiah. The Soncino translation (p. 699) employs the verb "enjoy," which is what the passage must signify.

κακεΐνος is emphatic.

This is the tenth reference in this chapter to coming down from heaven. In the earlier nine οὖρανοῦ is invariably preceded by the article. There is no article here, though the meaning appears to be the same.

σκληρός is derived from σκελλω, "to dry." It means "hard to the touch," "rough." In the Bible it is applied metaphorically to Abraham's view of the command to cast out Hagar (Gen. 21:11), to people (Matt. 25:24), and to things, including its being "hard" for Saul of Tarsus to kick against the goad (Acts 26:14), and to the "strong winds" of Jas. 3:4. Here (as in Jade 15) the meaning is something like "harsh." Calvin comments, "the hardness was in their hearts and not in the saying."

οὐτοῖ I have taken to refer to the saying. But it could refer to Jesus, "Who can hear him?"

Barclay comments: "Here we come upon a truth that re-emerges in every age. Time and again it is not the intellectual difficulty of accepting Christ which keeps men from becoming
Christians; it is the height of Christ's moral demand." There is mystery in religion, of necessity. But "Any honest thinker will accept the mystery . . . to this day many a man's refusal of Christ comes, not because Christ puzzles and baffles his intellect, but because Christ challenges and condemns his life."

145. σκανδαλίζει. The σκάνδαλον was the bait stick that triggered off a trap when an animal or bird touched it. The verb, then, used metaphorically, signifies to be caught in a difficulty. It is frequent in Matthew and Mark, but only here and in 16:1 in this Gospel.

146. Elsewhere in the New Testament ἀναβαίνω is never used of the crucifixion. Bernard accordingly rejects the view. He thinks that the use of this verb "provides a notable illustration of Jn.'s manner of writing, that here and at 20]7 he introduces an allusion to the Ascension of Christ, while he does not state explicitly that it took place."

147. A minor point supporting this is the use of οὖν, "therefore" (which MV omits). I f Jesus were proceeding to treat of something that would comfort rather than offend, "but" would be more natural, οὖν is very frequent in this Gospel, but not in the words of Jesus. Abbott points out that of 195 occurrences of οὖν only eight are in sayings of Jesus (2191). We are justified in finding significance in these few occurrences. Here the meaning will be, "You are scandalized at this? The logical, inevitable consequence is . . . ."

148. Cf. Westcott, "You are troubled, the Lord seems to say, by words which cannot be interpreted according to the laws of material, phenomenal existence. How then will you bear the last revelation of the Ascension, when that which is truly human will be seen to be transfigured and to rise beyond the conditions of earthly life? This will be at once the severest trial and the highest reward of faith."

149. ζωοποιέω occurs in 5:21, seven times in Paul, and once in 1 Peter. Especially interesting are 1 Cor. 15:45, ἐγένετο . . . δ Εσχατος Αδάμ εἰς πνεύμα ζωοποιοῦν, and 2 Cor. 3:6, τό γάρ γράμμα ὑποκείεται τό δέ Πνεϋμα ζωοποιεῖ. This New Testament insistence that life comes from the Father or the Son (John 5:21) or the Spirit (here) should be contrasted with the rabbinic view: 'Great is the Law, for it gives life to them that practise it both in this world and in the world to come' ('Ab. 6:7). But no Law can give life. Only the life-giving Spirit can do that.

150. "Counts for nothing" contains an emphatic double negative, οὐκ ωφελεί οὐδέν.

151. ῥήμα is always used in the plural in this Gospel, and it always refers to the words of God or of Christ, λόγος (used in v. 60) is usually singular (plural in 7:40; 10:19; 14:24; 19:13); for this term see Additional Note A, pp. 102-11.

152. The repetition of ἐστιν in the expression πνεῦμα ἐστιν καὶ ζωὴ ἐστιν means that πνεῦμα and ζωῆ are not blurred; they are regarded as distinct. There is also some emphasis on the verb, "spirit they are, and life they are."

153. Cf. Lightfoot, "The Lord's work and the Lord's word are one; and both must be received and assimilated by the believing disciple."

154. ἀλλ' (NIV translates "yet"). See on 1:8.

155. ἀξίω is found elsewhere in the New Testament only in 16:4. But John does not seem to make much distinction between ἐκ and ἀπό, so we should note that ἀπ' ἀξίω occurs in 8:44; 15:27 and frequently in 1 John. The expression here probably means from the beginning of their professing discipleship, though in view of the strongly predestinarian strain in this Gospel it is not impossible that there is the thought of a knowledge going back to God's eternal purpose (cf. 1:1). For Jesus' knowledge see on 4:18, and for the use of ὁδό and γινώσκω on 2:24.

156. τίς ἐστιν is read by most MSS here, but G. D. Kilpatrick points out in a private communication that τίς ἐστιν is read by p66 κ and ε, and he suggests that this is an example of an infrequent construction (noted by Goodwin and occasionally found in the classics and elsewhere) when the imperfect replaces the present of direct speech, τίς ἐστιν, then, is a correction to the more usual construction.

157. παραδίδωμι is used in a variety of ways of the "delivering up" of Jesus. Here Judas was responsible, but Jesus was also "delivered up" by the Jewish nation and its high priests (18:35), by
Pilate (19:16), for our sins (Rom. 4:25), and by the Father (Rom. 8:32). In the most moving passage of all Christ is said to have delivered himself up (Gal. 2:20). ὁ παραδόσων here is the only example in John of a future participle with the article (Abbott, 2510, citing Bruder).

158. If the imperfect tense (ἐλεγεν) is significant the meaning will be that this is the kind of thing that Jesus said repeatedly. Barclay renders, "So that was why He often said. . . ."

159. ἀπερχόμην εἰς τὰ ὄπισθα, "they went away to the things they had left behind." Godet sees in the words "more than simple defection; they denote the return of these people to their ordinary occupations, which they had abandoned in order continuosly to follow the Lord."

160. ἐκ τούτου. "For this reason" contains a further ambiguity in itself. It may refer to the words of the previous verse (they went back because the Father did not draw them), or to the discourse as a whole (they were repelled by the "hard" sayings).

161. It is often said that John's narrative is no more than a variant of the Synoptic story, e.g., "The confession of Peter in w. 68 and 69 is the Fourth Evangelist's account of the confession of the Apostle at Caesarea Philippi, recorded by the Synoptists. . . . Here, he feels, is a dramatic setting too good to be missed, too allegorically appropriate to be lost. So he takes the confession of Peter out of its historical setting and places it against the denial that is growing within the soul of Judas" (Wright). The principal reasons for holding such views (apart from "insights" into the Evangelist's method) are two: the setting and the nature of the confession. In Matthew and Mark the incident is related not long after the feeding of the five thousand, in Luke it follows immediately on that feeding. The decisive nature of the confession, it is felt, means that it would have been uttered once only. Against the identification are (i) The difference in place. The Synoptics refer to an incident in the vicinity of Caesarea Philippi, John to one at Capernaum, (ii) The difference in Jesus' approach. The Synoptists record that he asked their opinion of his Person, John that he challenged them to continue following him. (iii) The difference in circumstances. In the Synoptists outsiders are recognized as venerating Jesus, though with imperfect knowledge. In John outsiders have opposed him and even disciples have left him. The Synoptists are talking about a more complete as against a less complete understanding of his Person. John is dealing with following versus desertion, (iv) The difference in the confession. In the Synoptists the wording differs, but it is concerned with "Christ" in one way or another: "You are the Christ" (Mark 8:29), "the Christ of God" (Luke 9:20), "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matt. 16:16). In John Peter says, 'Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We believe and know that you are the Holy One of God., ' The differences are marked. Though the two come from the same period the evidence suggests that they should be regarded as different confessions. Murray thinks of John's account as " in striking contrast, in spite of many points of similarity, with the account given in the Synoptists of a challenge made by Jesus somewhat later at Caesarea Philippi. Here the challenge is addressed directly to their sense of personal loyalty, and the confession is a confession of a consciousness of personal indebtedness. There the challenge relates to the place that they were prepared to assign to their Master in the working out of the purpose of God for the nation and the world. " Temple does not deal with the question directly, but assumes a distinction. Peter's epithet, "the Holy One of God," he says, "points to the spiritual character rather than the official status of the Messiah. That will be affirmed at Caesarea Philippi." P. Gardner-Smith says bluntly, "The only real point of contact is the belief that Peter understood the Lord's Person best" (Saint John and the Synoptic Gospels [Cambridge, 1938], p. 36).

162. John assumes that his readers will be familiar with the Twelve, for, though this is the first time the group is mentioned in this Gospel (it is implied in v. 13), he does not explain the term. Matthew adopts a similar procedure; he introduces the Twelve without explanation (10:1). Apart from 20:24 this is the only passage in which John speaks of the Twelve.

163. The word for "go" used here (ἀπέρχομαι) is that used also of Judas's going to the chief priests to betray Jesus in Mark 14:10.
164. NIV has "the words," but the article is lacking in the better MSS. Barrett points out that "τὰ ρήματα would imply a formula." Moulton says, "For exegesis, there are few of the finer points of Greek which need more constant attention than this omission of the article when the writer would lay stress on the quality or character of the object. Even the RV misses this badly sometimes, as in Jn. 668" (M, I, p. 83).

165. Richardson points out that "one cannot know if one will not believe... 'To know' in the Johannine usage, as generally in the Bible, means to enter into relations with someone and thus to have personal experience of him, as distinct from mere knowledge by description; it is first-hand or 'I-thou' knowledge, not scientific-objective knowledge" (An Introduction to the Theology of the New Testament, pp. 45-46). See further on 2:24.

166. Vincent Taylor is of the opinion that, while the expression "does not appear to have been an accepted Messianic title," it is used by Peter as "a Messianic designation" (The Names of Jesus [London, 1953], p. 80). Schnackenburg comments, "'Holy' expresses the closest possible intimacy with God, a participation in God's deepest and most essential being. Peter's confession is therefore the appropriate responsory (σβ ει) to the revelatory formula ἐγώ-είμι" (II, p. 77).

167. This verse names his father, as Simon Iscariot. Ισκαριώτης, which is applied to Judas also in 12:4, is usually accepted as a place name, signifying μαν ἀντ α, "man of Kerioth." It would then apply equally to father and son. Kerioth may be the Keriothhezron of Josh. 15:25 (in Judah), or Kerioth in Moab (Jer. 48:24). If this view is correct, Judas was the only one of the Twelve who was not a Galilean. Schonfield and others think the title might mean "One of the Sicarii" (or "Assassins"; the name was given to a group of desperate rebels with a bitter hatred of Rome and of Roman sympathizers), citing Josephus, Bell. 2.3.3. But this view has little to commend it, and it has not attracted much support. Goguel rejects both views and finds it impossible to discover a satisfactory meaning (The Life of Jesus [London, 1958], p. 495, η. 1). Other suggestions include "liar,""man from Sychar," and "carrier of the leather bag." But if the same name applies to both father and son, the place name, "man of Kerioth," seems most likely.

168. Εμελλεν. The verb may denote simple futurity, but it can also convey the thought of inevitability, as when it is used in Matt. 17:22 of the certainty of the passion. That is surely the meaning here.
N. THE FIFTH DISCOURSE — 
THE LIFE-GIVING SPIRIT (7:1-52)

The opposition to Jesus grows. At first it might have been thought possible that people would in time come to make Jesus their Leader. The events of the preceding chapters show that this will not be the case. From now to the end of the public ministry John depicts a steadily deepening hostility. In this chapter and the next he has a good deal to tell us about the arguments used by Jesus' enemies. This may well be his way of saying that the objections raised to Jesus' messianic claims all had their answers.¹

It had now become dangerous for Jesus to appear in Judea (v. 1), so that his appearance at Jerusalem at the Feast of Tabernacles had to be carefully arranged. Even so it was a feat of courage, and an attempt was actually made to arrest him. But, though danger was in the air, Jesus continued on his appointed path. He went up to the feast in due course, and gave the teaching that was appropriate to the occasion. The great advance was in his teaching on the Spirit. Some aspects of this have come before us earlier, but on this occasion Jesus brings out that when the Spirit is within anyone that person overflows in abounding life. Spirit-filled people cannot but be a blessing to other people.

The Feast of Tabernacles was a feast of thanksgiving primarily for the blessings of God in harvest, but there was also special reference to the blessings the people received during the wilderness wanderings, the time when God manifested himself in the tabernacle. It may be this that gives significance to John's recording of the happenings in this chapter. Neither in the tabernacle in the wilderness, nor in the temple that replaced it, was God fully manifested. The final and perfect manifestation of God was in Jesus, whose ministry would result in God's dwelling neither in a tent nor in a temple, but in people's hearts by his Spirit.

1. Jesus' Discussion with His Brothers (7:1-9)
After this, Jesus went around in Galilee, purposely staying away from Judea because the Jews there were waiting to take his life. But when the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles was near, Jesus' brothers said to him, "You ought to leave here and go to Judea, so that your disciples may see the miracles you do. No one who wants to become a public figure acts in secret. Since you are doing these things, show yourself to the world." For even his own brothers did not believe in him. Therefore Jesus told them, "The right time for me has not yet come; for you any time is right. The world cannot hate you, but it hates me because I testify that what it does is evil. You go to the Feast. I am not yet going up to this Feast, because for me the right time has not yet come." Having said this, he stayed in Galilee.

The hatred of his opponents meant that Jesus could no longer move openly. He must be circumspect lest he run into the kind of trouble that would hinder his mission. Thus he rejected the invitation of his unbelieving brothers to go up to Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles. To do as they suggested would be to provoke trouble. While he was ready to die when the time came, he would not thrust himself into precipitate action. He awaited the proper time for any action that he might take.

"After this" is an indefinite note of time. It gives no indication of how much time had elapsed. The period between Passover (6:4) and Tabernacles, however, shows that the interval was about six months. This is instructive for John's method. He records nothing at all that happened during this period. He is not writing a complete history, but making a selection for a definite twofold purpose, that of bringing out the messiahship of Jesus and that of bringing people to faith. Despite the passage of months, the hostility of Jesus' opponents persisted. So forbidding was their attitude ("waiting" is misleading; the verb means "were seeking" and the continuous tense gives the thought, "kept on seeking") that Jesus withdrew from Judea altogether. He "went around" (the word means "walked") in Galilee. The verb indicates the itinerant ministry of a rabbi moving among the people with his disciples. "Purposely" signifies that he set his will against walking in Judea. For "the Jews" see on 1:19.
2 John is fond both of time notes and of references to feasts; we find both here. "The" feast is defined as the Feast of Tabernacles, a usage that is paralleled in the Mishnah and elsewhere. The name "tabernacles" refers to the custom of building leafy shelters to be lived in during the festival, a feature to which Goodspeed's rendering, "the Jewish camping festival," draws attention (though this translation obscures the fact that the feast had deep religious significance).

3-5 For Jesus' "brothers" see on 2:12; they did not believe in him (v. 5; the imperfect tense gives their continuing attitude). But they challenge him to appear publicly at the feast. "So that your disciples may see the miracles you do" is somewhat puzzling. It appears to mean that the brothers had seen Jesus perform miracles, and that they now wish that his disciples should see this sort of thing too. But there is no indication in the previous narrative that the brothers had seen any sign that the disciples (or some of them) had not. It may be that the brothers are pretending to superior knowledge. It may be that they are ironic. It may be that they are thinking of disciples in other places than Galilee, or perhaps his disciples as a whole. Many would be gathered in Jerusalem for the feast, and Jesus could make contact with them then. It may be that they have in mind the defections mentioned in 6:66, and suggest that Jerusalem is the best place to retrieve the situation. More likely they mean that the signs wrought by a messianic claimant must be wrought in the holy city and not simply in remote places. It is only as the Messiah openly performs the messianic signs that he is the Messiah. They point out that no one who claims to be a public figure (Berkeley, "to be in the limelight") can establish himself by working in secret. There is no implication that Jesus had hidden himself of set purpose. But Galilee was far from the capital, and anything done there would be "secret" as far as the dwellers in the metropolis were concerned. And such things as messianic claims must be established in the capital city before the religious leaders. To act in Galilee accordingly was to act "in secret." The brothers challenge Jesus to produce miracles in the nation's heart and center. Their action is like that of Mary in chapter 2, and even more like that of the multitude who tried to make a king of him (6:15). It implies a belief that he could work miracles, coupled with a thoroughgoing misunderstanding of his mission, a complete lack of faith in the only sense that matters. They had no idea that Jesus' mission, in its very nature, must be unpopular. We should not
overlook the importance of this for an understanding of the difficulties under which Jesus labored. Many a man faced with cruel opposition in public life has been sustained by the faith and the faithfulness of his kith and kin. Jesus was denied this solace.

"These things" is not explained. But the expression points to the works wherein Jesus showed forth his glory, and by implication if no more claimed a special position for himself. If he claims to be the Messiah, the brothers are saying, then let him tell it to the world. This may be another example of John's irony. Jesus was indeed the Messiah, and would in due course be manifested to the world, and that in a way far fuller than they could comprehend. But their words arose from unbelief. "Did not believe" denotes a continuing attitude. They had no faith and their words must be understood in the light of that.

Greek has two words for "time," and that used here often refers to time not simply in its chronological sequence, but with reference to the events that take place in it. Used in this way, it is time in its qualitative rather than its quantitative aspect. It points to the suitable time, the right time, the favorable opportunity. In the present context it must refer to the time for going up to the feast. It was not the right time for Jesus to go up. He would not get the opportunity he sought if he went up with the brothers at the beginning of the feast. It was better for him to wait till the crowds assembled so that he could suddenly come among them (in the spirit of Mai. 3:1). Cf. Barclay: "to arrive with the crowds all assembled and expectant gave Him a far better opportunity than to go at the very beginning. This simply shows us Jesus choosing His time with careful prudence in order to get the most effective results." It is not impossible that John saw more in it than this. John's picture of Jesus is of one steadily moving on to meet his divinely appointed destiny. If this is in mind here, the meaning will be that Jesus' time, his God-appointed time, had not yet come (see on 2:4). Yet we should not overlook the facts that John normally uses the word "hour," not "time," to express this thought, and that the context at least in part is against it. But there is one feature of the context that strongly favors it, namely the following verse, which speaks of the world as hating Jesus but not the brothers. Odeberg points out that "To the Jews it was a self-evident truth that every man had his time." To affirm that they had no particular "time," but that their "time" was always present was accordingly striking and novel teaching. What gives it point is the fact
that the world as such did not recognize Jesus. It was not interested in his "time." In this respect the brothers joined with the world. Since the world (and the brothers) have cut themselves off from the divinely appointed "time" all times are alike to them. The brothers are set in strong contrast to Jesus. 18 They had no divine commission to discharge. Their only duty was to be faithful Jews. For this there was little point in a careful choice of time. One time was as good as another. The brothers' "time" was that when they would show themselves to be faithful Jews by going up to the feast. Their advice came out of their own situation and was completely irrelevant to the situation of Jesus accordingly. 19

7 The contrast with the brothers continues. 20 Jesus takes up their word "world," but uses it in a very different sense. The world not only does not, but cannot hate them. How could it? They belong to it. Its hate is not for such (cf. 15:19). But Jesus is in a different position. Him it does hate. The reason is the unfailing testimony that he bears against it ("testify" is in a continuous tense, as is "hates"; both point to ongoing activities). Jesus marks himself off from the world by his continuous testimony that the world's deeds are evil. The evildoer does not care to have his sin rebuked, and the hatred of which Jesus speaks is the inevitable result.

8 The difference in the "times" of Jesus and his brothers, and that in the attitude of the world to him and to them, lead to a difference in conduct. Jesus tells the brothers to go up to the feast. That is the natural thing to do in their position. But he is not in their position. Therefore he is not going up. There is a difficulty here, for after saying this Jesus does later go to Jerusalem. It is important accordingly to notice that the use of the present tense does not exclude subsequent action of a different kind. Jesus simply says that the brothers should go (the implication being "go now"), and he separates himself from them. Moreover, what they are urging him to do is to go up to keep the feast. This Jesus did not do, neither then nor later. He was absent for a good part of the ceremonies, perhaps for all of them. He went up to give certain teaching, not to observe the feast in the manner of a pilgrim. He is refusing to go up at their request and with a view to accomplishing what they set before him, but he is not refusing to go up to Jerusalem. 23 He is working out the implications of his messiahship in his own way, not theirs. He tells his brothers that for him "the right time has not yet come." 24 This means that the events in the time of which he speaks have
not yet approached their consummation. Until they do he will not act.\(^{25}\) And much will happen before he can make that public claim that his brothers try to foist on him at this moment.

\(^9\) Jesus has made his position clear. And having done so, he acts in accordance with it. When the brothers go up to the feast he stays where he is, in Galilee.

**2. The Reaction of the Multitudes (7:10-13)**

\(^{10}\) However, after his brothers had left for the Feast, he went also, not publicly, but in secret. \(^{11}\) Now at the Feast the Jews were watching for him and asking, "Where is that man?" \(^{12}\) Among the crowds there was widespread whispering about him. Some said, "He is a good man." Others replied, "No, he deceives the people." \(^{13}\) But no one would say anything publicly about him for fear of the Jews.

It is apparent that the brothers were not alone in the thought that it would be natural for Jesus to be in Jerusalem for this feast. There was comment on his absence, or rather on the fact that he was not known to be present, for John introduces the section in which he tells us of the discussion by informing us that Jesus did go up to Jerusalem. It is apparent that his ministry is having an effect. The people are divided. They do not know what to say. But the hostility of the hierarchy is now plain and serious, so that open discussion is inhibited.

\(^{10}\) Jesus differentiated himself from his brothers. They went up to the feast, but he did not go up with them. But after they had gone, he went up also. But he did not go up in the way they suggested. John is clear that others do not lay down the pattern for Jesus. He is supremely the master of every situation. So in this case he went up when he was ready and in the way he chose. "Not publicly" takes up the "show yourself to the world" (v. 4) and rejects it.\(^{26}\) Jesus' going up is not the going up the brothers had counselled. "As it were in secret" should probably be read; it is not quite as definite as "in secret" (NIV)\(^{27}\) would have been, and probably indicates that, though he took care to avoid undue publicity, Jesus did not go up in such a way that his presence was completely unknown to all others (Kleist and Lilly, "not so as to attract attention, but incognito"). Mark also tells us that
Jesus' last journey to Jerusalem was without publicity (Mark 9:30). What John is saying is that Jesus did not go up with the pilgrim caravan. We see how large such a group might be from the incident in Luke 2 when Joseph and Mary looked for the boy Jesus throughout an entire day. Nothing could be more public than to travel in such a company. Jesus eschewed such a conspicuous method of travel and went up privately.

11 For "the Jews" see on 1:19. Here the expression signifies the enemies of Jesus; "were watching . . . and asking" are continuous tenses. They kept looking for him and asking where he was. John does not tell us why they were so sure that he would be there. Possibly they discerned a fitness for his message about the feast; possibly they reasoned that he had been absent from the city on some previous feasts and thus might be expected to be present this time.

12-13 "Whispering" is cognate with the verb rendered "grumble" (6:41, 43, 61, where it meant grumbling about Jesus), and it may indicate discontent here; more probably NIV is correct. It probably signifies quiet discussion, " 'whispering,' suppressed discussion in low tones, in corners, and among friends" (Dods). The crowds were divided in their opinions, but it was not safe to speak up about Jesus, so they kept their voices low. "He is a good man" indicates an awareness of his character and a lack of perception of his Person (cf. Mark 10:17). Those who thought of him as leading the multitude astray did not go into details. Presumably they held that his signs and his preaching, while ostensibly setting forth the divine, cloaked sinister designs. Those who followed such teaching could not but be led astray. The role of "the crowds" throughout this chapter should not be overlooked. Except in chapter 12 there is nothing like it in this Gospel. The term denotes the uninformed majority, wanting to do the right thing but not sure what it was. They are distinguished from "the Jews" (which here must mean the religious leaders, for the crowds were Jews themselves), and also from the disciples of Jesus (see further on v. 25). Some of them differed sharply from the view that Jesus was a good man. John concludes this part of his narrative with the information that "fear of the Jews" prevented free and open discussion. This represents the high point of hostility so far reached. The opposition is rising. Since the people who were afraid were themselves Jews it is clear that John's "the Jews" does not refer to the whole nation; it signifies the leaders, hostile to Jesus.
3. Righteous Judgment (7:14-24)

14 Not until halfway through the Feast did Jesus go up to the temple courts and begin to teach. 15 The Jews were amazed and asked, "How did this man get such learning without having studied?" 16 Jesus answered, "My teaching is not my own. It comes from him who sent me. 17 If anyone chooses to do God's will, he will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own. 18 He who speaks on his own does so to gain honor for himself, but he who works for the honor of the one who sent him is a man of truth; there is nothing false about him. 19 Has not Moses given you the law? Yet not one of you keeps the law. Why are you trying to kill me?" 20 "You are demon-possessed," the crowd answered. "Who is trying to kill you?" 21 Jesus said to them, "I did one miracle, and you are all astonished. 22 Yet, because Moses gave you circumcision (though actually it did not come from Moses, but from the patriarchs), you circumcise a child on the Sabbath. 23 Now if a child can be circumcised on the Sabbath so that the law of Moses may not be broken, why are you angry with me for healing the whole man on the Sabbath? 24 Stop judging by mere appearances, and make a right judgment."

When the feast was at its height Jesus came out of his seclusion and taught in the Temple. 33 His opening address is a call to make serious judgments and not simply snap decisions on the basis of surface appearance. He points out that if anyone is really in earnest he will know whether his teaching is divine in origin or not. But in this situation the people are trying to kill him and thus break the very law they profess to uphold. 34 Their consideration for the outward letter of the Law (as shown in their concern for circumcision) contrasts sharply with their carelessness about the deeper things to which the Law points (as shown in their attitude toward Jesus' healing on the Sabbath). Their values are wrong. They are superficial. They do not understand the meaning of the law they profess to honor, and therefore they do not recognize that the authority of Jesus is the very authority of God.

14 Jesus waited until the feast was halfway through before going up to the Temple. No reason is given for this choice of time. We may conjecture that he wished to teach at the climax of the festivities but not to
be involved in the whole of the celebrations. When he went up there was no attempt at concealment or at remaining in semi-seclusion. He taught in the Temple, which was just about as public an activity as was possible. Nothing is said about the subject of his discourse.

15 His hearers were surprised, which seems to indicate that many of them had never heard Jesus teach before this, and indeed, John has not recorded any previous teaching of Jesus in Jerusalem. He has told us that Jesus had been in the capital before, that he had done "signs" there, and that he had defended himself when accused of making himself "equal with God." But in any case many of his audience on this occasion would be pilgrims from centers where Jesus had never been. They express astonishment at Jesus' "learning" (basically knowledge of Scripture) when he had never "studied," that is, been a disciple attached to a rabbi (see the reference to Peter and John as "unschooled," Acts 4:13). "He had not gone through the system" (Guthrie). They would not have been surprised at his knowing a little Scripture. The Bible was read regularly in the synagogues, and the Shema' (Deut. 6:4-5) at any rate was memorized by all. Probably most people could quote some parts of the Bible. The surprise would be at the fact that Jesus could carry on a sustained discourse apparently in the manner of the rabbis, and perhaps also with the amount of Scripture he could quote. "This man" is contemptuous (Moffatt renders, "this uneducated fellow"). MacGregor points out that "The Evangelist would see something intensely dramatic in this picture of the Jews confronted by the Incarnate Logos and yet treating him as an 'uneducated fellow'!" It is a highly ironical situation.

16-17 Jesus assures them that the origin of his message is divine. Had he said that he was self-taught, or that he needed no teacher, or the like, he would have been discredited immediately. The age did not prize originality. The rabbinic method was to cite authorities for all important statements. So Jesus did not claim to be the originator of his message. It does not stem from any earthly source. It stems from him who sent him (again the thought that John so often repeats, that Jesus was sent from God; see the note on 3:17). Jesus goes on to affirm that any really sincere person would know this. It is not something that can be learned only by those who are expert in theological niceties. Anyone who really wills to do the will of God (i.e., whose whole will is bent in this direction; it is the set of the life that is meant) will have the spiritual discernment required. This means more than
ethical determination. It involves faith (as in 6:29).\textsuperscript{40} Such a one will know whether this teaching is divine in origin or whether it bears the stamp, "Manufactured in Nazareth."\textsuperscript{41} His hearers had raised the question of his competence as a teacher. He raises the question of their competence as hearers.

\textbf{18} The Jews can verify Jesus' statement from their own observation. Anyone whose message originates with himself seeks his own advancement. He can do no other. But the person who is concerned with the interests of the One who sent him is different (see on 4:34 for Jesus' concern to do the Father's will). The one who seeks the glory of God is true.\textsuperscript{42} Jesus does not say that he speaks the truth, but that he is true (cf. 14:6). And of him that is true he further says that there is no unrighteousness in him. The negative way of putting it may be meant to point a contrast with the Jews in whom there certainly was unrighteousness.

\textbf{19} Jesus develops this thought. It was a favorite cause for self-congratulation among the Jews that they were the recipients of the Law (cf. Rom. 2:17). But now Jesus points out that there is a difference between receiving and keeping the Law. Moses gave them the Law, but none of them keeps it (Paul points out that there is profit in circumcision only when the Law is kept; being a Jew is not simply a matter of pride of race, Rom. 2:25-29). Far from keeping the Law they are seeking to put Jesus to death (cf. v. 1). Or Jesus may mean that from time to time all of them break the Law because of conflicting regulations of the type he is about to cite (v. 22). He has done no more than they all do, yet they seek to kill him. Against this interpretation is the fact that the example that substantiates the point is not cited until three verses later, so the former interpretation is to be preferred.

\textbf{20} The "crowd" will be largely the pilgrims who came up from various places for the feast, not the Jerusalem mob. This multitude professes to know nothing of the plot,\textsuperscript{43} and it attributes Jesus' words to demon possession. In the Synoptic Gospels we frequently meet with cases of demon possession, but there are none in John.\textsuperscript{44} But John mentions a number of accusations, like this present one, that Jesus is demon-possessed and that this is the explanation of what he says (8:48-52; 10:20-21).\textsuperscript{45} The accusation is made, of course, in the Synoptics also (Mark 3:22, etc.).

\textbf{21} Jesus answers by referring them to "one miracle" (really "one work"; see Additional Note G, pp. 607-13), which he did. This does not, of course, mean that he had done only one miracle, but it singles one out for
attention. He does not specify more exactly, but as he goes on to refer to the Sabbath there is no doubt that he is referring to the curing of the man by the pool Bethesda that caused such a discussion about Jesus' attitude to the Sabbath (5:19). It is the only miracle John has described that Jesus did in Jerusalem (though cf. 2:23). He recalls the astonishment with which they had greeted this miracle.

2-23 "Because" indicates that the true meaning of the institution of the Sabbath and of circumcision is seen in Jesus' action. He is not transgressing the Law of Moses, but fulfilling its deepest meaning. He has spoken of Moses as the giver of the Law (v. 19), and he now goes on to speak of him in connection with circumcision. He immediately points out that circumcision did not originate with Moses, but with the patriarchs. But it was included in the Law of Moses, and it was in accordance with the precepts of that Law that the Jews governed their practice in circumcision. So binding did they regard the command to circumcise on the eighth day (Lev. 12:3) that they held this to override the Sabbath (cf. Mishnah, Shab. 18:3; 19:1, 2; Ned. 3:11). Thus, though they would scrupulously avoid all manner of things that even remotely looked like work lest the Sabbath be profaned, they had no hesitation in carrying out the ritual requirement of circumcision on that day. Had they understood the significance of what they were doing they would have seen that a practice that overrode the Sabbath in order to provide for the ceremonial needs of a man justified the overriding of the Sabbath in order to provide for the bodily healing of a man.

This is a most important point for an understanding of the Sabbath controversy between Jesus and his legalistic opponents. He was not arguing simply that a repressive law be liberalized. Nor was he adopting an anti-Sabbatarian attitude, opposing the whole institution. He pointed out that his action fulfilled the purpose of the original institution. Had his opponents understood the implications of the Mosaic provision for circumcision on the Sabbath they would have seen that deeds of mercy such as he has just done were not merely permissible but obligatory. Moses quite understood that some things should be done even on the Sabbath. The Jews had his words but not his meaning. They misinterpreted the significance of the Sabbath. Jesus draws them back to the basic reason for its institution. He asks why they should be wrathful when he has done a deed of mercy if a ritual act not only may, but must, be performed on that day. "Healing the whole man"
puts some emphasis on the completeness of the cure. The man had been in need, and Jesus fully met his need. Some exegetes understand "the whole man" to include the moral cleansing implied in 5:14 in contrast with the purely ritual requirement of circumcision. There may be something in this though we must not press the latter part of the proposition. The Jews did not regard circumcision as "purely ritual," but saw it as having profound significance. The Greek seems to mean, "made an entire man healthy," that is, circumcision is concerned primarily with one member of the body, whereas Jesus has made a complete man healthy.48

24 In the light of their practice Jesus calls on them to judge, not in accordance with the outward appearance (C. B. Williams, "Stop judging superficially"), but in accordance with right. "Stop judging" brings out the meaning of the present imperative; it implies that they were guilty of wrong judgment and urges them to mend their ways. Again, the aorist imperative "make" (the Greek means "judge") directs urgent attention to the specific example.49 Jesus is not laying down a general rule (though admittedly the words may well be applied generally). He is telling his hearers how they should estimate this specific case.

4. Is This the Christ? (7:25-31)

25 At that point some of the people of Jerusalem began to ask, "Isn't this the man they are trying to kill? 26 Here he is, speaking publicly, and they are not saying a word to him. Have the authorities really concluded that he is the Christ? 27 But we know where this man is from; when the Christ comes, no one will know where he is from." 28 Then Jesus, still teaching in the temple courts, cried out, "Yes, you know me, and you know where I am from. I am not here on my own, but he who sent me is true. You do not know him, 29 but I know him because I am from him and he sent me." 30 At this they tried to seize him, but no one laid a hand on him, because his time had not yet come. 31 Still, many in the crowd put their faith in him. They said, "When the Christ comes, will he do more miraculous signs than this man?"

a. 26 Or Messiah; also in verses 27, 31, 41 and 42
Jesus' teaching made a favorable impression, such a favorable impression, indeed, that some of his hearers wondered whether the rulers' failure to arrest him was due to a recognition that he really was the Christ, the Messiah. This leads to some discussion of the origin of the Christ. It is clear that there was much uncertainty about Jesus, and a variety of reactions to his message.

25-26 In this chapter a number of groups of people are referred to. "The Jews" (vv. 1,11 etc.; see on 1:19) denotes the religious leaders of the nation who were Jesus' enemies. These men were trying to be rid of him, apparently quite openly. Then there is "the crowd" (vv. 20, 31, etc.), the throng of pilgrims who did not know a great deal about either the plans of the authorities or the teachings of Jesus. They are ready to listen to him and even to believe in him (v. 31). "The people of Jerusalem" (the word "Jerusalemites" is found only here and in Mark 1:5 in the whole New Testament) are apparently a third group, the Jerusalem mob. They were not the instigators of the plot to arrest Jesus, but they knew about it, as their words here show. Their question, "Isn't this the man . . . ?" looks for the answer, "Yes." They were sure that Jesus was the man. Why, then, was no action taken? They were impressed by Jesus' words and by his manner. He spoke openly despite the plan to kill him. So they put two and two together. He was apparently immune from arrest, for no one even spoke to him, let alone took action against him (cf. Phillips, "It's amazing — he talks quite openly and they haven't a word to say to him"). They began to wonder whether this indicated that their leaders really knew that Jesus was the Christ (see on 1:20, 41). At the same time their question looks for the answer "No"; they raise the possibility only to dismiss it.

27 They do a little reasoning on their own account. "But this fellow," they say, "we know where he comes from," and they proceed to lay it down that the origin of the Christ is a mystery. This was not universally held. The scribes in Matthew 2 do not seem to have been at a loss when Herod asked them where the Christ should be born. They were able to assure him on the basis of prophecy that Bethlehem was the spot. Yet it must be borne in mind that they could tell him no more. Family, circumstances, and all the rest apparently remained completely unknown so that their knowledge did not really take them very far. Later in this chapter some of the crowd show a similar knowledge of the prophecy about Bethlehem (vv. 41-42; Jesus' association with Galilee puzzled them). But there were divergent ideas in
this matter. While some appealed to prophecies like that cited by Herod's scribes, others must have interpreted these same Scriptures differently, for they ascribed to the Christ a mysterious supernatural origin and a sudden appearance on the scene. Some passages might be interpreted of a sudden appearance (e.g., Dan. 9:25; Mai. 3:1), and this line is developed in some of the apocryphal books.\footnote{54} It is typical of John's irony that he leaves the objection without comment. Those who know the truth about Jesus' origin know that it is baseless.\footnote{55}

28 Jesus uses their comment for some further teaching on his mission. It is probable that we should understand John's "therefore" (NIV, "then") to refer back to the immediately preceding "no one will know where he is from" rather than to "speaking publicly" in the face of the desire of his enemies to kill him. "Cried out" indicates a loud shout. Jesus is giving the greatest publicity to this piece of teaching. The verb, as John uses it, always seems to introduce with emphasis a saying of some importance (1:15; 7:37; 12:44). It may also indicate here that Jesus spoke with some emotion. He agrees that they know him and that they know where he came from, but this is almost certainly ironical: "So you know me and my origin!" While there is a sense in which this is true (they knew that he came from Nazareth), there is a more important sense in which it is not true (they did not know that he came from God, and this is the important point).\footnote{56} Jesus proceeds to enlighten them. As in verse 16, he has disclaimed originality for his teaching, so here he disclaims responsibility for his mission. He did not set out on any self-chosen task. On the contrary, he was sent (see on 3:17), and that by One who is true. These last words should not be overlooked. The Jerusalemites did not accept the fact of Jesus' divine mission. In their minds no one sent him; he was acting on his own initiative. But Jesus insists that he was sent by a real person (cf. Goodspeed, "someone who is very real, whom you do not know, has sent me"; C. B. Williams, "the One who has sent me exists as the Real One"). As often in this Gospel, a word will have a deeper meaning than appears on the surface. God is "true" with all that that means (see on v. 18).\footnote{57} But the Jerusalemites cannot be expected to know all this because they do not really know God. Had they known God they would have recognized him whom God sent. The thought is repeated elsewhere that they do not know the Father (8:19, 55). The implication is plain: if they do not know the Father who sent him, how can they be expected to know the Christ whom the Father sent?
29 Jesus' "I" is emphatic and in sharp contrast with the preceding "you." He does not share the ignorance of the Jerusalemites. He knows the Father (see on 4:18). He gives a twofold account of this, namely in connection with his origin and his mission. He came out from a state of existence with the Father, and he was sent\textsuperscript{58} by the Father to accomplish the Father's purpose, another expression of one of the dominant ideas of this Gospel.

30 This saying aroused varied reactions.\textsuperscript{59} On account of it (NIVs "At this" should be "therefore") his enemies sought to arrest\textsuperscript{60} him. But God is over all. His purpose is worked out. People cannot prevent it. The time for Jesus' death was not yet, and\textsuperscript{61} his enemies could not bring that time forward no matter how they might try.\textsuperscript{62} For Jesus' "hour" (NIV, "time") see on 2:4.\textsuperscript{63}

31 But (there is a contrast with the preceding) among the uncommitted multitude all this had an effect precisely the opposite of that on Jesus' enemies. Many of them came to believe on him (see on 1:12,41). The reason for their faith was not profound: they could not conceive that when the Christ came he would do more miracles than Jesus did (their question, "will he do more miraculous signs . . . ?" expects the answer "No"). But throughout this Gospel it is better to believe on the basis of miracles than not to believe at all, so there is no condemnation of this faith as inadequate.

5. An Attempt at Arrest (7:32)

32 The Pharisees heard the crowd whispering such things about him. Then the chief priests, and the Pharisees sent temple guards to arrest him.

32 It is not without its interest that the Pharisees heard all this but that it was "the chief priests and the Pharisees" who took action. The Pharisees would have their finger on the public purse rather than the chief priests who were more remote. And the Gospels indicate that the Pharisees were more active in opposing Jesus, and therefore more likely to be taking an interest in what he said and did. But the chief priests were in the place of power. More effective action was possible by combining with them. So the band of police sent to arrest Jesus came from them as well as from the Pharisees.\textsuperscript{64}
The combination points to the Sanhedrin as usually in John (cf. v. 45; 11:47, 57; 18:3). In view of the sequel it is likely that the command was not to arrest Jesus immediately, but to watch for a favorable moment. The authorities may well have hesitated to provoke a riot among the pilgrims who supported Jesus. There was, of course, only one "chief priest." But since the Romans had taken to deposing and appointing the principal ecclesiastic there were quite a few ex-chief priests who apparently retained the courtesy title. The title seems also to have been extended to others of the chief-priestly families, so that it came to denote quite a party.65 This is John's first use of the term. MacGregor maintains that for John "the 'high-priests' practically correspond to the Synoptic Sadducees." For "whispering" see on 6:41; the verb usually conveys the thought of a muttered complaint, but here, as in verse 12, the thought will simply be that of lowered voices. It was not prudent to speak openly of Jesus, especially if one's opinion of him was favorable. So those who believed spoke softly. John speaks more often of the "temple guards" than do the Synoptists.66 Nothing more is said of these officials until verse 45, and in particular John does not say whether they had any direct contact at all with Jesus.

6. Jesus' Return to the Father (7:33-36)

33Jesus said, "I am with you for only a short time, and then I go to the one who sent me. 34You will look for me, but you will not find me; and where I am, you cannot come." 35The Jews said to one another, "Where does this man intend to go that we cannot find him? Will he go where our people live scattered among the Greeks, and teach the Greeks? 36 What did he mean when he said, 'You will look for me, but you will not find me,' and 'Where I am, you cannot come'?'"

The thought that Jesus will be taken from this world one day rings through this section. John includes some teaching from Jesus on the subject, teaching that, as might be expected, is misunderstood by the crowds.

33 It is not clear to what John's "therefore" refers (and NIV simply drops it). It may follow on from the threat of arrest; Jesus was being threatened; "therefore" he spoke of his removal in due course to a place beyond the reach of his persecutors. Or it may be that verse 32 is to be taken as a parenthesis. The multitudes were talking about Jesus' miracles (v.

"therefore" he turns the discussion to his death, which was the most significant topic for faith. Or again, it may be that these words refer back to the last previously recorded words of Jesus (in v. 29). There he spoke of the Father as having sent him; "therefore" he now goes on to the thought of his return to the Father. But, whatever be the connection, Jesus is expressing his unconcern at the plot. His life and his death are determined by the Father, not the Pharisees. It is true that in due course he will return to him who sent him, where the thought is that of the accomplishment of a mission, with a hint also that his proper and natural abode is not here. But any suggestion that his enemies are in control is excluded.

Enigmatically Jesus refers to his death. When he is with the Father they will look for him, but he will be secure from their approaches. Lenski cites Amos 8:11ff. and Proverbs 1:24ff.; he adds: "This terrible seeking comes when the day of grace is past." There is a sharp contrast between the "I" and the "you." Jesus and his opponents are of different order. They cannot reach him when he is in his natural place. This points to their ultimate loss. As Bultmann puts it, "It is not Jesus whom they will destroy, when they remove him, but themselves" (p. 307).

The Jews wonder among themselves. The saying puzzles them. Their "we" is emphatic: "Where can he possibly go that we won't find him?" They suggest as a hypothetical possibility in Jesus' mind a journey to the Dispersion, a technical term for the large number of Jews who at this time were dispersed throughout the Roman Empire and beyond. Ever since the exile to Babylon there had been Jews living outside Palestine. When permission to return from Babylon was given many availed themselves of it, but many also did not. This evidently set something of a precedent, for in later days quite large numbers of Jews were to be found in cities throughout the Empire. Those in Alexandria were especially numerous. They speak of going to the Dispersion, but of teaching not the Dispersion but the Greeks. This would seem to mean going to the Jewish synagogues and making them the springboard for a mission outward to the Greeks. It is, of course, the method that the first Christian preachers actually employed (as we see in Acts). These Jews, however, dismiss the method as too fantastic to be considered a proper activity of the Messiah, which is another example of John's irony. It is not without its interest that John has recorded a misunderstanding as to the origin of the Messiah on the part of
some (vv. 26-27). Now he matches it with a misunderstanding as to his departure.

36 The Jews repeat Jesus' words of verse 34, this being noteworthy as one of the very few places in this Gospel where words are repeated exactly (see on 3:5 for John's habit of variation). It is clear that the saying puzzled them greatly. And it not only puzzled them; it apparently made them uneasy. Was there perhaps some meaning in it that still eluded them? Was the Man from Nazareth mocking them? Should they have understood more?

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7. A Prophecy of the Spirit (7:37-39)

37 On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "If a man is thirsty, let him come to me and drink, Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him." 38 By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.

a. 38 Or If a man is thirsty, let him come to me. And let him drink, who believes in me

Jesus kept his great saying for the climax of the Feast. Chrysostom thought that more people were gathered together then, and this is not unlikely. Tabernacles was a festival rich in symbolism and popular appeal, and the symbolism forms the background to our Lord's saying. The principal features of the observance, in addition to the erection of the leafy bowers (in which the people camped out) and the offering of sacrifices, appear to have been these.73 The people carried with them bunches of leaves called lulabs.74 There was apparently a disagreement between the Sadducees and the Pharisees over the correct interpretation of Leviticus 23:40: "On the first day you are to take choice fruit from the trees, and palm fronds, leafy branches and poplars. ..." The Sadducees took the words to refer to the material out of which the booths for the observance of the feast were to be constructed, while the Pharisees held them to mean that the worshipers were actually to carry branches of the trees named as they entered the Temple. The Pharisaic interpretation prevailed among the people, and
accordingly each worshiper in the procession would carry a *lulab* in the right hand and a citron in the left. The *lulab* symbolized the stages of the wilderness journey (marked by different kinds of vegetation), and the fruit the fruit of the goodly land that God had given his people. As certain Psalms were recited the worshipers shook their *lulabs*. The rejoicing was marked further by the flute-playing and dancing that went on for most of the feast and by bringing in young willow branches and arranging them around the altar (*Sukk. 4:5*). The tops thus were bent over the altar, forming a leafy canopy. The recital of the words, "O Lord, save us; O Lord, grant us success" (Ps. 118:25), is probably to be understood as a prayer for rain and a fruitful season. On each of the seven days of the feast a priest drew water from the pool of Siloam in a golden flagon and brought it in procession to the Temple with the joyful sounding of the trumpet. There the water was poured into a bowl beside the altar from which a tube took it to the base of the altar. These symbolic ceremonies were acted thanksgivings for God's mercies in giving water in past days (probably looking right back to the smiting of the rock in the wilderness and then on to the giving of rain in recent years). They were also an acted prayer for rain for the coming year. It is also significant that the words of Isaiah are associated with these ceremonies: "With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation" (Isa. 12:3). The Mishnah says, "He that never has seen the joy of the Water-drawing has never in his life seen joy" (*Sukk. 5:1*). The Jerusalem Talmud connects the ceremonies and Isaiah 12:3 with the Holy Spirit: "Why is the name of it called, The drawing out of water? Because of the pouring out of the Holy Spirit, according to what is said: 'With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation' "

Jesus' words are to be understood against this background. Until now nothing has been recorded of his teaching at this feast, for all his words in this chapter hitherto have been replies to the accusations of his foes. But now, at the culmination of the greatest feast of the Jewish year, he unfolds its significance in terms of the life he came to bring. He takes the water symbolism of the feast and presses it into service as he speaks of the living water that he will bestow. The people are thinking of rain and of their bodily need. He turns their attention to the deep need of the soul and to the way he would supply it. In chapter 4 we have had references to the living water, but here only is the explanation given in terms of the Holy Spirit.
It seems that the feast at one time went on for seven days (Deut. 16:13), but there came to be an eighth day even though it could be mentioned separately from the seven (Lev. 23:36). It is not quite clear whether it was the seventh day or this eighth day that was the climax of the whole celebration, and that John says was "the last and greatest day of the feast." Once again he tells us that Jesus "cried" (see on v. 28; NIV has "said in a loud voice"). The word indicates that importance is attached to the saying. It is proclaimed loudly and emphatically, perhaps also with emotion, so that all might hear and all might heed. Jesus is also said to have stood (the verb means "was standing" rather than "rose to his feet"). A teacher usually sat with his disciples, so that the Master's posture as well as his voice called attention to his words as important. Moreover, he was thus in a position to make the maximum number of people see and hear him. In words reminiscent of those in 4:10 Jesus gives the invitation to the thirsty to come to him and drink. There is the implication that the thirsty soul will find that Jesus fills the need that cannot be supplied elsewhere. The appropriateness of the words at this feast is that, throughout the seven days, libations were made in the Temple with water brought from the pool of Siloam (Sukk. 4:9), but on the eighth day no water was poured, and this would make Jesus' claim all the more impressive. At the same time his primary reference may be not to the Temple rite, but to the supply of water from the rock in the wilderness. That water supplied the physical needs of the Israelites, whereas no one drank from the water poured out of the golden ewer. Whichever way we take it, the festal observance has included an acted prayer for water and Jesus is proclaiming the answer to the prayer in a way the worshipers would never have expected.

There is uncertainty as to the sentence division here, and this affects the sense. If we delete the full stop at the end of verse 37 the passage will mean, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to me, and let him that believes in me drink." Those who accept this view usually hold that the next section, "as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him," refers not to the believer, but to Christ. Indeed, part of the reason for preferring this punctuation is the desire to refer these words to the Lord. Two main reasons are given for this way of taking the words: (a) it is hard to find a scriptural passage that refers the source of the living water to the believer, and (b) Christ, not the believer, is in fact the source of the living water. This position cannot be ruled out as absolutely impossible, but the
punctuation of NIV seems preferable.\textsuperscript{82} The statement about thirst calls for one about drinking, but it does not call for one about faith. The words about faith go better with what follows.\textsuperscript{83} It does not seem that any really satisfactory reason has been given for separating "and drink" from the previous words. It is the thirsty, not the faithful, who need to drink. In fact, to come to Jesus and drink is to believe. There is no difference in meaning. To invite the believer to drink is thus tautology. It is also worth noting that the construction "he who believes" is common in John and seems always to indicate the present possession of life (3:18, 36; 6:35, 47; 11:25; 12:44; 14:12).

But the biggest difficulty is in accepting the change of subject involved if we take the words "streams of living water will flow from within him" to refer to Christ. However we punctuate, it does seem as though "him" is the same person as the preceding "he" (NIV, "whoever"). We need strong reasons for taking it otherwise. Again, while it is true that the living water has its ultimate source in Christ, yet the believer is mediately a source to others.\textsuperscript{84} And, while it is true that it is hard to find an Old Testament passage that unambiguously prophesies that rivers of living water will flow from the believer, it is also true that it is harder still to find one that says this of Christ. Some are suggested (Exod. 17:6; Ps. 105:41; Ezek. 47:1; Joel 3:18), but a good imagination is required to find in any of these a prophecy that Christ would become the source (some see significance in the reference to water, as well as blood, proceeding from the Savior’s side, 19:34, but this is farfetched). And, if the Old Testament does not speak explicitly of living water as proceeding from the believer, at least there are passages that refer to spiritual blessing for God’s people under the symbolism of water. Some regard the water as outgoing, which is consonant with the view that the blessing is passed on. Perhaps the most relevant is "You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail" (Isa. 58:11; see also Prov. 4:23; 5:15; Isa. 44:3;\textsuperscript{85} 55:1; Ezek. 47:iff.; Joel 3:18; Zech. 13:1; 14:8).\textsuperscript{86} The meaning of our passage, then, in accordance with such Old Testament prophecies, appears to be that when anyone comes to believe in Jesus the Scriptures referring to the activity of the Holy Spirit are fulfilled.\textsuperscript{87} On the day of Pentecost Peter claimed the fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel (Acts 2:16ff.); it is something like this that we should understand here. Verse 38 carries on the thought of verse 37. The drinking of which Jesus there spoke is possible only to one who comes in faith. And
faith has its results. When the believer\(^88\) comes to Christ and drinks, that believer not only slakes his thirst but receives such an abundant supply that veritable rivers flow from him.\(^89\) This stresses the outgoing nature of the Spirit-filled life. In contrast to the men of Qumran there is nothing of the piety of the pond about Christianity. The covenanters (of this very period) had withdrawn into the wilderness to become the people of the Lord. They became ingrown. They seem to have made no attempt to influence others and thus to bring the blessing to them. Just as the Dead Sea receives the Jordan, but gives nothing out and thus becomes lifeless and arid, so the Dead Sea sect sought to receive the blessing of the law of God and to keep it for themselves.\(^90\) And in the process they became sterile. Not so the true Christian.\(^91\) Believers are not self-centered. As they receive the gift of God, so they pass it on to others. Or to put the same thought in another way, when people believe they become servants of God and God uses them to be the means of bringing blessing to others.\(^92\) "Living water" is the gift of Christ in 4:14. Here we must think of the gift as divine in origin, but as channeled through believers.

39 John explains Jesus' cryptic utterance. It concerns the Spirit, and the Spirit would be given to them that put their trust in Christ. The explanation is important. "Living water" is not elsewhere explained, and the expression is not a common one (other than for its use for running water as against the stagnant water of a pool or the like).\(^93\) This explanation helps us interpret passages like chapter 4. The expression translated "the Spirit had not been given" is difficult. There is nothing in the Greek corresponding to "given" and a more literal rendering would be "for it was not yet Spirit."\(^94\) This probably points to the period after Pentecost. The gift of the Holy Spirit to the infant church that day transformed everything, so that all that followed might be called the era of the Spirit. The Bible does not speak of the Spirit as totally inactive until that point; there is much about him in the Old Testament and the Gospels. But nothing can compare to his activity in the apostolic age. Then it "was Spirit" in a way it had never been before. John tells us that it was the work of Jesus that made the difference. It was not yet Spirit because Jesus had not yet been glorified.\(^95\) Calvary is the necessary prelude to Pentecost. Once again John refers to the cross in terms of glory, not of shame. Once again he sees the cross and the glory as one. And he views the atoning work of Christ as the necessary prelude to the work of the
Spirit. While we must not try to dissect the believer's experience too minutely, it is yet plain that sin must be dealt with before we can enter life in the Spirit. It is repeated in this Gospel that the Spirit could not come during the time of Jesus' earthly ministry (16:7). But when that work was consummated the Spirit was given (20:22; Acts 2). 96

8. Division (7:40-44)

40 On hearing his words, some of the people said, "Surely this man is the Prophet." 41 Others said, "He is the Christ." Still others asked, "How can the Christ come from Galilee? 42 Does not the Scripture say that the Christ will come from David's family and from Bethlehem, the town where David lived?" 43 Thus the people were divided because of Jesus. 44 Some wanted to seize him, but no one laid a hand on him.

a. 42 Greek seed

As throughout this chapter, there is division over Jesus' words. Here John records a tendency to accept him on account of his words and a tendency to reject him on account of his connection with Galilee.

40 John returns to the opinions of the multitude. Some of them were so much impressed by Jesus' words (for "words" see on 14:24) that they affirmed him to be "the Prophet" (i.e., the prophet of Deut. 18:15). The persistence of references to this prophet in this Gospel is remarkable (cf. 1:21, where see note; 1:25; 6:14). Evidently there was a considerable section of the Jews who looked for the prophet's appearance. The attitude recorded here is more logical than that of 6:14. There people saw the prophet in Jesus on account of the "sign" they saw him perform, whereas here it is his words that impress. The words of a prophet are more characteristic than any doing of miracles.

41 Others in the crowd took the further step of seeing in Jesus none less than the Christ (see on 1:41). But the first group (or perhaps a third group) countered with a question as to the origin of the Christ. Their question is so phrased as to expect the answer "No." It was agreed that the Christ did not come from Galilee (in v. 52 it is accepted that not even a prophet came from Galilee, how much less the Christ?). This confidence is interesting in
contrast with the attitude behind Matthew 2:23, which speaks of Scripture being fulfilled in the fact that "He will be called a Nazarene." Though that passage has difficulties of its own it certainly does not rule out the possibility of a Galilean Christ.

42 The objectors back up their case with an appeal to the Bible. "The Scripture" usually refers to a specific passage, but there is no place where the Old Testament says precisely this. It seems that the general tenor of several Old Testament passages is in mind (e.g. 1 Sam. 20:6; 2 Sam. 7:12ff.; Ps. 89:3-4; Mic. 5:2, etc.). The expectation shows that the Exile was not held to have put an end to the possibilities of the Davidic line. In due course, when God sent his Messiah, he would be of that line, and, indeed, come from the very town of Bethlehem. Incidentally the description of Bethlehem as "the town where David lived" somewhat overstates the case. David was born there and was brought up there, but after Saul took him to be with him (1 Sam. 18:2) there is no record of his ever returning there. Nearly all the significant events of his life took place elsewhere. It is not without its interest that these members of the crowd could cite such Scripture spontaneously. There must have been strong messianic expectations, such that messianic predictions were eagerly sought out. We have here another example of Johannine irony.98 How strange that these people were citing as an objection to Jesus' messiahship just that fact which they required to attest it, had they but known the facts of the case.99

43-44 There was thus a "division."100 The crowd of pilgrims was not unanimous in its views of Jesus. Some thought him to be a prophet, some the Christ, and some wanted to arrest him (v. 44; it would appear that this refers to the crowd and not to the police spoken of in vv. 32, 45-46). No actual attempt at arrest is described, simply the will101 to do it. John leaves us in no doubt as to the intention of this group. But nothing came of it. Though he does not repeat the reason he has given in verse 30 concerning an earlier attempt, we must understand that to operate here also. No arrest could take place before his "hour" had come.

9, The Failure to Arrest Jesus (7:45-52)

45Finally the temple guards went back to the chief priests and Pharisees, who asked them, "Why didn't you bring him in?" 46"No one
ever spoke the way this man does," the guards declared. 47 "You mean he has deceived you also?" the Pharisees retorted. 48"Has any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed in him? 49No! But this mob that knows nothing of the law — there is a curse on them." 50Ni-codemus, who had gone to Jesus earlier and who was one of their own number, asked, 51"Does our law condemn a man without first hearing him to find out what he is doing?" 52They replied, "Are you from Galilee, too? Look into it, and you will find that a prophet does not come out of Galilee."

a. 52 Two early manuscripts the Prophet

The abortive attempt of the Temple police to arrest Jesus brings Nicodemus before us once more, this time in discussion with the Sanhedrin. His defense of Jesus is not exactly spirited, but it is a defense of sorts. And it induces his colleagues to give expression to the objection to Jesus' messiahship based on his supposed Galilean origin (mentioned for the third time in this chapter!). It would seem that this objection must have been widely bruited, and John, in pursuance of his declared aim of showing that Jesus is the Messiah, notes that it is not new, and goes on to provide material for its refutation.

45 The "temple guards" (referred to in v. 32) now return to the Sanhedrin with their mission unfulfilled. Apparently their orders had been not simply to make an arrest (for then they would surely have pressed through the crowd and would have been stopped only by physical force), but to look for a favorable opportunity of apprehending Jesus. The authorities wanted an arrest but not a riot. They had waited for some time (v. 37 points to a time later than does v. 14» the previous time note, which apparently covers v. 32). But no such opportunity as they sought presenting itself, they now returned to the Sanhedrin. Nothing is recorded of any report they may have made, but it was obvious that they had no prisoner, so they were met with a question as to the reason.

46 The reply of the officials stresses the effect Jesus' teaching had on them. No man ever spoke like this. It is curious that they do not mention the crowd, the hostility of a section of which was presumably a big factor in their failure to make the arrest. They simply tell of the effect of Jesus' words on them and let it go at that. This must have taken some courage, since they
must have known that it would expose them to the rebuke (and the 
disciplinary action) of the Sanhedrin. Some mention of the hostility of the 
crowd, or a section of it, would have served as an excuse, palliating their 
offense to some extent. But they had been deeply impressed by Jesus, and 
they said so. That, and that alone, was the basic reason for their failure to 
carry out their orders. If the shorter reading in this verse be the true one, 
we have a typical Johannine double meaning. The officers will mean 
"Never did another man speak like this," while John will understand their 
words as "Never did one who was no more than a man speak like this." 

47-49 The Pharisees were apparently irritated by this answer, and took 
the initiative in replying (the chief priests might have been expected to be 
the ones to rebuke their servants). Their question expects the answer "No": 
"Surely you are not deceived also?" is the sense of it. The "also" indicates 
that they know that some were deceived, and they are trying to distance 
their officers from those who have gone astray (RSV, "Are you led astray, 
you also?"). The perfect tense in the verb "led astray" (NIV, "has deceived") 
points to a continuing state. GNB renders, "Did he fool you, too?" which 
brings out the stupidity of the position as the Pharisees saw it. A further 
question implying the negative answer shows how unthinkable it is that any 
leading person should believe in Jesus ("any" is singular; not so much as 
one has believed). The "rulers" are here distinguished from the Pharisees 
and will denote the Sadducees in general or the high priestly party in 
particular. The explicit rejection of the idea that any of the Pharisees 
believed may give us something of Nicodemus's reason for coming at first 
by night. Plainly the Pharisees were set in opposition to Jesus, and this 
supports the thought that his motive then was one of timidity. The multitude 
is contrasted with the rulers and the Pharisees. It is characterized as not 
knowing the Law. This does not mean either that it was not interested in the 
Pentateuch, or that it did not have a reasonable working knowledge of 
Scripture (in v. 42 some at least show acquaintance with passages of 
Scripture that do not immediately strike the casual reader). It means that 
they did not know the Law in the way the Pharisees did. These students 
discerned 613 commandments in the Law, and they set themselves the task 
of meriting their salvation by trying to keep them all. Even this was not 
the whole task, for they added the entire corpus of oral tradition concerning 
the Law (which governed the interpretation of biblical passages). It was 
small wonder that ordinary pious people, like the crowd of pilgrims, simply
gave up the task. Their knowledge of the Bible could not be compared with that of the Pharisees. And because it could not, their practice could not be the same as that of these zealous exponents of the traditions. Inevitably, then, the crowds failed to comply with what the Pharisees thought of as necessary rules, and thus they came under severe condemnation. They were "accursed"\(^\text{110}\) (Deut. 27:26 speaks of him "who does not uphold the words of this law by carrying them out" as "Cursed").\(^\text{111}\)

\section*{50-51} Apparently there was no dissentient voice, and this provoked Nicodemus into speaking up. There is something dramatic in the way John introduces this. The leaders denied that any important person believed in Jesus, and Nicodemus immediately spoke up. They condemned the multitude for not knowing the Law, and Nicodemus immediately put his finger on their own disregard for the Law (there is perhaps more Johannine irony here: the guardians of the Law do not keep the Law!). John characterizes Nicodemus in two ways, as having formerly come to Jesus and as being one of the Pharisees. It is this double character which causes him to speak in this situation. But, though he speaks up in defense of Jesus, he takes a very cautious line. He does not commit himself. He does not bear witness as do so many in this Gospel.\(^\text{112}\) Yet the temper of the meeting must be borne in mind. Plain testimony to Jesus would undoubtedly have enraged the majority further. Nicodemus may have judged that Christ's cause would best be served by pointing these angry men to a legal weakness in their position. His question looks for a negative answer. He is sure of his point. He reminds them that according to their law the accused must first be heard in person.\(^\text{113}\) The judges must "know" (NIV, "find out") what he does. The implication is clear that these judges do not really know what Jesus does. Nicodemus is of opinion that they ought not to give sentence until they do.

\section*{52} But the Sanhedrin is in no mood for legal niceties. "Are you from Galilee, too?" they ask (the force of the question is "Surely you are not from Galilee, too?"). They exhort their colleague to make a search. He will find that no prophet came from Galilee. They were angry men, and men who had been balked of their prey, so their answer is not a careful one. They overlook Jonah,\(^\text{114}\) who was a Galilean (2 Kings 14:25; other prophets may also have come from Galilee; there is uncertainty about the origin of some). And they ignore the power of God to raise up prophets wherever he wills.\(^\text{115}\)

For the commentary on 7:53-8:11 see the Appendix.
1. Dodd points out that in chapters 7 and 8 there is a strongly polemical tone, with the enemies of Jesus having more to say than at any other place in the four Gospels. This is doubtless, as he says, in order to bring out the constant pressure of the opposition Jesus met (note the repeated statements that Jesus’ life was in danger, 7:1, 13, 19, 25, 30, 32, 44; 8:37, 40, 59). It should also be noted that “The evangelist has brought together here most of what he has to say in reply to Jewish objections against the messianic claims made for Jesus” (IGF, p. 346). Messiahship is central for John. This section of his Gospel shows that objections to the messiahship of Jesus can all be met.

2. Calvin reminds us that ”it was not right for Him to rush headlong into danger,” but that also "He did not turn aside a hair's-breadth from the course of His duty." From this he draws the moral, "We must always beware that we do not for the sake of life lose the purpose for living."

3. For μετά τὰ ταῦτα see on 2:12.

4. Abbott points out that θέλω with the present infinitive here and in v. 17 stresses continuity, "he did not wish to continue teaching (περιπατεῖν)..."; "If any one be willing to continue doing (ποιεῖν) his will," whereas the aorist πιάσαι in verse 44 refers to a particular act (2498).

5. See Ma’as. 3:7; Bikk. 1:6; Shek. 3:1; 6:3, etc. Similarly Josephus says that Tabernacles was considered "especially sacred and important by the Hebrews" (Ant. 8.100), and again, "this is a festival observed by us with special care" (15.50). The place the feast held is shown by the fact that it (and not one of the others) was chosen as the test in Zech. 14:16-19. Knox's rendering, "one of the Jewish feasts, the Feast of Tabernacles," misses the emphasis. This was not "a" feast. It was "the" feast. We see this when Tabernacles is the one feast emphasized in Zech. 14:16-19. Tabernacles was the great feast held when the harvest was finally gathered in, not only the grain crops but also the grapes and the olives (Exod. 23:16 calls it "the Feast of Ingathering at the end of the year, when you gather in your crops from the field"); see also Lev. 23:33ff., 39ff.; Deut. 16:13ff.). There are references to the feast as lasting for seven days (e.g., Lev. 23:34), and also to the eighth day (as in Lev. 23:36), from which the conclusion is drawn that an original feast of seven days had been extended by one day. Together with the note of thanksgiving for harvest the feast commemorated the goodness of God to his people during the wilderness wanderings. The tents, or leafy bowers, which gave the feast its name, were erected in the courts of houses or on the roofs. Plummer points out that this custom "involved much both of the discomfort and also of the merriment of a picnic." He goes on to remark that the distinctions between rich and poor were thus largely obliterated for the duration of the merrymaking.

6. The construction is ἵνα with the future indicative, which may put a slight emphasis on the actuality of the seeing. Abbott thinks that "there may be an intention to blend purpose with assured result" (2690).

7. Cf. Jesus' remark, "surely no prophet can die outside Jerusalem!" (Luke 13:33). The brothers were right in seeing Jerusalem as the proper place for the manifestation of the essence of the Messiah's work. They were wrong in their conception of what that work was and how it should be manifested.

8. For this Jewish idea cf. S. Mowinckel, "they mean, come forward, and perform openly the Messianic works and miracles. . . . According to Jewish thought, it is only then that He will become Messiah in the full sense of the term. Before that time we may say that He is but Messias designates, a claimant to Messianic status" (He That Cometh [Oxford, 1959], p. 303).

9.έν παρρησία. The noun is often used in the New Testament with the meaning "boldness," and its use here may be meant to indicate that Jesus' conduct was not courageous. In John the word is mostly used of speech (7:13, 26; 10:24; 11:14; 16:25, 29; 18:20), and the meaning is "open," "not obscure." But John also uses the word in the sense "public," as here (11:54; it is not impossible that some of the references to speech have this meaning). The basic idea in the word (παραποιείν) is freedom of speech, the attitude of being completely at home, when the words flow freely. This may lead to the idea of boldness, or confidence, or openness. In all John uses the word 9
times, and it is found 4 times in 1 John. Since the New Testament total is 31, it is clear that it is a Johannine word. The highest total in any other book is 5 times in Acts.

10. "Certainly, speaking absolutely, they were right: the Messianic question could not be decided in Galilee" (Godet).

11. Brown points out that in this section of the Gospel there are parallels to the Synoptic temptation stories. In 6:15 people try to make him king, just as Satan tempted him with the offer of all the kingdoms of the world. In 6:31 they ask for miraculous bread, which is not unlike Satan's suggestion that he turn stones into bread. Now they want him to go to Jerusalem and show his power, which reflects the same spirit as the suggestion that he jump from the pinnacle of the Temple. We are justified in thinking that the temptations narrated so graphically by Matthew and Luke recurred throughout Jesus' ministry.

12. Bernard strangely understands the passage as ironical. He thinks the brothers were sceptical about Jesus' power. By contrast MacGregor comments: "The brothers' challenge does not so much imply doubt concerning the reality of Jesus' works as a hint that a change of method is necessary."

13. "Their supreme misunderstanding lies in their distinction between secret and public, which covers a false distinction between glorious and inglorious (vv.41-44), bold and cowardly. There will be a public ministry of Jesus in Jerusalem . . . but it consists in the public exposition of the sin of the world and the provocation of its hatred. . . . There is also a glorious display of power, but it consists in secret obedience to the will of the Father and in the transmission of the truth to the disciples in private . . . and is displayed completely in the death of the Christ" (Hoskyns). Bultmann comments that there is always an ambiguity in the revelation, so that the very works that the world finds insufficient are the fulfillment of its demand. It is, of course, still the case that the world is unable to discern the hand of God in the events in which it is concerned.

14. "His destiny was not popularity but the hatred of the world, a hatred such as no one else could experience, since he alone brought the world into judgement" (Barrett, p. 309).

15. The word is καιρός, which occurs in this Gospel only in this passage (here and in v. 8) and in the spurious 5:4. The other word is χρόνος. Sometimes there is a determined attempt to differentiate between them, as in J. A. T. Robinson, In the End God (London, 1950), or J. Marsh, The Fullness of Time (London, 1962). This matter has been subjected to a very critical examination by J. Barr in The Semantics of Biblical Language (Oxford, 1961) and in Biblical Words for Time (London, 1962). He makes it clear that the differences have been exaggerated, but he does not deny them altogether. Thus in the latter book he sums up in these terms: "In many contexts the two words are interchangeable, apart from the stylistic preference for καιρός. For the lapse of time, with an adjective of quantity, χρόνος is usual; for cases like 'the time for figs', and for 'opportunity', καιρός is used. The strong eschatological expectation, and the sense of fulfillment of past eschatological promises, produces frequent contexts like 'the time is coming', in which ό καιρός is usual. The sense of 'season', both for natural and sacred seasons, appears a few times for καιρός. In two passages both χρονός and καιρός appear together, probably with no appreciable difference in meaning" (p. 121). In the present passage καιρός is clearly the appropriate word.

16. Wright expressly differentiates this verse from those referring to the "hour." Those refer to "the end of the Ministry of Jesus on the Cross," he thinks, but καιρός means that "the occasion did not seem as yet opportune to Jesus to manifest Himself to the world (v,4)." Similarly Bernard thinks that καιρός "stands for the moment of opportunity, the fitting occasion, rather than for the 'predestined hour' (όρα), on which the Fourth Gospel dwells with such insistence.... The fitting time had not yet come ... and by this is meant not the hour of His Passion, but rather the best time for that public manifestation of Himself as Messiah, which He would make when He went up to the Feast of Tabernacles." A. Guilding is another who draws attention to the distinction from ώρα. She thinks that the words of this verse "bring instantly to mind the Markan summary of the Lord's preaching Πεπλήρωται ό καιρός, και ἤγγικεν ή βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ (Mark 1.15). . . . The time, then, is the time of the coming of the Messiah predicted by the prophets" (The Fourth Gospel and Jewish Worship
[Oxford, 1960], p. 99). But καιρός is by no means as specific as this. There are many occurrences of καιρός in the New Testament, and there seems no reason to think that Mark 1:15 is in mind here. Moreover, this interpretation overlooks the fact that the καιρός in Mark 1:15 is fulfilled, whereas that in the present passage is not. Cf. Schnackenburg, "The καιρός is the moment of challenge, the call for his own decision in the face of God's summons. Jesus knows that he is not yet summoned by his Father to the journey to Jerusalem, which will mean for himself the decision to accept death.

17. FG, p. 279.
18. "My" is ὸς ὲμός, and "your" is ό υμέτερος. The use of the possessive adjective rather than the genitive of the pronouns may be significant. See on 3:29 for John's use of possessives.
19. Cf. Bultmann, Jesus' saying "is a complete rejection of the world's view of the matter. It does not mean, 'not now, but later', but asserts that the time (the 'now') of the revelation cannot be determined at all from the world's point of view" (p. 292).
20. ύμας and the emphatic ὲμέ are set in immediate contrast. The opposition is not to be missed.
21. ὸκ is read by Κ D K Lat syr S C boh arm eth geo etc., ὸπω, "not yet," by p66 75 P BLTWF A0 f f l f l3 etc. The third century neo-Platonist Porphyry spoke of an inconstancy at this point, and this may have given rise to the variant ὸπω (so IB). Hendriksen argues that the context so strongly favors the meaning "not yet" that the attestation of ὸπω (which is by no means meager, to say the least) should be accepted. But it is doubtful whether he allows sufficient weight to the maxim difficilior lectio potior. If the original read ὸπω, why should anyone alter it to ὸκ? I cannot find any convincing answer, so I incline to the reading ὸκ. Cf. also GNT, p. 426, Metzger, p. 216. NIV has "not yet," but "not" is accepted by NRSV, GNB and REB.
22. Cf. Chrysostom, "'How then,' saith some one, 'went He up after saying, 'I go not up?' ' He said not, once for all (καθάπαξ), 'I go not up,' but, 'now,' that is, 'not with you' " (48.2; p. 174).
23. Several commentators draw attention to the parallels in 2:4 where Jesus refuses to be constrained to perform a miracle, though subsequently he does perform it, and 11:6, when, on being told of Lazarus's illness he goes up at what is the wrong time as people would think. On the present passage Barrett says, "John's ὸκ άναβαίνω merely negatives the request of the brothers, and does not negative absolutely the intention of Jesus to go to Jerusalem at the proper time." Cf. Godet, "Jesus begins here by refusing to go up to Jerusalem in the sense in which He was urged to do so (that of manifesting Himself to the world), in order to go up afterwards in a wholly different sense." Temple says, "when He appears at the feast it is not as one of the pilgrim worshippers but as a Prophet." It is plain that Jesus' words refer specifically to the suggestion made by the brothers and to the whole of that suggestion. He is refusing to go up in the way they suggest, that is with a view to manifesting Himself openly. At the next Passover this would happen. In the meantime Jesus declines to do as the brothers suggest. Hoskyns thinks there is a subtle play on words, άναβαίνω is used not only of going up to Jerusalem to feasts, but also for Jesus' going up to the Father (3:13; 6:62; 20:17), and Hoskyns relates this to use of άναβαίνω for the lifting up of Jesus on the cross (3:14, etc.) "In the Evangelist's thought the death and resurrection form one act of ascension or lifting up to the Father. . . . Jesus does not go up to Jerusalem to the Feast of Tabernacles, but His ascent for the salvation of the world is deferred by the will of the Father until the Time of the more significant feast of the Passover." This, however, seems too subtle. If that is what Jesus meant he certainly misled the brothers.
24. Harold Blair finds a reference to Jesus' rejection by the people: "Jesus had something to say which by its very nature must rouse hatred and antagonism; not only must his message be said, it must be acted out stage by stage until his people had seen the whole picture. There would come the inevitable end: he would be rejected. But he must be rejected on his own terms, no less. Above all he must not be rejected on a misunderstanding. 'My time', he said, 'is not yet fulfilled' " (The Ladder of Temptations [London, 1960], p. 96).
25. Notice the repetition from v. 6, "The right time for me has not yet come . . . for me the right time has not yet come," and for similar repetitions of the negative in this Gospel see 5:19, 30; 5:30
and 6:38; 5:34, 41; 13:33, 36. Similarly the Jews take up a negative of Christ and repeat it in 7:34-36; 8:21-22.

26. "Not publicly" is ού φανερώς, recalling φανέρωσαν σεαυτόν of v. 4. It does not mean "furtively," but "without being a member of a pilgrim cavalcade." The first time John records Jesus as going up to a feast it is as purifier of the Temple (2:13ff.), then as one of the pilgrims (5:1ff.), here alone for the purpose of giving a prophetic message, and finally as King (12:12ff.).

27. ώς is read by ρ66 ρ75 B L WO etc., so its attestation is not meager, but a copyist may have inserted it. Metzger's committee favored putting the text in brackets to indicate doubt (p. 217).

28. The plural ἧθλοι (if this is the right reading) is found here only in John. It may denote groups of pilgrims from various places.

29. Amplified renders, "There was . . . much whispered discussion and hot disputing." There is nothing in the Greek to correspond to the last two words and they represent an unlikely interpretation. There were varied opinions, but the discussion was guarded.

30. The accusation persisted among the Jews. In the Talmud we read "On the eve of the Passover Yeshu was hanged"; two reasons are given, sorcery and "he enticed Israel to apostacy" (Sanh. 43a).

31. ού, άλλά represents a radical contradiction, "Not at all," "on the contrary." For ού see on 1:21.

32. παρρησία, which the crowd did not attain here, is the very word used in v. 26 of Jesus' way of speaking.

33. Cf. Dodd, "Choosing His own time, He goes up μεσούσης τῆς ἐορτῆς. What does this mean but a fulfillment of the prophecy, 'The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to His temple' (Mal. iii.1)? It is the Day of the Lord, which according to Zech. xiv, the Feast of Tabernacles foreshadows. We have here a striking instance of the characteristic Johannine irony. On the surface, we are reading about a rustic prophet who leaves the obscurity of the provinces to appeal to the great public of the metropolis. But the words φανέρωσαν σεαυτόν τω κόσμω have a weight disproportionate to the ostensible situation. In their deeper meaning they are an appeal to the Messiah to manifest Himself to Israel. But if we go deeper still, they speak of the manifestation of the eternal Logos, as life and light, to the world of human kind" (IFG, p. 351). Dodd goes on to point out that here we have the Logos, in the world unknown, coming to and being rejected by his own. Lightfoot also sees a reference in this passage to Mai. 3:1, and finds in this the reason that Jesus did not go up with the pilgrims. For this chapter cf. J. R. Michaels, "The Temple Discourse in John," in R. N. Longenecker and M. C. Tenney, New Dimensions in New Testament Study (Grand Rapids, 1974), pp. 200-213.

34. Wayne A. Meeks regards the nature of Jesus' prophetic activity as the point at issue: "The whole argument of 7.15-24 turns on the question whether Jesus is the true prophet like Moses or whether he is the false prophet.... Jesus' hearers are placed before a dramatic decision, for while they are commanded to heed the true prophet upon pain of divine judgment (Deuteronomy 18.19), they are also commanded to put the false prophet to death (Deuteronomy 18.20; 13.6). The crowd therefore divides" (The Prophet-King [Leiden, 1967], p. 56).

35. τῆς ἐορτῆς μεσούσης is not definite. It may mean the exact center of the feast, that is the fourth day. Or it may be a vague way of saying that Jesus came up sometime between the beginning (when the brothers wanted him to go up) and the last day, when he made his great proclamation (vv. 37ff.).

36. The imperfect ἐδίδασκεν is probably ingressive, "He began to teach."

37. "Get such learning" is more literally "learned letters," where γράμματα means primarily "sacred letters," that is Scripture. The term could apply to learning in general, and the article is required to make a reference to Scripture unambiguous; cf. τα ἱερά γράμματα in 2 Tim. 3:15 or αἱ γραφαί, John 5:39. But there is no reason to think that there is an allusion to learning in general here,
for the context clearly demands a meaning concerned with the understanding of Scripture. Berkeley renders "literature," and Ferrar Fenton "theology," but neither quite meets the situation.

38. The use of μή with the participle will not be to throw doubt on the proposition; μή here is really equivalent to οū. μή encroaches on the territory of οū in Hellenistic Greek, and there are few examples of οū with the participle in John (BDF 430 [1]).

39. εμή is emphatic (see on 4:32), which makes the disclaimer that he himself is responsible for the message all the more effective.

40. Augustine emphasizes the place of faith in understanding this saying: "under-standing is the reward of faith. Therefore do not seek to understand in order to believe, but believe that thou mayest understand . . . what is 'If any man be willing to do His will'? It is the same thing as to believe" (29.6; pp. 184-85).

41. Cf. C. J. Wright, "It does not mean that if a man really centres his whole personality on doing the divine will as it is known to him, he will arrive at a perfectly articulated doctrinal position, or at dogmatic statements which will answer every perplexity of the logical intellect. It means that the truthful spirit comes to those truths of eternity by which Jesus lived and died. In other words, it is the truthful who recognise Him who is Truth."

42. ἀληθής is applied to God in 3:33; 8:26, and these are the only other places in this Gospel where a person is said to be true. This is another unobtrusive indication of the very high place John assigns to Jesus. He alone shares this quality with God.

43. "This is a lifelike touch. It was not the 'people,' but the 'Jews,' who had begun the plot; the people knew nothing of it" (Bernard).

44. It is possible that this is due to the fact that the ancient world knew large numbers of "exorcists." John writes with single-minded concentration on his theme that Jesus was the Christ, and it may well have seemed to him that to have written of Jesus casting out demons would scarcely have set forward this aim. It might also have had the disadvantage of causing some, at any rate, to class Jesus with those who cast their spells and muttered their enchantments in the endeavor to obtain power over demons. A similar motive, it might be countered, would inhibit John from recounting miracles lest Jesus be classed with the thaumaturgists. But John does not speak of "wonders"; he describes "signs." He is not interested in miracles as such, but in the spiritual significance of those he recounts. He relates incidents that point people to God, incidents pregnant with spiritual meaning. It is not immediately obvious how exorcisms are to be fitted into this pattern.

45. δαιμόνων is the word used in these passages (δαιμονίζομαι in 10:21). John uses διάβολος of Satan (8:44), of Judas (6:70), and of Satan's putting the thought of betrayal into Judas's heart (13:2).

46. Grammatically διά τοῦτο could be taken with v. 21, but most commentators agree that it belongs with v. 22. "It is contrary to Johannine usage to connect διά τοῦτο (v. 22) with θαυμάζετε, equating τοῦτο with εν ἔργῳ; and the suggestion of confusion in Aramaic (Torrey, 5) is not convincing" (Barrett). John often uses διά τοῦτο to begin a new section (cf. 5:16, 18; 6:65; 8:47; 10:17; 13:11; 16:15), but he never ends a section with it. Bernard prefers to take the expression with the preceding, and he cites 9:23; 13:11; 15:19; 16:15; 19:11 in support (on 9:23). But in all these cases διά τοῦτο heads a clause or a sentence. There is no example of John's using it to end a sentence (as, indeed, Bernard admits). Lenski argues very strongly for taking the expression with v. 21, but he does not look at the decisive argument that John never uses διά τοῦτο in this way else where. Moreover, he does not notice what seems to be the probable meaning. If the words be taken with v. 22 he thinks the meaning would be "For this reason has Moses given you circumcision, not because it originates with Moses, but with the fathers; and you circumcise." But this is surely not the meaning. Rather, Jesus is saying that the reason for Moses' prescribing of circumcision on the Sabbath was to give a precedent for such Sabbath activities as he had just engaged in. Alternatively, the words may mean that the circumcision Moses enjoined foreshadows the perfecting of "the whole man" that Jesus accomplishes. Godet sees here "the most piquant irony: 'Moses has in advance pleaded my cause before you, by making you all jointly responsible for the crime with which you charge me. . . . "'
47. J. D. M. Derrett argues that the Jews thought of circumcision as "perfecting of males" and concludes his study of this passage with "Circumcision notionally commences the perfecting of the supine male; Christ places the willing recipient of his grace on to the road indeed" (*EQ*, LXIII [1991], pp. 211-24).

48. Cf. Ryle: "Is it then just and fair to be angry with Me, because I have done a far greater work to a man on the Sabbath, than the work of circumcision? I have not wounded his body by circumcision, but made him perfectly whole. I have not done a purifying work to one particular part of him, but have restored his whole body to health and strength. I have not done a work of necessity to one single member only, but a work of necessity and benefit to the whole man." Field takes the view that "the whole of a man," in contrast to a single member," is the meaning (p. 93). Jesus may well be contrasting the cure wrought on the whole man with a work on but one of the members of the body, of which the Jews counted 248. Cf. the rabbinic saying (to justify healing on the Sabbath when life was endangered), "If circumcision, which attaches to one only of the two hundred and forty-eight members of the human body, suspends the Sabbath, how much more shall (the saving of) the whole body suspend the sabbath!" (*Yoma* 85b, Soncino edn., p. 421). It is possible also that there is in mind the thought that the foreskin was the seat of corruption according to the adage *praeputium est vitium in corpore*. Jesus was doing more even than the removal of the foreskin signify when he healed "the whole man."

I. Abrahams regards Jesus' defense of his position here as "yet another instance of the Fourth Gospel's close acquaintance with Hebraic traditions" (*Studies in pharisaism and the Gospels*, first series [Cambridge, 1917], p. 135). He says, with respect to the whole method of Jesus' teaching as recorded in this Gospel: "My own general impression, without asserting an early date for the Fourth Gospel, is that the Gospel enshrines a genuine tradition of an aspect of Jesus' teaching which has not found a place in the Synoptics" (p. 12). Dodd also agrees that this passage shows a familiarity with rabbinic methods of reasoning (IFG, p. 79).

49. Moule keeps open the possibility that the two imperatives in this verse are not used with strict regard for the tense (*IBNTG*, p. 135), though in a footnote he allows the interpretation I have adopted. Incidentally some MSS read κρίνετε in both places.

50. For παρρησία see n. 9 above. Here the thought is that Jesus is quite at home and unafraid.

51. "Really" translates ἀληθῶς: "Do the rulers know truly?" "know for a certainty?"

52. ἀλλὰ is the strong adversative (a very common conjunction in this Gospel; see on 1:8). Abbott points out that "in most instances, a negative is expressed or implied in the context of a Johannine ἀλλὰ" (2055). In the present passage he says, "ἀλλὰ implies something quite different from that which has been suggested by the preceding context" (2057).

53. If we can insist on the force of the present tense in δταν έρχεται it will signify that at the very time that the Christ is coming people will still not know where he comes from.

54. Thus 4 Ezra 7:28; 13:32; 2 Baruch 29:3 picture the Messiah as "revealed," and 4 Ezra 13:1ff, views him as arising out of the sea (which, of course, implies a sudden appearance). The idea appears among the rabbis, for R. Zera taught that "Three come unawares: Messiah, a found article and a scorpion" (*Sank.* 97a; Soncino edn. p. 659). Justin in his *Dialogue* reports Trypho as saying, "But Christ — if He has indeed been born, and exists anywhere — is unknown, and does not even know Himself, and has no power until Elias come to anoint Him, and make Him manifest to all" (*Dial*, VIII; ANF, I, p. 199; this appears to be the only reference to an anointing of the Messiah by Elijah). The apocryphal texts are discussed by R. H. Charles, *A Critical History of the Doctrine of a Future Life* (London, 1899), and V. H. Stanton, *The Jewish and the Christian Messiah* (Edinburgh, 1886). While the sudden appearance of the Messiah is the most natural understanding of the apocryphal texts cited, they do not actually say in set terms that the origin of the Messiah is unknown. But the Jews expected the Messiah's work to begin suddenly when God willed it. Thinking as they did of the Messiah as a man, this involved that he be in the world, a grown man and ready for
his task, before anyone knew him for what he was. Plummer thinks that the present passage means only that the Messiah's parentage "immediate and actual" would be unknown.

55. Lightfoot points out that their declaration had implications they were not prepared to face. "To admit the truth of the doctrine of the secret origin of the Messiah is, or should be, equivalent to the admission that all human judgement about it is, and is bound to be, inadequate; and this admission the Lord's opponents are not prepared to make." Lenski comments on their whole position, "This type of reasoning has often been followed by men who imagine themselves to be superior to others. They pick some flaw, and fasten on that and refuse to consider the real and decisive facts, however great and convincing these may be."

56. That this is the correct understanding of it appears from the fact that elsewhere Jesus explicitly denies that they know him (8:19), and apparently his origin also (8:41ff.). Some commentators think the statement here is not ironical, but that Jesus is simply agreeing that his opponents do know that he comes from Nazareth. This is possible, but scarcely seems adequate. Some take Jesus' words as questions, for example Moffatt, "You know me? you know where I come from?" or Phillips, "So you know Me and know where I have come from?" (so also Torrey, RSV, etc.; NRSV, however, makes it a statement).

57. See on 1:9 for άληθινός. This is one of the places where Kilpatrick thinks άληθής should be read (with p\textsuperscript{69} 544).

58. The change from πέμψας in the previous verse to απέστειλαν is not significant. See on 3:17.

59. Barclay reminds us that it still does: "Either, what Jesus said about Himself is false, in which case He is guilty of such blasphemy as no man ever dared to utter; or, what He said about Himself is true, in which case He is what He claimed to be and can be described in no other terms than the Son of God. Jesus leaves us with the definite choice — we must accept Him fully or reject Him absolutely. That is precisely why every man has to decide for or against Jesus Christ."

60. The verb πιάζω is not found in the other Gospels, but John uses it 8 times.

61. "But" renders καί, which is here equivalent to καίτοι, "and yet."

62. Calvin reasons from Christ's death to ours: "From this a general doctrine must be gathered; for though we live unto the day, the hour of every man's death has nevertheless been fixed by God ... we are safe from all dangers until God wishes to call us away."

63. Goodspeed emphasizes Jesus' mastery of the situation with his rendering "and yet no one laid hands on him, because he was not yet ready." Cf. the comment of Augustine: "that is, because He was not willing. ... He meant not therefore an hour in which He should be forced to die, but that in which he would deign to be put to death" (31.5; p. 190).

64. On the combination Strachan comments: "This is a significant combination. he chief priests belong to the sect of the Sadducees and concerned themselves with the Temple worship and revenues.... They were not closely in touch with the common people. The Pharisees were the popular religious leaders and concerned themselves with the synagogue, which was the real religious centre. They were in close touch with the popular mind. It is they who hear the 'murmurs' of popular opinion regarding Jesus. These two parties combine, when ecclesiastical and religious interests are threatened, to arrest Jesus."


66. John uses υπηρέτης, a word that means "servant," not "temple guard," though of course here it means the "servants" who made up that guard. John uses the term 9 times, while each of the Synoptists uses it twice. It is found elsewhere in the New Testament only 4 times in Acts and once in 1 Corinthians, so that John's use of the term is unusual.

67. John uses the word ύπαγω, which means simply "go" or "go away." But John uses it quite often of Jesus' "going" to the Father. He does this in all 17 times, which accounts for the fact that he uses this verb far more often than does anyone else in the New Testament (32 times; Matthew has it 19 times, Mark 15 times, and Luke 5 times). Here Jesus speaks of going to him who sent him (again in 16:5). Or he may speak of going to the Father (16:10), or to God (13:3). Or he may use the term
absolutely and speak simply of going away (8:21). He can speak of knowing where he is going (8:14), or of the impossibility of being followed there (8:21). Again, he links the thought of his departure with that of a return (14:28).

68. It is possible to accent εύμη and understand the sense as "go," here and in other passages, namely v. 36: 14:3; 17:24, but in no case does this seem likely, εύμη is an obsolete form (there is no certain example of its use in the New Testament), and few take the possibility seriously. "Where I am" is surely the meaning. Temple puts emphasis on the present tense: "It is not merely where He will be that they cannot come, but where He is now, that is, in the bosom of the Father (i,18). When He came down out of heaven (vi,38), He did not leave Heaven, but all the while is in heaven (iii, 13). For Heaven is fellowship with the Father; from that fellowship He came down, or forth, into the world, yet He was never without it." Similarly Augustine, "He came in such wise that He departed not thence; and He so returned as not to abandon us" (36.9; p. 192). Lightfoot reminds us that this expression recurs at 12:26; 14:3; 17:24, and that "whither I go" is found in 8:14,21; 13:33. He thinks it probable "that a spiritual truth is being expressed both in terms of motion ('whither I go') and in terms of rest ('where I am'). Even now, when the Lord is standing before His opponents, they cannot come where He is, because they do not share His mind. For, in spite of what He has just said in 733, it is also true that separation from Him is caused not by distance in space, but by unlikeness of heart and mind and spirit." But the thought should not be held in such a way as to obscure the reference to his death.

69. Διασπορά is occasionally used of Christians (Jas. 1:1; 1 Pet. 1:1). But this is very unusual and there is nothing to indicate that the word should be taken in that way here.

70. With Jews dispersed in many countries it is curious that the dispersion "among the Greeks" is singled out. It may be, as W. C. van Unnik thinks, that this gives a clue as to the circle for which this Gospel was intended: "The Jewish Diaspora was spread all over the world: it would have been possible to speak about the dispersion in general; why is not Babylon, Egypt or Rome mentioned? There is only one explanation possible: because the writer was especially interested in this part of the world" (SE, I, p. 408). If this Gospel was written with a synagogue in a Greek environment specially in mind, there would be a natural interest in preserving any saying that referred to the Greeks.

71. "It is as if he would say: the Jesus who in the days of His flesh transcended the divisions of Judaea, Samaria, and Galilee, accomplished in spiritual presence with His Church an even wider liberation, an even more signal breaking down of racial barriers. What seemed so absurd to 'the Jews' was accomplished when Jesus returned to the Father" (Wright). Cf. also N. A. Dahl: "As often in the Fourth Gospel, the misunderstanding conveys the truth: Jesus was, indeed, going to the Father, and thus also going to the Greeks — through the word of his missionary witness" (Current Issues in New Testament Interpretation, ed. W. Klassen and G. F. Snyder [London, 1952], p. 126).

72. As Westcott says, "In spite of all, Christ's words cannot be shaken off. They are not to be explained away. A vague sense remains that there is in them some unfathomed meaning." Cf. also Strachan: "Sarcasm, however, often conceals a deep perplexity. The speakers are still haunted by Jesus' words."

73. For the ceremonies of Tabernacles, cf. TDNT, IV, pp. 277-78.

74. A. Edersheim describes the lulab thus: "the lulav, or palm, with myrtle and willow branch on either side of it, tied together on the outside with its own kind, though in the inside it might be fastened even with gold thread" (The Temple [London, n.d.], p. 238; ch. 14 gives a description of the way the feast was observed). R. Ishmael laid down the requirement in these terms: "Three myrtle-branches (are needful) and two willow branches and one palm-branch and one citron" (Sukk. 3:4).

75. Sukk. 3:9 records a division of opinion; the school of Hillel advocated shaking at the beginning and end of Ps. 118 and at Ps, 18:25, while the school of Shamma if avored shaking also at Ps. 118:25.

76. Bernard cites a saying of Rabbi Akiba: "Bring the libation of water at the Feast of Tabernacles, that the showerers may be blessed to thee. And accordingly it is said that whosoever will
not come up to the Feast of Tabernacles shall have no rain."

77. So R. Ena (Sukk. 48b). Some say that the words were sung during the procession.


79. It is possible that the eighth day was not reckoned as part of the feast at all, in which case the seventh day would be "the great day." This is supported by the consideration that the ceremonies with water and lights seem not to have continued after the seventh day (Sukk. 4:1); the Talmud, however, cites R. Judah as saying that the ceremony of water libation continued for eight days (Sukk. 48b). But against it is the difficulty of seeing how the seventh day could be called "the last day" if the eighth day was observed at all. Further, the eighth day seems to be a special day like a Sabbath (Lev. 23:36), and Sukkah 5:6 with its mention of special sacrifices for this day supports the idea that the day was marked off from the others in New Testament times. Josephus also speaks of this feast as lasting eight days (Ant. 3.245; so also 2 Macc. 10:6). The fact that there was no water poured on the eighth day may better explain Jesus' words to them that lack water. On the whole it seems that the eighth day is more probable (though Edersheim favors the seventh). Incidentally, the eighth day was the last festival day in the Jewish calendar and is called "the last good day" (Sukk. 4:8). Similarly Philo speaks of it as "a sort of complement (πλήρωμα) and conclusion of all the feasts in the year" (De Spec. Leg. 2.213; Loeb edn. p. 439).

80. Godet favors this view, and he points out that it accords with the symbolism of this Gospel in terms of Old Testament figures: "In chap. ii. He had presented Himself as the true temple, in chap. iii., as the true brazen serpent, in chap. vi., as the bread from heaven, the true manna; in chap. vii., He is the true rock; in chap. viii., He will be the true luminous cloud, and so on, until chap. xix. where He will finally realize the type of the Paschal lamb."

81. IB indicates that this punctuation "alone makes sense," but this is far too cavalier. It ignores the difficulties in the way of this view and magnifies those in the way of the other. Hoskyns points out that part of our difficulty is that both ways of dividing the text are Johannine. He thinks the reference to Jesus as the source of the water of life is primary, but he sees the believer as becoming "a well of water springing up unto eternal life" (4:14; strictly it is not the believer but the water Jesus gives that is thus described). "The explanation of the possibility of a double punctuation and of the consequent obscurity both of the grammar and of the application of the citation is that the subsidiary meaning presses upon the primary meaning in the author's mind and this jostling causes a disturbance in the construction of the Saying."

82. This punctuation has the weighty support of p66. Patristic evidence is divided, but modern critical editions of the Greek text all seem to favor this division, as do most translations, for example, NRSV, REB, GNB. G. D. Fee examines the problem and concludes that we should "decide in favour of the tradition of the English translations" (ExT, LXXXIX [1977-78], p. 117). See also Juan B. Cortes, CBQ, XXIX (1967), pp. 75-86 for a strong argument for a similar conclusion.

83. In a private communication Professor G. D. Kilpatrick points out that καθώς clauses show a strong tendency to follow their main clause, though this is less marked in John than elsewhere. Thus the rule is invariable in Matthew and Mark; in Luke it is followed 13 times out of 17 and in Acts 13 times out of 15; whereas in John it is followed 19 times (including one v.l.) and transgressed 13 times (though in several of the exceptions there is a resumptive word). When καθώς introduces a quotation there is no certain example of its not following the main clause, and it is never inserted in the middle of a quotation. From this he reasons that the main clause here ends at εις ἐμέ, and that the quotation begins with ποταμοί. The latter point may be accepted without setting off ὁ πιστεύων εἰς ἐμέ. It is true that this means having the καθώς clause precede, but the usage in John is not so regular, it would seem, as to preclude this.

84. For a roughly contemporary parallel Brown cites a saying of R. Akiba from Midrash Sirfe on Deut. 11:22: "The disciple who is beginning is like a well who can give only the water it has
received; the more advanced disciple is a spring giving living water." Cf. also "Eleazar b. Arak is an ever-flowing spring" (Ab. 2:8).

85. The parallelism of this verse connects water and the Spirit: " I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour out my Spirit on your offspring, and my blessing on your descendants."

86. See also the discussion by Juan B. Cortes, CBQ, XXIX (1967), pp. 75-86.

87. There is a further ambiguity as to whether we should take the words "as the Scripture has said" with the preceding or the following. Chrysostom adopted the former course, but most commentators the latter. And they are surely right. There does not appear to be an Old Testament passage that explicitly foretells faith in Jesus, and in any case the emphasis is on the flowing of living water. It is this to which the words most naturally refer, and we need scarcely take the alternative seriously.

88. ὁ πιστεύων is a nominative absolute.

89. The Greek is ἐκ τῆς κοιλίας αὐτοῦ, "out of his belly," that is "from his innermost being." Some scholars, finding great difficulty in seeing such a prophecy in Scripture, understand the "belly" to refer to Jerusalem. Thus I. Abrahams says that Zech. 14:8 is read in the synagogues in connection with the Feast of Tabernacles (on the first day). This speaks of waters going out from Jerusalem: "But as in Rabbinic tradition (B. Sanhedrin 37a, Ezekiel xxxviii.8, Jubilees viii.) Jerusalem was situated in the navel of the earth, John may be using belly as a synonym for Jerusalem" (Studies In Pharisaism, first series, p. 11). C. F. Burney sees a mistranslation of the original Aramaic. He points out that מים, "fountain," and מים, "belly," are identical if unpointed, and gives the meaning as.

"He that thirsteth, let him come unto Me;
And let him drink that believeth in Me;
As the Scripture hath said, Rivers shall flow forth from the fountain of living waters" (AO, p. 110).

C. C. Torrey denies that the two Aramaic words suggested by Burney could have been confused, and he says that Burney's reconstruction "is neither good Aramaic nor comes anywhere near accounting for our Grk." (Our Translated Gospels [New York and London, 1936], p. 110). He thinks that confusion has arisen between the Aramaic gawwah ("the midst of her"), and the masculine gawweh (which leads to the reading "out of his belly") (p. 111; unpointed, these forms would be identical). His translation runs, "As the Scripture says, Out of the midst of Her shall flow rivers of living water," and he appends a note explaining that "Her" is Jerusalem, and the scripture is Ps. 46:4-5. Against the whole idea is the difficulty that the New Testament sees Christ, not Jerusalem, as the source of blessing. The linguistics are not convincing enough to counterbalance this. See further Hendriksen's criticism of Torrey, and W. F. Howard's note (M, II, p. 475). SBK cites rabbinic evidence for the use of כפץ, "body" (which they say is equivalent to κοιλία), to mean "person." This may be significant, though it is fairly objected that this would naturally be translated σώμα rather than κοιλία. "Belly" is used in the Old Testament of the innermost feelings of a person; cf. Prov. 20:27. In Ps. 40:8 (LXX 39:9) Rahlfs accepts the reading κοιλίας (the Law is "in the midst of my belly"), though noting that B has καρδίας; cf. v. 10. Chrysostom says of the present passage, "By 'belly' he here meaneth the heart" (51.1; p. 183; he proceeds to cite Ps. 40:10). So also Augustine: "The belly of the inner man is the conscience of the heart. Having drunk that water, then, the conscience being purged begins to live; and drinking in, it will have a fountain, will (32.4; p. 194). NRSV, GNB, Goodspeed, and others have "heart"; Phillips, "inmost heart"; Knox, "bosom." J. Behm also supports "heart" (TDNT, III, p. 788). Barclay gives Jesus' meaning as "Come to me; accept me; trust me; and I will put into you through my Spirit a new life which will give you purity and satisfaction, and which will take away all your frustrations and unsatisfied hungers and give you the kind of life you have always longed for and never had." This is true, but the words also point to the outgoing character of this life. Not only do believers receive blessing, but they become the source of blessing to others. Cf. K. H. Rengstorf, " In the image of the ποταμός this means that Jesus equips
His disciples in such a way that the forces and fulness of life remain unrestrictedly at work, since the streams of living water flow via them into the world and are available for the thirsty so long as they believe" (TDNT, VI, p. 607). Thus the "innermost being" or the "life" is understood by many, both ancient and modern. It seems to meet the requirements of the passage better than any other suggestion thus far made.

90. Wright quotes from Bunyan, "There was a man, the world did think him mad,
The more he gave away, the more he had."
Against this he sets the "'rule' of the stagnant pool"
"... the good old rule
Sufficed! them, the simple plan,
That they should take who have the power,
And they should keep who can."
He adds: "This 'plan' defeats itself. The pool that only receives eventually dries up. The living waters that flow for the healing of others do not dry up, for their source is in the Divine life — in that 'Spiritual Rock' which is Christ."

91. Not so either, Judaism at its best. There is a saying of R. Meir: "He that occupies himself in the study of the Law for its own sake merits many things. . . . And it gives him kingship and dominion and discernment in judgment; to him are revealed the secrets of the Law, and he is made like to a never-failing spring and like to a river that flows ever more mightily" (.Ab. 6:1). But it is significant that, whereas the rabbi speaks of the Law, Jesus speaks of the Spirit-filled life.

92. Cf. J. Behm: "the basic thought is that he who is touched by Jesus in the innermost recesses of his personal life will from thence send forth saving powers in superabundant measure (cf. v. 39; also Mt. 5:13f.)" (TDNT, III, p. 789). In a footnote he says that the view which sees αὐτοῦ as referring to Jesus and the blessing as proceeding from him "has the text very definitely against it" (n. 17).

93. Perhaps we should notice that water and spirit are combined in a number of places in the Dead Sea Scrolls, e.g., 1QS 4:20-21.

94. For a careful study of these words cf. S. H. Hooke, NTS, IX (1962-63), pp. 372-80. His conclusion is: "never until the Son of Man had ascended up where he was before, and the last Adam had become a life-giving spirit, had it been possible for the Spirit to enter into and become the life of the believer, producing in him the life of Jesus, as Paul says 'That the life of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh' (II Cor. iv.11)" (p. 380).

95. For John's idea of glory see on 1:14. This is his first use of δοξάζω, a verb he uses in all 23 times. In no other book does it occur more than 9 times (Luke), so it is clearly an important Johannine concept. John invariably uses it of the glorifying of the Son or the Father, and he sees this glorifying particularly in the cross.

96. Though there is nothing like this statement in the Synoptic Gospels, G. W. H. Lampe reminds us that it "is implicit in all the records" (SJT, V [1952], p. 168).

97. ἐκ τοῦ δύναμεν is a partitive genitive, "some of the crowd."

98. "John often takes pleasure in reporting objections which, for his readers who are acquainted with the Gospel history, turn immediately into proofs" (Godet).

99. "But John's irony goes far deeper than this. The birth place of Jesus is a trivial matter in comparison with the question whether he is ἐκ τοῦ ἄνω or ἐκ τοῦ κάτω (8.23), whether he is or is not from God. Cf. 7.28 where though Jesus admits that his hearers know whence he came he emphasizes that human origins are irrelevant (ἀπ' ἐμαυτοῦ οὐκ ἔληλυθα), and 8.14 where Jesus denies that the Jews (truly) know whence he came — they judge κατὰ τήν σάρκα. See also 3.8 — no one knows whence comes and whither goes one who has been born of the Spirit. This refers primarily to Christians, but a fortiori to Jesus himself. It follows that all disputes about the birth place of the Messiah, the heavenly Man, are far wide of the point" (Barrett).
100. σχίσμα does not denote anything as thoroughgoing as a "schism" in our sense of the term. It points rather to a party or a faction, and it is used in the plural, for example, of the parties in the Corinthian church (1 Cor. 1:10).


102. There is but one article in the expression τοὺς ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ Φαρισαίους, which points to the official body on which they sat together.

103. οὕτως puts the emphasis on the manner rather than the content of his teaching. Cf. Lenski: "The authority, majesty, and power of the speaker restrained these officers."

104. Dods draws attention to two remarkable things about this: "The testimony is notable, because the officers of a court are apt to be entirely mechanical and leave all responsibility for their actions with their superiors. Also it is remarkable that the same result should have found place with them all; for in view of the divided state of public opinion, probably five or six at least would be sent."

105. "Never did man speak so" is read by p66c p75 Κ B L T W boh Or Chrys Cyr. The longer text adds "as this man speaks," but the shorter text seems preferable.

106. Cf. Barrett: "The stress appears to lie on the last word (i.e., ἄνθρωπος). The speech of Jesus is not the speech of a man. The constables were cowed by his superhuman authority...?"

107. Cf. Barclay, "Their plea was: 'Nobody who is spiritually and academically of any account has believed on this Jesus. Only ignorant fools accept him.' It is indeed a terrible thing when a man thinks himself either too clever or too good to need Jesus Christ — and it can happen yet." It is worth noting, moreover, that in the light of 12:42 their statement is premature.

108. The choice of μή as negative is seen by Abbott as significant: "John could not have used οὐ without limiting the assertion to a particular crowd pointed out, whereas the meaning is 'This multitude (these and their like, this rabble) that knoweth not the law are accursed' " (2253). J. Louis Martyn comments: "That Billerbeck assembled the rabbinic teaching regarding the Am ha-Aretz in his comment on John 7:49 is no accident. That verse (cf. 9:34) is the most transparently accurate reference to the Am ha-Aretz in the whole of the New Testament" (History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel2 [Nashville, 1979], p. 103, n. 150). The contempt felt for these people is expressed succinctly by the great Hillel, who said that an Am ha-Aretz "cannot be saintly" CAB. 2:6).

109. E. P. Sanders argues strongly that the Jews saw the Law as a great and good gift God had given them and that they did not really think they were saved by works (Paul and Palestinian Judaism [London, 1977]). This is a very valuable discussion, but it is doubtful whether Sanders gives sufficient attention to Jewish preoccupation with legal questions, whether or not they had fulfilled their obligation and the like. Jesus' attitude was very different.

110. While the participle γινώσκων is singular to agree with όχλος, the verb and predicate are plural, ἐπάρατοι εἶσον. This will put some emphasis on the thought that every individual is included as accursed. Phillips translates ἐπαρατοί as "damned." This is the one use of the word in the New Testament.

111. For the contempt in which those expert in the Law held "the people of the land" see the passages cited in SBk, II, pp. 494-519.

112. Ryle is among those who commend rather than condemn Nicodemus: "Slow work is sometimes the surest and most enduring. Nicodemus stood firm, when Judas Iscariot fell away and went to his own place. No doubt it would be a pleasant thing, if everybody who was converted came out boldly, took up the cross, and confessed Christ in the day of his conversion. But it is not always given to God's children to do so. . . . Better a little grace than none! Better move slowly than stand still in sin and the world!".

113. The rule is put in these words by R. Eleazar b. Pedath: "Unless a mortal hears the pleas that a man can put forward, he is not able to give judgment" (Exod. Rab. 21.3).

114. It is possible that emphasis should be placed on the present tense, "does not come." The Pharisees would surely have known where Jonah came from, and it may be that they were simply
belittling the inhabitants of Galilee in their own day: "Search them out. See for yourself that a
prophet never comes from people like these Galileans." It is certainly clear that the Galileans were
commonly despised. There is, for example, a series of stories holding them up to mockery for their
inexact speech in 'Erub. 53b. Yet the rabbis, too, could be more just than this. A saying of R. Eliezer
is recorded: "There was not a tribe in Israel from which there did not come prophets" (Sukk. 27b.;
Soncino edn. p. 121).

115. p.66 has a singular reading in that it inserts ὧ before προφήτης. If this were accepted there
would be no difficulty, for the rulers would be saying that the prophet, the Messiah, does not come
from Galilee. Long before the discovery of this MS Owen conjectured that this was the true reading
(see Metzger, p. 219). Bultmann also favored this reading before p66 came to light, and the
conjecture was regarded with some favor by C. K. Barrett (ExT, LXVIII [1956-57], pp. 176, 177). J.
R. Michaels thinks that this is "almost certainly the correct text, or at the very least a true
interpretation of what John really meant" (BT, 8 [1957], p. 154). G. D. Fee does not favor the reading
and thinks the scribe tried to delete it (JBL, LXXXIV [1965], p. 68). E. R. Smothers argues for
accepting it. The evidence of p75 is not clear, for there is a lacuna. The editors think the article was
there originally, but B. M. Metzger is not convinced (ExT, LXXIII [1961-62], p. 202). The reading is
attractive, but in view of the overwhelming evidence of all the rest of the MSS we can scarcely say
more.
O. THE SIXTH DISCOURSE —THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD (8:12-59)

It is usually held that the background of this chapter remains the Feast of Tabernacles (as in ch. 7). In the Jewish celebration of that feast the imagery both of water and of light was very important, and light continues to occupy attention in this section. But it is not always noticed that, though the crowd is mentioned eight times in chapter 7 it is not mentioned at all in this chapter (in fact, it is not mentioned again until 11:42; NIV reads "the people" in v. 12, but the Greek means no more than "them"). Throughout this section of the Gospel Jesus is confronted by his adversaries, not by the people at large. All this appears to mean that the feast was over and the crowd had gone home. Perhaps it was not long over, and the significance of the ceremonies had not yet faded from people's minds.

The discussion is triggered off by Jesus' statement that he is "the light of the world." The first reaction of his enemies is to attack the witness borne to him. Then the discussion goes on to the fate of dying in sins (vv. 21-24), the relationship between the Father and the Son (vv. 25-30), and the fact that the opponents of Jesus are slaves to sin (31-47). It concludes with a section on the glory the Father gives the Son (vv. 48-59). It thus covers a very wide range.

1. The Witness of the Father (8:12-20)

12When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life. 13The Pharisees challenged him, "Here you are, appearing as your own witness; your testimony is not valid." 14Jesus answered, "Even if I testify on my own behalf, my testimony is valid, for I know where I came from and where I am going. But you have no idea where I come from or where I am going. 15 You judge by human standards; I pass judgment on no one. 16 But if I do judge, my decisions are right, because I am not alone. I stand with the Father
who sent me. 17 In your own Law it is written that the testimony of two men is valid. 18 am one who testifies for myself; my other witness is the one who sent me — the Father." 19 Then they asked him, "Where is your father?" "You do not know me or my Father," Jesus replied. "If you knew me, you would know my Father also." 20 He spoke these words while teaching in the temple area near the place where the offerings were put. Yet no one seized him, because his time had not yet come.

Jesus makes a great claim. This provokes the Pharisees into vigorous opposition, and they choose to charge Jesus with invalid witness. Witness is not a new theme. Jesus has already claimed that the Father bears witness to him (5:37). He has said that it is this witness that carries conviction to him, so that he rejects all other witness (5:34), though he has also made it clear that this witness will not be received by his enemies. Here he is not going back on that position, but, in reply to the accusation that no witness is borne to him other than his own (which is legally invalid witness), Jesus insists that there is in fact Another who bears witness to him. Whether the Pharisees accept the witness of the Father or not, it is a fact. And that fact is important. John does not confine his attention to legal niceties, but he makes it clear that the witness borne to Jesus is completely valid.

12 The discussion of chapter 7 is resumed. John does not say when this happened, but he does indicate the situation, namely "near the place where the offerings were put" (v.20). Jesus' opening words, "I am the light of the world," are very impressive. "I am" is emphatic. It is the very style of deity that we have seen employed before in this Gospel (see on 6:35). There has been a good deal of speculation about the origin of the expression "the light of the world" (cf. 9:5; 12:46 for the repetition of the thought in slightly different wording). Many draw attention to the ceremonies with lights at the Feast of Tabernacles and suggest that Jesus was consciously fulfilling the symbolism suggested by them. There is nothing unlikely in this, especially if the words were uttered reasonably close to the time of the Feast. The feasts were very important to the Jews, who delighted in their observance and rejoiced in their symbolism. And it was important to the Christians that the Christ fulfilled all the spiritual truths to which the feasts pointed. Now the brilliant candelabra were lit only at the beginning of the Feast of Tabernacles; there is dispute as to the number of nights on which the illumination took place, but none as to the fact that at the close of the
feast it did not. In the absence of the lights Jesus' claim to the Light would stand out the more impressively. In favor of this view is also the fact that the candelabra were lit in the Court of the Women, the most frequented part of the Temple, and the very place in which Jesus delivered his address.

Yet, just as the reference to the water in chapter 7 seems to point us back to the rock in the wilderness rather than to the pouring of water from the golden pitcher, so the light may refer us to the pillar of fire in the wilderness. We have noted the reference to the manna in chapter 6, so that in three successive chapters the wilderness imagery seems consistently used to illustrate aspects of Jesus' Person and work. It must always be borne in mind that light is a common theme in both Old and New Testaments, so that it is not necessary for us to find the source of Jesus' saying in any nonbiblical context. Elsewhere we read that God is light (1 John 1:5), and Jesus himself said that his followers are "the light of the world" (Matt. 5:14; the expression is identical with that used here). Paul can also speak of Christians as "stars in the universe" (Phil. 2:15). It is, of course, plain that such terms must be applied to believers in a sense different from that in which they are applied to Christ. He is the fundamental source of the world's illumination. They, having kindled their torches at his bright flame, show to the world something of his light.

Bultmann sees the emphasis not in the fact that Jesus is distinguished from other claimants to give light, but from that human certainty that it already has the light, (p. 343). Light is not a natural human possession. It comes only from Christ. And it is not a separable entity that may be possessed in itself. It is not an objective revelation that people may receive and hug to themselves. Jesus is the light. To have the light is to have Jesus. There is no light apart from a right relationship to him.

This is the supreme example of John's interest in light, which we have seen from the Prologue on (see on 1:4). In the opening verses of the Gospel he associated both life and light with the Logos. Now the whole world draws its light from him, and light and life are again connected. This saying does not mean that all people indiscriminately receive the light. Light does not belong to the human race as such. Only those who follow Jesus are delivered from darkness and enjoy the light; the implication is that the whole world, of itself, is in darkness. We should not overlook the present participle, which implies following Jesus continually. Jesus is speaking of wholehearted discipleship, not of casual adherence (cf. 1:37 and note). The
follower of Jesus "will never walk in darkness." This may refer to the
darkness of the world or the darkness of Satan. Perhaps we are not meant to
distinguish sharply between them, for believers are delivered from both. Far
from being confined to darkness they will have "the light of life."10 "The
light of the world" does not give only a fleeting glimpse of light; the whole
of life is illuminated. "Will have" points to something that continues. The
coming of the light means a permanent transformation. For "life" see on
1:4; 3:15. Marsh makes the important point that "light, in a sense, bears
witness to itself, though every other object in the world requires light in
order to bear witness to itself. Light always illuminates, is never
illuminated." (p. 351). Light is unique.

13 The leaders of the opposition to Jesus are the Pharisees. They do not
address themselves to the main question. Indeed, they do not speak of light
and darkness at all. Typically they fasten on a legal technicality. Jesus is
bearing witness (see on 1:7) to himself, they say, and therefore his witness
is "not valid." This does not necessarily mean that it is false.11 They are
saying that it has no legal worth.12 There is no reason to accept it (cf. 5:31).
The Pharisees' reaction to Jesus' claim to be the light is at base the answer
people always make when they do not wish to be convinced: "I do not see it
that way. The evidence is not sufficient to establish the claim." But light
establishes its claim and does so, not by arguments, but by shining. Light
must always be accepted for itself, and notwithstanding the objections of
the blind.13

14 Jesus insists that his witness is true (cf. Rieu: " 'What if I am?' said
Jesus, 'My evidence is sound'""). In 5:31 he has said, "If I bear witness of
myself, my witness is not true," by which he meant that his witness had to
be supported to be accepted (see note). There he agreed with the Pharisees
that unsupported testimony has no legal value. He did not mean that his
words were not in fact true. They were true. But if his testimony was
unsupported it was not to be received. Here he has two points to make: the
one is that he is qualified to bear witness though his enemies are not, and
the other that in any case his testimony is not unsupported. The Father bears
witness of him. Jesus is contrasting himself with the Pharisees. He knows
both his origin and his destination,14 but they know neither.15 They are not
in a position to comment on his witness. They are totally unaware of the
great heavenly verities.
Their disqualification is further emphasized. They judge, and they can judge, only "by human standards," more exactly "according to the flesh." Now it is the nature of the flesh to be weak and incomplete, so the expression draws attention to the weakness and imperfection of their judgment (and of all judgments like theirs). It cannot but be imperfect and partial. After such a statement we expect something like "I do not judge after the flesh." But Jesus says, "I pass judgment on no one." The statement is a strong one, with an emphatic double negative. A difficulty is posed by its obvious meaning coupled with the fact that in succeeding verses it is clear that Jesus does judge. But we should notice two things: (1) he did not come to judge; that was not his purpose, and (2) the kind of judging that he engages in is not at all the same thing as that which the Pharisees envisage by the term. The two activities are so different that the same term does not describe them both. Judgment "according to the flesh" is not really judgment at all. As the Pharisees understand judgment Jesus makes no judgment whatever. The contradiction with "For judgment I have come into this world" (9:39) is no more than apparent. There judgment is the natural consequence of the coming of Jesus. Being what he is, his coming divides people: some accept him, some reject him. His coming is in itself a judgment. But here quite another truth comes before us. Jesus is pointing out in the firmest manner that he does not practice the kind of judgment that the Pharisees practiced. He came for salvation, not for judgment (3:17; 12:47).

Jesus turns now to the sense in which he does judge, and the justification for it. "If I do judge" could be understood of the judgment at the last day. But, as often in this Gospel, the context has to do with present judgment and the words should be taken in this sense. Jesus is continuing the thought that his judgment is unlike that of the Pharisees. It is not "according to the flesh" but "true" judgment (for "my judgment is true" NIV has "my decisions are right"), for it arises from his relationship to the Father. It is to sustain this point that Jesus insists that he is not alone. To the Jews he may appear a solitary figure, but the truth is that the Father is with him (cf. v. 29; 16:32). This validates his judgment, for any judgment carried out by one who is in the very presence of the Father and in harmony with him must be a valid judgment. Characteristically Jesus adds a reference to his mission. He is "sent" (see on 3:17), but sent in such a way that the Father who sent him has not left him; he is with him still. Some
very good manuscripts omit "Father" in this verse, reading simply, "I and he who sent me." If (as is probable) this is the correct way to take the verse the emphasis is not on the Father-Son relationship, but rather on the mission of Jesus. He is the "sent" one. He is not forsaken by the Sender. His judgment is informed by his intimate contact with the Sender.

17 Jesus now appeals to the Law which the Jews held to be binding. "Your" sets him apart from them. The expression is that by which Gentiles refer to the Law in dialogues reported in the rabbinic literature. The Law applies to them in a way that it did not apply to him. Jesus stands with God and they with people. Yet this must not be overpressed, for Jesus was himself a Jew. The primary emphasis, then, is on the fact that this is the law to which they made their appeal (cf. Nicodemus's "our law," 7:51). It is the law that is binding on them and which they must accept. Now this law provided that the agreement of two witnesses was sufficient to establish testimony (Deut. 19:15), even in so serious a matter as an execution (Deut. 17:6). In view of what follows it may be significant that Jesus does not cite Deuteronomy exactly. That book speaks of "two witnesses," but he of "two men," which he puts in an emphatic position. The Law accepts the testimony of two men. What then shall we say of the testimony of the Father and the Son?

18 Jesus asserts that he has the required twofold testimony. He is emphatic. "I am" may be meant to recall the style of deity; at the very least it adds solemnity and grandeur to the statement. The two verbs expressing witness are both in continuous tenses. There is a continuing witness that Jesus bears to himself and a continuing witness that the Father bears to him (cf. Brown, "In v 31-39 Jesus listed a series of ways in which the Father has given testimony (v 37): John the Baptist; the works of Jesus; the abiding word of God in the hearts of the audience; the Scriptures"). In the light of his claims no other witness than that of the Father is sufficient. If Jesus really stands in the relationship to God in which he says he does, then no mere human is in a position to bear witness. No human witness can authenticate a divine relationship. Jesus therefore appeals to the Father and himself, and there is no other to whom he can appeal. Once again the Father is described in terms of his sending of the Son.

19 Not unnaturally the Jews want to know where this Father of whom Jesus speaks is. Jesus' reply indicates that the Father is inaccessible to
them. It is possible to know the Father only as we know Jesus, for Jesus is the revelation of the Father. It is a key doctrine of this Gospel that it is in the Son, and in the Son alone, that the Father is revealed. No one has ever seen God. It is the Son who has "made him known" (1:18). This is fundamental. If anyone really comes to know Jesus then that person will know the Father also, and acknowledge the Father's testimony to the Son. The two go together (cf. Weymouth, "You know my Father as little as you know me"). But to reject Jesus is to place oneself out of reach of the divine testimony. There is a sense in which the Pharisees know Jesus, but it is not the significant sense (see on 7:28). Their failure to understand the significance of Jesus and enter into an appreciation of his mission and message meant that they were quite unable to perceive the witness of the Father to him. They prided themselves on their knowledge of their God; Jesus tells them that they have no knowledge of him at all.

20 John adds another of those little notes which indicate an exact knowledge of the circumstances. Jesus spoke these things, he says, "in the treasury" (NIV paraphrases). It is most unlikely that Jesus taught in the actual treasure chamber, so the word probably means that part of the Temple area into which people came to cast their offerings into the chests. This must have been part of the Court of the Women (which got its name from the fact that women as well as men were permitted to enter it), for women had access to it (Mark 12:41-43). There were thirteen trumpet-shaped collection boxes there, each with its inscription showing the use to which its contents would be put. In no other writing does the name "the treasury" appear to be used for a section of the Court of the Women, but it is difficult to give John's words any other meaning. This court was a place to which people resorted and where teaching could take place accordingly. It is not without its interest in view of the attitude of the authorities to Jesus that it was quite near the hall where the Sanhedrin met. Yet no one arrested him. Following the open enmity between the Pharisees and Jesus an arrest might have been expected. John explains that its failure to materialize was due, not to any lack of desire or opportunity, but to the will of God. Jesus' "hour" (see on 2:4; NIV has "time") had not yet come. Until it did his enemies were entirely powerless to harm him.

2. Dying in Sins (8:21-24)
21 Once more Jesus said to them, "I am going away, and you will look for me, and you will die in your sin. Where I go, you cannot come." 22 This made the Jews ask, "Will he kill himself? Is that why he says, 'Where I go, you cannot come'?" 23 But he continued, "You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. 24 I told you that you would die in your sins; if you do not believe that I am the one I claim to be, you will indeed die in your sins."

a. 24 Or I am he

The previous verse appears to denote a break in proceedings. It is impossible to say when what follows was spoken. It follows on naturally enough, but that does not necessarily mean that it was spoken on the same occasion. There is no note of the time of the year between 7:37, when it is still the season of Tabernacles, and 10:22, when it is the Feast of the Dedication. The interval is two months, and there is no way of knowing to what point in this period any of the intervening matter should be dated. This section appears somewhat later than the previous one, but how much later cannot be determined.

The ideas here are important. Indeed, Wright says of verses 21-30: "These profound verses develop and unfold the key thought of Jesus in this Gospel, and cannot, therefore, be understood apart from the Gospel as a whole." John is all the time writing of one who stands in a unique relationship to the Father, one who is the supreme revelation of the Father. In this passage this relationship is the dominating thought.

21 "Once more" links what follows rather loosely with the preceding; it does not mean that it follows on immediately. Jesus begins by telling the Jews that he will leave them and that they will not be able to follow him where he goes (cf. 7:33-34, where see note). The words are mysterious, but we need not doubt that Jesus is referring once more to his departure to be with the Father. 32 His death is set in contrast to theirs. They will die in their sin, and this will prevent them from going where he goes. Dying in sin is not further defined. It is an Old Testament expression, but there, as here, it is not explained (Prov. 24:9, LXX; Ezek. 3:18; 18:18). It points to a horror that is all the more terrible for being unexplained. To die with one's sin unrepented and unatoned is the supreme disaster (Amplified renders, "}
under the curse of" your sin). Why the Jews should seek him Jesus does not say. It may be understood as their implacable pursuit of him, which would continue even after he has "gone away." Or Jesus may mean that their moment of insight will come too late. Only after they have crucified him will they realize who he is. Then their seeking of him will be in vain. Throughout this entire section the emphatic personal pronouns are used freely. Jesus and the Jews are set in strong opposition.

22 The form in which the question is cast shows that the answer "No" is expected. 'Surely he will not kill himself?' is the force of it. The Jews do not think of Jesus as a likely suicide, but they correctly catch a reference to death. The parting of which he is speaking is final. Some exegetes suggest that the Jews are joking, their meaning being, "If you are going to lowest Hades, we certainly will not be able to follow you!" Their quotation of the words of Jesus at the end of the verse is noteworthy for being exact, and the saying is quoted accurately once more in 13:33. The similar words in 7:34 are also quoted accurately in 7:36. In this Gospel the more usual habit is for slight variation (e.g., 1:48, 50; 16:14, 15, etc.; see on 3:5), so that we cannot but feel that John attached especial importance to these sayings.

23-24 Jesus differentiates himself from the Jews with a pair of contrasts. "He has to remind them that there are other gulfs dividing men besides the gulf of death" (Murray). His opponents are closely tied up with this word. They are "from below" and "of this world." In a sense this can be said of all people. But there is a sense in which the attitude is all-important. These Jews were not only members of the human race. They were of the earth, earthy. Their attention was concentrated on this world instead of on doing the Father's will (contrast Col. 3:1-2). Jesus' meaning here, however, does not appear to center on this aspect (though it will be included) as much as on the fact that he and they differ in their essential being. He comes "from above;" he is "not of this world." He is a being of a different order, and thus their pursuit of him when he chooses to leave them will be futile. It is because of this essential nature of theirs that he has told them that they will die in their sins. They belong to the world, the world where Satan is supreme (cf. 1 John 5:19). Therefore (which NIV omits), when they die they will die in their sins. There is but one way of avoiding this fate, namely by coming to believe in Jesus. And this
involves a right estimate of his person. It is important to believe "that I am" \(^{42}\) (NIV, "I am the one I claim to be"). This expression is in the style of deity. No predicate is expressed. The same Greek expression occurs a number of times (4:26; 6:20; 8:18, 28, 58; 13:19; 18:5, 6, 8, and, of course, it is found several times with a predicate; see on 6:35). But it is not easy to understand what predicate could be supplied here (NIV does not carry conviction). The answer of the Jews shows some mystification. We should probably understand it along the lines of the similar expression in LXX, which is the style of deity (cf. Isa. 43:10). \(^{43}\) Its use here involves the very highest estimate of Christ's Person (see further on v. 58). This, of course, gives a certain intellectual content to faith. Basically faith is trust. But in our reaction against the view that faith means no more than a firm acceptance of certain intellectual propositions we must not go so far as to say that it is entirely a matter of personal relations. It is impossible to have the kind of faith John envisages without having a high view of Christ. Unless we believe that he is more than just another man we can never trust him with that faith which is saving faith.

3. The Father and the Son (8:25-30)

25"Who are you? " they asked. "Just what I have been claiming all along, "Jesus replied. 26 "I have much to say in judgment of you. But he who sent me is reliable, and what I have heard from him I tell the world." 27They did not understand that he was telling them about his Father. 28So Jesus said, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know who I am\(^a\) and that I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me. 29The one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases him. " 30Even as he spoke, many put their faith in him.

a. 28 Or, know that I am he

This leads to a discussion of Christ's Person and of his relationship to the Father. There is a strong affirmation of the unity between them, and a reference to Christ's death. This concept of the death on the cross of one who was one with the Father is the great central thought of this Gospel.
25 It is unlikely that the Jews perceived the full implications of Jesus' words. There is mystery in them, and the mystery is open only to faith. But they caught enough to discern that Jesus was making a large claim, and the outrageousness of this claim (as it seemed to them) caused them to explode into the question, "Who are you?" The pronoun "is scornfully emphatic" (Plummer) and placed first: "You, who are you to be saying such things?" is the force of it. The meaning of Jesus' answer is not clear. The expression rendered "all along" is not the usual one. It really means "at first," "at the beginning," and it is not easy to understand how this fits in. Barrett takes this as the significance of the words, but when he gives the meaning of the whole clause he substitutes "from the beginning," which is not the same thing as "at the beginning" at all. He says, "We must choose between the renderings (a) I am from the beginning what I tell you, and (b) I am what I tell you from the beginning." He thinks (a) is probably right. His (b) is the way GNB and Phillips take it. But nobody seems to have shown that the expression ever means "from the beginning." If we substitute Barrett's "at the beginning," neither of his suggestions is felicitous. With this rendering the present tense is really difficult. One way of avoiding the difficulty is to go back to an understanding of the expression favored by the Fathers, namely, as "altogether" or the like. It is the "at all" in our phrase "not at all." On this view Jesus' reply may be regarded either as a question or an exclamation. Quite a few translations take it as a question (NRSV, NEB, Cassirer, Goodspeed, Knox, etc.), which yields such a meaning as "To begin with, why do I even speak to you?" or "Why do I talk to you at all?" This yields a good sense; in the face of the Jews' continued refusal to recognize Jesus for what he was he wonders what is the point of continuing to talk to them. They are willfully obtuse. This meaning, however, does not fit in very well with the context, particularly with the very next verse, where Jesus says he has much to say about them. And it involves an interrogative that is not common anywhere in the New Testament and does not occur elsewhere in John. This may be avoided by taking the expression as an exclamation, "That I speak to you at all!" But the difficulty of the context remains. Others, retaining the "at all," "altogether," significance, suggest a meaning like "Altogether that which I also speak unto you" (ARV mg; cf. Berkeley, "I am exactly what I tell you"). Jesus is then saying that he is altogether what his words show him to be. But the expression seems to be used with this meaning only when there is a negative. As we have seen, it is the "at
all" in "not at all." It does not appear to be used often, if ever, in this positive sense. Hoskyns is of opinion that "beginning" is such an important word for John that he would never allow it to be lost completely, as in some of the above suggestions. Both the beginning of creation and the beginning of Jesus' ministry are important to him, and if he has both in mind at the same time (and we must bear in mind his fondness for double meanings) this may well have complicated the grammar. A further suggestion arises from the unique reading of the great Bodmer papyrus ($\rho^{66}$): "I told you at the beginning what I am also telling you." This is so much better than the other readings that the only difficulty lies in seeing how, if it was original, it has affected the manuscript tradition so little. Barrett rejects it as secondary.

The problem is thus a very complicated one, and it is not surprising that many exegetes hold that it is incapable of solution with the information at our disposal. If we could accept the reading of $\rho^{66}$ all would be well. Failing that, Hoskyns's suggestion seems to be best, that there is a complication due to the double meaning in the writer's mind. If neither of these be acceptable, then it seems that we are in the presence of a primitive corruption of the text such that the original is irrecoverable without further evidence. Perhaps "What I told you at the beginning" is as good a rendering of the Greek as we can get.

26 Then Jesus goes on to point out that he has many things to say "about" (not "to") them, and that these things concern judgment. Judgment is necessarily involved in all right teaching and action, and preeminently is this the case where the mission of the Son is concerned. In his function as Judge of us all he cannot overlook such conduct as that of his antagonists. But the right place and the right time to say such things are not yet. There are things that Jesus says now, and a consideration of them leads to his close connection with the Father. Once more he thinks in terms of mission. The Father is "he who sent me" (seen 3:17). Once more he thinks of his message as thoroughly reliable because it rests on his contact with the Father. The Father is "true" (NIV, "reliable"), on which see Additional Note D (pp.259-62). Elsewhere Jesus also speaks of himself as the truth" (14:6), and the things he speaks are only the things that he has heard from the Father. His message is to "the world"; it is not restricted in its scope.
27-28 The Jews did not catch the allusion. Since they did not recognize Jesus' heavenly origin it meant nothing to them that he could trace his message back to him who sent him, nor that his Sender was "true." What they did think of it is not said. So Jesus went on. "Lifted up" is a curious expression, but it must point to the cross here as in other places where it occurs in this Gospel (see on 3:14). It is not a natural expression to use for crucifixion, and no other New Testament writer uses it with this meaning. Elsewhere it always means "to exalt." John probably uses it to convey a double meaning. Jesus was "lifted up" on the cross, and he was also exalted in a deeper sense, for his greatest glory consists in accepting the shame and the humiliation of the cross in order that thereby he might bring salvation to sinners. Here he is saying that the Jews will not understand who he really is before they have crucified him. There is a revelatory aspect to the cross, and after the crucifixion those who reflect on it will be in a position to appreciate that Jesus is indeed more than man. It is probable that we should put a stop after "I am he" (NIV, "who I am"), so that what follows is not a statement of what the Jews will come to realize, but of what Jesus constantly does (there is nothing in the Greek corresponding to NIVs "that"). He does not act as an isolated individual. He does nothing on his own initiative. He repeats from verse 26 that what he says to people is what God has spoken to him. His message is not of human origin, but divine.

29 This is followed by a statement of the intimate communion that always exists between Jesus and the Father. Again there is the thought of mission (this is the fourth reference to his being "sent" in this discourse; see also vv. 16, 18, 26). It is he who sent Jesus who is with him, and this may perhaps be regarded as part of the consequence of the sending. God does not and will not forsake his messenger. Jesus is not abandoned. The words that follow may give the reason for this in his continual doing of the Father's will. Or we may think of an ellipsis: "(I can say this) because I do always. . . ." The deeds that Jesus did were evidence that the Father was indeed with him. Sometimes objection is taken to the whole idea of "the sinlessness of Jesus" on the grounds that this is a negative concept. Here we have the glorious positive: Jesus is active in doing what pleases the Father. Always.

30 John briefly gives us the result of all this. As Jesus was speaking these things, many came to put their trust in him (see on 1:12 for the significance of the construction). We are not told who the "many" were.
They may have come from the opponents who disputed with Jesus, or they may have been bystanders. But they caught enough of the significance of all this to take their stand with Jesus.

4. Slaves of Sin (8:31-47)

31 To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. 32 Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." 33 They answered him, "We are Abraham's descendants and have never been slaves of anyone. How can you say that we shall be set free?" 34 Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. 35 Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. 36 So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. 37 I know you are Abraham's descendants. Yet you are ready to kill me, because you have no room for my word. 38 I am telling you what I have seen in the Father's presence, and you do what you have heard from your father." 39 "Abraham is our father," they answered. "If you were Abraham's children," said Jesus, "then you would do the things Abraham did. 40 As it is, you are determined to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. Abraham did not do such things. 41 You are doing the things your own father does." "We are not illegitimate children," they protested. "The only Father we have is God himself." 42 Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and now am here. I have not come on my own; but he sent me. 43 Why is my language not clear to you? Because you are unable to hear what I say. 44 You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies. 45 Yet because I tell the truth, you do not believe me! 46 Can any of you prove me guilty of sin? If I am telling the truth, why don't you believe me? 47 He who belongs to God hears what God says. The reason you do not hear is that you do not belong to God.

a. 33 Greek seed; also in verse 37
b. 38 Or presence. Therefore do what you have heard from the Father.
c. 39 Some early manuscripts "If you are Abraham's children," said Jesus, "then

This section of discourse is addressed to those who believe, and yet do not believe. Clearly they were inclined to think that what Jesus said was true. But they were not prepared to yield him the far-reaching allegiance that real trust in him implies. This is a most dangerous spiritual state. To recognize that truth is in Jesus and to do nothing about it means that in effect one ranges oneself with the enemies of the Lord. It means also that there is some powerful spiritual force holding back the would-be believer from what is recognized as the right course of action. Anyone in that position is not free but a slave. Jesus makes it plain that his adversaries are slaves to sin and in the closest possible relationship to the evil one. True freedom is to be found in the liberty that Christ gives. By setting themselves in constant opposition these Jews did but proclaim their servitude to the evil one.

31 There is a puzzle in the meaning of "believed him." Normally John uses this verb of trust in Jesus, such trust as brings people out of death into life. Especially is this so when the construction means "believe on" (as in v. 30; NIV, "put their faith in him"), but, as we saw in Additional Note E (pp. 296-98), it is usually not possible to make a sharp differentiation between the various constructions used with this verb. We would expect a discourse introduced in this fashion to be addressed to genuine disciples, but as it unfolds it appears that these Jews were nothing of the sort. Therefore many commentators look for a change of subject. Some think verse 30 refers to genuine believers and verse 31 to those who did no more than make an outward profession. Others think of real believers in both places, but hold that "they" in verse 33 refers to a different group, the enemies of Jesus. But there is no indication in the narrative that different groups of people are meant. The difficulty leads some expositors to think the passage composite and ascribe some of the words to a redactor. This, however, introduces a further difficulty, namely the problem of the mind of a redactor who would take a reasonably straightforward narrative and produce this result, not being concerned about introducing a difficulty of such a magnitude that it has troubled commentators through the centuries. It
is best to think that John is speaking of people who had made an outward profession, but a profession that did not go very deep. Jesus' words, then, are meant to drive home to formal and casual adherents the meaning of true discipleship. If people in any sense believe in Jesus it is important that they come to see what real faith means. While "therefore" in this Gospel often denotes a very loose connection (NIV omits it here), there may be point in the use of the word in this place. Since many attached themselves to Jesus, "therefore," he proceeded to unfold what their attachment should mean. The key word here is "abide" (NIV paraphrases with "hold to my teaching"; the Greek means "abide in my word"). It is easy enough to be superficially attracted to Jesus, but the test is "abiding." It is only those who continue who are genuine disciples. There is some emphasis on "you," as if to say, "you, you who have believed, even you can become true disciples by abiding." "My word" stands for the whole of Jesus' teaching (cf. 5:24; 14:23, etc.). The thought is repeated several times in this chapter (vv. 37, 43, 51, 52; cf. v. 55). It is probably significant that Jesus does not say "you will be" but "you are" disciples. He is not laying down a condition of discipleship, but telling them in what discipleship consists. When anyone abides in Christ's word, then that person is a true disciple. 64

32 Now Jesus does move into the future. Any true disciple will know the truth, and this discourse is especially concerned with truth; it is mentioned seven times (twice here, vv. 40, 44 bis, 45, 46). Truth is closely connected with the Person of Christ (1:17; 14:6), so that knowledge of the truth is naturally associated with being his disciple. What is essentially part of himself he communicates to his followers (see further on 1:14). Jesus goes on to say that "the truth" liberates. This must be understood in the context of this whole Gospel. The meaning is not that truth in a philosophical sense exercises a liberating function so that adherence to the school of Jesus procures such intellectual insight that people are delivered from the bonds of ignorance. There is, of course, a sense in which it is true that only by surrender to the facts is genuine freedom possible, be it in philosophy, science, or what you will. But that is not the point here. 65 The truth of which John writes is the truth that is bound up with the Person and work of Jesus. It is saving truth. It is the truth that saves people from the darkness of sin, not that which saves them from the darkness of error (though there is a sense in which those in Christ are delivered from gross error; this Gospel has a good deal to say about knowledge). Luke tells us
that Jesus saw fulfilled in his ministry the prophecy that "He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners" (Luke 4:18). This is the kind of freedom of which John writes. People do not always, or even usually, realize that they are in bondage. They tend to rest in some fancied position of privilege, national, social, or religious. So these Jews, proud of their religion, did not even know their need to be free.

33 They retort by pointing to their relationship with Abraham. Connection with the great ancestor of the race was a high privilege, and in their view inconsistent with bondage. With a superb disregard for the facts of the situation as typified by the Roman yoke (and of their past history in Egypt and Babylon) they maintain emphatically that they have never been in a state of subjection. So they ask triumphantly how those who have never been in slavery can possibly be made free.

34 Jesus' answer is prefaced by the solemn "I tell you the truth" (see on 1:51), which shows that the saying is important. "Everyone who sins" is a participial construction that points us to a continuing state (cf. 1 John 3:6). Jesus is not saying that every individual act of sin represents slavery (though there is a sense in which that, too, is true). He is saying that everyone who continues in sin, who is a sinner, is thereby a slave. Calvin brings out that people may not realize their true position: "the greater the mass of vices anyone is buried under, the more fiercely and bombastically does he extol free will." Those who sin are slaves to their sin whether they realize it or not. This means that they cannot break away from their sin. For that they need a power greater than their own.

35-36 Jesus draws attention to the difference between the slave's relationship to the home and that of the son in order to show that he can bring people the freedom they need but cannot procure for themselves. The Jews held themselves to be sons in God's household. They presumed accordingly on rights that, being really slaves, they did not possess. The slave's position is temporary. He may in fact remain in a particular house all his life, but he has no rights, no security. At any time he can be sold or transferred to another part of the property. A son may in fact leave home or be expelled (though either would be unusual). But he has the position of a son, and nothing can alter that. He belongs. He has rights. In the Johannine manner we have a passing over to another meaning. John's interest is not in a son but in the Son. And he "belongs to it forever" in the
sense of eternal existence. It is because he is what he is that he can give the freedom of which he speaks.\textsuperscript{73} He has rights, and they concern a heavenly, not merely an earthly home. Because he is what he is he is able to give real freedom.\textsuperscript{74} It is possible that we have here an allusion to the words, "I will be his father, and he will be my son. ... I will set him over my house and my kingdom forever; his throne will be established forever" (1 Chron. 17:13-14).\textsuperscript{75} If so, there is a hint at Christ's high majesty, as well as his rights in the house.

37 Jesus concedes their claim to be of Abraham's line. But over against that he sets their attempt to kill him, which stamps them as being of another spirit than Abraham (cf. Luke 3:8). The reason for their hostility is given in terms of Jesus' "word," that is his whole message (cf. v. 31), which finds no place in them (or perhaps, among them). They have no room for it.\textsuperscript{76} Religious privilege does not guarantee a right attitude to the things of God.

38 There is a series of contrasts in this verse. Jesus is set over against the Jews, "seen" stands over against "heard," his Father against theirs,\textsuperscript{77} his speaking against their doing.\textsuperscript{78} Jesus insists, as always, that his message is derivative. It is from the Father. He has unclouded vision of God, and he speaks accordingly of the things he has seen in him. They by contrast have no vision. They are children of their father and these are the things they do. "Speak" and "do" are both continuous tenses. Jesus is referring to his consistent message and their persistent practice. This assumes that NIV has translated correctly. But "do" might also be an imperative. In this case we must take "Father" in both parts of the verse as referring to God. Jesus is then enjoining his opponents to do what the heavenly Father tells them. This, while not an impossible understanding of the text, seems out of harmony with the general drift. It does away with several of the contrasts of the verse and is not the natural understanding of the Greek.\textsuperscript{79}

39-40 Their reply is to reiterate their relationship to Abraham. This is a little strange since Jesus admitted that (v. 37). But probably they discern in his latest words an assertion that they have another kinship, a spiritual kinship, which negates their physical descent from the great patriarch. God called Abraham "my friend" (Isa. 41:8) and spoke to Moses as to a friend (Exod. 33:11). The Jews are implying that they are aligned with Abraham as well as friends of God. Jesus' reply is that deeds count for more than impressive ancestry (cf. Luke 3:8; Rom. 9:6-7). If they were really
Abraham's children they would do the kind of deeds that Abraham did.\textsuperscript{80} These deeds are summed up in their attempt to kill Jesus. Their murder plot arises out of their fundamental hostility to God.\textsuperscript{81} At this point he characterizes himself as "a man\textsuperscript{82} who has told you the truth." Truth receives a good deal of emphasis in this chapter (see on v. 32). And, as is characteristic, Jesus roots his message in God. He is not enunciating truth of himself. The truth he speaks to them he first heard from God. Abraham's conduct was not that of his descendants.

41 Jesus repeats that his enemies do the works of their father, but again he does not say who this father is. It is plain, both from this verse and from verse 38, that he is thinking of someone other than Abraham, but in neither place is this explicit. The implication in both places is that the evil deeds of his opponents are the result of their paternity: there is a family likeness. Grammatically it is possible to take "you are doing" as an imperative ("do") and to understand "your father" as God. But this involves the idea that the Jews know what his works are and scarcely seems consistent with the context (cf. v. 43; their whole failure to recognize Jesus as sent by God shows that they do not know the ways of God). It is better to take the verb as indicative and "your own father" as the devil. It is explicitly said that their father is the devil (v. 44), and it would be perverse to understand this verse differently. They answer that they are "not illegitimate children," which is a very curious response. They may be reviling Jesus. While they would not have given countenance to the Christian doctrine of the Virgin Birth, the Jews may well have known that there was something unusual about the birth of Jesus and have chosen to allude to it in this way.\textsuperscript{83} Their emphatic "we" sets them over against someone else who they imply was born in this way. By contrast with the unfortunate manner of birth of which they speak they main-tain that they themselves are children of God (they go on to accuse him of being a Samaritan [v. 48], and they may be thinking that the Samaritans were not legitimate Jews; cf. 2 Kings 17:24). They dimly perceive the drift of Jesus' discourse. He was not speaking of physical paternity when he spoke of their father. They apparently now realize this, and proceed to claim the highest spiritual paternity. Not only are they Abraham's seed, but, they say, in spiritual things they are closely related to God. Their spiritual, as their physical, descent is impeccable (cf. Knox, "God, and he only, is the Father we recognize"). Alternatively it is possible to take the words in the sense often found in the Old Testament, where the
forsaking of Yahweh is frequently likened to fornication or adultery. The Jews would then be asserting that they are not apostate, that they retain a firm hold on true religion.  

42 The form of the conditional denies both propositions: "If God were your Father (as he is not), you would love me (as you do not)." Jesus finds evidence for this in their attitude to him. He came out from God (the tense points to a moment of time, the incarnation) and has come (this time the tense indicates a continuing state). His was not a self-originated mission. It was the Father who sent him (see on 3:17). Once more we get this concept of mission. John is full of it. There is the thought of dependence.

43 Everything in this verse depends on the contrast between "my language" (lit. "my speech) and "what I say" ("my word"). The former term will denote the form of expression, the outward shape of the discourse, while the latter signifies rather its content. Cf. Rieu, "Why do you not understand my language? Because you cannot comprehend my thought." It is a constant charge that the Jews do not hear Jesus' teaching. They are so wrapped up in their preconceptions that they cannot perceive its truth. It repels them. "We are here dealing with the terrible reality of the bondage of the human will, and this has as much to do with twentieth-century Christians as with first-century Jews or early Christian apostates" (Newbigin, p. 112). Phillips renders, "you cannot bear to hear what I am really saying." And because the essential content is alien to them, they do not understand the discourse in which the message is set forth. But Jesus is speaking basically of spiritual incomprehension, not of any failure of intellect. The Jews take no notice of what Jesus says because they have no notion of what he stands for. This has to be borne in mind in interpreting the frequent misunderstandings of Jesus recorded in this Gospel. If there is a lack of sympathy and comprehension of the basic position, then all manner of details will inevitably be misunderstood.

44 Now comes Jesus' explicit assertion of the kinship of his enemies with Satan. He has previously hinted at it, but now he affirms it in set terms. They take their origin from the devil, their father. Consequently they set their will on doing his evil desires. They voluntarily choose to do his will. "To carry out" is continuous and points to an attitude. Their difficulty was not primarily intellectual but spiritual. The word rendered "desire" may on occasion denote good desire (e.g., 1 Thess. 2:17), but this is rare in the New Testament. The basic idea is that of very strong desire, and usually of strong
desire directed in the wrong way ("lust"). Here it is plainly evil desire. Specifically Jesus has charged them with trying to murder him (v. 40; cf. 7:25), and indeed, has said that in the end they will succeed (v. 28). This he puts down to Satan's proclivity for this kind of thing. "From the beginning" will possibly refer to the murder of Abel (cf. 1 John 3:12), more probably to the fact that it was through Satan that Adam became mortal (Rom. 5:12ff.; cf. Wis. 2:24). Satan thus became the murderer of the whole human race. Though the devil existed before that time, people did not, so there was no opportunity for him to show himself as a "man killer." Once again there is a reference to truth. Truth is associated with God and with Christ. Satan has no interest in them or in truth. His habitat is falsehood. When he speaks a lie (NIV, "lies"), he is at home. That is what we expect from him. Basically he is a liar and the father of lying. Therefore those who live in a false way, as Jesus' opponents were doing, do but reflect their kinship with the devil. There is a change of tense: Satan "was" from the beginning a murderer, and was not standing in the truth. But then comes there "is" no truth in him; that is his present and continuing characteristic.

This essential relationship of his foes with the devil and that of the devil with falsity made it impossible for the Jews to believe in Jesus. He and they were in opposite camps. They had contradictory presuppositions. We should notice that Jesus says "because," not "although I tell the truth." They being what they were, it was not to be expected that they would respond to the truth.

The hollowness of their attitude is exposed. The first part of the verse is a staggering assertion of sinlessness, and they do not respond to it. We are often so interested in the fact that they found no charge to lay that we overlook that other fact that the really striking thing is the making of the challenge. It betokens a clear and serene conscience. Only one who was in the closest and most intimate communion with the Father could have spoken such words. It is impossible to envisage any other figure in history making such a claim. In the light of their inability to point to any sin in him their continuing failure to believe in him is shown for the sham it was. If there was no sin, then he was indeed speaking the truth and if he was speaking the truth then they should have believed.

Jesus gives the answer to his own questions. A man must "belong to God" really to hear "what God says." His opponents do not "belong to
God." He has already pointed out that they are of their father the devil (v. 44). And because they lack the necessary kinship with heaven they do not heed the things he says.

5, The Glory the Father Gives the Son (8:48-59)

48The Jews answered him, "Aren't we right in saying that you are a Samaritan and demon-possessed?" 49"I am not possessed by a demon," said Jesus, "but I honor my Father and you dishonor me. 50I am not seeking glory for myself; but there is one who seeks it, and he is the judge. 51I tell you the truth, if a man keeps my word, he will never see death." 52At this the Jews exclaimed, "Now we know that you are demon-possessed! Abraham died and so did the prophets, yet you say that if a man keeps your word, he will never taste death. 53Are you greater than our father Abraham? He died, and so did the prophets. Who do you think you are?" 54Jesus replied, "If I glorify myself, my glory means nothing. My Father, whom you claim as your God, is the one who glorifies me. 55Though you do not know him, I know him. If I said I did not, I would be a liar like you, but I do know him and keep his word. 56Your father Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing my day; he saw it and was glad." 57 "You are not yet fifty years old," the Jews said to him, "and you have seen Abraham!" 58 "I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, I am!" 59At this, they picked up stones to stone him, but Jesus hid himself, slipping away from the temple grounds.

John brings this section of his Gospel to its close by leading up to a resounding climax — Jesus' claim to deity. This is recognized by the Jews for what it is and rejected with decision. The logical result is their attempt to stone him. But John always has before him the thought that no harm can befall Jesus until his "hour" has come. So he was concealed from them and went away from the temple.

48 The Jews remain totally unconvinced. Their accusation that Jesus was a Samaritan is puzzling, but clearly it points to a laxity, as they saw it, in the observance of the tenets of Judaism. Possibly they have in mind Jesus' failure to observe the traditions of the elders; in their view this is being disloyal to the faith. He is observing only those parts of their religion
which the heretical Samaritans observed and is thus to be classed with them. Or his refusal to agree with the Jews that they had an exclusive right to be called Abraham's children may be the point (cf. vv. 39-40). The Samaritans disputed this with some vigor, and Jesus' enemies may be saying, "You are no better than a Samaritan!" Aren't we right in saying..." appears to mean that this is a standing accusation, but we have no information about its being levelled at Jesus on any previous occasion. The charge of demon possession is found in 7:20; 8:52; 10:20. It is also reported in the Synoptic Gospels, where it is regarded as particularly heinous, being linked with the unforgivable sin (Matt. 12:24ff.; Mark 3:22ff.; cf. Matt. 9:34; 11:18, etc.).

Jesus ignores the charge that he is a Samaritan (which in any case probably counted for less to him than it did to them), and quietly denies that he has a demon. Against this he sets the contrasting thought that it is his practice to honor his Father, which, of course, is as far removed from demon possession as is possible. With that is to be taken the fact that they are dishonoring him. Rieu's "you insult me" appears to be too strong. Jesus is saying that he gives honor where it is due while they do not. This failure on their part is the reason they make such erroneous statements.

Immediately Jesus goes on to disclaim self-seeking. His words just spoken might perhaps be misinterpreted to mean that he sought glory for himself. This was not his aim at all. He reminds his hearers that there is One who seeks. In this context this must mean "seeks glory." Jesus is not concerned that people should give him the glory that is his due; God is looking after that. God seeks out the glory that people bestow, and not only seeks what they do, but judges it. Jesus' hearers may act as though they are supreme and dispense justice. Actually they are under judgment. It is therefore not an indifferent matter where they give glory. God searches out what they do and judges accordingly. The present tense shows that, as elsewhere in this Gospel, judgment takes place here and now. There is possibly some of John's irony here. The Jews were continually "seeking" Jesus in their mistaken zeal for God's glory, and their seeking was aimed at and would ultimately issue in Jesus' death (5:18; 7:1, 19, 25, 30; 8:37, 40; 10:31, 39; 11:8; 18:3). But in a deeper sense the real seeking was done by God. And he sought not the treatment of Jesus that the Jews sought, but his own glory. Further, this seeking means judgment for those who, for all their zeal, are so hopelessly opposed to God's purposes. There is a further
ironical touch in that, while the Jews sought the death of Jesus, when it was
brought about this would turn out to be his real glory.

51 Now comes the climax of this short speech, as the solemn "I tell
you the truth" (see on 1:51) shows. As earlier in this chapter, "word" means
the whole of Jesus' message (vv. 31, 37, and 43). There is some emphasis
on "my." The Jews are ready to classify him as a demon-possessed
Samaritan. Yet it is his word that anyone must keep if that person would
enter life. Jesus chooses to put his statement into the negative form, "he will
never see death." "Death" is in an emphatic position: "Death he will not
see." This is possibly occasioned by the preceding thought that the Jews are
under judgment. But death is not the lot of anyone who keeps Jesus'
message.

52 The Jews think that their previous statements about Jesus are now
proved. None but such as they held him to be could say such things. They
point out that Abraham, the great forebear of the race, died. The prophets,
the spiritual giants of the race, died. Yet in the face of these facts Jesus
("you" is scornfully emphatic) says that keeping his "word" will avoid
death. Obviously, their reasoning runs, this claim is something bigger
than anything accomplished by the greatest of the ancients. It does not
occur to them that it is not therefore necessarily false.

53 So they ask Jesus to reflect on the implications of his words. Their
question is so framed as to look for the answer "No." This is another
example of John's irony. The true situation is the very opposite of that
presupposed by their words. Is he greater than Abraham who died? And
the prophets died. The use of the aorist tense in both clauses points to the
actuality of these happenings. Death comes to all, and it came to these men.
What, then, does it mean that Jesus can deliver other people from death?
Clearly it means a claim to superhuman power. They imply that to expose
the claim for what it is is to show it to be impossible of fulfilment. They do
not face the fact that Jesus is aware of the implications and still makes the
claim. It is worth noticing that the Jews constantly accuse Jesus of
"making" himself divine (5:18; 10:33; 19:7). But this Gospel stresses Jesus'
continual dependence on the Father (5:19, etc.). He is aware of his high
dignity, but speaks of it in terms of obedience and service. He does not see
his dignity as enhanced or even brought out by the making of exaggerated
claims. At the end of the verse NIV renders "Who do you think you are?"
but the force of the Greek is rather "Whom do you make yourself out to be?" (so Bruce, p. 203).

54 For the moment Jesus leaves Abraham and returns to the thought of glory. If he were to glorify himself (which he has just disclaimed, v. 50), that would be nothing. All self-glorification is to be discounted. But that does not mean that Jesus is not glorified. The Father glorifies him. The Jews are attempting to make nothing of Jesus. Before dealing specifically with the case of Abraham that they have raised, Jesus points out that he is not without his glory. But it is God-given, not self-given. He speaks of God as "my Father," then differentiates his relationship from theirs by pointing out that him whom he calls "Father" they call not "Father" but "God."  

55 Yet he is not really their God at all. They have not known him. This probably includes the thoughts that they have never known him in the past and that they do not know him in the present. In this their case is different from that of Jesus. He really does know him (see on 4:18), and to say otherwise would be to reduce himself to the class of liars to which they belong. In their case it means saying that they know God whereas in fact they do not. In his it would be the opposite error, but error for all that. Facts must be faced. Jesus does more than know him. He keeps his word. That is to say, he acts in accordance with all that God has revealed of himself.

56 Now Jesus returns to the case of Abraham on which they built so much. Abraham, so far from being opposed to Jesus, rejoiced at his "day." Abraham is characterized as "Your father." His relationship to the Jews is noticed at the same time as his joy in Christ is brought out. The Jews were being false to their great ancestor. Their reliance on Abraham was baseless. "Rejoiced" is a wholehearted word, and signifies something like "exulted," "was overjoyed." Two points are to be considered here — the occasion of Abraham's rejoicing and the meaning of Christ's day. Taking the latter first, "my day" is not defined. Elsewhere "the day of Christ" points to the second coming and to final judgment (Phil. 1:10; 2:16). Here a reference to the incarnation is more probable. The whole of Christ's work for people seems to be in mind. The occasion of Abraham's rejoicing is difficult. Some take it as present, and think of Abraham as rejoicing in Paradise over Christ's work on earth. This, however, ignores the use of the past tenses (cf. the similar statement about Isaiah, which is definitely located in the prophet's lifetime, 12:41). There are various possibilities suggested by Jewish thought about Abraham, though it should be noted that
the rabbis were more concerned about Abraham's foresight of later events than about his rejoicing. Thus some apparently pointed to the promise, "all peoples on earth will be blessed through you" (Gen. 12:3), and held that Abraham then rejoiced at the prospect of the Messiah being born from his descendants. Others concentrated on the vision of Genesis 15, thinking that Abraham then foresaw the future of the nation, and thus of Messiah. A view that seems to involve misinterpretation of Scripture saw in the laughter of Genesis 17:17 not incredulity but happiness that the birth of this child would lead on to God's Chosen One. And there is a very curious piece of rabbinic exegesis in connection with Genesis 24:1, "Abraham was . . . well advanced in years," which literally is "gone into the days." This was understood to mean that Abraham entered into all the days of the future. Though much of this seems fanciful to us, it shows that among the Jews the idea that Abraham looked forward to the day of the Messiah and rejoiced in it was not strange. We cannot, however, feel confidence in any of the proposed occasions, and it may be significant that Jesus does not refer to any. In other words, he may well mean that Abraham's general attitude to this day was one of exultation, rather than referring to any one specific occasion in the life of the patriarch.

The Jews' incredulity breaks out in a reference to the age of Jesus; a man not yet fifty years old could not have seen Abraham! It is curious that they use the number "fifty." Luke tells us that Jesus was "about thirty years old" (Luke 3:23) when he began his ministry, and all the indications are that the ministry occupied no more than about three years. It is not likely that John is presenting us with another tradition about the age of Jesus. More probably fifty is thought of as a good age, possibly as the completion of a person's working life and the entrance on to old age. It is the age at which the Levites completed their service (Num. 4:3). Marsh gives the meaning as, "Are you, still not retired, old enough to have seen Abraham?" (p. 371). Or it may be meant to contrast one short lifetime with the centuries that had elapsed since Abraham's day. In any case we must not overlook Lagrange's point that they thought of Jesus as being out of his mind. They were certainly not discussing his age with careful precision; they simply gave good measure. Jesus was still a young man. He could not claim even to be one of the elders. How then could he possibly have seen Abraham? The
Jews do not quote Jesus exactly: he speaks of Abraham seeing his day, they of his seeing Abraham.

58 So we reach the climactic point in this chapter with Jesus' magnificent affirmation, "before Abraham was born, I am!" John began his Gospel by speaking of the preexistence of the Word. This statement does not go further than that. It could not. But it brings out the meaning of preexistence in more striking fashion. Before the great patriarch, who lived centuries before, Jesus' existence went on. His "I tell you the truth" marks this out as an important and emphatic statement (see on 1:51). Whether we translate "before Abraham was" (KJV) or "was born" (NIV, etc.) the meaning will be "came into existence," as the aorist tense indicates. A mode of being that has a definite beginning is contrasted with one that is eternal. "I am" must here have the fullest significance it can bear. It is in the style of deity (see on vv. 24 and 28), "a reference to his eternal being" (Haenchen). It is not easy to render into Greek the Hebrew underlying passages like Exodus 3:14, but the LXX translators did so with the form we have here. It is an emphatic form of speech and one that would not normally be employed in ordinary speaking. Thus to use it was recognizably to adopt the divine style. In passages like verses 24 and 28 this is fairly plain, but in the present passage it is unmistakable. When Jesus is asserting his existence in the time of Abraham there is no other way of understanding it. It should also be observed that he says "I am," not "I was." It is eternity of being and not simply being that has lasted through several centuries that the expression indicates.

59 The Jews could interpret this only as blasphemy. They therefore took up stones to stone him, the proper punishment for that offense (Lev. 24:16). In their angry state they apparently saw no other course. They could, of course, have chosen to proceed by legal means. This would have meant trying Jesus on this count and stoning him only when he was duly sentenced by a proper authority. But their passions were aroused. They were incensed. So they took the law into their own hands. That they found stones ready to hand in the Temple area seems to indicate that building operations were in progress at the time. "Hid himself" is really a passive, "was hidden." John is perhaps hinting that God protected his Son. It is not so much that Jesus by superior cleverness concealed himself from them. It was rather that he was concealed by Another, and so passed out of the
Temple. It may well be that we are to discern symbolism in this action. "At this point Jesus symbolically abandons his own people (the temple) and goes out to humanity (the man born blind; chap. 9)" (MacGregor).

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1 The aorist ἐλάλησαν signifies "uttered a discourse" rather than "was teaching."
2 For John's habit of introducing variations in repetitions though without substantial difference of meaning see on 3:5. Here and in 9:5 Jesus is called "the light of the world," but the word order is different in the Greek and the emphatic ἔγνω is lacking from 9:5. In 12:46 we read that he came "into the world as a light."
3 Philo sees the time at which the Feast of Tabernacles was observed as significant. On the first day of the feast the moon succeeded the sun without interval so that there was no dark interlude (De Spec. Leg. 2.210). This kind of symbolism may have suggested "the light of the world." The strength of the illumination at Tabernacles is also significant: the Mishnah says that there was not a courtyard in Jerusalem that was not illuminated by the light from the great candlesticks (Sukk. 5:3).
5 Barrett has a lengthy and important note in which he shows that the background of the saying is complex. He finds it in the ceremonies of the Feast of Tabernacles, in pagan religions (notably in the Hermetic literature), in Judaism, and in the Synoptic Gospels. He concludes: "John stands within the primitive Christian tradition.... Nevertheless, it remains very probable that in the formulation of his statement he was influenced both by Hellenistic religion and by Jewish thought about Wisdom and the Law. . . . Yet for John 'the light of the world' describes what is essentially a soteriological function rather than a cosmological status." MacGregor sees in the expression an echo of the Prologue and specifically rejects a reference to the symbolism of Tabernacles. Light is of course one of the major themes of the Qumran scrolls. The good spirit may there be called "the prince of lights," and good men are designated "sons of light." There is even a reference to looking at "the light of life" (1QS 3:7; DSS, p. 373). As often, there is similarity in terminology and even ideas, but difference in the basic concept. The scrolls have nothing like Christ's statement that he is "the light of the world."
6 This should not blind us to the uniqueness of Christ's claim. The assertion that he is the light of the world means that he is the source of light for the whole world and sets him apart from all others. To say that his followers are collectively the light of the world is to say that, in contrast to outsiders, the church mediates light to the world. But its light is derivative. It comes from Christ and cannot be more than a reflection of the light that streams from him.
7. Paul's word is φωστῆρες, whereas here and in Matthew the term is φῶς. φωστήρ is used primarily of the heavenly bodies, and seems to mean "light-bearers," though it has "light" as a secondary meaning.

8. The rabbis sometimes used "Light" as a name for the Messiah, which may point to the same truth (SBk, I, p. 67).

9. The implications of the use of χόσμος should not be overlooked. John is not writing about a parochial salvation, a gospel for some small, restricted group (like tiny Israel). Jesus is the light of nothing less than the world.

10. The meaning of the genitive in τὸ φῶς τῆς ζωῆς is not obvious. It might signify "the light that gives life" or "the light that is life" or "the light that springs from life" or "the light that illuminates life." Probably in the Johannine manner none of these meanings is meant to be excluded. The expression is found in the Qumran scrolls, where we read that the man whose sins are atoned "will look at the light of life" (1QS 3:7; DSS, p. 373). This would favor the first of the suggestions. Schnackenburg understands the meaning as "the life which frees a person from the sphere of death," and this certainly is included.

11. The Pharisees would, of course, have affirmed that Jesus' witness was false. This may be another of John's many uses of a word with more meanings than one. But the main thrust of the passage is clearly that the witness of Jesus has not complied with the legal requirements for valid testimony.

12. In the Mishnah we read, "none may be believed when he testifies of him-self. . . . None may testify of himself" (Ket. 2:9).

13. Cf. Wright: "there are types of so-called religious apologetic, which, distrusting the intrinsic claims of religion itself, seek to put in its place 'external evidences' and 'institutional safeguards.' How can light convince us that it is light except by what it does for us? We do not demonstrate that light is light by treatises, or by analyses of its constituent rays. It is only light to us when it illumines and quickens us." He also says, "Anyone can, to his own satisfaction, confute the claim which Beauty makes, by saying, I do not see it; or the claim inherent in Goodness, by saying, I do not hear it; or the self-evidencing nature of Truth, by saying, I do not know it. But man does not create Goodness, or Truth, or Beauty; and to say that he cannot see them is to condemn himself, not them." So with Light.

14. Cf. Westcott: "In the past lie the manifold elements out of which the present grew; in the future lies the revelation of what the present implicitly contains. He can bear witness to himself who has such knowledge of his own being." For John's use of υπάγω see on 7:33.

15. There is a change from the aorist ἦλθον, "I came," to the present ἔρχομαι, "I come." It may be that Jesus is contrasting his own knowledge of a definite event with the continuing uncertainty of the Pharisees. MiM comments, "The past fact (I came') is not one which the Pharisees could know, except by inference: His present mission from the Father (I come') should have been discerned by all who saw His works and heard His words." Jesus uses χαί, while the Pharisees have ἕ: he knows both, but they know neither.

16. ύμεῖς and ἐγώ are set in emphatic contrast.

17. κατὰ τήν σάρκα. NIvs paraphrase brings out the error of the Pharisees, but not the weakness and incompleteness that are implied. The same is true of many translations.

18. Bernard reminds us that Jesus did not set himself up as a judge during his earthly life. In fact people charged him with not judging enough, for he mingled with publicans and sinners (Mark 2:16; Luke 15:2), he did not repulse the sinner in Simon's house (Luke 7:39), and even when confronted with the adulteress whose guilt was clear he refused to condemn her (John 8:11).

19. δέ comes unusually late in the sentence (fourth word); it supports χαί to give a meaning like "even if."

20. There is no verb in the last part of the verse; it reads "I and the Father that sent me," placing Jesus and the Father side by side in impressive simplicity.

21. The words are not found in K* D syr S C.
The expression is ἐν τῷ νόμῳ δὲ τῷ ύμετέρῳ. The following γέγραπται signifies "it stands written" (see on 2:17 for John's method of citation). "Your law" is very unusual (though cf. 10:34; 15:25). It must not be taken as though Jesus repudiated the authority of the Law. Rather, it is an argumentum ad hominem. By their own principles, by the Law they invoked and so proudly claimed as their own, they were shown to be in the wrong. We see here a further example of the Johannine irony. The Jews sought conformity to the Law they accepted. Jesus offers the testimony, not merely of one under the Law like themselves, but of the very Giver of the Law. But they cannot accept it.

Num. 35:30 provides that one witness is not sufficient. The Jews took this so seriously that they interpreted Scripture to mean "two witnesses" wherever a witness is mentioned unless it is specifically laid down that only one is required (SBk, I, p. 790).

The expression is found in Isa. 43:10 (where it is used of Yahweh), as is the thought of witness.

Field argues for the correctness of KJV here: "In making out the two witnesses, we should say in English: "There is I (or myself) that bear witness of myself, and there is the Father,' &c. But the Greek idiom for 'There is I,' or 'It is I,' is not εστίν εγώ, but εγώ ειμι (Ch. vi.20). Hence the A.V. (only italicizing one) exactly expresses what is intended" (p. 93).

Among the Jews the combined witness of a father and son was not acceptable, at least for some purposes (Mishnah, Rosh. Hash. 1:7). But this is not laid down in the Law, and it is the Law to which Jesus appeals, not tradition.

Tenney comments: "Whether the Pharisees' question is a bewildered inquiry or an intentional insult is hard to determine. In Western culture it would be more likely to be the former. In the East, to question a man's paternity is a definite slur on his legitimacy. It may be unwise to read into this question more hostility than is necessary; yet in the ensuing discussion the same idea recurs (v. 41)" (EBC).

Abbott points out that in this Gospel cxv always follows an emphatic word, so that "my Father" is more emphatic than "know."

The inscriptions are quoted in the Mishnah, Shek. 6:5.

καί is used in the sense καίτοι (see on 1:5).

When John uses ὑπάγω of Jesus it most commonly refers to his going to the Father; in other words, it is a reference to his death.

If there is significance in the singular ἁμαρτία as against the plural of verse 24 it will be to concentrate attention on the sin of all sins, that of rejecting Jesus (so Barrett), of failing to believe in him (cf. 16:9). It is placed before the verb for emphasis, whereas in verse 24 it is the thought of death that is more prominent. But it is a habit of John's to introduce small variants in his threefold repetitions, and this could be another example (see on 3:5). The word occurs 6 times in this chapter and 3 times more in chapter 9, but not again until the discourse in the upper room.

Mήτι ἀποκτένει έαυτόν;

The Jews had a very severe attitude to suicide. Thus Josephus says, "But as for those who have laid mad hands upon themselves, the darker regions of the nether world receive their souls, and God, their father, visits upon their posterity the outrageous acts of the parents" (Bell. 3.375). Occasional exceptions, such as Samson (Judg. 16:30) and the Jews who died at Masada in a.d. 73, were regarded as praiseworthy, but the general attitude was one of abhorrence.

This is the only threefold repetition in this Gospel with all three members identical that I have been able to find. See SFG, ch. 5.

The imperfect ἐλεγεν suggests to Bernard that this was a habitual saying of the Lord's. Lagrange sees in the use of καί ἐλεγεν rather than ἐλεγεν οὖν an indication that Jesus does not reply to the Jews' question but merely continues with what he had in mind to say to them.

There is a variation in word order here. "This world" is τούτου τοῦ κόσμου when used of the Jews, but τοῦ κόσμου τούτου at the end of the verse. Since the latter is John's normal order the
former may well be emphatic. Indeed, this is the only place in the whole New Testament where οὗτος precedes the noun in the expression "this world." There is emphasis on this world.

39. The preposition ἐξ denotes origin in each case. For εἰς see on 3:31.

40. This is one of the few examples in this Gospel of the use of οὖν in speeches of Jesus (see on 6:62). It links the saying that they will die in their sins very closely with the foregoing.

41. The aorist πιστεύσετε means "make an act of faith," "come to believe."

42. Temple maintains that this "cannot be reproduced in English, for it combines three meanings: (a) that I am what I say — 5c. the Light of the World; (b) that I am He — the promised Messiah; (c) that I am — absolutely, the divine Name. All these are present; none is actually indicated." GNB renders, "I Am Who I Am."

43. See n. 117 below.

44. There is a good discussion of the passage by E. R. Smothers, HTR, LI [1958], pp. 111-22.

45. The expression is τήν ἀρχήν. It is more usual in the New Testament to find ἀπ' ἀρχῆς, which means "from the beginning"; sometimes ἐν ἀρχῇ or ἐξ ἀρχῆς is preferred. This is the only place in the New Testament where τήν ἀρχήν is used adverbially, though the accusative is not uncommon elsewhere, as LS shows. This lexicon gives the meaning as "to begin with, at first." It is not usual to have a present tense with such an expression, and this increases the difficulty of the present passage.

46. It may be possible to derive this meaning from the adverbial accusative. So, for example, BDF 160, but the meaning "from the beginning" is there bracketed with "at all," and in 300(2) the latter appears to be favored.

47. Cf. Chrysostom, "What He saith, is of this kind; 'Ye are not worthy to hear My words at all, much less to learn who I am' " (53.1; p. 191).

48. δ τι is, of course, used in indirect questions, but it is not common in direct questions. BDF cites examples from LXX, from Mark, and from early Christian literature, and considers the construction "a piece of 'biblical Greek'." In the present passage it favors the reading of ρ66 (εἴπον ὑμῖν τήν ἀρχήν), though noting that this is rejected by Barrett (300[2]). Abbott rejects the idea that δ τι is interrogative here (2155). If δ τι is read as introducing a question it will, of course, have the meaning "why?" (unless it is read as δτι, "that").

49. See Abbott, 2154, 2154c. Hendriksen accepts this meaning ("Exactly what I am also telling you"), but cites no example of this use without a negative (he says it is "not without parallel elsewhere," but he cites no parallel). Dodds makes up much the same position, but again cites no examples. Jacob Eisner cites a few but prefers to understand the expression in the sense initio, a principio (Observationes Sacrae [Jacob van Poolsum, 1720], pp. 319-21). Clearly this construction is very rare, and that is the objection. It is not a natural way of understanding the text.

50. In the text of ρ66 there is a mark to show an omission just before τήν ἀρχήν and in the margin is written εἴπον ὑμῖν. Prof. V. Martin, who edited this papyrus, thinks the marginal correction was made by the original scribe and says that there are many examples of this throughout this papyrus. R. W. Funk argues for accepting this reading (HTR, LI [1958], pp. 95-100), and J. R. Michaels favors it (BT, 8 [1957], p. 154).

51. ExT, LXVIII (1956-57), pp. 176-77. He translates it, "I told you in the beginning that which also I am speaking to you (now), since I have many things to speak and judge concerning you." His conclusion is, "It seems doubtful whether this is an improvement on the current text, of which it is probably a secondary development."

52. Other meanings have, of course, been suggested. Thus Rieu renders, "So we go back to our starting-point!" and Barclay, "Anything I am saying to you is only the beginning," Black finds a mistranslation of an Aramaic expression. But he has to do a considerable amount of rearrangement of the text, and he offers no explanation of how such disorder is possible (AA, pp. 172ff.). Torrey thinks an original εἰς has been corrupted to δτι and translates "I am even yet in the beginning of my word to you." But I have not found a solution that carries conviction.
53. This is introduced by ἀλλ'. It is not easy to understand why this emphatic adversative is chosen. Perhaps a contrast is intended between what the Jews understood to be Christ's origin and the facts of the case. Or the thought may be "But now is not the time. That must await the Father's time.

54. κάγῳ is an emphatic aligning of Jesus with the Father's message. The aorist ἐκουσα accords with the custom in this Gospel when reference is made to Christ's hearing anything from the Father (3:32; 8:26; 10:15; 15:15). It may be that John has in mind "that message which He heard when He came down from the Father to save mankind" (Abbott, 2451 on 3:32). Cf. also Deut. 18:18.

55. Unless we take εἰς τὸν κόσμον as equivalent to ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ. The construction λαλέω εἰς is found only here in John (elsewhere 1 Cor. 14:9). λέγω is occasionally followed by εἰς, as in Luke 22:65; Acts 2:25; Eph. 5:32, but the meaning then is "with reference to."

56. "Here it is a grim suggestion that the Jews will help him on his upward way — by killing him" (Hunter).

57. Bultmann reminds us that this prophecy has significance for all, and not only for Jesus' contemporaries: "it applies to all those who refuse to believe in the Revealer, whenever and wherever the word is heard; to all those who through their unbelief identify themselves with the Jews who set Jesus upon the Cross. The Cross was the Jews' last and definitive answer to Jesus' word of revelation, and whenever the world gives its final answer in the words of unbelief it 'lifts up' the Revealer and makes him its judge" (p. 350).

58. Dodd sees a possible reference to Isa. 43:10 and adds, "It is difficult not to see here an allusion to the divine name ἸΣΩ (IFG, p. 95).

59. There is a genitive absolute αὐτοῦ λαλοῦντος, though the participle might have agreed with αὐτόν.

60. Cf. Temple, "As we read the stern words that follow, let us not ask so much how He the Lord of Love should so speak to the Jews, as whether we have deserved that the Lord of Love should so speak to us. Above all, let us remember, and here observe, how resistance on grounds of self-will to what we recognise as right and noble, has a hardening and embittering effect on those in whom it is found which involves mortal peril to the soul."

61. Wright points out that "The answers of Jesus deepen the perplexity, for that is grounded, not in serious and anxious inquiry, but in the blind determination of the whole nature. The perplexity hardens into exasperated hostility, and then, at the end of the chapter, into open violence."

62. τους πεπιστευκότας αὐτῷ Ἰουδαίους. The perfect may, as Abbott suggests (2506), be due to the fact that there is no pluperfect active participle, and John wants something to indicate more than a simple past. Certainly the context rules out the possibility of taking it to mean a continuing belief. The use of the dative often denotes simple credence rather than trust in a person, and the change to this construction from εἰς + accusative of the previous verse may be significant. But John does not appear to make much of a distinction between the two (see Additional Note E, pp. 296-98), and in any case it appears to be the same persons who are spoken of. Nor should we overlook the fact that εἰς + accusative may apparently be used of a defective faith (cf. 2:23-24; 12:42). Of the kind of conditional clause here Burton says, "The thought would be expressed more fully but less forcibly by supplying some other phrase as it will appear that or it will still be true that" (Moods, 263). It says nothing about whether the condition is fulfilled or not, but explains what would be the case were it to be realized.

63. Augustine, for example, thinks of a change of subject here (41.2; p. 230).

64. Of the kind of conditional clause here Burton says, "The thought would be expressed more fully but less forcibly by supplying some other phrase as it will appear that or it will still be true that" (Moods, 263). It says nothing about whether the condition is fulfilled or not, but explains what would be the case were it to be realized.

65. For this reason parallels sometimes adduced from the Stoics and others to the effect that wisdom or the like liberates are misleading. Even χάρις χαί φιλία ἐλευθερία (Prov. 25:10a, LXX; not in the Hebrew) is not really parallel. Perhaps the nearest approaches are in Epictetus. That
philosopher says to the tyrant, "How can you be my master? Zeus has set me free" (1.19.9; Loeb edn. I, p. 131); "no one has authority over me. I have been set free by God. I know His commands, no one has power any longer to make a slave of me" (4.7.16-17; Loeb edn. II, p. 367). But this is simply the expression of a proud self-sufficiency. Epictetus also says, "I pay attention only to myself. But if you wish me to say that I pay attention to you too, I tell you that I do so, but only as I pay attention to my pot" (1.19.10; Loeb edn. I, pp. 131-32). This is far from the spirit of Jesus.

66. ὑμῶν is read after τοῦ πατρός by C K Θ fl fl3 etc., but is to be omitted with ρ 66 ρ 75 B L W Or etc. Hellenistic Greek proliferates personal pronouns, but sometimes the New Testament follows classical usage by employing only the article. This does not lead to ambiguity. In this verse, for example, there is no suggestion that Jesus' Father is identical with the father of the Jews. The whole sentence structure seems to show that there is a contrast, not an identity. Moulton argues from the absence of a possessive pronoun that "the Father" (i.e., God) is meant (M, I, p. 85), but this scarcely seems evidence enough.

67. Ryle comments, "The power of self-deception in unconverted man is infinite. These Jews were not more unreasonable than many now-a-days, who say, 'We are not dead in sin; we have grace, we have faith, we are regenerate, we have the Spirit,' while their lives show plainly that they are totally mistaken."

68. Some suggest that their meaning is "We have never been in bondage to other deities" or "We have never lost our freedom of spirit," rather than "We have never been in subjection to a conqueror," the latter being so patently false. Moreover, "truth" would not set free from such bondage. Yet if this is the meaning it is rather curiously expressed. The most natural way of taking their words is with reference to outward bondage. But in any case Jesus' reply will stand. A proud assertion of self-sufficiency is itself evidence of the bondage of which he speaks. Josephus quotes a speech of Eleazar in which he says, "Long since, my brave men, we determined neither to serve (δουλεύειν) the Romans nor any other save God" (Bell. 7.323; he also cites the followers of Judah the Galilean as holding that God is their only Ruler and Lord, Ant. 18.23-25). The Talmud records a saying that "R. Simeon b. Gamaliel, R. Simeon, R. Ishmael, and R. Akiba, all hold that all Israel are royal children" (Shab. 128a; Soncino edn. p. 637).

69. The words της άμαρτίας are omitted by D b d syrs CI Cypr. If this is the true reading, we have a very terse and pointed epigram. But whether the shorter or the longer reading be accepted the meaning is essentially the same.

70. Augustine points out that slavery to sin is worse than other forms of slavery:"At times a man's slave, worn out by the commands of an unfeeling master, finds rest in flight. Whither can the servant of sin flee? Himself he carries with him wherever he flees. An evil conscience flees not from itself; it has no place to go to; it follows itself. Yea, he cannot withdraw from himself, for the sin he commits is within. He has committed sin to obtain some bodily pleasure. The pleasure passes away; the sin remains. What delighted is gone; the sting has remained behind. Evil bondage!" (41.4; p. 231).
"True freedom is not the liberty to do anything we please, but the liberty to do what we ought; and it is genuine liberty because doing what we ought now pleases us."

75. S. Aalen takes this allusion as "something beyond doubt" (NTS, VIII [1961-62], p. 237).

76. The verb χωρεί, often transitive (as in 2:6), is here used intransitively. Tasker rejects the translation "hath not free course in you" and says, "The meaning, however, is not that these Jews have received the word but not allowed it to make progress, but that they have never really made room for it at all."

77. ὑμῶν is read after τοῦ πατρός by Ρ Κ Θ f l f l3 etc., but is to be omitted with ρ66 ρ75 B L W Or etc. Hellenistic Greek proliferates personal pronouns, but sometimes the New Testament follows classical usage by employing only the article. This does not lead to ambiguity. In this verse, for example, there is no suggestion that Jesus' Father is identical with the father of the Jews. The whole sentence structure seems to show that there is a contrast, not an identity. Moulton argues from the absence of a possessive pronoun that "the Father" (i.e., God) is meant (M, I, p. 85), but this scarcely seems evidence enough.

78. There is also a contrast of cases, παρά τῷ Πατρί of God, and παρά τοῦ πατρός of the devil. Abbott finds a contrast "between the distinctness with which the Son 'sees' the things in the House of the Father and the indistinctness with which men receive promptings from the invisible, whether for good or for evil" (2359).

79. For the rare use of οὖν in the words of Jesus see the comments on 6:62. Abbott argues that this conjunction here means "that there is a correspondence between the conduct of Christ and that of His persecutors. They are as consistent in evil as He in good" (2194).

80. Both the text and the interpretation are difficult. In the first clause the verb is certainly ἐστε, though ἦτε is read in some MSS. The big difficulty is whether to read in the second clause ποιεῖτε with ρ66 B* 700 lat syr5, ἐποιεῖτε with ρ75 (vid) Ρ * D W Θ 070 13 22 28 etc., or even ἐποιεῖτε δν with Ρ C Κ L. Grammatically we should expect either ἐστε . . . ποιεῖτε or ἦτε ... ἐποιεῖτε &v. Transcriptional probability accordingly favors ἐστε . . . ἐποιεῖτε, for there would be every temptation to scribes to alter this, and each of the other readings is explicable on this basis. Since there is really good MS attestation it appears that this is the reading we should accept. The meaning then will be "If you are . . . you would do. ..." If we were to read ποιεῖτε it would be possible to take it as imperative. But the indicative is more likely. The following νῦν δέ would perhaps also accord better with an indicative.

81. Dods paraphrases: "this has not only the guilt of an ordinary murder, but your hostility is roused against me because I have spoken to you the truth I heard from God. It is murder based upon hostility to God."

82. For John's use of "man" for Jesus see above on 4:29.

83. There was, of course, a Jewish slander that Jesus was born out of wedlock (see the passages cited in R. Travers Herford, Christianity in Talmud and Midrash [London, 1903], pp. 35ff.), though, as far as our information goes, it was later than this.

84. Odeberg understands this to be the explanation: "The Jews are blind to J's (i.e. Jesus') Divine origin: this shows that they are directed away from God's world to the world of 'another one'. Quite naturally such an utterance would to a Rabbinic mind imply an accusation of idolatry. . . . Thence the vehemence of their retort: 'We be not born of fornication, we have one Father, even God' " (FG, p. 302; in a footnote he explains further, "Fornication is the Rabbinic as well as O.T. simile for idolatry").

85. The preposition is ἐx, which denotes origin. Dodd sees a distinction from οὔδὲ γάρ ἀπ' ἐμαυτοῦ ἐλήλυθα, for ἀπό expresses no more than mission: "Christ's coming was not initiated by Himself — He came, not ἀπ' ἐμαυτοῦ but ἀπό τοῦ θεοῦ, since the Father sent Him; but not only so — He had His origin in the being of the Father" (IFG, p. 259). This may well be the meaning, but we must bear in mind John's penchant for slight variations in vocabulary without real difference of meaning (see on 3:5).
86. "He" renders the emphatic ἐκεῖνος, for which see on 1:8.
87. λαλιά and λόγος.
88. ἐx denotes origin here, as it does in vv. 23 and 42. For είναι ἐx see on 3:31.
89. Of the devil it is said, οὐ χέστηκεν, i.e., he was not standing fast in the truth. The smooth breathing is to be noted; it points us to the imperfect of στήκω rather than the perfect of ἴστημι, and thus to the meaning "He was not standing fast" rather than "he does not stand."
90. Harold Blair points to this passage as indicating that the fundamental sin is not so much pride, as is often asserted, as falsehood (The Ladder of Temptations [London, 1960], p. 79).
91. ἐx των ιδίων λαλεί = "he speaks from his own family" or "he speaks from his own things," depending on whether we take ιδίων to be masculine or neuter. The meaning here is somewhat like that in Matt. 12:34: "out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks," where we also have ἐx. In the previous clause δταν λαλη points to simultaneous action: whenever he speaks the lie, at that very time he shows himself to be . . . .
92. This seems to be the meaning of οὐτός. Torrey finds support for this view in Aramaic: "'Liar' was b'el sh'qar, 'master of falsehood'; which explains the pronoun, 'The father of it,' at the end of the verse." It is possible to take the expression to mean, "he is a liar and so is his father," from which some scholars conclude that there is a reference to the Gnostic idea that the God of the Old Testament was the father of the devil. But there is no real reason for finding an allusion to such speculations, let alone an acceptance of them. Scripture never refers to such a being as Satan's father. There are those who hold that we should understand "anyone" as the subject of λαλη, with the meaning, "whenever anyone speaks . . . he is a liar and so is his father" (i.e. the devil)." It is not at all certain that this is grammatically permissible, but in any case it is simpler to take οὐτός as referring to the thing that is false. Others again take the meaning to be that the devil is a liar and the father of the liar. This is possible, but it does not seem as probable as the meaning I have adopted.
93. The Qumran scrolls oppose "the spirit of truth" to "the spirit of error" (1QS, 3:19). The former expression is found very rarely outside these scrolls and John, which is one of the pieces of evidence pointing to a connection of some sort (see on 14:17). John does not have the other expression, "the spirit of error," but this verse shows that he thinks of Satan as diametrically opposed to truth.
94. For causal δτι see on 1:50.
95. Cf. Godet, "The perfect holiness of Christ is proved in this passage, not by the silence of the Jews, who might very well have ignored the sins of their interlocutor, but by the assurance with which Jesus lays this question before them. Without the immediate consciousness which Christ had of the perfect purity of His life, and on the supposition that He was only a more holy man than other men, a moral sense so delicate as that which such a state would imply, would not have suffered the least stain to pass unnoticed, either in His life, or in His heart; and what hypocrisy would there not have been in this case in addressing to others a question with the aim of causing them to give it a different answer from that which, in His inmost heart, He gave Himself!"
96. Cf. Barclay, "it is quite possible that a man may lack the something essential which will enable him to have the experience. A man who is tone deaf cannot ever experience the thrill of music. A man who is colour blind cannot ever appreciate a picture . . . unless the Spirit of God is in a man's heart he cannot recognize God's truth when he sees it."
97. Some expositors find a reference to Samaritans like Simon Magus and Dositheus, but these are too late. Hoskyns thinks that 2 Kings 17:24ff. could naturally be interpreted of unions between Gentiles and Israelite women and that the Jews are now contrasting their legitimate birth with "the irregularity of the birth of Jesus." This seems to be reading a good deal into the words.
98. Edersheim thought that the word may have been misunderstood. Shomroni, he says, means "Samaritan," but it is also used as the equivalent of "Ashmedai," a name of the chief of the demons. "Samaritan" on this view means much the same as "hast a demon" (LT, Π, pp. 174-75). This would be supported by the fact that Jesus refuted the charge that he was demon-possessed but said nothing
about being a Samaritan. It is an attractive hypothesis, but the evidence for this use of Shomroni does not appear to be early enough to carry complete conviction. Matthew Black thinks that 'the word 'Samaritan' had become practically equivalent in meaning to 'schismatic' or 'heretic', and appears to have passed almost as a term of abuse' (The Scrolls and Christian Origins [London, 1961], p. 70).

There is a passage in the Talmud that says, 'It has been reported, If one has learnt Scripture and Mishnah but did not attend upon Rabbinical scholars, R. Eleazar says he is an 'Am ha-arez; R. Samuel b. Nahmani says he is a boor; R. Jannai says he is a Samaritan'' (Sot. 22a; Soncino edn., pp. 109-10). It is just barely possible that there is a connection with 7:15, where it is mentioned that Jesus had never learned in the schools.

Jesus sets himself and his opponents in contrast with εγώ and ύμείς. The strong adversative άλλα sets his honoring of the Father in emphatic contrast to their suggestion of demon possession.

The expression is τόν έμόν λόγον. John's normal habit is to place the possessive after the noun with a repeated article, as in v. 43 (and in v.l. here). The form here is much less common and appears to be used for the purpose of adding emphasis. For John's use of possessives see on 3:29.

Calvin emphasizes this verb: "Therefore in this passage, Christ promises eternal life to His disciples, but demands disciples who will not merely nod their assents like donkeys, or profess with the tongue that they approve His teaching, but who will keep it as a precious treasure." The verb is used 18 times in this Gospel, 7 times in 1 John and 11 times in Revelation, while no other book of the New Testament has it more than Acts with 8 times. The Johannine frequency is accounted for very largely by the emphasis in all these writings on the commandments of God or of Christ. A minority of passages in them speaks of God or Christ as keeping believers.

Temple admits to some exaggeration when he translates "he shall not notice death." He explains that if anyone's mind "is turned towards (Jesus') word it will not pay any attention to death; death will be to it irrelevant. It may truly be said that such a man will not 'experience' death, because, though it will happen to him, it will matter to him no more than the fall of a leaf from a tree under which he might be reading a book. It happens to him, but he does not in any full sense see or notice it." It seems better to interpret "death" here as spiritual death, but I cite Temple as a notable statement of the attitude of the believer to physical death.

There are small changes between what Jesus said and their report of his words — τόν λόγον μου for τόν έμόν λόγον, γεύσηται for θεωρήση and θανάτου in a less emphatic position than θάνατον. Probably these changes are not significant since John often has small changes when sayings are repeated (see on 3:5). Abbott, however, refers "seeing" death to spiritual death and "tasting of" death to physical death (2576).

There is probably point in the use of the relative of quality δστις (the masculine here only in this Gospel; the neuter occurs a number of times). It brings out the truth that Abraham (and by inference all people, even the greatest) was of such a quality as to die. BDF views this as an example of δστις correctly used "with reference to a definite person where the relative clause expresses the general quality . . . 'who neverthe-less was a man who died " (293).

This is so even if we read ήμών (ρ75 Β 2 Θ) and not υμών (Β* D; G. D. Fee shows that p66 supports this reading, JBL, LXXXIV [1965], p. 69). The signif-icant thing is the noun, not the possessive.

'ίνα ιδη is difficult, for 'ίνα seems to have no telic force. Abbott thinks that "this exultant and ecstatic belief was a gift from God with a view to (ίνα) the fulfilment of divine purpose," and he cites Rom. 4:18 (2689). BDF prefers the meaning, "he longed with desire, rejoiced that he was to..." (392[ 1a]); cf. NRSV, "rejoiced that he would ...”). Moule thinks that it denotes content (IBNTG, pp. 145-46), and this appears to be the preferable view.

Barclay gives this as a Jewish interpretation, though he does not cite authori-ties. Wright adopts it as his understanding of this verse. Cf. Bultmann, "Abraham knew that he was not himself
the fulfilment of the saving will of God, nor the yard-stick for judging the greatness of divine revelation; he looked forward to the fulfilment in the Messiah, and welcomed the day when he himself would be judged by one greater than himself” (p. 326).

110. SBk cites R. Eleazar, R. Nathan, and others for views of this type (Π, pp. 525-26). Beasley-Murray cites Schlatter: "to say that Abraham saw the Messiah was neither new nor offensive to Jewish teachers; it was its application to Jesus that was unbelievable."

111. In Jub. 16:19 we are told that Abraham and Sarah rejoiced "with exceeding great joy" at the prospect of Isaac's birth. Philo sees joy in the very name Isaac, which name "is that of the best of the good emotions, joy, the Isaac who is the laughter of the heart, a son of God" (De Mut. Nom. 131). E. Nestle pointed out that the Targum on Gen. 17:17 renders Heb, יִזְהַר, "to laugh," "not by יִזְהַר, laugh, as in 1812 נָשַׁב, but by יִזְהַר, to rejoice, to be glad; likewise in 21ם (ExT, XX [1908-09], p. 477).

112. k cites Tanch. B for this view (loc. cit.).

113. Cf. Lagrange, "Jesus n'argumente pas le livre a la main et ne cite ici aucun texte."

114. Strachan thinks that "the words suggest His youthfulness. The Jewish objec-tors interpret Jesus' reply prosaically and ironically as meaning that Abraham had actually seen one who still had his reputation to make, and was as yet undistinguished."

115. Chrysostom reads, "thou art not yet forty years old" (60.2; p. 198). Irenaeus argues that Jesus must have been over forty, for had he been less they would have said "thou art not yet forty years old" (Adv. Haer. 2.22.6). G. Ogg examines the question and concludes that Jesus would have taught when in his fortieth, but his birth must have been earlier than has generally been thought (NTS, V [1958-59], pp. 294-96).

116. The verb is γενέσθαι, "came into being."

117. ἐγώ εἰμι in LXX renders the Hebrew יְהֹוָה, which is the way God speaks (cf. Deut. 32:39; Isa. 41:4; 43:10; 46:4, etc.). The Hebrew may carry a reference to the meaning of the divine name יְהֹוָה (cf. Exod. 3:14). We should almost certainly understand John's use of the term to reflect that in the LXX. It is the style of deity, and it points to the eternity of God according to the strictest understanding of the continuous significance of the present εἰμί. He continually IS. Cf. Abbott: "taken here, along with other decla-ration about what Jesus IS, it seems to call upon the Pharisees to believe that the Son of man is not only the Deliverer but also one with the Father in the unity of the Godhead" (2228).

118. LXX has ἐγώ εἰμι ó ὅν for the Hebrew rendered "I am who I am" in Exod. 3:14, and ὅ ὅν for "I AM" in the last clause of that verse.

119. "That is a supreme claim to Deity; perhaps the most simple and sublime of all the things He said with that great formula of all, the great 'I AM'. . . . These are the words of the most impudent blasphemer that ever spoke, or the words of God incarnate" (Morgan).

120. E. Stauffer has an important examination of the I AM formula in Jesus and His Story (London, 1960), pp. 142-59. The mention of Abraham, he thinks, "recalls the insertion of the figure of Abraham in God's speeches in the rabbinic Targum on Isa. 40-55. This is certainly not an accident. It agrees with the evangelist's report that the opponents only at this point grasp the monstrous meaning and claim of Jesus' ANI HU — and at once set about to do away with the blasphemer by stoning him on the spur of the moment" (p. 154). Of the I AM formula he says, "It is Jesus' boldest declaration about himself. 'I AM'. This means: where I am, there is God, there God lives, speaks, calls, asks, acts, decides, loves, chooses, forgives, rejects, hardens, suffers, dies. Nothing bolder can be said, or imagined" (p. 159). See also N. Walker, ZATW, 74 (1962), pp. 205-6. Jesus is not saying that he is identical with the Father, but he is claiming that this expression which is used of the Father may also be used of him.

121. The difficulty in the way of carrying out the sentence even if it were imposed by a Jewish court would also have been a deterrent. Cf. 18:31 and note.
122 The aorist passive ἐκρύβη is used in the sense of the middle in the LXX and most interpreters understand it so here. But the New Testament usage is rather to take the form as passive. The Amplified version renders, "Jesus by mixing with the crowd concealed Himself," but this is based on inferior manuscripts and in any case includes a large element of interpretation.
It would not be true to say that there are no accounts of the healing of the blind in antiquity other than those of Jesus, but there are remarkably few in canonical Scripture. There is no story of the giving of sight to the blind anywhere in the Old Testament. Nor is this function anywhere attributed to the followers of Jesus. The nearest we come to it is when Ananias laid his hands on Saul of Tarsus and that Pharisee's temporary blindness disappeared (Acts 9:17-18); but this exceptional case is not on all fours with the giving of sight as Jesus gave it. There are more miracles of the giving of sight to the blind recorded of Jesus than healings in any other category (see Matt. 9:27-31; 12:22-23; 15:30-31; 21:14; Mark 8:22-26; 10:46-52; Luke 7:21-22). In the Old Testament the giving of sight to the blind is associated with God himself (Exod. 4:11; Ps. 146:8). It is also a messianic activity (Isa. 29:18; 35:5; 42:7), and this may be its significance in the New Testament. It is a divine function, a function for God's own Messiah, that Jesus fulfills when he gives sight to the blind. This chapter then has significance in John's plan for showing Jesus to be the Messiah.¹ This story has features all its own, notably in the character of the healed man. He is no lay figure, but a colorful personality with a mind of his own and a readiness to say what he thinks before the highest in the land. His argument with the Pharisees is lively and very true to life. The narrative brings in the motif of judgment. Jesus is the Light of the world, and light is always in conflict with darkness. When people walk in darkness the coming of light always represents judgment. Indeed, Jesus says that he came "For judgment" (v. 39). This particular miracle was performed on the Sabbath, which opened the way for a controversy. There were those so firmly in the grip of
darkness that they saw only a technical breach of their law and could not
discern a spectacular victory of light over darkness. They disputed with the
man and in the process revealed their inward blindness. The incident takes
us one step further in the dispute between Jesus and the authorities. In the
end they take action against the healed man. Whether this is rightly
understood as excommunication or not it marks the first definite action
taken by way of persecution of Jesus followers.

Jesus' method of dealing with the man is not to be overlooked. First he
healed him, then he left him to debate the situation with the Pharisees, and
only after they had taken disciplinary action against him did Jesus approach
him to deal with his spiritual need (Jesus is out of the action between v. 7
and v. 35). The result was that the man came to believe (v. 38). In his
ministry to people's souls Jesus adopted no stereotyped approach. He dealt
with each as the person's need required.

1. The Healing (9:1-7)

1As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. 2His disciples
asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was
born blind? " 3Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus,
"but this happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his
life. 4As long as it is day, we must do the work of him who sent me.
Night is coming, when no one can work. 5While I am in the world, I
am the light of the world." 6Having said this, he spit on the ground,
made some mud with the saliva, and put it on the man's eyes, 7 "Go,"
he told him, "wash in the pool of Siloam" (this word means Sent). So
the man went and washed, and came home seeing.

There are unique features in this healing. The man given sight is said to
have been blind from birth, there is a discussion as to the reason for this,
and means other than the word of Jesus are used for the healing, namely
spittle to make mud and the washing in the pool of Siloam.

1 There is no time note. John does not relate this incident to others in
his story, and we are left to guess at its place in the sequence. Hoskyns says
that the incident took place on the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles, but
this is pure assumption. It is likely that some time has elapsed since the
attempt on Jesus' life (8:59), but more than this we cannot say. John simply
tells us that Jesus passed by (where?) and saw a man blind from birth. Nothing is said as to how Jesus knew that the man had been blind from birth, which argues that he was a well-known figure. The Synoptic Gospels mention a number of cases of restoration of sight to the blind, but they do not include any mention of a man blind from birth. One might have expected some mention of the disciples, in view of the following question, but John appears to mean that it was Jesus who first took notice of the man. The initiative was his.

2 The man's plight provoked the disciples into asking Jesus the reason for it. It was widely held that suffering, and especially such a disaster as blindness, was due to sin. The general principle was laid down by R. Ammi: "There is no death without sin, and there is no suffering without iniquity." The disciples evidently accepted this, but, in the present case were perplexed as to the application of the dogma. There were grave difficulties in seeing how a man could have sinned before his birth. And it is not much easier to think that a man should bear such a terrible punishment for the sin of his parents. So the disciples put the matter to Jesus.

3 Jesus decisively rejects both alternatives. Suffering is not always due to sin, and this blindness is not the result of sin either in the man or in his parents. "But" translates a strong adversative: "on the contrary," "far from that." It happened so that God's works might be shown in the man. It is perhaps worth noticing the significance of the use of the term "work." What was to happen is to us a miracle, but to God no more than a normal "work" (see Additional Note G, pp. 607-13). This does not, of course, mean that God made the child suffer blindness for years so that the cure might reveal his greatness. Rather, "God overruled the disaster of the child's blindness so that, when the child grew to manhood, he might, by recovering his sight, see the glory of God in the face of Christ" (Bruce).

4 Both "we" and "must" are important. Jesus is not speaking only of what he must do; his followers share with him the responsibility of doing what God directs (specifically Jesus has said that it is "the work of God" for people to believe on him whom God sent, 6:29). And "must" reminds us that this is not simply what is advisable or expedient. There is the thought of a compelling necessity (see the comments on 4:4, and for Jesus' obedience those on 4:34). As happens so often in this Gospel, God is
characterized in terms of his sending of Jesus (see on 3:17). That is the critical event, and John does not let us lose sight of it. It is a reminder in this context also of the fact that the works in question do not originate here on earth. They are heaven-sent works that we must do. And there is an urgency about doing them, for the opportunity will not always be present. "Night is coming": the remorseless passage of time removes the present opportunity.  

5 There is particular appropriateness in Jesus' doing the works of which he speaks and doing them while it is day because he is "the light of the world" (cf. 8:12). For "light" see on 1:4. "While" is the indefinite "whenever." It is a little strange to find this expression, and we might have expected something general, as in 8:12. But here there is a sort of urgency, and Jesus may well be hinting that the time of the incarnation is limited. His stay in this world is short. Therefore he must work quickly and in accordance with his character as the world's light.  

6 Jesus proceeded to cure the man. He took the initiative, for it is not said that anyone asked him to heal this man; he saw him and he gave him sight. He chose to do this by making clay of his spittle, putting it on the man's eyes, and bidding him wash it off. Questions arise like "Why clay?" "Why spittle?" "Why wash in Siloam?" In most other cures that Jesus wrought such things are not mentioned. It is known that the ancient world often attributed curative powers to saliva. And it may have helped this particular man to have something that he might do himself. But in any case Jesus performed his cures with sovereign hand, and he cannot be limited by rules of procedure. He healed how he willed. Mark once relates a cure in which Jesus "had spit on the man's eyes" and later laid his hands on the eyes (Mark 8:22-25), but there is no mention of mud there. Some of the patristic writers heard in the mention of mud a reference to Genesis 2:7 where man is made out of the dust of the earth. If this is the right way of viewing the passage, we are to discern in Jesus' action a work of creation.  

7 Jesus told the man to go and wash in the pool of Siloam. "Pool" denotes quite a large pool, one big enough to swim in (see on 5:2). This pool is mentioned here only in the New Testament (though cf. Luke 13:4). According to his custom John explains the meaning of the Hebrew word, giving the Greek equivalent. Originally the name will have had to do with the fact that this water was "sent" into the pool by a channel; the Hebrew is
active and in the first place will have referred to this channel, the "sender." But the pool was given the name quite early (Neh. 3:15; Isa. 8:6). For John such a name has obvious spiritual significance and is not to be overlooked. So he draws attention to the meaning. In this Gospel the thought of being sent is very prominent. Again and again John refers to Jesus as having been "sent" by the Father. So now blindness is removed with reference to and with the aid of the "sent." John describes the actual miracle in the simplest possible fashion. The man washed as he was told "and came home seeing." Nothing could be more concise or less flamboyant.

2. The Effect on the Neighbors (9:8-12)

8His neighbors and those who had formerly seen him begging asked, "Isn't this the same man who used to sit and beg?" 9Some claimed that he was. Others said, "No, he only looks like him." But he himself insisted, "I am the man." to "How then were your eyes opened?" they demanded. 11 He replied, "The man they call Jesus made some mud and put it on my eyes. He told me to go to Siloam and wash. So I went and washed, and then I could see." 12 "Where is this man?" they asked him. "I don't know," he said.

The first result John records is the effect of the miracle on the neighbors of the formerly blind man. They were so astonished at such a cure that some of them refused to believe that this was the man who had been blind.

8-9 The mention of the neighbors probably indicates that the man went home (NIV has "came home" in v. 7, but the Greek says only "came seeing"). There are two groups here, the man's neighbors and those who knew him as a beggar. This is the first mention of his being a beggar, but it is almost implied in the earlier statement that he was blind. What else could a blind man do in the ancient world than beg? The one presupposes the other. The people who had lived near him and those familiar with him from his begging are probably singled out as those who knew him best. Their amaze-ment at his cure is expressed in a question, "Surely this is he . . . ?" The question expects an affirmative answer, but the putting of it shows the great difficulty they had in accepting the evidence of their senses. Others, who perhaps knew him but not quite so well, kept talking. Some said it was the man, others that it was not, though those of the latter opinion
admitted a resemblance. The man himself put an end to speculation by saying emphatic-ally, "I am the man."35

**10-11** This brings the eager question, "How then were your eyes opened?" (NIV's "demanded" is a mite strong; the Greek means no more than "they said"). The man responds with a succinct account of the miracle.26 He apparently knows little about Jesus and expects that his hearers will likewise know little, for he speaks of him as "The man they call Jesus."27 He expects that Jesus will be known but no more. That he speaks of him as no more than a man shows that he has, as yet, little understanding of his Person.28 As the chapter progresses we will observe how his awareness of the significance of Jesus grows.

**12** The interrogators want to know the whereabouts of him who had done such a miracle. But the healed man does not know where Jesus is.

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**3. The Healed Man and the Pharisees (9:13-34)**

This miracle no more than any of the others serves to induce faith in Jesus' bitter opponents. Rather, it stimulates them into more vigorous opposition. John evidently wants us to see that the activity of Jesus as the Light of the world inevitably results in judgment on those whose natural habitat is darkness. They oppose the Light and they bring down condemnation on themselves accordingly.

The man now enters a spirited discussion with the Pharisees, which we may divide into three sections. In the first the healing is established and a division among the Pharisees revealed (vv. 13-17), in the second the Pharisees examine the man's parents (vv. 18-23), and in the third they turn on the man himself (vv. 24-34).

**a. Preliminary Discussions (9:13-17)**

13*They brought to the Pharisees the man who had been blind.*
14*Now the day on which Jesus had made the mud and opened the man's eyes was a Sabbath.* 15*Therefore the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. "He put mud on my eyes," the man replied, "and I washed, and now I see." *16Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath.* But
others asked, "How can a sinner do such miraculous signs?" So they were divided. Finally they turned again to the blind man, "What have you to say about him? It was your eyes he opened." The man replied, "He is a prophet."

In this section the battle lines are drawn. It is established that it was the Sabbath and that the man claimed to have been cured of blindness. The division of opinion among the Pharisees is indicated by the fact that some are impressed by the miracle and others by the Sabbath breach. And the man's own emphatic declaration for Jesus is recorded.

13 There is no note of time, but it seems plain that this is on a day subsequent to that of the cure. It is not said who is meant by "they," nor why they should have brought the man to the Pharisees. The expression may be indefinite (like the French on) and mean no more than "he was brought." But perhaps it is more likely that the disputants of the previous verses are in mind. Not being able to make up their own minds, they decide to lay the matter before the recognized religious leaders. They probably felt that there must be a religious aspect to the cure (was not Jesus a religious teacher?), and the Pharisees would be the ones to pronounce on such an aspect. It is possible that the Pharisees were acting as official representatives of the Sanhedrin. Hendriksen argues cogently that they were an official body, possibly even "the minor Sanhedrin or synagogue-court, of which there are said to have been two in Jerusalem." If this is the case, it will explain such things as the fear of the parents in the face of interrogation. But neither the proceedings, nor the sentence read like the account of formal proceedings and it may be better to think of an influential but unofficial inquiry.

14 John interpolates an explanation of his own that is important in the light of the coming discussion. It was Sabbath (no article) when Jesus made the clay and performed the cure. Calvin is of the opinion that Jesus purposely wrought this miracle on the Sabbath in order that the resultant offense to the orthodox would give more publicity to the matter, and so "the truth of the miracle shines more brightly." This may be so, but Jesus' avoidance of publicity is against it.

15 The Pharisees question the man. The verb denotes a continuing process and not a simple invitation to rehearse the matter. They were evidently persistent. Again the man relates what happened. He has a gift for succinct utterance and puts the essence of the matter in one terse sentence.
The man's statement divides the Pharisees. The more doctrinaire seize on the breach of the Sabbath as they saw it. If a man did not keep the Sabbath according to their understanding of Sabbath keeping he could not possibly be from God. It was as simple as that. Others, however, were more open-minded. They took their stand on another principle, a principle neatly stated by the formerly blind man (v. 31). Jesus was doing "signs" (note the plural; they were not confining their attention to this one miracle) of such a kind that they could not envisage him as being a sinner. One group starts from the Sabbath breach. Since the Pharisaic rule has been broken Jesus cannot be from God. The other starts from the miracle. Since he has performed such signs he must be from God. So the Pharisees were divided. The group speaking tentatively in favor of Jesus must have been a small one. We do not hear of them again after this verse, and throughout the rest of the chapter the narrative proceeds as though the other group were the only one to be considered.

It is a measure of the Pharisees' perplexity and division that they ask the man what he thinks of Jesus. Normally they would not have dreamed of putting a question on a religious issue to such a man. But after all he did know what had happened. So they ask for his opinion. The request is the measure of their embarrassment. Their "you" is emphatic; the man is in a special position. He does not hesitate but robustly affirms: "He is a prophet" (cf. the verdict of the Samaritan woman, 4:19). Knox renders, "Why, he must be a prophet," but this is not strong enough. The man is definite. "He is a prophet." If this seems to us inadequate we must remember that the man had no way of knowing that Jesus was more. His contact with the Lord had been very brief. And for him "prophet" was probably the highest place he could assign to a man of God; his answer puts Jesus in the highest place he knew. John brings out his progressive apprehension of the significance of Jesus. He passed from thinking of him as "the man they call Jesus" (v. 11) to seeing him as a prophet (here). Then he advances to the thought of one to whom allegiance may fitly be given (vv. 27-28), then to one "from God" (v. 33), and finally he comes to believe in the Son of man to whom worship should be given (vv. 35-38). By contrast the Pharisees, starting with the view that Jesus is not from God (v. 16), question the miracle (v. 18), speak of Jesus as a sinner (v. 24), are shown to be ignorant (v. 29), and finally are pronounced blind and sinners (v. 41).
b. The Man's Parents Examined (9:18-23)

18 The Jews still did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they sent for the man's parents. 19 "Is this your son?" they asked. "Is this the one you say was born blind? How is it that now he can see? "20 "We know he is our son," the parents answered, "and we know he was born blind. 21 But how he can see now, or who opened his eyes, we don't know. Ask him. He is of age; he will speak for himself. "22 His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews, for already the Jews had decided that anyone who acknowledged that Jesus was the Christa would be put out of the synagogue. 23 That was why his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

a. 22 Or Messiah

The first tack attempted by Jesus' enemies is that of discrediting the miracle. They held that Jesus did not come from God. It followed that he could not have done a miracle. Therefore this miracle did not happen. They do not examine the evidence with open minds, but in the light of their firmly held prejudices seek to discover the flaw that they feel must surely be present. They begin by trying to establish that the man who now saw had not been born blind.

18 The opposition is now called by the usual name, "the Jews." "The Pharisees" are mentioned again in this chapter only in verse 40. The Jews did not believe that the man had really been cured. So they called his parents.

19 They put two questions to the parents. The first is natural enough: they want to know whether the man is really their son who they say was born blind (NIV splits this into two questions). But when they ask the second, "How is it that now he can see?" they give their case away. They concede that the man was blind (as the parents said) and now sees (as they perceived for themselves).

20-21 The parents were evidently of a very different temper from that of their sturdily minded son. Their reply is characterized by timidity and a readiness to submit tamely to the authority of their questioners. They testify out of their own knowledge to the identity of the man as their son, and to the fact that he was born blind. But they say they know nothing of how or by whom he received his sight. In avowing their ignorance of the identity of
the healer they used the emphatic pronoun ("we don't know"). Evidently this was the tricky question. In saying "Ask him" they also put emphasis on him, and they have the emphatic pronoun in "he will speak... ..." All this emphasis makes clear their determination not to get mixed up in the affair more than they can help. There is no reason for thinking that they had been present when the cure was performed, so it was inevitable that they should give some negative answers. What was not inevitable was that they should manifest such an indecent concern for thrusting the matter back on their son, with their "Ask him," their "he is of age," and their "he will speak for himself." It is plain that they discerned danger and had no intention of being caught up in it with their son.

22 John explains the predicament in which the parents found themselves. It is interesting that the authorities had agreed as early as this to take action against the followers of Jesus. It is difficult to know exactly what meaning is to be attached to "confessing" Christ (NIV, "acknowledged that Jesus was the Christ"); for "Christ" see on 1:20, 41. NIV and similar translations are probably not correct, for there seems to be no possibility of these people being accused of holding that Jesus was the Christ. "Confess" seems rather to be interpreted in a broad sense, as of giving support to Jesus. "Put out of the synagogue" will refer to something like excommunication. The term is not found in LXX nor in secular writers, and precisely what it covered is not clear. But any deprivation of synagogue privileges was something to be feared by any Jew. That Christians did not suffer excommunication in the full sense as a matter of course is evidenced by the fact that Acts depicts them as moving freely in the synagogues. But the precise meaning to be attached to the word in its present context is not certain. Unless we hold that John is anachronistically reading the conditions of a later day back to this period, it seems best to understand the term to denote a temporary withdrawal of the privileges of membership in the community. But this was not yet a settled policy and it was not continued. "Already the Jews had decided" does not necessarily indicate a formal decree of the Sanhedrin. It might well mean that some of the leading men had agreed among themselves to take action against the supporters of Jesus, perhaps to exclude them from synagogues, perhaps to initiate proceedings in the Sanhedrin.

23 John repeats in abbreviated form the reply of the parents, and cites the threat of excommunication as the reason for it.
24 A second time they summoned the man who had been blind. "Give glory to God," they said. "We know this man is a sinner." 25 He replied, "Whether he is a sinner or not, I don't know. One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see!" 26 Then they asked him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" 27 He answered, "I have told you already and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you want to become his disciples, too?" 28 Then they hurled insults at him and said, "You are this fellow's disciple! We are disciples of Moses! 29 We know that God spoke to Moses, but as for this fellow, we don't even know where he comes from." 30 The man answered, "Now that is remarkable! You don't know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes. 31 We know that God does not listen to sinners. He listens to the godly man who does his will. 32 Nobody has ever heard of opening the eyes of a man born blind. 33 If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." 34b This they replied, "You were steeped in sin at birth; how dare you lecture us!" And they threw him out.

a. 24 A solemn charge to tell the truth (see Joshua 7:19)

This is the most spirited part of the chapter. The Jews press the healed man, and he withstands them with some vigor. They take their stand on their preconceived ideas, he on the simple facts that he knows. It is not possible to argue a man out of his position when he can say, "One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see." Indeed, far from shaking him, their arguments caused him to clarify his position and he finished the interrogation with a deeper appreciation of Jesus than he had had at the beginning. We should not miss this further example of John's irony. He depicts those who thought of themselves as enlightened trying to badger the once blind man into denying his certainty that he now had light.

24 "Therefore" (which NIV omits) is significant. They perceive that further interrogation of the parents would be fruitless and "therefore" switch their attack back to the son. They begin with the pious exhortation to give glory to God. This should probably be understood (in the spirit of Josh. 7:19) as an exhortation to own up and tell the truth and confess one's misdeeds. "Remember that God sees you" is the thought, "and give him due
honor by speaking the truth" (cf. GNB, "Promise before God that you will tell the truth!"). If this is the way of it the man is being told that he has not been completely frank until now. He has held back something that would show Jesus\(^39\) to be a sinner. Alternatively the words may imply that all Jesus did was put clay on the man's eyes and tell him to wash. No glory is due for that. Glory is due rather to God who wrought the miracle. Jesus had nothing to do with it, and the man should ascribe glory where it is due (cf. Phillips, "You should give God the glory for what has happened to you"). They, the religious experts, can indeed assure him that this is the case. Their "we" is emphatic. "We, the religious leaders, know" (Moffatt, "we know quite well"), and therefore others ought to follow the lead we give! Significantly they leave their accusation that Jesus is a sinner in general terms and do not attempt to demonstrate their point with an example.

25 The man has a sturdy independence, as his answer shows. He does not go into the theoretical question of whether Jesus was a sinner or not. He sticks to the facts of which he has certain knowledge, and thus produces an answer that is a classic. No fine-spun web of airy theory can budge a person who can say with conviction "one thing I do know." The man had sight. Nothing could alter that.

26 But the restless questioning continues. It may be that there is matter for accusation in the circumstances of the cure? So the interrogators begin to go over the whole ground again.

27 This is not to the taste of the healed man. Forthrightly he reminds them that he has already answered these questions. Therefore the questioners can surely not be seeking information? What then are they trying to do?\(^40\) The question, "Do you want to become his disciples, too?" is asked in such a way as to look for the answer "No," but the asking of it is the significant thing. The man did not really expect that people so plainly opposed to Jesus were changing their minds, but he was quite ready to bait them. His "too" is significant. He was now counting himself among Jesus' disciples.\(^41\)

28-29 They stop arguing and abuse the man, then contrast their position with his. He, they say, can claim only to be Jesus'\(^42\) disciple; they are Moses' disciples. This gives them a sure basis, they think. They speak out of certainty. Whatever be the case with the rabble, such men as they know that God spoke to Moses. The perfect tense "has spoken" (NIV, "spoke") implies that these words stand. "This fellow" is contemptuous. They regard their
ignorance of Jesus' origin as damaging to his cause. But some Jerusalemites have argued that when the Christ comes no one will know where he is from (7:27), so that ignorance of his origin could be urged in favor of his messiahship. Their argument is less convincing and less consistent than they may have thought.Had they con-sidered its implications they might have been led to the truth.

30 The man continues his independent line. Far from being impressed with their argument he launches out on one of his own, designed to lead to the opposite conclusion. He finds it astonishing that they do not know whence Jesus is. This, he says, "is the marvellous thing" (NIV, "that is remarkable"), where the expression seems to have a meaning like "this is the really mar-vellous thing; your unbelief in the face of the evidence is more of a miracle than my cure!" His "you" is emphatic and may carry some sly irony: "You, the religious experts, cannot work out a simple thing like this?"

31 The man lays down his basic proposition negatively and posi-tively. He matches their "we know" with one of his own, and thus claims to share with his questioners, and perhaps with the community at large, the knowl-edge that God does not hear sinners. This should have been accepted by the second group mentioned in verse 16, at any rate (cf. Ps. 66:18; Prov. 15:29; Isa. 1:15). Then comes the positive, If a man is a worshiper and if he does the will of God, then he will be heard.

32-33 He goes on to point out that restoration of sight to the blind is most uncommon. Indeed, it has never been heard since the age began that a man born blind has received sight. His chain of reasoning is complete. Jesus could not possibly have done such a thing, a thing unparalleled in all history, unless he were from God (cf. 3:2). For the man the proposition is incontestable. It is not a bad chain of reasoning for one who had hitherto been a beggar all his life, and presumably a stranger to academic and forensic argument.

34 But it is wasted on men like these. They pay no attention to the argument, but concentrate on the person of the man who has presumed to teach them. In sins, they maintain, he was altogether born. And that ends that. They probably imply that his blindness was the punishment of sin (cf. v. 2). If so, their answer gives away their case, for they are then admitting the point they had questioned (vv. 18-19), namely that the man really had been blind, though he could now see. They cast him out, which probably means
much the same as "put out of the synagogue" (v. 22). It is possible that that was a technical term, and that the expression used here by contrast means no more than that they expelled the man from their assembly and from the building in which they were (cf. Barclay, "they ordered him to get out"). But it is more probable that this represents a stronger disciplinary action against a stubborn heretic.

4. Faith in the Son of God (9:35-38)

35 Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" 36 "Who is he, sir?" the man asked, "Tell me so that I may believe in him." 37 Jesus said, "You have now seen him; in fact, he is the one speaking with you." 38 Then the man said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshiped him.

John is interested in the way the coming of Jesus divides people. Throughout this chapter we have observed the process in operation. At the close we see the natural conclusion: on the one hand a confession of faith, on the other a plain statement of the condemnation of those who have been resisting the light.

35 The interesting thing here is the simple "when he found him" (cf. 5:14). It would have been common knowledge that the Jews had taken action against the healed man, and Jesus heard this in due course. John does not find it necessary to say that he sought him out. When the man had been persecuted for Jesus' sake it could be assumed that Jesus would not remain indifferent. So John simply tells us that he found him (Moffatt's "on meeting him" is inadequate). 47 Jesus' "you" is emphatic. He asks how it is with the man personally, whatever may be the case with others. Faith is an essentially personal thing. For "believing in" see on 1:12, and for "the Son of Man" see Additional Note C (pp. 150-52). 48 Whichever text we accept, faith in Christ is what is meant.

36 The man evidently recognized the voice, for though he knew that Jesus was his benefactor until now he had not seen him. He responds respectfully, though whether we should translate "sir" (as NIV) or "Lord" is not so clear. Since the man does not yet know who Jesus is, it seems preferable to give the term the lesser significance (see on 4:1). His gratitude
to Jesus comes out in his readiness to believe. He wants to know who the Son is so that he may believe. He has gathered from Jesus' question that Jesus wants him to believe. He for his part is ready to do what is right.

37 Jesus discloses his identity. His use of the verb "you have seen" must have meant a good deal to the man who until that day had seen nothing.

38 The man's instant response is "Lord, I believe," and this time there is little reason for thinking that "Lord" has anything less than the maximum content. Some translations (such as Twentieth Century, and Goodspeed) have "Sir," but this is incongruous in view of the immediately following reference to worship. This is the climax for the man of a process that has been going on throughout the chapter. His insight into the Person of Jesus has been growing, and now this final revelation puts the coping stone, on what has gone before. The man sees that Jesus is the one object of a right faith and accordingly puts his trust in him. This is the only place in this Gospel where anyone is said to worship Jesus. The verb occurs several times in chapter 4 to indicate worshiping God, and it is found in the same sense in 12:20. It can be used of paying very high respect to people, but in John it is more natural to understand it of paying divine honors. The man has already recognized that Jesus came from God (v. 33). Now he goes a step further. He gives to Jesus the reverence that is appropriate to God. John began this story with the disciples raising the question of undeserved suffering: Why was the man born blind? He does not answer it in set terms, but at least he ends the story with the man entering into such a blessing that he may well have given thanks for all the way that God had led him. The healing of his blindness had resulted in sight, both physical and spiritual.

5. The Condemnation of the Pharisees (9:39-41)

39 Jesus said, "For judgment I have come into this world, so that the blind will see and those who see will become blind." 40 Some Pharisees who were with him heard him say this and asked, "What? Are we blind too?" 41 Jesus said, "If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains."
The light has had its effect on the man who was ready to receive it. It remains to notice its effect on those who closed their eyes to it.

39 Were these words spoken on the same occasion? John says nothing to indicate a change of scene, but the conversation with the formerly blind man is unlikely to have been held before hostile witnesses, and it is difficult to think that the Pharisees would have witnessed the man's act of worship without protest. It seems more likely accordingly that these words were spoken a little later. They represent Jesus' account of the principle at work. In one sense he did not come to judge people (3:17; 12:47). But for all that, his coming represents a judgment, for people divide according to the way they react to that coming (see on 3:18; 8:15). The coming of light shows who are spiritually blind and thus judges them; judgment is not the purpose of the coming of light, but it is an inevitable consequence. In this passage the thought is worked out in terms of sight and blindness. The result of Jesus' coming is that blind people see. This has obvious relevance to the happenings of this chapter, and it must be understood to include the recovery of spiritual sight as well as of physical sight. Indeed, it is especially spiritual sight that is in mind now. We must understand the concluding words to mean "those who claim to have spiritual sight (apart from me) may be shown up for the blind people that they really are" (cf. also Isa. 6:10).

40 We are not told when and why some of the Pharisees were with Jesus, but they heard these things. Their reaction was an incredulous question: "Are we blind too?" They are the embodiment of the condemnation of which Jesus has been speaking. It never occurs to them that they of all people can possibly be blind.

41 Jesus' answer is paradoxical and probably highly unexpected. The Pharisees doubtless expected Jesus to say that they were blind. That was only to be anticipated from one they had opposed so vigorously. Instead he says that blindness would have been an excuse. If the Pharisees had been really blind, if they had had no understanding of spiritual things at all, they would not have sinned in acting as they did (cf. Rom. 5:13). They could not be blamed for acting in ignorance. They would then not have been acting in rebellion against their best insights. But they claim to see. They claim spiritual knowledge. They know the law. And it is sin for people who have spiritual knowledge to act as they do. Jesus does not say that they really do see, but that they claim to see. If they really had spiritual sight they would
act differently toward him. Yet they are not completely blind. His meaning
is that they have enough spiritual knowledge to be responsible. Had they
acted on the best knowledge they had they would have welcomed the Son
of God. But they did not act on their best knowledge. They claimed to have
sight and acted like the blind. Therefore their sin is not taken away. It
remains with them.\textsuperscript{61}

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\item Cullmann sees in the story a reference to baptism, but, as in the case of his other alleged
references to the sacraments, he proceeds by way of dogmatic assertion rather than by that of
adducing evidence. Indeed on this occasion he seems to realize this, for he says: "The opponents of
the method of examination which we apply in this study to the Fourth Gospel will not fail to stress
the questionable character of the observations made by us on this passage, and we can only repeat
here that each detail taken by itself does not in fact amount to much" (Early Christian Worship
Schnackenburg examines and rejects the view that the author intended a reference to baptism (II, pp.
257-58).
\item Barrett thinks that "This short chapter expresses perhaps more vividly and completely than
any other John's conception of the work of Christ. On the one hand, he is the giver of benefits to a
humanity which apart from him is in a state of complete hopelessness. . . . The illumination is not
presented as primarily intellectual (as in some of the Hermetic tractates) but as the direct bestowal of
life or salvation. . . . On the other hand, Jesus does not come into a world full of men aware of their
own need. Many have their own inadequate lights . . . which they are too proud to relinquish for the
true light which now shines. The effect of the true light is to blind them, since they willfully close
their eyes to it. Their sin abides precisely because they are so confident of their righteousness."
Hoskyns acutely remarks, "To become a Christian is not to recover what has been lost, but to receive
a wholly new illumination."
\item For J. L. Martyn's treatment of this chapter see the Introduction, pp. 41f. He holds that we
must understand the story on two levels, the one being the events that took place in Jesus' lifetime
and the other those that occurred in the city in which the Gospel was written. Martyn makes frequent
remarks about the Jews with whom the Evangelist interacted. There is, of course, no reason why the
Evangelist should not write on two levels and emphasize local circumstances, but Martyn cites no
evidence. He simply takes his assumption for granted, and this does not seem warranted. For further
comments see Carson, John, pp. 360-61.
\end{enumerate}
\end{center}
4. τυφλόν έx γενετής signifies congenital blindness, but John may also have in mind the truth that from birth we are all spiritually blind. The man blind from birth symbolizes every person. We all need the illumination that Christ alone can give. This is the only occurrence of γενετή in the New Testament.

5. For "his disciples" see the comments on 2:2. The exact meaning of the term here is not clear. If the Twelve are meant, as seems probable, this is the first indication that they were with him in Jerusalem (they are not said to have been with him in chs. 7 and 8). The alternative is to hold that there were followers of Jesus who lived in Jerusalem (cf. 7:3) and were with him on this occasion.

6. ίνα seems to express result, an unusual but not unparalleled use (see J. H. Greenlee in BT, 6 [1955], p. 14; J. L. Boyer, GThJ, 7 [1986], p. 8).

7. Shab. 55a (Soncino edn., p. 255). The latter point is proved from Ps. 89:33(32).

8. But the rabbis did not find the difficulties insurmountable. SBk cite a few passages, mostly based on Gen. 25:22, that show that it was held that a child could sin in the womb (II, pp. 528-29). An alternative was to think of the soul as preexistent, a belief that appears in Wis. 8:20, and as sinning in the preexistent state. But views like this do not seem to have been widely held in Judaism.

9. Yet the rabbis held such things to be possible. There are sayings that speak of children as having been born epileptic or leprous on account of the sins of their parents (SBk, Π, p. 529). The untimely death of a scholar could be ascribed to his mother's dalliance with idolatry while pregnant with him (Ruth Rab. 6.4; Soncino edn., p. 79).

10. That is, in this particular case. "Stop sinning or something worse may happen to you" (5:14) indicates that there may be times when sin and suffering are connected.

11. The construction is elliptical, and it is not certain what should be supplied before ίνα. It is usually taken as "but (he was born blind) that..." though it is quite possible to understand something like "but (all was ordained) that..." C. J. Cadoux thinks that this is a possible example of imperative ίνα (see on 1:8 for this construction) with the meaning "but the works of God had to be made manifest... in his case" (JThS, XLII [1941], p. 169). This, however, is not an imperative, which would be rather "Let the works of God be manifest." But this does not appear to be the sense of the passage. Richardson sees the ίνα as expressing result. It is, of course, possible to change the punctuation and read "... nor his parents. But that the works of God should be made manifest in him we must work the works of him who sent me... " Morgan, for example, adopts this punctuation, but it does not seem probable. The construction seems to hint at the divine purpose, and it seems best to adopt one of the two first-mentioned suggestions.

12. Cf. Brown, "Jesus was asked about the cause of the man's blindness, but he answers in terms of its purpose."

13. There are textual uncertainties, but it seems that we should read ήμας with Ρ 66 ρ 75 Χ* B D W Or etc. rather than ἐμέ with Χ* A Θ f l f l3 lat syrs. After πέμψαντος ρ 66 ρ 75 Χ* W* read ἡμᾶς but here the singular is to be preferred with Χ A B C DA Θ f l f l3 etc. It would seem that the variants are different ways of removing the difficulty posed by the use of both plural and singular. For Jesus' associating others with himself see on 3:11.

14. Odeberg understands "night" to signify "the period beginning with the discursive judgement for those who, although having the possibility of seeing, condemn themselves to blindness because they do reject the light that comes to them" (FG, p. 312). This would accord well with John's use of "light" and "darkness," but there is a difficulty in seeing how this "night" can be said to be coming; surely it is already here. Jesus' statement envisages a time now when work may be done, followed by another time when it will be too late to work. Odeberg's view does not safeguard this thought.

15. Westcott argues from the absence of an article with φως, as compared with 8:12 that "Christ is 'light to the world' as well as 'the one light of the world'." But E. C. Colwell has shown that in the New Testament definite predicate nouns that precede the verb usually lack the article (see on 1:1),
and that would cover this case. The expression means "the light of the world." John's " I am" sayings characteristically have ἐγώ εἰμι (as in 8:12), but here we have only εἰμί.

16. oton. In a context like this the meaning will not be repetition or continuity but coincidence of time: "during the time I am in the world." Plummer, however, says, "όταν is important; it shews the comprehensiveness of the statement. The Light shines at various times and in various degrees, whether the world chooses to be illuminated or not." Dods thinks that οταν is used rather than εως to suggest a time when Jesus would not be in the world.

17. The meaning of οταν before τὸν πηλόν is uncertain. It may mean "his clay," that is, the clay Jesus has made, or "its clay," that is, the clay from the spittle.

18. There are several technical breaches of the Sabbath here. The making of the mud is a breach of the prohibition of kneading (one of the thirty-nine classes of work forbidden in the Mishnah, Shab. 7:2), and probably of mixing (Shab. 24:3). The placing of it on the eyes would be included in the class of prohibited anointings (Shab. 14:4), for one may anoint on the Sabbath only with what one employs for the purpose on other days. This section provides that if a man's loins pain him "he may not rub thereon wine or vinegar, yet he may anoint them with oil but not with rose-oil. King's children may anoint their wounds with rose-oil since it is their custom so to do on ordinary days." Healing on the Sabbath was forbidden unless the life was in danger (SBk, I, pp. 623ff.). Barrett cites a specific rabbinic prohibition of the application of fasting spittle to the eyes on the Sabbath.

19. The curative power of spittle was highly esteemed in antiquity, especially in connection with the eyes. There is a well-known incident in which a blind man sought a cure from the Emperor Vespasian by means of his spittle. Mark twice records that Jesus used spittle (Mark 7:33; 8:23). For a general account see the art. "Saliva" in ERE.

20. είς is a little curious. It may be an example of the encroachment of this preposition on the territory of έν. But BAGD cites a similar construction with νίπτω in Epictetus. In the blind man's account of the incident in v. 11 it is attached to ἰπάγε and not νίψαι.

21. The genitive τοῦ Σιλωάμ is rather strange. Probably the whole system, spring, conduit, and pool, is being thought of as a unit and it is the pool of this complex that is meant.

22. The Hebrew is סְפּוּ . Hezekiah cut a tunnel through the rock to bring waters from Gihon (the "Virgin's Fountain") into the city. It flowed into the Upper Pool (Birket Silwan) and probably from there to the Lower Pool (Birket el-Hamra), though it is not possible to verify this archaeologically owing to the buildings on the site. See further the article in NBD.

23. In the expression δτι προσαίτης ήν Burney claims that δτι is a mistranslation of an Aramaic 1, rendered δτε instead of δτε (AO, p. 78). But this is not necessary. The δτι may well mean "because," that is they noticed him because he was a beggar (so Bernard).

24. Note the imperfect tenses. John is describing a situation in which excited talking went on continuously.

25. Actually he said " I am" (NIVinserts "the man"). The expression is Εγώ εἰμι; its occurrence in such a context makes it plain that it does not always convey the divine overtones we saw in 8:24, 28, and 58.

26. His word for receiving sight is ἀνέβλεψα, which strictly means " I saw again." The point may be, as Westcott suggests, that "sight by nature belongs to a man even though he has been born blind." But the word also means "to look up," and John may well use it with the idea in mind that the man came to look up to Jesus.

27. For John's use of ἀνθρώπος of Jesus see on 4:29.

28. Augustine is interested that the man immediately speaks out so clearly: "see, he preaches the gospel; endowed with sight, he becomes a confessor. That blind man makes confession, and the heart of the wicked was troubled; for they had not in their heart what he had now in his countenance" (44.8; p. 247).
29. τὸν ποτε τυφλόν receives emphasis from being thrown in at the end of the sentence with no syntactical link with the preceding. As is his habit, John describes the man in different ways. In v. 17 he is "the blind man," in v. 18 "he had been blind," and in v. 19 "the one you say was born blind."

30. In the expression "this man," ούτος is separated from ὁ ἄνθρωπος by παρὰ θεοῦ. This unusual order may be intended to put some emphasis on "man" This is probably meant contemptuously ("this fellow," NEB). John possibly wants also to indicate their ignorance of the incarnation.

31. ἀμαρτωλός occurs four times in this chapter (vv. 16, 24, 25, and 31) and nowhere else in this Gospel. The principle stated by these Pharisees does not fit in with the teaching of some facts of Scripture. Thus Pharaoh's magicians were able to imitate some of the miracles performed by Aaron (Exod. 7:11, 22; 8:7; but cf. 8:18-19). A continuing possibility, against which the Israelites were warned, is the appearance of a prophet or dreamer who should perform "a miraculous sign or wonder" to lead people astray (Deut. 13:1ff.). Jesus spoke of the same kind of thing (Matt. 24:24). A reconciliation might perhaps be sought in the nature of Jesus' miracles. They were not simply "wonders," but "signs" pointing people to God. Such miracles could not proceed from a deceiver.

32. σχίσμα does not denote a schism in our sense of the term, but rather a dissension. It is a division within the group, not a splitting off from the group.

33. McClymont cites Maimonides for what he calls a common Jewish belief that a prophet had authority even over the law of the Sabbath. If this is as early as New Testament times it will make the man's rejoinder very significant.

34. Among the Jews this would be thirteen years and one day (SBk, Π, p. 534). But the expression may well mean here "he is old enough to reason" rather than "he is legally of age."

35. Strachan suggests that their fear was not for themselves but for their son, and that accordingly they rightly leave the ultimate decision to him. But this is not the impression the passage leaves.

36. ἀποσυνάγωγος γένηται is found in the Greek Bible only here and at 12:42 and 16:2 (cf. Luke 6:22). The exact significance of the term is uncertain, as are the nature and procedure for excommunication among the Jews of that day. At a later time there were two forms of excommunication: the ἡμερεία, a temporary exclusion lasting 30 days, and the ἐκκαθάρισμος, which was a permanent ban. Both were at the discretion of the elders of the congregation. Excommunication cut a person off from all normal dealings with the Jewish community, but apparently not from worship (Mishnah, Midd. 2:2). But whether this applied in New Testament times is far from certain. The Mishnah speaks of excommunication but without giving details, and assumes the possibility of readmission (MK 3:1, 2; see also Ta'an. 3:8; Ned. 1:1; 'Eduy. 5:6; Midd. 2:2). The practice of excommunication is undoubtedly old (Ezra 10:8). Indeed, there are references to being cut off from the people in a number of places in the Law; specifically "Observe the Sabbath . . . whoever does any work on that day must be cut off from his people" (Exod. 31:14). We have no information about how this kind of discipline was practiced in New Testament times, but that does not mean that the rule was not enforced. Ta'an. 3:8 contains a saying threatening excommunication, which was said to have been uttered by Simeon b. Shetah c. 80 B.C. It is usually accepted that the benediction against the heretics was aimed at the Christians and was composed by Samuel the Small toward the end of the first century; many suggest that this is presupposed by the present passage. But Beasley-Murray cites W. Horbury's "exhaustive examination of the evidence" with its conclusion that the benediction "simply reinforced an earlier, more drastic exclusion of Christians" (p. 154). We have practically no information as to how it was carried out in New Testament times. J. A. T. Robinson points out that the benediction is concerned with cursing the minim, not with excluding them from the synagogue, so that it has nothing to do with the problem here (Priority, pp. 72-81). M. Hengel says of "the introduction of the cursing of the 'heretics' into the Eighteen Benedictions by the so-called 'Synod of Jamnia'" that "this event is historically problematical." He goes on to remind us that "The 'expulsion' of Christians from the synagogue took place, rather, in a lengthy and painful process which began
even before Paul with the martyrdom of Stephen" (Hengel, pp. 114-15). See further E. Schurer, *A History of the Jewish People in the Time of Jesus Christ, II, ii* (Edinburgh, 1885), pp. 59ff.; SBk, IV, pp. 293-333; TDNT, VII, pp. 845-50. Dodd points out that we have "no means of testing the accuracy of the evangelist's representation of the trial." He goes on, "But there are certain expressions in the narrative which do suggest knowledge of Jewish ideas and procedure" (IFG, p. 80). C. F. D. Moule questions "whether there is any inherent reason for declaring this to be unhistorical" (The Birth of the New Testament [London, 1962], p. 107). In any case we do not know of a formal ban on Christians (as opposed to a general curse on heretics included in the prayers) until later than the date of this Gospel. Long ago Lagrange expressed his astonishment at Loisy's assurance that such excommunication did not exist in the time of Jesus but did exist when the Fourth Gospel was written. Lagrange adds, "Plainly the excommunication of the Christians as such did not exist in the time of Jesus; but excommunication existed, and the Jews continued to employ it to stop the spread of Jesus' teaching while He lived as well as after His death." It seems best to accept the evidence of John that some form of excommunication was in use at this time as a means of opposing Jesus and all that he stood for, but that it was not a firm policy, permanently binding.

37. In this verse ἐπερωτήσατε (if this is the right reading) is used in place of ἐρωτήσατε in the parents' statement in verse 21. But probably no significance should be attached to this in view of John's habit of making small alterations in repetitions (see on 3:5). But there is good attestation for the reading ἐρωτήσατε, and this may be considered the preferable reading in view of John's marked preference for the uncompounded verb (27 times elsewhere, whereas περοπάω occurs again only in 18:7, and in both places ἐρωτάω has support). It is clear that John used ἐπερωτάω considerably less than some other New Testament writers (and ἐρωτάω more than any of them; Luke comes a long way behind with 15 times).

38. Rieu renders "the Jews... swore him in," which gives the sense of it according to this view, even though it is scarcely a translation.

39. For John's use of ἄνθρωπος of Jesus see on 4:29.

40. θέλετε ἀκούειν is interesting because θέλω is usually followed by the aorist infinitive (as in the second half of the verse). The meaning will be "Why do you want to keep on hearing?"

41. Some exegetes hold that the expression does no more than draw attention to the known band of Jesus' disciples, and inquire whether the Pharisees wish to join them. But this seems pointless, and not at all in accord with the healed man's frank espousal of Jesus' cause. The next verse indicates that the inquisitors understood the man to be a disciple of Jesus.

42. ἐκείνου is probably used with a touch of contempt (so BDF, 291[1]), "that fellow."

43. Filson comments: "they admitted and took pride in the fact that they did not know the origin of Jesus (vs. 29). Just so! This was their basic failure: Jesus had come to them from God, and they did not face this fact."

44. θεοσεβής is found here only in the New Testament.

45. The expression ἐκ τοῦ αἰώνος is found here only in the Greek Bible (Gal. 1:4 is different, the expression there being qualified; έξ αἰώνος occurs in LXX, e.g., in Prov.8:21; Jer. 7:7; Sir. 1:4). ἀπό τοῦ αἰώνος or ἁπ' αἰώνος is much more common.

46. There is an emphatic double negative, οὐκ ἦδύνατο ποιεῖν οὐδὲν

47. Cf. Chrysostom, "The Jews cast him out from the Temple, and the Lord of the Temple found him" (59.1; p. 212). Calvin points out that an excommunication can have good results: "I f he had been kept in the synagogue, he would have run the danger of becoming gradually alienated from Christ and plunged into the same destruction as the ungodly... . We have known the same thing in our own time. For when Luther, and others like him, were beginning to reprove the grosser abuses of the Pope, they had scarcely the slightest taste for pure Christianity. But after the Pope had fulminated against them and cast them out of the Roman synagogue by terrifying bulls, Christ
stretched out His hand and made Himself fully known to them. So there is nothing better for us than to be far away from the enemies of the Gospel so that He may come near to us."

48. ἄνθρωπος is read by p66 p75 R BDW syrs sa and θεοῦ by A Θ f l f l 3 lat. Both expressions are Johannine. We do not elsewhere find "the Son of Man" directly connected with believing (though cf. 3:14-15; 12:34ff.), but "the Son of God" is used in connection with confessions of faith (1:34, 49; 3:18; 11:27; 20:31). It is thus unlikely that an original θεοῦ would be altered to ἄνθρωπος, whereas the reverse process may be readily envisaged (this carries conviction to Tasker, GNT, p. 427; Metzger's committee found the reading "virtually certain"). Since the attestation of ἄνθρωπος is superior there seems to be no reason why it should not be accepted. A further confirmatory consideration is that the passage moves on to the thought of judgment, a topic with which "the Son of Man" is connected (cf. 5:27). M. Müller argues that "Son of Man" here "is to be understood as a circumlocution for the speaker" (NTS, 37 [1991], pp. 291-94).

49. The question may look for an affirmative answer. Cf. Bailey, "Thou puttest thy trust on the Son of Man dost thou not?" So also Bernard.

50. BDF notes the use of καί to introduce an apodosis when the apodosis is a question with the meaning "who then" (442[8]).

51. Burney cites this verse as an example of the Semitic use of the redundant pronoun (εἰς αὐτόν) after the relative (AO, p. 85; for the construction in John see on 1:27). But this example is not convincing, for it rests on the view that ίνα is a mistranslation of the relative, a view that is far from being established (cf. Black, AA, pp. 58-59).

52. Jesus' question uses the present, "Do you habitually believe?" The man's reply employs the aorist, "... that I may come to believe."

53. It has been suggested that we take ίνα here as imperative, which would give the meaning "Would that I might believe!" (see on 1:8). More probably, we should postulate an ellipsis: "(Tell me) in order that. . . ."

54. BAGD notes that προσκυνέω is "used to designate the custom of prostrating oneself before a person and kissing his feet, the hem of his garment, the ground, etc.; the Persians did this in the presence of their deified king, and the Greeks before a divinity or someth. holy." Of the use with regard to people it says, "to human beings who, however, are to be recognized by this act as belonging to a supernatural realm." LS shows that in later times this meaning was weakened considerably, but in the New Testament it is plain that the word is used with a very full meaning that the occasional use for people (Matt. 18:26; Rev. 3:9) does little to weaken.

55. This is the only place in this Gospel where κρίμα is found. John prefers κρίσις.

56. βλέποι is used here in the sense of άναβλέπω.

57. J. M. Lieu holds that "a theological understanding of unbelief as blindness, with a degree of tension as to the question of ultimate responsibility, had already been worked out both in direct exegesis of Isa 6.9-10 and in the interpretation of the healing of the blind in the light of that tradition" (NTS, 34 [1988], p. 90).

58. John uses the partitive έx, as often, to give the meaning "Some of the Pharisees," rather than "Those of the Pharisees."

59. Westcott speaks of these Pharisees as in some sense followers of Jesus. This, however, seems to be going beyond the meaning of μετ’ αὐτοῦ, which in itself signifies no more than "with him." In 3:25 μετά Ιουδαίου is even used of antagonism.

60. The question is introduced by μή, thus expecting the answer "No," while their καὶ ήμεῖς registers surprise at the suggestion that they, of all people, are blind.

61. Cf. Temple, "It is a crushing, overwhelming retort. Can we escape its impact? Only in one of two ways. Either we must confess our blindness and seek the opening of our eyes; or else we must accept the light and walk by it. What we may not do, yet all strive to do, is to keep our eyes half-open and live by half the light. That kind of sight holds us to our sin and our sin to us. But the only way of avoiding it is to look with eyes wide open upon ourselves and the world as the full light reveals it;
but this is the surrender of faith, and pride resists it." For the concept of "having" sin see on 15:22. Cf. H. C. Kee and F. W. Young, "those who claim that they see do not know they are blind"; further, "the sin of the Pharisees" is that they "walk in the light of their own knowledge, believing it to be the true light" (The Living World of the New Testament [London, 1971], p. 403
Q. THE SEVENTH DISCOURSE — THE GOOD SHEPHERD (10:1-42)

In this, the last public address of Jesus that John records, a further aspect of his ministry is unfolded in an allegory of great power. Jesus uses the figure of the Good Shepherd to differentiate his ministry from that of false shepherds and to stress the voluntary nature of his sacrifice for his people. This chapter should be read in the light of Old Testament passages that castigate shepherds who have failed in their duty (see Jer. 23:1-4; 25:32-38; Zech. 11; and especially Isa. 56:9-12 and Ezek. 34). God is the Shepherd of Israel (Ps. 80:1; cf. Ps. 23:1; Isa. 40:10-11), which gives us the measure of the responsibility of his under-shepherds. Those entrusted with this duty must be faithful, and it is a heinous crime when they are not. But Israel's shepherds on more than one occasion did fail in their responsibility. It is this which calls forth the prophecy that a shepherd after God's own heart will in due course appear: "I will place over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he will tend them; he will tend them and be their shepherd" (Ezek. 34:23). It is this shepherd who is depicted in this chapter.

Nowadays we think of the shepherd in terms of tender care and concern for the flock, thoughts that are legitimate for the ancient world as for the modern. But we should not overlook the fact that for people in biblical times other associations were also aroused by the term. The shepherd was an autocrat over his flock, and passages are not lacking where the shepherd imagery is used to emphasize the thought of sovereignty. Jesus is thus set forth in this allegory as the true Ruler of his people in contrast to all false shepherds.

Some expositors feel that there is little connection between the opening of this chapter and the close of the preceding. Various reconstructions have
been proposed. But these are not necessary. It is likely that John saw a link in the Old Testament passages noted above. There are many of them, and it is clear that the Jews delighted in this kind of imagery. It is apt, accordingly, that, immediately after Israel's shepherds have failed so conspicuously in the case of the man born blind, we should have set forth the nature and functions of the Good Shepherd. "Two contrasts dominate the chapter: the contrast between the Pharisees and Jesus as shepherds of the people and the contrast between the Pharisees and the former blind man as recipients of Jesus' message" (Michaels).

The main teaching here is clear enough but there are difficulties in detail, and the passage is far from simple. Jesus is spoken of both as the Door and as the Shepherd (who goes in by the door), statements not easy to harmonize formally. Then the force of the Good Shepherd imagery is not always the same. He is contrasted first with thieves and later with hired men. Again, the meaning of the sheep seems to vary somewhat. And the discourse itself is far from being perfectly straightforward, for literal and symbolic sayings are closely interwoven.

There are references to the shepherd and the sheep in the Synoptic Gospels, notably in the parable that speaks of a shepherd leaving ninety-nine sheep while he searches through the wilderness for one that was lost (Matt. 18:12-13; Luke 15:3-7). In the Synoptics the shepherd is seen in his relationship to the sheep; he provides for them and cares for them. In John this concern is clear. Indeed, it is taken further than in the Synoptics, for the Good Shepherd provides for the sheep even to the extent of laying down his life for them. But John also sounds a distinctive note. Here the Good Shepherd is seen also in contrast to false shepherds, He is the rightful shepherd, whose voice the sheep know.

Finally let us notice that the shepherd imagery was common in many parts of the ancient world. Kings and gods alike were described as shepherds. Thus whenever this Gospel was read, language like this would strike a chord. In contrast to whatever false shepherds John's readers may have known Jesus would stand forth as the Good Shepherd, who makes genuine provision for his sheep.

1. The Parable (10:1-6)
1/ tell you the truth, the man who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber. 2The man who enters by the gate is the shepherd of his sheep. 3The watchman opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. 4When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. 5But they will never follow a stranger: in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger's voice." (Jesus used this figure of speech, but they did not understand what he was telling them.

Jesus begins with an allegory\(^9\) in which he sets forth the main facts of herding sheep in ancient Palestine. His audience no doubt is familiar enough with the general pastoral picture, but it does not discern the spiritual meaning behind the words.

1 There is no introductory explanation of the occasion or the like. The chapter opens with Jesus fairly launched on his discourse. This indicates that there is no great break from the previous section, a conclusion that is reinforced by the reference to opening the eyes of the blind in verse 21. Moreover, the blind man, so ready to heed the voice of Christ, clearly belongs among the sheep of this discourse, while the Pharisees are the very embodiment of the false shepherds. The opening "I tell you the truth" (see on 1:51) agrees with this, for elsewhere it never begins a discourse but always follows up some previous teaching. It indicates that the following statement is important, but also that it has a connection with the preceding. This passage, then, must be understood in the closest of connections with the the story of the blind man given sight. Sheep were commonly herded in a walled enclosure, mostly open to the sky, but providing protection from the worst of the elements and from beasts of prey. The word used here is the usual word for a courtyard, and thus may signify that the sheep are herded close alongside the house, though it may also mean a special fold.\(^10\) Whatever be the truth about this, the fold envisaged was one with solid walls and one door (\textit{NIV} has "gate") guarded by a doorkeeper. If a man does not enter the door in the normal way but climbs over\(^11\) the wall, then it is clear that he is there for no good purpose. He is castigated as a robber.\(^12\)

2-3 By contrast, the one who enters by the door is seen to be the shepherd.\(^13\) He has the right to enter,\(^14\) and this is recognized when the
doorkeeper opens to him. In the case of a small flock there would be no such official, but what is apparently in mind is a large fold where several flocks find shelter. One doorkeeper can thus look after a large number of sheep. Various attempts have been made to find a meaning for the doorkeeper, but none has won wide acceptance and none, it would seem, should. In an allegory not all details are significant; some are included as necessary parts of the picture even though they have no part to play in the symbolism. So here with the doorkeeper. When the shepherd comes in he calls the sheep, who know his voice. The Eastern shepherd often has an individual call for each of his sheep, and it is this that is in mind here. The sheep know their shepherd and recognize\(^{15}\) the call he gives his own.\(^{16}\) More, they respond to it,\(^{17}\) and in this way he leads them out.

4 When he has put all his own sheep out\(^{18}\) of the fold the shepherd leads them to their destination by walking before them. This is a very different picture from that of driving the sheep (which is more familiar in lands like Australia today). The sheep follow, we are told, because they know\(^{19}\) their shepherd's voice.

5 The case is different when a stranger attempts to lead them away. They certainly will not (double negative) follow\(^{20}\) a stranger. The reason is given in terms of the voice again. They do not know the voice of strangers,\(^{21}\) and therefore they run away. Travelers in modern Palestine have sometimes been able to document this. It appears that strangers, even when dressed in the shepherd's clothing and attempting to imitate his call, succeed only in making the sheep run away. The sheep know their shepherd's voice but do not know and do not respond to that of a stranger.

6 "Figure of speech" translates a word not often found in the New Testament and which appears to mean "proverb" in its only non-Johannine occurrence, 2 Peter 2:22.\(^{22}\) In John (elsewhere 16:25, 29) it signifies something like "figure of speech." It denotes language of which the meaning is not obvious, but which conveys to those who probe deeply enough spiritual truths of importance. So here Jesus spoke indeed to his hearers, but they did not understand\(^{23}\) the spiritual truth that he was conveying.

2. The Application to Christ (10:7-18)
Therefore Jesus said again, "I tell you the truth, I am the gate for the sheep. All who ever came before me were thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand is not the shepherd who owns the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it. The man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. I know my sheep and my sheep know me — just as the Father knows me and I know the Father — and I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd. The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life — only to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.

a. 9 Or kept safe

In this section of the discourse Jesus applies the saying to himself. There are two ways of viewing him, as the Door and as the Good Shepherd, and he deals with them successively. Both have to do with salvation. As the Door he is the one way of entering salvation. As the Good Shepherd he is the one who cares for the sheep and provides for their salvation at the cost of his life. The two figures lend themselves to different contrasts. When Jesus considers himself as the Door he stigmatizes those who do not come in by the Door as thieves and robbers. When he thinks of himself as the Good Shepherd he makes a contrast with hireling shepherds. Both stress personal gain on the part of the persons opposed and an absence of interest in the well-being of the sheep. In all this Jesus is not engaging in an exposition of animal husbandry. He is showing what it means to see him as the Good Shepherd. The essential and central thing is the laying down of
his life. But while the earthly shepherd is a useful illustration the Good Shepherd is different from anything earthly, for Jesus insists that he has power both to lay down his life and to take it again.

7 Jesus resumes his discourse. "Therefore" may indicate that this is an explanation given in the light of his hearers' failure to understand what he has been saying. "Again" is resumptive. For "I tell you the truth" see on 1:51. It introduces a solemn and important statement, and this is continued in the emphatic "I am" (see on 6:35). We might have expected some explanation of Christ's function as Shepherd, but instead we have the new thought introduced that he is the door. "Door" is used metaphorically in other places in the New Testament (e.g., Luke 13:24; Acts 14:27; 1 Cor. 16:9,) but this is the only passage in which Jesus himself is seen as the door. The thought is not unlike that of 1:51, where Jesus is the ladder connecting heaven and earth, or 14:6, where he is the Way, but here it gets its force from the imagery of the sheepfold. There is but one door to a fold, and sheep and shepherds alike must enter by this door. There is no other way for them. But Jesus does provide the way. It seems that the thought here is primarily that Jesus provides the door by which the shepherd must enter (see the next verse). In verse 9 the emphasis is rather on the door as the way by which the sheep go in.

8 Jesus contrasts himself with his predecessors. "All who ever came before me" must refer to the Jewish religious leaders, but the expression is strangely comprehensive. It cannot mean the prophets and the like, for they were anything but thieves and robbers (for this expression see on v. 1). Jesus' attitude to the people of the Old Testament is clear in 5:46; 8:56. He must have in view the whole of the Jewish hierarchy of his day. They were not interested in the well-being of the sheep but in their own advantage. The Sadducees in particular were known to make quite a lot of money out of temple religion, and there are denunciations of the Pharisees (Luke 16:14) and the scribes (Mark 12:40) for covetousness. Some understand the word to refer to revolutionaries like Judah the Galilean, and if this is right the references to violence are much in point. We should almost certainly take "before me" as part of the imagery rather than as indicating Jesus' predecessors the religious leaders. The shepherd comes to the fold for his sheep (vv. 2-3) the first thing in the morning. All who preceded him accordingly must be thieves and the like, working in the darkness. All the more is this likely to be the case in that Jesus does not say that they "were"
but that they "are" thieves and robbers. The emphasis is on his own day. It is perhaps a little strange to have this reference to religious leaders when Jesus is speaking of himself as the door. We would have anticipated it rather when he is developing the idea of the Good Shepherd. The meaning appears to be that if people are to bring other people into God's fold they must first enter it themselves (cf. 1 Tim. 4:16). And the only way to enter is through the one door. These men declined to come to God through Christ. They therefore stamped themselves as impostors. All who seek to bring life to others, but who do not themselves enter life through Christ, stand condemned. Jesus has already pointed out that the sheep will take no notice of strangers. Now he says that the sheep did not hear these robbers. Those who really are the sheep, given by the Father, have spiritual discernment. They await the voice of their true Shepherd.

9 Jesus repeats that he is the door. This time "of the sheep" is lacking and the words stand out in impressive simplicity. The emphasis is on Jesus' function. The words "through me" are in an emphatic position; it is he and no other who enables people to enter salvation (cf. 14:6). There is a certain exclusiveness about "the" door. If there is one door then people must enter by it or stay outside. They cannot demand another door. John does not often use the verb "to save," and he never explains exactly what he means by it. But he makes it clear that salvation was the purpose of Jesus' coming (3:17; 5:34; 12:47). It is the comprehensive term for the whole process whereby people are delivered from the consequences of their sin and brought into the blessing of God. Here the blessing is described in terms of secure pasturage, the supreme good of the sheep. The sheep that enters the fold through Christ will then be able to go in and out and have all its needs met. We should not attempt to find some esoteric meaning for "come in and go out." It is simply an expression to indicate free and secure movement (cf. Knox, "he will come and go at will").

10 The thought is further developed by a contrast with the thief. His interest is entirely selfish. He steals or kills for food, and even destroys the sheep. He comes only for harm to the flock and with no interest in its welfare. Christ by contrast ("I" is emphatic) came for the benefit of the sheep. He came that they might have life (for this term see on 1:4), and not only life, but a more abundant life (cf. 20:31). There is nothing cramping or restricting about life for those who enter his fold.
11 Now comes another of Jesus' resounding declarations. For the "I am" sayings see on 6:35. That he is the Good Shepherd has meant much to every generation of Christians. It makes an instant appeal to the depths of our being, even though many of us are city dwellers and have never seen a shepherd in our lives. But the thought of care for the sheep that is involved in the title is plain enough. We should notice that, while a shepherd does many things for his flock, when Jesus speaks of himself in his capacity as Good Shepherd he immediately goes on, "The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep." This must have been a rare occurrence among Palestinian shepherds. But it is characteristic for Jesus. It is that for which the metaphor is chosen. The great act of care for the sheep that he is impressing on his hearers by this figure is that of laying down his life. Moreover, when the Palestinian shepherd did die in defense of his sheep that was an accident. He planned to live for them, not die for them. With Jesus, however, death for his sheep was his set purpose. There is an element of voluntary acceptance of death in the expression "lays down his life for the sheep" that ought not to be missed (cf. v. 18). One may cavil at Moffatt's translation, "a" good shepherd (Lindars also takes the article as generic, "I am a good shepherd"), for Jesus is not classing himself as one among many shepherds. He is speaking of his own distinctive activity. "A" good shepherd does not characteristically give his life for the sheep; "the" Good Shepherd does. Moreover, the death of the Palestinian shepherd meant disaster for his sheep. The death of the Good Shepherd means life for his sheep.

12 Jesus contrasts the behavior of the man who is not really the shepherd at all, but simply a servant, paid to do his work. There is nothing evil about the term, as there is with "thief," but it points to someone whose interest is in wages, not sheep. In the only place where the word rendered "hired hand" is used in the New Testament apart from this verse and the next it refers to fishermen working for pay (Mark 1:20; MM cites its use for men paid to carry bricks; Horsley points out that the hired laborer's status was just above that of slave [New Documents, 4, pp. 97-98]). It certainly indicates someone other than the owner. It speaks of a man whose interest is in what he is paid for doing his job rather than in the job itself. So Jesus says explicitly, "Not the shepherd who owns the sheep." Such a man lacks pride of ownership and the care that proceeds from possession. When he sees the wolf coming he does not risk danger. He abandons the sheep and
runs. The result is that the wolf seizes and scatters the sheep. Presumably this means that he seizes some of the sheep and the rest run in all directions. The Mishnah lays down the legal responsibility of the hired shepherd. An interesting provision is that if one wolf attacks the flock he is required to defend the sheep, but "two wolves count as unavoidable accident" (i.e., no blame attaches to the hired man for any damage they may cause). Jesus, however, gives his life for the sheep without condition.

13 The hired hand runs away not fortuitously, but because he is what he is, hired. His interest is in wages, not sheep. He is not deeply concerned for the sheep. He is not involved in their situation. His passions are not aroused. The interests of the sheep are not a lively concern with him.

14-15 Again comes the majestic assertion that Jesus is the Good Shepherd, this time not directly linked with his laying down of his life. Instead there is first put forward the relationship between the Good Shepherd and his sheep and arising from that a reiteration of his determination to lay down his life for them. Being the Good Shepherd, he knows his sheep. And his sheep know him (cf. v. 4). There is a relationship of mutual knowledge, a reciprocal knowledge that is not superficial but intimate. It is likened to the knowledge wherewith Jesus knows the Father and the Father knows him. It may be that the love implied in this relationship elicits the following statement that Jesus lays down his life for the sheep. Or it may be a simple addition. Either way it is the culmination of this part of the discourse. Jesus here speaks directly in the first person, "I lay down my life," whereas in verse 11 he has used the third person, "the good shepherd lays down his life."

16 Now Jesus looks beyond the immediate circle of his followers to "other sheep." It is difficult to interpret "not of this sheep pen" other than as indicating people not found within Judaism. The words look to the world wide scope of the gospel. "I have" shows that these sheep already belong to Christ, even though they have not yet been "brought" (cf. Acts 18:10, where "I have many people in this city" is used of Corinthians prior to their conversion). But the bringing of them is an urgent task, and Jesus says he "must" perform it. There is a compelling necessity here (see on 4:4). Throughout this discourse there is an emphasis on the voice of the shepherd (vv. 3, 4, and 5), and thus it is said of these other sheep that are to be brought in order that they, too, will hear the shepherd's voice. Again the thought is that they will hear with appreciation. The end result is one flock
and one shepherd. The other sheep are not to remain distinct from the existing sheep, as though there were to be a Jewish church and a separate Gentile church. They are to be united in one flock. And they all stand under the leadership of one shepherd. The unity is not a natural unity, but one brought about by the activity of the Shepherd in "bringing" them.

17 Throughout the discourse the thought that Jesus will lay down his life recurs (vv. 11 and 15). Here it is given as the reason for the Father's loving the Son. One might have expected rather the thought that the Father loves the Son for what he is and that this leads to the cross (cf. 3:16). But the meaning here is that the death of Jesus is the will of God for him. And because he is in perfect harmony with the will of God he goes forward to that death. Thus the Father's love is the recognition from the Father's side of the perfect community between them in this matter. With the death is linked the thought of the resurrection. Christ dies in order that he may rise again. The death is not defeat but victory. It is inseparable from the resurrection.

18 Nowhere is John's view of Jesus as in complete command of every situation brought out more strongly than here. The Lord's death does not take place as the result of misadventure or the might of his foes or the like. No one takes his life from him. Far from this being the case, he himself lays it down, and does so completely of his own volition. He claims authority both to lay down his life and to take it again. And, characteristically, the whole is linked with the Father. He gave commandment to this effect, and Jesus accordingly is simply doing his will.

3. The Reaction of the Jews (10:19-21)

At these words the Jews were again divided. Many of them said, "He is demon-possessed and raving mad. Why listen to him?" But others said, "These are not the sayings of a man possessed by a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?"

As always, Jesus' words cause division. Some reject him altogether, repeating the Synoptic canard that he is demon-possessed. Others reject this view on the grounds that a demon can scarcely open the eyes of the blind.
19 "Again" may indicate that the pattern is repeated. Once more there is division among the Jews over words of Jesus. John often uses the expression "the Jews" to denote the religious leaders, but here it will be members of the Jewish nation in general. For the plural "words" see on 14:24.

20 First, John gives us the view of the opposition party. They put "demon" in an emphatic position: "A demon he has," as indeed they did on three previous occasions (7:20; 8:48, 52). It is not without its interest that the only occasions in this Gospel when the word "demon" occurs are when the Jews are accusing Jesus of being demon-possessed or when he is defending himself from the charge (or others are doing so, as in v. 21). A further point to be noted is that on this occasion having a demon and being mad are apparently equated. At the least they are thought of in the closest possible connection. In other places (e.g., Matt. 4:24) they appear to be distinguished. Those who hold that Jesus has a demon are able to dispense with the evidence. He is mad, they say, and therefore there is no point in taking notice of him.

21 Others were impressed both by Jesus' words and by his deeds. The words, they affirmed, are not the words of a demon-possessed man. And a demoniac would not have been able to open the eyes of a blind man. Their respect for the facts prevented this group from prejudging the case. So they refused to condemn Jesus. Yet their position remains entirely a negative one. They say what Jesus is not, but they make no attempt to say what he is.

4. The Jews' Final Rejection of Jesus (10:22-42)

There follows a section introduced by the information that it was the Feast of Dedication. The reference to sheep (vv. 26ff.) connects it with the preceding and marks it as in some sense a continuation. But there is also an advance, notably in the teaching on the unity of the Father and the Son. The question of the Person of Jesus dominates the section. It becomes clear that people must either recognize that Jesus stands in such a relation to the Father as no one else ever did, or else reject him entirely. John's account of the public ministry of Jesus ends accordingly with the final breach with the Jews, after which Jesus retires beyond the Jordan.
22 Then came the Feast of Dedication\textsuperscript{a} at Jerusalem. It was winter, 23 and Jesus was in the temple area walking in Solomon's Colonnade. 24 The Jews gathered around him, saying, "How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ,\textsuperscript{b} tell us plainly." 25 Jesus answered, "I did tell you, but you do not believe. The miracles I do in my Father's name speak for me, 26 but you do not believe because you are not my sheep. 27 My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. 28 I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. 29 My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all\textsuperscript{c}; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. 30 I and the Father are one.

\textsuperscript{a} 22 That is, Hanukkah
\textsuperscript{b} 24 Or Messiah
\textsuperscript{c} 29 Many early manuscripts What my Father has given me is greater than all

Using the symbolism of the Feast of Dedication, John brings us to the last act in Jesus' offer of salvation to the Jews. This feast commemorated the rededication of the Temple by Judas Maccabaeus in 165 B.C. after its profanation by Antiochus Epiphanes (who had sacrificed a sow to Jupiter on the altar of the Temple).\textsuperscript{60} It was the last great deliverance that the Jews had known, and therefore it must have been in people's minds a symbol of their hope that God would again deliver his people. It was an occasion for gratitude to God, whose mercy had resulted in renewed opportunity for Temple worship and that at a time, as Josephus says, when the people scarcely dared to hope for it.\textsuperscript{61} In this present passage John is presenting us with the last act in Jesus' public ministry and with the Jews' final rejection of all that he stood for. In some aspects the passage is not unlike those in which Matthew and Luke recall that when the messengers of John the Baptist asked Jesus, "Are you the one who was to come?" he replied by pointing to the works that attested his messiahship (Matt. 11:2ff.; Luke 7:19ff). It is not otherwise here. There are the thoughts of Jesus' works that attested his messiahship (v. 25), of the eternal life he gives his sheep (v. 28), of his unity with the Father (v. 30), and of the Father's consecration of Jesus for his work of salvation (v. 36),\textsuperscript{62} leading up to the final appeal for faith (v.
Perhaps we should also discern the thought of the dedication of a new temple (cf. 2:19ff.). All this may well be held to embody the great truths behind that Feast of Lights wherein people recalled that the sovereign God, against all human probabilities, wrought deliverance for his people, brought them out of their darkness, and enabled them to offer real worship.

Let us notice the sequence of thought. Jesus' works bear witness, but the witness is appreciated only by the "sheep." These are eternally safe. No one can take them from his hand. No one can take them from his Father's hand. The justification for two such statements together is the unity between the Father and the Son, to which this whole paragraph leads up. The statement on unity is noteworthy, as is the fact that Jesus links it with the care both have for the sheep.

The passage begins by mentioning that it was then "the Feast of Dedication at Jerusalem." This could possibly be simply a time note, somewhat like the note of place that John has inserted into a section of discourse at 6:59. But, as we have already noticed, it is more likely that John wants us to see in Jesus the fulfillment of all that the feast stands for.

The feast began on the 25th of Chisleu (about November-December in our calendar) and lasted for eight days. The manner of its observance resembled that for the Feast of Tabernacles (2 Macc. 10:6), and indeed it could be called "the feast of Tabernacles in the month of Chisleu" (2 Macc. 1:9). As at Tabernacles the use of lights was very important in this feast. For the benefit of those not familiar with the time of this feast John adds "It was winter." This may be no more than another time note, though some commentators see symbolical importance. They suggest that in John's mind is the thought that it was winter, grim winter, in the relations between Jesus and the Jews.

The term "Colonnade" denotes a roofed structure supported on pillars. It would have given a certain amount of shelter from the wintry weather. The reference is to a colonnade in Herod's temple. It appears to have been a very old structure, and was popularly thought to have been part of Solomon's Temple, though this belief, of course, was not well founded. It is mentioned again in Acts 3:11 and 5:12. It seems to have stretched along the east side of the Temple, and apparently it was the place where the scribes normally held their schools. Jesus is not depicted as engaging in any formal teaching on this occasion, but simply as walking in this colonnade.
As he walked, the Jews (see on 1:19) crowded around him. The act of encirclement may indicate a determination to get an answer. They hemmed him in (cf. Phillips, "The Jews closed in on Him"). They are serious and want a clear reply. Their question, "How long will you keep us in suspense?" implies that Jesus has not been quite fair to them. He has not made his position plain but has kept them in suspense, not knowing what he claimed for himself. So now they demand plain speech. But it is also possible that we should understand the words to mean "Why do you plague us?" In this case the Jews are not quite so friendly and their demand for plain speaking will have been made in a hostile spirit. Another possibility that has much to be said for it is that they may mean "Why are you taking away our life?" in which case the Jews appearing to be discerning, somewhat in the manner of Caiaphas in 11:48, that the drift of Jesus' teaching meant the end of Judaism as they knew it. He has warned them that they will die in their sins unless they believe in him (8:21, 24), and he appears to be looking for followers outside Judaism (v. 16). The logical outcome of such a program is the end of exclusivism. Whichever way we translate, they rightly discern that the critical question is that of Jesus' messiahship and accordingly proceed to interrogate him on the matter. This makes the passage important for our understanding of this Gospel, the aim of which is to show that Jesus is the Messiah and to bring people to believe in him as such (20:31). The basic question is whether Jesus is or is not the Messiah (see on 1:41). As the passage unfolds it becomes clear that messiahship is not something that can be recognized by all, but only by the "sheep" (v. 26). It becomes clear also that the work of the Messiah is to bring eternal life, a life that can never be lost because the Messiah is one with God. Their "you" is emphatic, perhaps implying that he is far from being the glorious being that the Christ should be.

In view of the erroneous ideas of messiahship held by his questioners, to answer either "Yes" or "No" would have been misleading. But Jesus' assertion that he has already told them raises a problem, for no answer to this question has been given in specific terms in this Gospel. Jesus has spoken unequivocally to the Samaritan woman (4:26), and he has also disclosed himself to the man born blind (9:35ff.), but he has not taught the Jews in set terms that he is the Christ. He may mean that the general drift of his teaching is so clear that if they had come to him with the right
attitude they would have believed, just as his disciples did (cf. 6:68-69). Or he may mean that such statements as "before Abraham was born, I am" (8:58) are the answer. Or, as the rest of the verse indicates, he may mean that his works and his whole manner of life are such that the answer to the question is plain for all who really want to know. "You do not believe" denotes a present attitude, not simply a past state, and it indicates the root trouble. These people had no faith. The "works" (NIV, "miracles") will mean particularly the miracles, but the term is broad enough to embrace other things as well, and may include all Jesus' deeds of kindness (see Additional Note G, pp. 607-13). These works were done "in my Father's name" (for "the name" see on 1:12), that is they accord with all that the Father stands for, or fit in with his revealed character. And these works "bear witness" (NIV "speak"; see on 1:7 for "witness," and cf. 5:36 for Jesus' works bearing witness). They are not empty, though spectacular. They are meaningful and point people to the truth of God. The trouble with these men is that they do not pay attention to the significance of what is going on before their very eyes. The recent healing of the blind man is in their minds (v. 21), and this should answer their question. Such works do indeed bear a vivid witness.

26 "But" is the strong adversative. Far from their heeding the witness, their habitual attitude is one of unbelief. The predestinarian strain in this Gospel comes out in the reason given for their failure: "you are not my sheep." Christ's "sheep" know him (v. 14), but the knowledge of Christ is not the natural possession of anybody. Faith is always a gift of God.

27 Christ's sheep hear his voice, an aspect of the sheep-shepherd relationship that has been stressed in this chapter (vv. 3, 4, 5, and 16). One might have expected "and they know me," but the proposition is reversed. It is the knowledge Christ has of the sheep that is important, and accordingly it is this that receives the emphasis. The result of this knowledge is that they follow him, the present tense denoting a habitual following.

28 Eternal life is his gift. It is often emphasized that the important thing about eternal life is its quality rather than its quantity. It is life of a certain kind, not simply life that goes on forever. While there is truth in this, we should not overlook the point that in fact eternal life does not end. It is this aspect that is prominent here. Those to whom Christ gives the gift "shall never perish." This perhaps points to the impossibility of a steady decay setting in that would end in total loss. At the end of the verse the thought is
rather than that of active evil. No one will snatch\textsuperscript{77} them from Christ. It is one of the precious things about the Christian faith that our continuance in eternal life depends not on our feeble hold on Christ, but on his firm grip on us. We should notice that the teaching of this verse is not that believers will be saved from all earthly disaster, but that they will be saved, no matter what earthly disaster may befall them.

\textbf{29} This is a very difficult verse. The true text appears to be "What my Father has given me is greater than all" (as \textit{NIV mg}),\textsuperscript{78} but the sense of the passage seems to require something like the \textit{NIV} text: "My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all." But the suspicion remains that the popularity of this reading is due to the fact that the former reading was found so difficult. Taking that former reading as original would seem to give the meaning that the flock that the Father has given the Son is greater in his eyes\textsuperscript{79} than anything else on earth. Since he thus attaches the highest value to it he will look after it to the end. Or the meaning may possibly be that the quality of life, the life of eternity that the Father has given, is greater than anything else. Another suggestion is the divine plan for salvation, the charge given by the Father to the Son, as Stephen M. Reynolds argues.\textsuperscript{80} But it seems more probable that the reference is to believers, the church. Cf. 1 John 5:4: "everyone born of God has overcome the world." The context seems to demand that it is the "sheep" that are given.\textsuperscript{81} The statement here is more far-reaching than that in the previous verse. There we had a future, "no one will snatch them" (so, correctly, \textit{NRSV}; \textit{NIV} is in error); here it is "no one is able to snatch them."\textsuperscript{82} This Shepherd is all-powerful and the sheep in his hand have nothing to fear.

\textbf{30} The bracketing of "I" and "the Father" is significant in itself quite apart from the predicate. Who else would be linked with God the Father in this fashion? "One" is neuter, "one thing" and not "one person."\textsuperscript{83} Identity is not asserted, but essential unity is. These two belong together. The statement does not go beyond the opening words of this Gospel, but it can stand with them. It is another statement that puts Jesus Christ with God rather than with people. It may be true that this ought not to be understood as a metaphysical statement, but it is also true that it means more than that Jesus' will was one with that of the Father.\textsuperscript{84} As Hoskyns remarks, "the Jews would not presumably have treated as blasphemy, the idea that a man could regulate his words and actions according to the will of God." But they
did regard these words as blasphemy as the next verse shows. They had asked Jesus for a plain statement of his messiahship, and they got more than they had bargained for.

b. A Charge of Blasphemy Rebutted (10:31-39)

31 Again the Jews picked up stones to stone him, 32 but Jesus said to them, "I have shown you many great miracles from the Father. For which of these do you stone me?" 33 "We are not stoning you for any of these," replied the Jews, "but for blasphemy, because you, a mere man, claim to be God." 34 Jesus answered them, "Is it not written in your Law, 7 have said you are gods a ? 35 If he called them 'gods,' to whom the word of God came — and the Scripture cannot be broken — 36 what about the one whom the Father set apart as his very own and sent into the world? Why then do you accuse me of blasphemy because I said, 'I am God's Son'? 37 Do not believe me unless I do what my Father does. 38 But if I do it, even though you do not believe me, believe the miracles, that you may learn and understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father." 39 Again they tried to seize him, but he escaped their grasp.

a. 34 Psalm 82:6

The Jews' reaction to Jesus' great assertion is the extreme one of trying to stone him, but he stops them with an argument based on Psalm 82:6. If there is a sense in which the term "gods" may be legitimately applied to men, then much more may Jesus assert his unity with his Father.

31 The Jews could regard Jesus' words only as blasphemy, and they proceeded to take the judgment into their own hands. 85 It was laid down in the Law that blasphemy was to be punished by stoning (Lev. 24:16). But these men were not allowing the due processes of law to take their course. They were not preparing an indictment so that the authorities could take the requisite action. In their fury they were preparing to be judges and execudoners in one. 86 "Again" will refer back to the previous attempt at stoning (8:59).

32 But they did not actually throw their stones. Before this happened Jesus "answered" them with a question (for this use of "answered" cf. 2:18;
5:17). We should not miss the calm courage he displayed. He did not run away, nor apparently did he show signs of fear or the like. In the face of stoning he quietly resumed the discussion and pointed out that he had shown many good works. "From the Father" indicates that Jesus is not acting in isolation. Then he asks which of these good works is the cause of the attempt at stoning.

33 The reply rejects any thought that they are stoning Jesus for a good work. It is blasphemy to which they object. They particularize Jesus, they affirm, is a man, yet makes himself God. This shows that they had discerned accurately enough what his teaching meant. What they did not stop to consider was whether it was true. This is the first occasion on which the charge of blasphemy is made against Jesus, though we may fairly say that it is presupposed elsewhere (e.g., 8:59).

34 Jesus' answer is to direct them to Scripture. He uses the term "Law," which strictly applied only to the Pentateuch but which was extended in meaning to embrace the whole Old Testament, and this is the use here where the passage cited is from the Psalms. For the expression "your Law" see on 8:17. Jesus points out that in Psalm 82:6 it stands written, "you are 'gods'" (the citation is exact, agreeing both with the Hebrew and LXX). The passage refers to the judges of Israel, and the expression "gods" is applied to them in the exercise of their high and God-given office.

35 Now Jesus unfolds the implication of this statement. If we translate "If he . . ." (as NIV), the words will be seen as the utterance of God, but it is also possible to render "If it . . ." when the law would be the subject. Either way a very high authority is being recognized in Scripture, for Jesus goes on "and the Scripture cannot be broken." He says this, not in connection with some declaration that might be regarded as among the key declarations of the Old Testament, but of what we might perhaps call without disrespect a rather run-of-the-mill passage. The singular is usually held to refer to a definite passage from the Old Testament and not to Scripture as a whole. Even so, what was true of this passage could be true only because it was part of the inspired Scriptures and showed the characteristics of the whole. Jesus puts all his emphasis on the exact word used. The argument would fall to the ground if any other word for "judge" had been employed. Yet Jesus not only appeals to the word, but says in connection with it that Scripture cannot be broken. The term "broken" is not defined, and it is a word not
often used of Scripture or the like (though it is so used in 7:23; cf. 5:18; Matt. 5:19). But it is perfectly intelligible. It means that Scripture cannot be emptied of its force by being shown to be erroneous. Jesus' point is that the Bible calls "gods" those who were no more than men. They were themselves the recipients of "the word of God," that is they were required to hear and heed and obey that word, primarily of course in connection with their calling as judges. Yet these men were on this occasion called "gods."

36 In the light of this word of Scripture Jesus asks whether they can say\(^\text{99}\) that he blasphemes\(^\text{100}\) when he calls himself the\(^\text{101}\) Son of God (see on 5:25). It is sometimes said that this verse classes Jesus as a man among men, and shows that his claims to divinity are not to be taken seriously. But we should notice that his argument is not "Psalm 82 speaks of men as gods; therefore I in common with other men may use the term of myself," but rather, "If in any sense the Psalm may apply this term to men, then much more may it be applied to him whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world." Jesus is not classing himself among men. He calls himself "the one whom the Father set apart as his very own and sent into the world" (for "sent" see on 3:17). He separates and distinguishes himself from men. His argument is of the "How much more — " variety. A minor difficulty arises from the fact that Jesus has not previously in this Gospel told the Jews that he is "God's Son." But this is no more than a question of terminology. He has spoken of himself as "the Son," and referred to God as his Father in such a way as to leave no doubt that he claims a special relationship. It is his way of accepting the charge made against him in verse 33. He does not deny the charge, but he denies that the Jews are right in their understanding of the situation. They thought he was making himself God. He held that he was not making himself anything. He was what he was, and it was the Father who in the first instance sent him into the world, and in the second instance testified of him (5:37).

37-38 Jesus tells them to let his works (see Additional Note G, pp. 607-13) be the criterion. They show the reality of the situation. He is ready to stand or fall by the works. If he does not do\(^\text{102}\) "the works of my Father" (NIV, "what my Father does"), then he is ready for them not to believe\(^\text{103}\) him (the dative denotes simple credence, not trust; see Additional Note E, pp. 296-98). But if he does do such works the situation is different. If\(^\text{104}\) they are not prepared to believe him, let them believe the works (simple credence both times). He suggests that they do this so that\(^\text{105}\) they may
come into important knowledge. The expression translated "that you may learn and understand" contains the same verb twice, with only the tense being changed. The two verbs in NIV are an attempt to bring out the significance of the change of tense. The first verb is in the aorist with the meaning "that you may come to know," while the second is in the present, signifying "and keep on knowing." Jesus is looking for them to have a moment of insight and then to remain permanently in the knowledge that that moment has brought them. The knowledge to which a right perception of the works would bring them is that of the mutual indwelling of the Father and the Son. Such works as he had done could not be done by a mere man, acting of himself (as the blind man had clearly stated, 9:30ff.). For Jesus' obedience to the Father see on 4:34.

39 This brought the discussion to an end. But instead of renewing their attempt to stone him his enemies now tried to arrest him (though possibly they simply wanted to take him out for stoning; we do not know for certain, but it looks like judicial proceedings this time). But their attempt was unsuccessful. John does not say why; he contents himself with registering their failure. It is not necessary to think of a miracle, but it is necessary to see that until his "hour" came Jesus was safe. It is possible that the singular "hand" (NIV, "grasp") reflects a Semitic usage, for Greek often has the plural. It is also not unlikely that John has in mind a contrast between the "hand" of the enemy, impotent to arrest, and the "hand" of the Father, mighty to protect (v. 29).

c. Retirement beyond Jordan (10:40-42)

40 Then Jesus went back across the Jordan to the place where John had been baptizing in the early days. Here he stayed and many people came to him. They said, "Though John never performed a miraculous sign, all that John said about this man was true." And in that place many believed in Jesus.

The result of the Jews' hostility was that Jesus withdrew to the land on the other side of the Jordan. But this did not mean the end of his influence. People sought him out there, particularly those who had been influenced by John the Baptist's witness to him.

40 Jesus went away from Jerusalem to the far side of the Jordan. The locality is stated with some precision as the place where John the Baptist
was baptizing\textsuperscript{110} at first. This is a small touch, but it shows that the author knew what he was describing. Jesus remained there for some time ("stayed"),\textsuperscript{111} but the length of the stay is not closely defined.

41 The change of scene did not mean a diminution of activity. If Jesus was no longer moving among the people, the people sought him out where he was. It is interesting that the reason they gave\textsuperscript{112} was the ministry of John the Baptist, for he has not been mentioned since 5:36, where his activity was spoken of as though already past. But his influence lived on. People still treasured his words, and acted on them. This final mention of John in this Gospel at the same time sounds a note of high praise and puts a definite stress on his subordinate position. It is high praise, for it affirms that his witness to Jesus was true, and true in its entirety. But there is subordination, for John did no miracle.\textsuperscript{113} His function was solely to bear witness to Jesus (see on 1:7).\textsuperscript{114}

42 The result was that many came to believe on Jesus (see Additional Note E, pp. 296-98, for "believing"). The addition of "there" (NIV, "in that place") is probably significant. It may envisage a process similar to that at Samaria. There the woman brought people to Jesus, but they believed, not because of her words, but because they heard him themselves (4:39ff.). So here John's testimony led these people to seek out Jesus, but faith came because of their contact with the Lord. They believed, not at home reflecting on what John had said, but "there," where Jesus was. The word may contain an implied contrast with Judea. In the place where we might have thought Jesus would be welcomed people tried to stone him. Now in despised Perea people believed in him. It may also be significant that in this remote area "the Jews" would probably have little influence.
1. In Isa. 56 the leaders are both "shepherds" and "watchmen" (cf. the "watchmen" of this passage), and they are castigated as "blind" and as those who "lack knowledge" (cf. 9:40-41; 10:6).

2. For the significance of the role of shepherd cf. Rev. 2:27, ποιμανεῖν ἀντίτυπον ἐν ὀρθὸν θρόνῳ. The same verb is used in Matt. 2:6 (in a quotation from Mic. 5:2) to describe the activity of the messianic ruler (ἐν ὀρθόμενος).

3. Cf. Richardson, "We must, however, clearly understand that 'shepherd' in biblical phraseology means 'ruler', and St John is claiming that Jesus is the ideal ruler of prophetic expectation."

4. Lightfoot thinks 10:1-21 "to be closely connected with ch. 9" and finds grounds for this in the Old Testament use of the shepherd-sheep imagery.

5. But such statements are not uncommon in this Gospel. Jesus is the bread of life (6:35), and he gives it (6:51). He speaks the truth (8:45-46) and he is the truth (14:6). Throughout the Gospel he is depicted as showing us the way, and he is the way (14:6).

6. Brown sees the explanation in the presence of more than one parable: w. 1-3a form a parable dealing with the proper approach to the sheep, through the gate opened by the gatekeeper, vv. 3b-5 are a separate parable concerned with the relationship of sheep to shepherd. It is possible to understand the passage this way, but it does not seem necessary in the light of the facts adduced in n. 5 above.

7. Cullmann finds in this chapter and especially in v. 18 an intentional contrast with the Teacher of Righteousness of the Qumran scrolls. He says of the reference to the voluntary nature of Jesus' death in v. 18, "The emphasis with which this is said makes clear that Jesus' death is being interpreted in intentional contrast to another conception" (SNT, p. 31). But this is too specific. As W. S. LaSor says, it would be just as easy to make out a case for a polemic against Socrates or Lao-tze (Amazing Dead Sea Scrolls [Chicago, 1956], p. 212). The words are general and must be understood so.

8. J. A. T. Robinson finds that this parable stands the test of genuineness, and he points out that it is significant that this should be so in a passage that obviously is not derived from the Synoptists (he also argues that there has been a fusion of two parables; Twelve New Testament Studies [London, 1962], pp. 67-75).

9. It is difficult to class this section exactly. It is called αὐλή in v. 6 (where see note), which may indicate a proverb, or, more generally, a "dark saying" of some sort. It differs from the Synoptic parables in that there is no connected story. Most people call it an allegory, but Lagrange objects that in an allegory the one person can scarcely be represented by two figures, as here Jesus is both shepherd and door. He prefers to call it un petit tableau parabolique. The name we give it matters little, but in our interpretation we must bear in mind that it does not fit neatly into any of our usual categories. It is basically an allegory, but with distinctive features of its own.

10. αἰμαθή is used for the court adjacent to a house in Matt. 26:58, etc. LS indicates its use to denote "steading for cattle" as far back as Homer. This might be the courtyard of a house, or an enclosure especially for sheep.

11. This is an unusual use of αὐσταίνω for this Gospel. Elsewhere John uses it of going up to Jerusalem for feasts 9 times, of ascending to heaven 5 times, and in 21:11 of Peter's going up and dragging the net to land.

12. Strictly κλέπτης denotes something like a sneak-thief (it is used of Judas, 12:6), and ληστής a brigand (it is used of Barabbas, 18:40). The combination may denote a readiness to engage in violence as well as dishonesty (cf. v. 10), though we should not make too sharp a distinction between them. Incidentally we find the same two words in Obadiah 5.

13. Some translations read "a shepherd," but this is erroneous. This is another example of the definite predicate preceding the verb and therefore lacking the article (see on 1:1). We should translate "the shepherd." Some commentators treat ποιμήν as more or less adjectival owing to the absence of the article, but this is to overlook New Testament usage.
Augustine connects this passage with chapter 9 by emphasizing that there is one right way of entering, and the Pharisees do not use it. He also says, “there are many who, according to a custom of this life, are called good people — good men, good women, innocent, and observers as it were of what is commanded in the law; paying respect to their parents, abstaining from adultery, doing no murder, committing no theft, giving no false witness against any one, and observing all else that the law requires — yet are not Christians. . . . Pagans may say, then, We live well. If they enter not by the door, what good will that do them, whereof they boast?” (45.2; p. 250).

For ἀκοόω with the genitive of the thing heard see on 5:25. It means that the sheep hear the shepherd's voice with understanding and appreciation.

16. ἰδιά is significant. The shepherd does not call sheep in general, but his own sheep. He has a call that they (but not other sheep) recognize.

17. H. V. Morton gives an account of this sort of thing: “Early one morning I saw an extraordinary sight not far from Bethlehem. Two shepherds had evidently spent the night with their flocks in a cave. The sheep were all mixed together and the time had come for the shepherds to go in different directions. One of the shepherds stood some distance from the sheep and began to call. First one, then another, then four or five animals ran towards him; and so on until he had counted his whole flock” (In the Steps of the Master [London, 1935], p. 155). George Adam Smith similarly tells of three or four shepherds separating out their flocks solely by their peculiar calls (The Historical Geography of the Holy Land [London, 1931], pp. 311-12).

18. Some points of language are worth noting, ἰδιά reminds us of the particular relationship of these sheep to the shepherd. They belong, πάντα indicates that he secures them all. ἐκβάλη is somewhat puzzling. It is the word used of expelling the formerly blind man from the synagogue (9:34) and may form a link between the two narratives. But not much can be made of this, as the sense is different. There the false leaders expelled the men; here the rightful shepherd compels the sheep to leave the fold, but for their good. The word does have about it the air of force. Left to themselves the sheep might not go in the right way, but the shepherd constrains them. He uses force if necessary to ensure that their best interests are served.

19. The verb is plural, though the subject is neuter plural, and two previous verbs with the same subject are singular (ἄκοοςει, v. 3, and ἄκοσλωθει, v. 4). The singular occurs in verses 3, 4, 12, and 16, and the plural in verses 4, 5 (three times), 8, 10, 14, 16, 27 (twice), and 28, while the textual evidence is divided in verse 16 (γενήσεται and γενήσονται). It is difficult to find a reason for the variation.

20. This is one of only three examples in this Gospel of a future indicative with οὐ μή (the others are in 4:14; 6:35), a construction not common anywhere in the New Testament. J. H. Moulton speaks of it as "a possible, though moribund, construction" and finds no apparent difference in meaning from the usual aorist subjunctive (M, I, p. 190).

21. Probably some emphasis is intended by placing των ἄλλοτρίων before τήν φωνήν.

22. The word is παραμια. It is not found in the Synoptic Gospels, while παραβολή, so frequent there, is not found in John. It is difficult to make a real distinction of meaning between them, and both probably reflect the Hebrew עֲבָרָה. Either can be used of a short saying (παραβολή in Luke 4:23; παραμια in 2 Pet. 2:22) or of a more extensive passage like the present one. Either way it may require careful thought or an explanation before its meaning is grasped. This is not to say that there is no difference between the parables so characteristic of the Synoptic Gospels and this passage. The differences are plain. All that I am saying is that it is difficult to make a hard-and-fast distinction between the meanings of the two words. The two terms are found together in Sir. 39:3; 47:17.

23. The verb is ἔγνωσαν. There is a certain emphasis on "knowing" in these verses (cf. οἴδασιν, vv. 4 and 5).

24. John uses πάλιν for repetition (as in 4:3, 13), and with the thought of going "back" (6:15, where see note). But sometimes it is little more than a connective (e.g., 16:28), as here.
25. Instead of ἡ θύρα the Sahidic and Achmimic and p75 read ὁ ποιμήν. Despite adoption of this reading by Moffatt it is difficult to take it seriously. It would seem to be an obvious correction for a scribe who was concentrating on the thought of the Good Shepherd and did not discern that another thought is being expressed here.

26. Barrett proposes a very complicated background for the saying, including the thought of a door in heaven in Greek literature from Homer downward, "the gate of heaven" (Gen. 28:17) and similar Old Testament expressions, and the use of such terms in apocalyptic literature, the Synoptic Gospels, and early Christian theology. He also ranges forward to Ignatius and Hegesippus. On the Synoptics he says: "These synoptic passages have for the most part an eschatological reference, which John has characteristically transformed, using Old Testament material which the earlier tradition had already selected, but applying it with special reference to the person of Jesus (rather than to the kingdom) and in such a way as to make it appropriate to the intellectual atmosphere in which he lived." All this seems unnecessarily complicated. The very fact that "door" turns up in such varied literatures is evidence that it comes naturally to people to use it, and there is no need to postulate a complicated dependence. Cf. Ps. 118:20. The figure is used a good deal in early Christian writings, e.g., Ignatius, Philad. 9:1; Hegesippus (Eusebius, Hist. Eccl. 2.23.8); Hermas, Sim. 9.12.1; Clem. Rom. 48:4. Hippolytus finds a similar reference in a Naassene writer (Refut. 5.3; ANF, V, p. 54); cf. also Acts of John, 95; Clem. Horn. 3.52 (ANF, VIII, p. 248).

27. NIV translates the genitive τῶν προβάτων as "for the sheep," making this statement synonymous with v. 9. But in view of v. 8 it seems better to take "the door of the sheep" here as "the gate leading to where the sheep are" (Cassirer; JB has a note, "The gate that gives access to the sheep").

28. This may be the reason for the omission of the words πρό έμοϋ in p45vid p75 Κ* Δ28 lat syrṣ P sah. But since they are read by p66 Κ o A B D W f13 33 700 boh they should be accepted. Metzger's committee found a decision difficult, but retained the words, putting them in brackets. Bultmann emphasizes the exclusiveness and the absoluteness of the claim Jesus is making. He brooks no rival.

29. Some of the Gnostics appear to have used the expression to discredit the entire Old Testament, including the God who speaks there. Hippolytus says that Valentinus held this view (Refut. 6.30; ANF, V, p. 89).

30. For the view that the Teacher of Righteousness of the Qumran scrolls is meant see n. 7 above.

31. NIV has "were," but the verb is εἰσίν.

32. Morgan cites a story told him by Sir George Adam Smith to illustrate this point. "He was one day travelling with a guide, and came across a shepherd and his sheep. He fell into conversation with him. The man showed him the fold into which the sheep were led at night. It consisted of four walls, with a way in. Sir George said to him, 'That is where they go at night?' 'Yes,' said the shepherd, 'and when they are in there, they are perfectly safe.' 'But there is no door,' said Sir George. 'I am the door,' said the shepherd. He was not a Christian man, he was not speaking in the language of the New Testament. He was speaking from the Arab shepherd's standpoint. Sir George looked at him and said, 'What do you mean by the door?' Said the shepherd, 'When the light has gone, and all the sheep are inside, I lie in that open space, and no sheep ever goes out but across my body, and no wolf comes in unless he crosses my body; I am the door.'" If this is the understanding of it (as several commentators think) the expression points to the absolute safety of the sheep in the care of the Good Shepherd. But such a sheepfold is difficult to reconcile with v. 3.

33. Cf. Murray, "The door, however, has characteristics which are not conveyed under the image of the way. First, the door suggests, even more distinctly than the way, a certain exclusiveness of function. There may conceivably be more ways than one of getting to a goal. In the fold of which our Lord is speaking, He has already made it clear that there is but one door." Bultmann has an
interesting note in which he draws attention to the exclusiveness and intolerance that attend all genuine revelation. When the true way is revealed it is impossible to be tolerant of the various false ways that can lead only to error and disaster.

34. It is found in 3:17; 5:34; 10:9; 11:12; 12:27, 47. Matthew uses it 15 times, Mark 15 times, and Luke 17 times, so that John's use is much less marked. He also lacks the frequent Synoptic use of the verb for healing (except for 11:12, and even this is not quite the same; it does not refer to a healing activity of Jesus). With John it signifies much the same as having eternal life, and indeed the two ideas lie close together in 3:16-17 and here (cf. v. 10).

35. θύση is usually understood as though it meant simply "kill" and were little more than a synonym for the following υπολέψη. But the word means "to sacrifice." Since "to sacrifice" generally meant also to provide a meal for the worshipers, the secondary meaning developed, "to kill for food." These are the two normal meanings for the verb; in the New Testament, apart from this passage, there is no occasion on which the verb does not have one or other of these meanings. G. D. Kilpatrick examines the word and concludes that in the present passage "the three verbs have each a proper meaning and none is otiose, 'steal, kill for food, and destroy'" (BT, 12 [1961], p. 132).

36. χαλός of course means "beautiful" as well as "good," and Rieu translates "I am the shepherd, the Shepherd Beautiful." Temple also translates "beautiful," but he adds, "Of course this translation exaggerates. But it is important that the word for 'good' here is one that represents, not the moral rectitude of goodness, nor its austerity, but its attractiveness. We must not forget that our vocation is so to practise virtue that men are won to it; it is possible to be morally upright repulsively!" This comment is interesting and draws attention to an important truth, but we must bear in mind John's penchant for variation. In particular it is difficult to find a difference in meaning between χαλός and ἄγαθος in this Gospel (see on 1:46). A shepherd was an autocrat (the word is often used of an absolute ruler); Jesus is saying that his shepherding is benevolent, not oppressive.

37. We should notice John's habit of introducing variation in statements he repeats three times. Here and in verse 14 there are three closely similar statements about the Good Shepherd. In the second, however, "the good shepherd" is not simply a title of Jesus, but the subject of "lays down his life for the sheep."

38. τήν ψυχήν τιθέναι is a peculiarly Johannine turn of phrase, and one he uses a number of times (w. 15,17,18 [twice]; 13:37,38; 15:13; 1 John 3:16 [twice]). We might have expected τήν ψυχήν δοῦναι as in Mark 10:45. John's expression is not found in LXX, the nearest to it being ἔθημεν τὴν ψυχήν μου ἐν τῇ χειρὶ μου (Judg. 12:3; cf. 1 Sam. 19:5; 28:21; Ps. 118 (119):109; Job 13:14). But there the meaning is risk the life; here it is give it (GNB misses this with "is willing to die"). The verb is used with τὴν ψυχήν μου in 1 Kings 19:2. The expression does not appear to be classical, LS citing only this Gospel.

39. For ύπέρ see on 6:51.

40. Though David, at least, put his life in jeopardy (1 Sam. 17:33-37; cf. also Gen. 31:39). David was, of course, remembered as the shepherd-king (Ps. 78:70-72).

41. Cf. Marsh, "The story of the 'passion' in John is not an account of what men did to Jesus, but rather the story of what he did for them" (p. 399).

42. The expression ὁ μισθωτός καὶ οὐκ ὁ ποιμήν is unusual. The single article links the two members closely together. Our attention is also caught by οὐκ since μή is more usual with participles. This carries some emphasis on factuality. This man is certainly not a shepherd. One is reminded of names in the Old Testament compounded with "not," such as "Lo-ammi." Perhaps the meaning here is that a hireling is a "no-shepherd." Moulton includes this passage in a list in many of which "we can distinctly recognise, it seems, the lingering consciousness that the proper negative for a statement of a downright fact is οὐ. . . . The closeness of the participle to the indicative in the kinds of sentence found in this list makes the survival of οὐ natural" (M, I, p. 232). BDF notes a preference for καὶ οὐ over καὶ μή but also an emphasis on the negation (430[1]).
43. The quotation is from B.Mes. 7:9. The responsibility of the hired shepherd is laid down in B.Mes. 7:8: "a paid guardian or a hirer may take an oath if the beast was lamed or driven away or dead, but he must make restitution if it was lost or stolen."

44. I do not understand how Berkeley makes a question out of this: "what does he care about the sheep?" If it were a question the ού would look for a positive answer. There is, moreover, nothing to correspond to "what."

45. This assumes the correctness of the punctuation of the NIV. It is, however, possible to put a full stop after τά έμα and begin a new sentence with καθώς γίνωσκε μύ ο Πατήρ. The difficulty with this is in understanding the point of inserting a reference to the mutual love of the Father and the Son in this way. An objection raised against the view I have adopted is that it implies that the knowledge disciples have of Christ is comparable to that between the Father and the Son. But this is reading too much into καθώς. It does not necessarily signify a very close parallelism; for Bultmann it introduces "not merely a comparison but an explanation" (p. 382, n. 2). In any case, it is not so much the degree of knowledge that is in view as its reciprocal character. For Jesus' knowledge see on 4:18.

46. We have here one of John's threefold repetitions with variation. There are references to Jesus' laying down of his life in verses 15, 17, and 18 and each is worded slightly differently from the others.

47. We cannot reproduce the play on words in English, μία ποίμνη, είς ποιμήν. The KJV renders "one fold," a reading that goes back to Jerome's Vulgate. But the MS evidence is solidly against it and we must read "one flock."

48. J. W. Pryor rejects Martyn's view arising from his two-tier formula that the verse "expresses the hope that Jewish Christians scattered by Jewish persecution in the post-Jamnia situation after 80 AD will be reunited into the one fold," in favor of the view that the reference is to Gentiles who would be united with Jewish Christians (RThR, XLVII [1988], p. 46).

49. Loyd explains it in these words: "The love of God must needs express itself; and therefore the Father could not love the Son, or know Him, if that Son did not express the Father's love."

50. ινα is used with full telic force the emphasis will be on the thought that the death of Christ is viewed in the light of triumph of the resurrection. The resurrection is not simply a happening that chanced to occur, but is as necessary as the crucifixion. The crucifixion led inevitably to the resurrection. But in view of the variety in the usage of ινα the point cannot be insisted on.

51. It is likely that the more difficult reading ἔρεν is to be preferred, though read only by p45. * B (ρ75 is defective, but the editors think the space indicates ἔρεν). In this case Jesus views his death as so certain that it may be regarded as already accomplished.

52. "Authority" is given some emphasis by the repetition of ἐξουσίαν. The same word is repeated in similar fashion by Pilate (19:10).

53. Jesus affirms that he himself has power to take it again. Strachan says, "In the New Testament Jesus is never represented as rising again by his own power." See also Hoskyns: "Elsewhere throughout the New Testament (i.e. apart from here and 2:19) the Resurrection of Jesus is always referred to as an act of God." It is undoubtedly true that the New Testament prefers to speak of God as raising Jesus, but Jesus several times predicted that he would rise (e.g., Mark 8:31; Luke 24:7) and some passages say that he did rise (Acts 10:41; 17:3; 1 Thess. 4:14). We ought not to put any opposition between the Father and the Son in this matter, nor should we doubt that the habitual New Testament form of expression is that the Father raised the Son. But we should not overlook the fact that there is also a strand of New Testament teaching that says that the Son "rose." The present passage is part of this strand.

54. John is notably interested in the commandments of God or of Christ. He uses ἐντολή 11 times (all but one referring to divine commandments). The Johannine Epistles use the word 18 times, but no other writing has it more often than Romans with 7 times.

55. σχίσμα, as in 7:43 (where see note) and 9:16.
56. *NIV*, it is true, renders σεληνιαζομένους as "epileptics." But the word is equivalent to our "lunatic." *LS* gives its meaning as "to be moonstruck" (though it goes on to explain this as epileptic). *KJV*, *Phillips*, and others have translations like "lunatic" or "insane."

57. For ἀκοῦω with the genitive see on 5:25.

58. The question introduced by μή looks for a negative answer.

59. Cf. Barrett, "John brings out the point that the issue between Jesus and the Jews is in the last resort Christological, and makes clearer the absolute relation between Jesus and the Father."

60. For a full discussion of this feast see O. S. Rankin, *The Origins of the Festival of Hanukkah* (Edinburgh, 1930). On the present passage he says, "That this theme, the divine sovereignty in the New Age, should be selected by the author of the Fourth Gospel as the topic for the days of the enkainia may not appear to be accidental if it be recognized that in other instances his mention of a festival serves a wider purpose than merely that of connecting the ministry of Jesus with Jerusalem" (p. 278).

61. Josephus gives an account of the institution of the festival (Ant 12.316-25). He concludes, "And from that time to the present we observe this festival, which we call the festival of Lights, giving this name to it, I think, from the fact that the right to worship appeared to us at a time when we hardly dared hope for it."

62. Cf. Strachan, "Here he makes use of another feature of the ceremonial of the Feast of Dedication. The altar was rededicated. Here Jesus dedicates himself to death (v. 36)." Similarly Lightfoot maintains that "here the Lord's ministry, which will reach its climax in the passion, is set forth as the one true dedication, which is to supersede and replace the Jewish festival."

63. W. Lüthi reminds us that it is all too easy to repeat the mistake of the Jews. "Nowadays we can understand all too well these people, in their militant mood, rejecting a Shepherd who lets Himself be crucified. A God who fights His battles like a shepherd, and with sheep, is no more popular today than at the feast of the dedication of the Temple. That is where the hidden danger lies for us: it is so easy to whip up a crusading mood over the shameful wrongs of the world and, in so doing, to deny the Shepherd and no longer hear His voice" (pp. 144-45).

64. τότε is read by ρ66c ρ75 B W etc. and should probably be accepted. Bernard maintains that this word "indicates here that some time had elapsed since the last date mentioned, viz. the Feast of Tabernacles (737)." We should gather the lapse of time, however, from other things than the use of τότε, which does not necessarily indicate any such thing (cf. Acts 17:14). Wright in fact argues that the word "suggests a close connexion with the preceding passage." So also Tasker and others. The lapse of time would be more probable if the alternative reading δέ be accepted with ρ66w Χ A D Θ f 13 etc.

65. For the article with "Ιεροσόλυμα see on 2:23. The point of mentioning Jerusalem may be that this feast could be observed anywhere; lights were lit in homes. It was not like the three great festivals when the men were required to go up to the capital. There is point accordingly in mentioning that Jesus was at Jerusalem for this feast.


67. ἔλεγον probably indicates persistence. They pressed their question. Cf. Weymouth, "kept asking Him."

68. The Greek is Ἐως πότε τὴν ψυχήν ἠμῶν αἴρεις; The meaning of NIV may well be possible, but few passages are adduced in which τὴν ψυχήν αἴρω has the meaning "hold in suspense" (BAGD cites only one and that of the 12th century A.D.). In LXX the expression is used of religious aspiration, lifting up the soul to God (Ps. 25:1; 86:4; 143:8), but this is an impossible meaning here.
Similar to LXX is Josephus's reference to certain Israelites who "with hearts elated at the peril, were ready to face the horror of it" (Ant. 3.48).

69. παρρησία has the meaning "boldly" as well as "plainly." The choice of word may contain the hint of an accusation of timidity.

70. A. Pallis argues persuasively for this translation from the usage in modern Greek, which, he thinks, has retained something of the idiom. He cites ώς πότε θά μας βγάζεις τήν ψυχή, "how long will you plague us?" (A Few Notes on the Gospels according to St. Mark and St. Matthew [Liverpool, 1903], pp. v-vi; so also in Notes on St John and the Apocalypse [Oxford, n.d.], pp. 23-24). This must remain a possible interpretation of the passage. Marsh says of the view that the words mean "How long will you vex, trouble, annoy us in this way?" that this "seems to make better sense of the passage" (p. 404).

71. The cogent argument in favor of this is that the nearest parallel to the expression, which is no further away than verse 18, is ούδείς ήρεν αύτήν άπ’ έμοϋ, where αύτήν refers back to ψυχήν and the expression signifies death. See also the similar construction in Acts 8:33 (a quotation from the LXX).

72. Cf. Dodd, "With complete dramatic appropriateness the Jews ask 'Are you the Messiah?' Jesus's avowal is all but explicit, but in the course of the dialogue we learn what the Messiah really is: He is the Son who being one with the Father is the Giver of eternal life" (IFG, p. 361).

73. Cf. Calvin, "they accuse His teaching of obscurity, when it was abundantly plain and distinct but for falling on deaf ears."

74. Ryle has an interesting note: "We should observe how our Lord always and confidently appeals to the evidence of His miracles. Those who try to depreciate and sneer at miracles, seem to forget how often they are brought forward as good witnesses in the Bible. This, in fact, is their great object and purpose." The general attitude toward miracles in modern times should not blind us to the significance such "works" held for the New Testament writers.

75. Ἀλλά (see on 1:8).

76. Barrett argues that in John εις τόν αἰώνα does no more than strengthen the negative οὐ μή: "not "They shall not perish eternally' but 'They shall never perish,' " and he cites 11:26. That passage, however, seems to prove the very opposite. Jesus, surely, is not telling Martha that the one who believes in him "will never die." There is a sense in which he will die (unless he is alive at the Second Coming!). Jesus is saying, 'He will not die eternally.' And so here. In any case it is difficult to understand what "they shall never perish" means if we exclude "They shall not perish eternally."

77. There is a notion of violence in ἄρπάζω. But even this will not suffice to remove them from Christ's hand.

78. δ...μείζων is read by B* latt bo Ambr Hier; the masculine δ...μείζων by p66 f1 f13 syr sa ac ac2. the combination δ...μείζων by K W and δ...μείζων by A Θ (p75 has δ, but a gap prevents our knowing whether it had μείζων or μείζων). D has the reading δ δεδωκάς μοι πάντων μείζων. This is a confused picture, but the best explanation appears to be that the first reading is original and that the others represent attempts to make better sense of it. The neuter is undoubtedly difficult (cf. Matt. 12:42; Luke 11:31), but cf. 1:4; 6:39; 17:2, and the somewhat similar Πατέρ, δ δεδωκάς μοι, θέλω... (17:24). Hoskyns refuses to see much difference in meaning. All the readings, he says, mean that "The Father is the only source of the ultimate security of the believers in Jesus. They belong to Jesus because they have been given to Him by the Father." Those who reject the neuter and take the masculine, at least in the pronoun, do not always face the difficulties of this reading. Neither δεδωκέν... άρπάζειν has an object on their view, and this is an unlikely piece of Greek. For the Father's gifts to the Son see on 3:35.

79. For the use of μείζων in this sense cf. Matt. 23:17, 19.


81. Twentieth Century renders, "What my Father has entrusted to me is more than all else." Cf. also Knox, "This trust which my Father has committed to me is more precious than all else."
82. This assumes that the generally accepted text is correct. A difficulty is the use of the present infinitive ἀρπάζειν after δύναται, whereas, unless there were some stress on continuity, we would anticipate the aorist, ἀρπάσαι. This is actually read by a few cursives, but it seems to be only an attempt to improve the grammar. The Sinaitic Syriac omits δύναται (see Burkitt's edition), and presupposes ἀρπάζει. Abbott cites this reading also from Origen and thinks it is probably correct (2767). But this, too, looks like an attempt to tidy up the grammar. It seems much more probable that δύναται ἀρπάζειν is original.

83. Ἐν, not είς. There is a similar expression in 1 Cor. 3:8, ὁ φυτεύων δὲ καὶ ὁ ποτίζων γυ εἰσιν, and this should warn us against reading too much into the expression. We should also notice the usage in 17:11 where Jesus prays ἵνα ὡσιν εν καθώς ἡμεῖς. Cf. also 17:22-23, ἵνα χριστὴν ἐν καθώς ἡμεῖς ἐν . . . ἵνα ὀφείλη μετελειπομένου εἰς ἑν.

84. Augustine is often quoted in order to be refuted. He comments, "when He says, '1 and the Father are one,' hear both, both the one, unum, and the are, sumus, and thou shalt be delivered both from Charybdis and from Scylla. In these two words, in that He said one, he delivers thee from Arius; in that He said are, He delivers thee from Sabellius. I f one, therefore not diverse; if are, therefore both Father and Son (36.9; p. 211). It is, of course, true that our Lord was not speaking with respect to the controversies that excited the church in later times. But it is also true that his words have implications, and it was natural for those embroiled in the controversies to seek out the implications. C. K. Barrett remarks, "I t may still be true that the Fourth Gospel not only raises dangerous questions but also contributes to their solution" (Essays on John [London, 1982], p. 21).

85. "Picked up" is ἐβάστασαν, "carried." There would be no stones in Solomon's colonnade, and they would have had to bring them there.

86. Yet we should not overlook the fact that in certain cases lynch law was encouraged rather than the reverse. "I f a man stole a sacred vessel or cursed by Kosem or made an Aramean woman his paramour, the zealots may fall upon him. If a priest served (at the Altar) in a state of uncleanness his brethren the priests did not bring him to the court, but the young men among the priests took him outside the Temple Court and split open his brain with clubs" (Sanh. 9:6). This last mentioned practice is all the more curious in that the legal penalty for the offense was apparently no more than scourging (Makk. 3:2).

87. The miracles were "signs" pointing out the way; therefore "shown" is appropriate. The use of the aorist is perhaps curious, but it must be borne in mind that the perfect of δείκνυμι is not common. It does not occur anywhere in the New Testament (where the verb is used 32 times).

88. The word order puts some emphasis on καλά and ἔργα. The works Jesus did were good works from the Father. They were about to stone him, but what he had done was work, not blasphemy. The adjective καλός is that used of the Shepherd (vv. 11, 14). As is the Shepherd, so are his works.

89. ποιον, "of what kind." It refers to the quality of the action, a quality Jesus has in this case characterized as καλά. It is the quality of the actions that shows their divine origin, and the choice of word invites the Jews to consider their significance.

90. BDF sees in λιθάζετε an example of a "conative present," explained as "an attempted but incomplete ction." They translate "want to stone me?" (319).

91. It is sometimes said that this charge can scarcely be historical since according to the Mishnah it was necessary to pronounce the sacred name for anyone to be guilty of blasphemy (Sank. 7:5), and there is no evidence that Jesus did this. But this ignores the facts that (a) the Mishnah represents Pharisaic Judaism and does not give the views of the Sadducees who were important in this connection; (b) Jesus' enemies were anxious to be rid of him and would not boggle at legal niceties; (c) in any case there was a broader interpretation of blasphemy, based on passages like Num. 15:30-31; Deut. 21:22, as SBk shows (I, pp. 1008-19). They regard the present passage as coming under this broader heading, based on Deut. 21:22 (p. 1017).
καὶ δὲ does not introduce a new charge, "and that," but explains and amplifies the charge already made, "even that."

93. For John's use of ἄνθρωπος of Jesus see on 4:29.

94. McClymont neatly comments: "In reality He, being God, had become man (Phil, ii.5-8)."

95. For John's formula of citation see on 2:17.

96. I have discussed the passage in Ps. 82 in The Biblical Doctrine of Judgment (London, 1960), pp. 34ff. Since then J. A. Emerton has argued that "gods" in the Psalm refers to beings who "were regarded as angels by the Jews, but as gods by the gentiles." He concludes that Jesus "does not find an Old Testament text to prove directly that men can be called god. He goes back to fundamental principles and argues, more generally, that the word 'god' can, in certain circumstances, be applied to beings other than God himself, to whom he has committed authority" (JThS, n.s. XI [1960], pp. 330, 332). Emerton's discussion, in my opinion, suffers from the defect that it makes no allowance for the context in Ps. 82. It is very difficult to understand how the Psalm can refer to either angels or gods. The subject is human judges. A better explanation is that of A. T. Hanson, who takes seriously the rabbinic view that the Psalm was spoken by God to Israel at Sinai (NTS, 11 [1964-65], pp. 158-62). He thinks that John had in mind the preexistent Word, rather than God, as addressing the Jews, and that this gives the citation relevance: "if to be addressed by the pre-existent Word justifies men in being called gods, indirect and mediated though that address was (coming perhaps through Moses, certainly written down only through David), far more are we justified in applying the title Son of God to the human bearer of the pre-existent Word, sanctified and sent by the Father as he was, in unmediated and direct presence" (p. 161). M. de Jonge and A. S. van der Woude draw attention to the Qumran scroll in which Melchizedek is regarded as the speaker of Ps. 82 and evil angels as the addressees (NTS, 12 [1965-66], pp. 301-26). They disagree with Hanson's interpretation but do not offer one of their own. Emerton claims the scroll as support for his position (JThS, n.s. XVII [1966], pp. 399-401), but Hanson disputes the correctness of this and vindicates his own position in the face of the criticisms offered (NTS, 13 [1966-67], pp. 363-67). That the words refer to Israel as a whole might perhaps be favored by Jesus' words to those "to whom the word of God came," but the actual functions in the Psalm are those of judges, not of all Israel, and certainly the word of God "came" to the judges.

97. It is possible to take these words as a parenthesis (so NIV). But it is perhaps better to regard them as depending also on 81, which then introduces two certainties — that the passage calls humans "gods," and that the Scripture cannot be broken.

98. B. B. Warfield has a valuable note on this passage (The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible [London, 1951], pp. 138ff.) in which he stresses this point: "Now, what is the particular thing in Scripture, for the confirmation of which the indefectible authority of Scripture is thus invoked? It is one of its most casual clauses — more than that, the very form of its expression in one of its most casual clauses. This means, of course, that in the Savior's view the indefectible authority of Scripture attaches to the very form of expression of its most casual clauses. It belongs to Scripture through and through, down to its most minute particulars, that it is of indefectible authority" (p. 140).

99. There is an air of incredulity about the question, ὑμεῖς is emphatic — you who regard yourselves as the keepers and expounders of the Law. Abbott points out that only in special circumstances can ὑμεῖς λέγετε be used interrogatively at the beginning of a clause, and he includes this passage as one of two in John in which "a conditional clause ('i f . . . as you cannot deny') prepares the way for something incongruous with that condition, which incongruity is expressed by an interrogative or exclamation of amazement" (2244).

100. BDF selects this as "a characteristic example" of the tendency of the New Testament narrators, and especially Mark and John, to use direct rather than indirect speech. They point out that βλασφημεῖν "would connect up much better with the preceding δν etc." (470 [1]). Though direct speech is used the quotation does not give us the exact words used, at least as John reports it. He is giving us the sense of their words rather than a transcript.
101. ὤιος is anarthrous, and sometimes this is pressed ("a" son), but wrongly. This is surely another example of the definite predicate preceding the copula and therefore being without the article ("the" Son; see on 1:1).

102. εἰ οὐ ποιῶ is used rather than εἰ μὴ ποιῶ, which probably signifies that the negative is more or less equivalent to the á-private, as though negative and verb were one: " i f I were to leave undone »,",* " i f I were to omit to do. . . ."

103. The present imperative is curious, for we would naturally understand μὴ πιστεύετε to mean "stop believing." Since such an understanding is impossible here we must take it to mean "do not have a continual trust."

104. Burton classes this among concessive clauses referring to the future. Where the subjunctive is used it denotes "a future possibility, or what is rhetorically conceived to be possible." He goes on, "Καὶ εαῦ introduces an extreme case, usually one which is represented as highly improbable" (Moods, 285[b]).

105. ίνα will here have its full telic force.

106. ίνα γνώτε καὶ γινώσκητε. Some MSS ( rdr 13 etc.) read πιστεύσετε, but this seems to be no more than a scribal variant arising because of the difficulty of γινώσκητε after γνώτε. The same is perhaps true of the omission of the second verb in D syrs etc.

107. There is a change of tense: ἔζητον, "they kept on seeking"; πιάσαν, "to lay hold on him once and for all." ἔξηλθεν also points to a single action: "he went out."

108. See the discussion by Turner (M, III, pp. 23ff.).

109. We should perhaps translate πάλιν as "back" rather than "again" (see on 6:15). Jesus went back to the early scenes of his ministry, the place where John had been as he baptized. Cf. Moffatt, "went across Jordan, back to the spot. . . ."

110. It is a question whether we are to understand ἣν . . . βαπτίζων as a periphrastic tense or not. If so, the stress will be on the continuous nature of John's activities. But the context does not require anything of the sort, and it seems better to take the expression as signifying "where John was at first, baptizing."

111. εμείνεται is read by the MS tradition as a whole, but εμείνεται by B it. If the former reading be adopted the aorist may be constative, regarding the stay as a completed whole, or perhaps progressive, "he settled down." In its favor is the fact that it is John's habit to use the aorist rather than the imperfect of this verb (the imperfect does not occur elsewhere in this Gospel). Against it is the possibility that he chose the less usual tense here to stress the length of Jesus' stay.

112. ελεγον is a continuous tense: "they kept saying."


114. The grammatical construction is a little unusual. After Ἰωάννης μέν we anticipate οὕτως δέ. Alternatively πάντα δέ might have been preceded by σημεῖον μέν. It is difficult to understand how πάντα δέ answers to Ἰωάννης μέν.
JOHN 11

R. THE SEVENTH SIGN — THE RAISING OF LAZARUS
(11:1-57)

In a sense the problems of the Fourth Gospel may be summed up in miniature in this chapter. John narrates here a stupendous miracle — the raising of a man who had been dead for four days. Moreover, he says that this was done in circumstances that necessarily involved publicity, and that in Bethany, a little village no more than a couple of miles from Jerusalem. The miracle was witnessed by some of "the Jews," who told the Pharisees what had been done (v. 46). It was on account of this that the chief priests and Pharisees consulted about how Jesus could be destroyed and thus was instituted the chain of events that was to lead to his death.

All this is perfectly straightforward. Critics might be expected to boggle at the thought of a dead man's being raised, but had this been the only Gospel we possessed it is likely that the discussion would have centered on the type of event that lay at the heart of the story. But we also possess the three Synoptic Gospels, and none of them so much as mentions this miracle.¹ It may be fairly argued in many cases that there was no reason why the Synoptists should include things that John narrates. They had plenty of material of their own, and in any case no one expects them to have known all the information that was at the disposal of the Fourth Evangelist.

But in the case of the raising of Lazarus things are said to be different. The publicity of which John speaks makes it difficult to understand how this miracle should not have been known to the Synoptists. And if they did know it, and if it had the consequences that John says it had, it is difficult to understand why they should have omitted it.² They seem to give to the events associated with the triumphal entry and the cleansing of the Temple

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¹ The reader is referred to the notes on John 11:18-25.
² The reader is referred to the notes on John 11:45-53.
the role of initiating the events that were to issue in the crucifixion, whereas for John it seems to be the raising of Lazarus that does this.

It is not surprising accordingly that quite a battle has raged around the interpretation of this chapter. Of those who do not view the story as historical some have suggested that it is inspired by the scattered references in Luke. There we read of Martha and Mary (Luke 10:38-42), of an unnamed woman who anointed Jesus (Luke 7:36-50), and of a character called Lazarus in a parable, and a resurrection parable at that (Luke 16:19-31). But in the first place, it is difficult to see how such material could give rise to our story, and in the second, it is a fallacy to suppose that John had no information other than that contained in the Synoptics. Others find in it no more than a dramatic illustration of Jesus' words, "I am the resurrection and the life" (v. 25; cf. also 5:21, 25), a kind of acted parable. It is difficult to reconcile this with John's method, however, and few find this really satisfactory. It seems clear that John believed he was narrating something that had actually happened. The multiplicity of factual details he includes is evidence of that. In a symbolic narrative there would be no need for details like the names of persons and the village, the distance from Jerusalem, and so on. We are faced with the straight choice between accepting what he says, and refusing to accept the story as credible because of our regard for the Synoptic tradition. Yet it must be borne in mind that the Synoptists do speak of Jesus as claiming to raise the dead (Matt. 11:5; Luke 7:22), and they give two specific examples, the daughter of Jairus (Matt. 9:18ff.; Mark 5:22ff.; Luke 8:41ff.) and the son of the widow of Nain (Luke 7:1ff.). It is possible that they saw no need to add to these.

It is also to be borne in mind that, if the traditional view that the reminiscences of Peter lie behind the Second Gospel is true, the silence of the Synoptists may be explicable. Peter is not mentioned in John between 6:68 and 13:6, and there is a similar, though not so pronounced a gap in Matthew (19:27 and 26:33) and Luke (18:28 and 22:8). The gap in Mark is between 10:28 and 11:21, but there is nothing in that Gospel against the view that Peter remained behind (in Galilee?) when the others went up to Jerusalem, and that he came up to the capital city only for the week prior to Passover. If so, the reason he said nothing about the raising of Lazarus was that he did not see it. It did not belong to his personal reminiscences. All the more is this possible in that it does not seem that this miracle took place immediately before the events leading to the Passion. One small piece of
evidence supporting the view that Peter was absent is the fact that Thomas is the spokesman for the Twelve in verse 16. Normally we would expect Peter to fill that role. Since Matthew seems dependent on Mark at this stage in his narrative, the absence of the story from the first Gospel follows from its absence from the Second. Its absence from Luke is more serious, but it has to be borne in mind that Luke's special source (or sources) appears to be episodic rather than a full chronological narrative. I do not maintain that this clears up all the difficulty, but it must be borne in mind so that the difficulty is not exaggerated.\(^7\) We must also remember that the miracles in Jerusalem form no part of the Synoptic tradition. Not only this one, but those concerning the lame man at Bethesda and the blind man at Siloam are not mentioned in the Synoptists. For whatever reason they deal only with the last week at Jerusalem and omit all that goes before. Since this miracle must apparently be dated an appreciable time before that week,\(^8\) they naturally do not mention it.

This, of course, is not to deny that the story has spiritual meaning. This Gospel has a good deal to say about life, from the Prologue on, and John loves to convey the revelation by Jesus' deeds as well as his words. There can be no doubt but that he attaches spiritual significance to this story, placing it as he does as the climax of Jesus' ministry. John wants us to understand that Jesus does give life\(^9\) and that it is this aspect of Jesus' ministry which brought him into the final clash with the authorities.

1. The Death of Lazarus (11:1-16)

1Now a man named Lazarus was sick. He was from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. 2This Mary, whose brother Lazarus now lay sick, was the same one who poured perfume on the Lord and wiped his feet with her hair. 3So the sisters sent word to Jesus, "Lord, the one you love is sick." 4When he heard this, Jesus said, "This sickness will not end in death. No, it is for God's glory so that God's Son may be glorified through it." 5Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. 6Yet when he heard that Lazarus was sick, he stayed where he was two more days. 7Then he said to his disciples, "Let us go back to Judea." 8"But Rabbi," they said, "a short while ago the Jews tried to stone you, and yet you are going back there?" 9Jesus
answered, "Are there not twelve hours of daylight? A man who walks by day will not stumble, for he sees by this world's light. It is when he walks by night that he stumbles, for he has no light." After he had said this, he went on to tell them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I am going there to wake him up." His disciples replied, "Lord, if he sleeps, he will get better." Jesus had been speaking of his death, but his disciples thought he meant natural sleep. So then he told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead, and for your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him." Then Thomas (called Didymus) said to the rest of the disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with him."

In this introduction the scene is set for the miracle. Jesus' friends inform him of Lazarus's sickness, but he makes no immediate move. After a couple of days he suggests going into Judea and tells the disciples that Lazarus is dead. The disciples recognize the danger but agree to go with him.

1 Without a time note Lazarus of Bethany is introduced, and we are told that he was a sick man. It is curious that in this introduction his relationship to Mary and Martha is not mentioned. That comes in the next verse. Here it is simply said that they lived in the same village. Lazarus (the name is the same as Eleazar) is mentioned in the New Testament only in this chapter and the next (though the name is found also in the parable in Luke 16:19-31). The two sisters are mentioned both in these chapters and in Luke 10:38ff. It seems that Martha was the elder of the two (she is the hostess in the Lukan passage), and if this is so it is interesting that Mary is mentioned before her here and is mentioned alone in verse 45. She was probably the more important in Christian tradition, and she had probably entered more deeply into the mind of Christ.

2 Mary is now identified as the one who anointed Jesus with unguent and wiped his feet with her hair. It is curious that John identifies her in this fashion, for he has not yet described the incident (he relates it in the next chapter). But clearly it was well known in the church, and he could presume that his readers would be familiar with it.

3 The sisters sent to let Jesus know that Lazarus was ill, neither of them being specially mentioned in particular as taking the initiative. For "Lord" we should probably read "Sir" (see on 4:1). They do not name Lazarus but refer to him simply as "the one you love" (REB, "your friend"). If this was
sufficient identification, the ties between Jesus and the family must have been very close indeed. We are reminded that our knowledge of the events in the life of Jesus is meager at best. There is no request that Jesus should come to them. Doubtless the sisters were well aware of the dangers that would beset him if he were to visit them, and they do not ask him to imperil himself. Nevertheless their words are in effect a plea for help. Jesus was resourceful, and they look to him for aid without specifying ways and means.

4 Jesus earlier denied that a certain man was born blind on account of sin, saying that it was rather "so that the work of God might be displayed in his life" (9:3). Now he gives a similar reason for Lazarus's sickness. It is not a sickness that will "end in death." This does not mean that Lazarus would not die (in v. 14 Jesus says plainly that he has died). It means that the ultimate issue of this sickness would not be death. Rather it would be "for God's glory" (for "glory" see on 1:14; Haenchen remarks, "God's glory does not consist in sparing the faithful life's difficulties"). The glory of the Father and the glory of the Son are always in close connection in this Gospel, so it is not surprising that Jesus adds that "God's Son" would also be glorified through it. Once again we have the close relation between the Father and the Son, as well as the thought of glory, both favorite themes in this Gospel. And it is likely that we should understand the glorification of the Son in two ways in the Johannine manner. Jesus was seen to be at one with the Father, and many came to believe on him (v. 45). But the true glory is in the cross, and this incident led right on to Calvary (v. 50).

5 Now John tells us that Jesus loved all three in the family. It is not without its interest that Martha is named first and Mary is not named at all; she is simply identified by her relationship to Martha (probably the elder of the two; see on v. 1). The separate mention of the three persons is probably meant to put some stress on Jesus' affection for each one individually. He did not simply love the family. He loved Martha, he loved Mary, and he loved Lazarus. It may be that John has prefaced verse 6 with this note to make it clear that Jesus' failure to move immediately was not due to any lack of affection for the family.

6 We would have expected Jesus to take action immediately on receipt of the news about Lazarus. The message of the sisters is a plea for help, even though they do not in set terms ask Jesus to do anything. But Jesus simply remained, indeed "therefore" remained where he was for two days.
John gives no indication of any urgency in the work he is doing. Indeed, he does not so much as mention what that work was. But his "therefore" cannot mean that Jesus deliberately waited for Lazarus to die; the death must have taken place before the messengers reached him. When Jesus reached Bethany, Lazarus had been dead for four days (v. 39), and the journey would scarcely have taken more than a day. The four days are accounted for by allowing a day for the journey of the messengers, the two days that Jesus remained where he was, and a day for Jesus' journey. Lazarus must have died shortly after the messengers started on their way. The delay would certainly heighten the miracle, but we cannot think that Jesus made his friends suffer bereavement simply in order that he might perform a more spectacular miracle. It is much more probable that John wants us to see Jesus as moved by no external forces, but solely by his determination to do the will of God. "Therefore" will relate to God's glory (v. 4); this was not to be set forward by following human suggestions. As on the occasion of the Feast of Tabernacles (7:3-10), Jesus made his journey as and when he himself determined, not at the dictates of others. At the marriage in Cana (2:1ff.) Jesus had been urged by his mother to take action. In all three cases the urge to action came from those near or dear, in all three their request was refused, in all three Jesus in the end did what had been suggested, but in all three only after it had been made clear that he did what he did in God's time and according to God's will. He was not to be coerced, not even by his dearest friends. All the more is this the case in the present instance, because Jesus was going up to Jerusalem to his death, the climax of his mission.

7 The double time note "then" and "after this" (NIV omits the latter) puts some emphasis on the delay. It was only after the two days that Jesus suggested action. He invited the disciples to go with him once more into Judea. He says "to Judea," not "to Bethany," for it was the entrance into unbelieving Judea, which would crucify him, that was the significant thing.

8 The suggestion provokes an immediate protest. The disciples have not forgotten the Jews' attempt to stone Jesus (10:31), which they speak of as happening "now" (NIV, "a short while ago"). The incident was vivid in their memory and they were fully alive to the danger. So they ask Jesus whether he is going back there again. They address him as "Rabbi" (for the last time in this Gospel), and their question brings out something of
Jesus' courage. To go up to Judea clearly meant to run into danger. But Jesus went up.

9 "Twelve hours" stands for the whole day. People in antiquity did not have the time pieces we take for granted and thus twelve hours was not a precisely calculated period. They divided the whole of the daylight into twelve, so that one hour meant one-twelfth of the whole day. The actual amount of time in twelve hours would thus vary from one part of the year to another. When Jesus then speaks of "twelve hours" he is reminding his hearers that this is all the time there is in a day. It is during these hours that "a man" may walk without stumbling, for he has "this world's light" to guide him. In the context "this world's light" must be the sun and Jesus is speaking of his intention to go up to Jerusalem. He, like other people, must do his work while he has the opportunity (cf. 9:4-5). But in view of his repeated statement that he is "the light of the world" (8:12; 9:5) we should probably discern a deeper meaning, in the Johannine manner. People should make the most of the presence of Christ, the Light of the world, for when he is withdrawn from them there is no possibility of their "walking" without stumbling. It is not impossible in view of the use of "hour" in this Gospel that the reference to "hours" here contains an allusion to the work that Jesus, the Light of the world, came to do. The disciples need not fear to go up with him, because he cannot die before the appointed time, and there is still a little time left. There will also be the thought that to be with him is to be in the light, and the next verse brings out the reverse — if they are away from him they will certainly stumble in the darkness.

10 This is the corollary of the previous statement. The man who walks in the night stumbles. The metaphorical element is plain in this verse, for Jesus says, "the light is not in him" rather than "he has no light" (NIV) or the like. The saying is true with regard to physical events. We will stumble if we walk in darkness. But the real concern here is with the deep darkness that may be within us. When there is darkness in the soul, then we will stumble indeed.

11 Now John gives attention to the sickness of Lazarus. He carefully separates Jesus' words about walking in the day or the night, words that have a mystical and spiritual as well as a literal application, from the words that have to do with the sickness of Lazarus. Jesus speaks specifically of his friend when he says that he "has fallen asleep." In the New Testament the death of the believer is characteristically spoken of as "sleep." In passing
it is worth noticing that few things illustrate more graphically the difference the coming of Christ made than this. Throughout the ancient world the fear of death was universal. Death was a grim adversary that everyone feared and noone could defeat. But Jesus' resurrection altered all that for his followers. For them death was no longer a hateful foe that could not be resisted. Its sting was drawn (1 Cor. 15:55). Of course this development was as yet future. But in the words of Jesus we find the manner of speaking that was to become characteristic of his followers. Death is now no more than sleep. So he speaks of Lazarus as sleeping. He adds that he is going to wake Lazarus from this sleep. In view of the disciples' unwillingness to go it may be significant that Jesus here uses the singular and not the plural as in verse 7. But in verse 15 he again associates them with him.

12 There is a common pattern in this Gospel wherein Jesus' hearers misunderstand something he has said, usually taking in a literal fashion what he means metaphorically, and this opens the way for further teaching (see on 2:20). This may be an example of this pattern, but the mistake is natural. The disciples think not of death but of natural sleep, and they affirm that if Lazarus is sleeping that is a good sign. "He will get better." They were probably all the more ready to reach this conclusion because it removed the necessity for the dangerous journey into Judea.

13 John makes the situation clear. Jesus has spoken of Lazarus's death. The disciples, however, misunderstand. They are thinking of "the sleep of slumber" (BAGD).

14 Therefore Jesus removes their uncertainty and says plainly, "Lazarus is dead." The aorist tense, which incidentally is somewhat abrupt, indicates that the action has taken place; "Lazarus is died" gives the sense of it. We might contrast the perfect tense in verse 11, where the continuing state is meant. This statement of Jesus implies supernatural knowledge (see on 4:18). The messengers had spoken only of illness, and there was no other human source of information.

15 Yet Jesus sees this as matter for rejoicing. We should not take this too calmly, for "The same shock that the disciples would have felt we also are intended to feel, when we hear Jesus say, 'Lazarus is dead, and I rejoice.'" He is aware of what he will do and he has already said that the death of Lazarus is "for God's glory" (v. 4). Now he says that his joy is for the disciples, "so that you may believe" (cf. vv. 42, 45, and 48). The aorist tense
used here would naturally indicate the beginning of faith, and this is curious in the case of the disciples who had so trusted Jesus that they left all they had to follow him. Without a doubt they were already "believers." Yet their faith was not strong, for at the critical hour they were all to forsake him. The meaning will be that faith is progressive. There are new depths of faith to be plumbed, new heights of faith to be scaled. The raising of Lazarus will have a profound effect on them and give their faith a content that it did not have before. Faith will be strengthened (cf. Luke 17:5). "But" will connect with "I was not there." Jesus had not been there when Lazarus died but now he calls on his followers to accompany him to the place.

16 It is somewhat curious to find Thomas taking the lead. He is not usually the spokesman for the Twelve, but here he takes the initiative. John identifies him by giving his name and its meaning. "Didymus" is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew "Thomas," both of which mean "twin." Thomas then said to his fellows, "Let us also go, that we may die with him." Thomas is usually known to us as the doubter. It is good accordingly to see this act of leadership and courage. In a way it fits his doubting, for it is a gloomy saying and not marked by any abundance of faith. In a sense, too, it expressed more than Thomas (or the others for that matter) could perform. When it came to the point Thomas like all the others forsook Jesus and ran away. Nevertheless we should not overlook these brave words. Thomas looked death in the face and chose death with Jesus rather than life without him. His words, in the Johannine manner, may also have a further meaning. They should probably be read in the light of 12:24-26; the follower of Christ must die if he would truly live.

2. Jesus' Meeting with Martha (11:17-27)

17 On his arrival, Jesus found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. 18 Bethany was less than two miles from Jerusalem, and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them in the loss of their brother. 19 When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed at home. 20 "Lord, "Martha said to Jesus, "if you had been here, my brother would not have died, 21 But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask." 22 Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." 23 Martha
answered, "I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day." 25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; 26 and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this? 27" Yes, Lord," she told him, "I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who was to come into the world."

a. 18 Greek fifteen stadia (about 3 kilometers)
   b. 27 Or Messiah

John takes this story in stages. He does not move immediately to the central miracle, but describes Jesus' meetings first with Martha, then with Mary, and he makes these meetings the vehicle of important teaching.

17 We have no description of the journey. John simply tells us that when Jesus arrived he found that Lazarus had already been buried for four days. 39 We do not know how long before that he died, but probably not long. Burial was not usually delayed, and for example Ananias and Sapphira were buried immediately when they died (Acts 5:6, 10). The four days may be significant. There was a Jewish belief that the soul stays near the grave for three days, hoping to be able to return to the body. 40 But on the fourth day it sees decomposition setting in and leaves it finally. If this view was as early as the time of which we are thinking (it is attested c. a.d. 220 but is probably a good deal earlier) it will mean that a time had been reached when the only hope for Lazarus was a divine act of power. 41

18 John inserts a typical topographical note. He locates Bethany with precision as "less than two miles" ("about 3 kilometers," mg.) from Jerusalem 42 By contrast, when he is referring to this family Luke speaks only of "a village" (Luke 10:38), giving neither the name nor the location. John's note about distance serves a twofold purpose; it explains how "many Jews" could be there to comfort the sisters, and it tells us that Jesus had practically reached Jerusalem for the climax. The suggestion that the use of the past tense "was" indicates that John was writing after Bethany had been destroyed is surely reading too much into a very natural use of the past tense.

19 "The Jews" (the Greek means "many of the Jews," but NIV drops the article) in this Gospel usually denotes the enemies of Jesus, and consequently of his adherents (see on 1:19). Its use here is accordingly a little
unusual. Perhaps John means to imply that, though the mourners could bring themselves to sympathize with Martha and Mary, they were hostile to Jesus. They apparently came with the intention of staying for some time and not simply of paying a passing visit. A fairly prolonged stay to comfort the bereaved seems to have been usual at a time of bereavement. At the funeral itself the mourners were left alone with their sorrow and their friends refrained from speaking to them. But later it was expected that visits for consolation would be made, and the Jews rated this duty highly.

20 There is a difference in the attitudes of the two sisters that is not unlike the difference in the incident recorded in Luke 10:38-42. Then Martha was occupied with the duties of hospitality, while Mary simply "sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said." So here, when the news of Jesus' coming reached them, it was Martha who went out to welcome him. It is not said that Jesus summoned her, nor indeed that he sent any message (though we should bear in mind that no words of his summoning Mary are recorded, but he did this, v. 28). A call to Martha may have gone unrecorded, but it is perhaps more likely that Martha heard that he was near, and that was enough for this busy, active lady. It would be natural for anyone giving information to give it first to Martha, as the mistress of the household. Clearly she was the one who was likely to take the initiative, especially in the duties of hospitality. Mary remained sitting where she was in the house. Incidentally sitting appears to have been the usual posture in which mourners received their comforters (cf. Job 2:13).

21 Martha's greeting is an expression of faith: had Jesus been present her brother would not have died. In the story in Luke Martha rebuked Jesus because he did not tell Mary to help her with the housework, and some hear an implied rebuke here, too. Why had Jesus not been there when he was needed? Martha knew when the message had been sent to him and she knew how long it had taken him to get there. If we are right in our explanation of the four days (see on v. 6) he could not have arrived in time, but Martha may have been upset about his two days' delay. But she does not say "If only you had come —," Her remark probably expresses regret rather than rebuke. It may well echo what she and Mary had often said to one another (cf. v. 32) during the past few days.

22 The meaning of this verse is puzzling. On the surface it seems to mean that Martha knew that Jesus could even now perform the miracle, he could raise Lazarus from the sleep of death. But the subsequent narrative
shows that she cannot have meant that, or at any rate that if she did mean it
she was not able to sustain the high faith the words imply. When Jesus
commanded that the stone be taken away from the tomb it was Martha who
objected in the strongest of terms (v. 39). Her attitude there is so clear that it
seems impossible to reconcile it with any real hope of a resurrection here.
The words may be an expression of faith to make up for any lack of warmth
in the previous verse. "Even now" may perhaps point to the thought of a
resurrection, but equally the expression may be logical rather than temporal
with the meaning: "If you had been here my brother might not have died,
for I know that God gives you the things you ask." "Whatever" is plural. It
does not point to any one gift, but to whatever things Jesus should at any
time ask.50

23 Jesus turns Martha's thoughts to resurrection: Lazarus will rise. The
words could be taken as a general reference to the final resurrection, for
Jesus does not mention his own part, nor that the rising is imminent.

24-25 Martha unhesitatingly takes the words to refer to the final
resurrection at the end of the age.51 Her words show that she had no idea of
an immediate raising of Lazarus to life, but they do represent a certainty
about the resurrection at the last day. Many commentators think that they
also show that she thought of Jesus' words as a commonplace of
consolation, as the sort of thing others had doubtless been saying to her
frequently, and in which she found but cold comfort. Be that as it may, her
words open the way for one of the great declarations of Jesus that mark this
Gospel.52 (For these "I am" sayings see on 6:35.) Jesus does not say simply
that he will give resurrection53 and life.54 So much are resurrection and life
associated with him that he says that he is the resurrection and the life.55
The linking of resurrection and life perhaps points to the truth that the life
he brings is the life of the age to come. It is the "eternal life" of which he
speaks elsewhere (see on 1:4; 3:15). Those who believe on Jesus (the
construction implies personal trust; see Additional Note E, pp. 296-98) will
live even though they die. The paradox brings out the great truth that
physical death is not the important thing. For the heathen or the unbeliever
death may be thought of as the end. Not so for those who believe in Christ.
They may die in the sense that they pass through the door we call physical
death, but they will not die in the fuller sense. Death for them is but the
gateway to further life and fellowship with God. This transcends the
Pharisaic view of a remote resurrection at the end of time. It means that the
moment we put our trust in Jesus we begin to experience that life of the age to come which cannot be touched by death. Jesus is bringing Martha a present gift, not simply the promise of a future good.

26 Everyone who lives and believes on Jesus (one article ties the two closely together; life and faith must be understood in the closest of connections) will never die. Jesus does not, of course, mean that the believer will not die physically. Lazarus was dead even then, and millions of Jesus' followers have died since. He means rather that believers will not die in the sense in which death has eternal significance. They will not die in the age to come. They have eternal life, the life of the age to come. Jesus rounds this off with a challenge: "Do you believe this?" His words about faith and life are not a philosophical dictum to be critically argued. They are a saving truth to be received in faith and acted on.

27 These words of Martha do not always receive the attention they should. When Martha and Mary are spoken of, Martha is apt to be characterized as the lady of whom Jesus said, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better . . ." (Luke 10:41-42). But with all her faults, Martha was a woman of faith and hers is a significant declaration. First, she agrees with what Jesus has said. She is not choosing her own way but accepting his. She may not understand fully the implications of what he has just said, but as far as she can she accepts it. Then she expresses her faith in her own words. Her "I" is emphatic. Whatever be the case with others she has put her trust in Jesus. "I believe" or better "I have believed" indicates a faith once given and permanently remaining. And she believes that —. Her faith is not a vague, formless credulity. It has content, and doctrinal content at that. She brings out three points. First, Jesus is "the Christ," that is the Messiah of Jewish expectation (see on 1:20, 41). Second, he is "the Son of God" (for this expression see also the confessions of John the Baptist [1:34] and Nathanael [1:49], and for Jesus' own use of the term see the note on 5:25). It is an expression which can mean little more than that the person so described is godly, but it can also point to an especially close relationship to God. It is in the latter sense that it is used throughout this Gospel, and, indeed, John writes explicitly to bring people to faith in Jesus as the Son of God (20:31). There can be no doubt but that Martha is giving the words their maximum content. Third, she speaks of Jesus as "who was to come into the world" (see on 3:31 and cf. 6:14), that is the long-awaited
Deliverer, the One sent by God to accomplish his will perfectly. Taken together these three affirmations give us as high a view of the person of Christ as one well may have. Martha should be remembered by this moving declaration rather than by her worst moment of criticism and fretfulness.

3. Jesus' Meeting with Mary (11:28-32)

And after she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary aside. "The Teacher is here," she said, "and is asking for you."

When Mary heard this, she got up quickly and went to him.

Now Jesus had not yet entered the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. When the Jews who had been with Mary in the house, comforting her, noticed how quickly she got up and went out, they followed her, supposing she was going to the tomb to mourn there.

When Mary reached the place where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died."

John describes Jesus' meeting with Mary much more briefly. There is no outstanding declaration on the part of Mary corresponding to that of Martha (v. 27), nor is there any resounding statement of Jesus.

Having made her great declaration of faith Martha calls her sister unobtrusively. Why she does it this way is not said. Possibly she wanted Mary to have the opportunity for a few minutes' private conversation with Jesus, as she apparently had had. And this may be the reason why Jesus remained for a time outside the village. She speaks of him as "The Teacher" and the article is probably important. Among his followers Jesus was designated primarily by his teaching activities. But he is recognized as incomparable: he is "the Teacher." It is important to notice this use of the term by a woman. The rabbis refused to instruct women, but Jesus took a very different view. John does not record any words of Jesus asking for Mary, so that he is not giving a complete account of all that took place. He tells us sufficient and leaves the rest to be understood.

"When Mary heard this" indicates an action performed without delay. Mary was quick to act on her sister's word. It is possible that we
should read "gets up" rather than "got up," in which case John is introducing a vivid touch. He sees Mary in the act of rising. "Went" is in a continuous tense: "she began to go" or "she was going" (this too may even be a present, "she is going").

30 A brief explanation of the situation is given. John tells us why Mary was going to Jesus. Martha in her eagerness had gone right outside the village to meet the Lord (v. 20). He was still in the same place, Martha having perhaps suggested that she should go and fetch Mary. Some students hold that an additional reason for Jesus’ remaining outside the village was that he was nearer the cemetery where his real business lay, but this is speculation. We do not know where the cemetery was, but Jesus was certainly at some distance from it. In any case he could scarcely have chosen his stopping place with reference to the cemetery, for he did not know exactly where it was (v. 34).

31 The Jews (v. 19) had remained with Mary; they did not accompany Martha when she went out to meet Jesus. John tells us that they were "comforting" Mary, though we do not know exactly what form that took. When they saw that Mary got up quickly and left they followed, telling themselves that she was going to wail at the tomb (for lamentation at the tomb cf. Wis. 19:3). They may have intended to share in this activity. Their action meant that what followed would have many witnesses and so receive wide publicity.

32 Mary now came to the spot where Jesus was waiting. She greeted him by falling at his feet in homage; she seems to have been more emotional than her rather matter-of-fact sister. For "Lord" see on 4:1. In this context it will have its full meaning. Mary's words, which are almost identical with those of Martha (v. 21), are eloquent of a firm conviction that Jesus' power could have saved Lazarus from death. They reveal Mary's certainty that Jesus could overcome sickness. But they reveal no more. It is possible that her quick action (vv. 29, 31) gained her a short respite from the attentions of her comforters, who did not realize at first where she was going. Her prostration and greeting may accordingly have been private. But her companions speedily rejoined her, as the next verse shows.

4, Lazarus is Raised (11:33-44)
When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled. "Where have you laid him?" he asked. "Come and see, Lord," they replied. Jesus wept. Then the Jews said, "See how he loved him!" But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?"

Jesus, once more deeply moved, came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance. "Take away the stone," he said. "But, Lord," said Martha, the sister of the dead man, "by this time there is a bad odor, for he has been there four days." Then Jesus said, "Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?"

So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, "Father, I thank you that you have heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me."

When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face. Jesus said to them, "Take off the grave clothes and let him go."

John brings out the point that nobody expected an act of resurrection. He has let us see that both Martha and Mary had confidence in Jesus' power to cure sickness, and he now goes on to bring out the same point for the Jews who were with them (v. 37), But none of them expected resurrection. John proceeds to describe just that.

The previous verse has said nothing about Mary's tears, but they were to be expected, and this verse makes it clear that she was wailing in grief, as were the Jews who had accompanied her. The word signifies a loud weeping, a wailing. It was the habit of the day to express grief in a noisy, unrestrained fashion and this is what these mourners were doing. With a crowd of people all doing this there must must have been quite a scene of confusion and sorrow. The sight of it caused Jesus deep emotion. The verb rendered "he was deeply moved" is an unusual one. It signifies a loud inarticulate noise, and its proper use appears to be for the snorting of horses. When used of people it usually denotes anger, and many exegetes hold that this is the meaning here; if so, it is probably anger against death that is meant. But the word may not be so specific. It is difficult to read anger into either of the other passages where it is used of Jesus. Both times it
denotes his attitude to men he cured, namely two blind men (Matt. 9:30) and a leper (Mark 1:43).

Before we can accept anger as the meaning we must have some indication of the object of the anger, and so far this does not seem to be forthcoming. Why would Jesus be angry with Martha? Or Mary? Or the mourners? That Jesus would have been deeply moved at the lack of trust and the wrong attitude to death of those present is understandable. That he should be angry with people, however mistaken their ideas, who were giving expression to emotions normal at a funeral is not. John probably means no more (and no less) than that Jesus was profoundly moved. John is clearly saying that Jesus was deeply moved (cf. NRSV, "he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved"). "In spirit" does not, of course, refer to the Holy Spirit, but to the human spirit of Jesus. It signifies that his feeling was no light emotion. This is meant also by "troubled." Rieu translates, "he gave way to such distress of spirit as made his body tremble." All this is somewhat curious. Jesus was about to raise Lazarus and we cannot interpret his perturbation as an act of mourning for the deceased. It must refer to his deep concern and indignation at the attitude of the mourners. They so completely misunderstood the nature of death and that of the Person of the Son. Even Mary, who from what we know of her elsewhere might have been expected to have understanding, had her thoughts firmly fixed on earth. The words will also probably mean that to work this miracle cost Jesus something (cf. Mark 5:30).

Jesus now inquires as to the location of the tomb. Instead of directing him they invited him to come and see. "They" is not defined, but apparently it means the two sisters.

In this, the shortest verse in the Bible, the noteworthy thing is that a different word is used for weeping than that used of Mary and the Jews. The word used of them means a loud, demonstrative form of mourning, a wailing. That used here (and here only in the New Testament) signifies rather a quiet weeping. Jesus did not wail loudly, but he was deeply grieved. As in verse 33 this will not be because of the death of his friend, for he was about to raise him. It will be because of the misconceptions of those around him. We are reminded of that other occasion when Jesus wept over Jerusalem (Luke 19:41). There as here it was the wrong attitude of the Jews that aroused his deep emotion.
36 As always the Jews fail to enter the mind of Christ. They take his tears to be no more than a mark of the love he bore to Lazarus. They do not discern the deeper reason.

37 Some of them now reach a position much like that of Martha and Mary. They remember Jesus' ministry to the sick and specifically his opening of the eyes of the blind man. So they ask: "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?" There is no reason for thinking of these words as spoken in mockery. These people seem quite sincere, and, while they are not as definite as Martha and Mary, they think that Jesus' power might somehow have been exercised. He might have done something. They misinterpret his tears as though they meant frustration. But there is no reason for doubting their sincerity.

38 Jesus comes to the burial place. Again he is moved by strong emotion; "deeply moved" is the same verb as that in verse 33 (where see note). Tombs might be of various kinds, and John supplies the information that this one was a cave with a stone against the opening. This type of burial place was not uncommon in Palestine of the day, especially for people of some importance. There is no indication here of whether the cave is thought of as vertical with the stone lying on top of it, or as horizontal with the stone up against it. Both types were used. From the later statement that Lazarus came out (v. 44) it is probable that this was the horizontal type.

39 This verse is of the greatest importance for John's understanding of what took place. The Evangelist puts some stress on the actuality of the death of Lazarus. He leaves no doubt but that he is describing a miracle of resuscitation. First comes Jesus' command to remove the stone, then Martha's astonished protest based on the certainty that the body would be decomposing, for it had already been buried for four days. If the reading, the sister of "the dead man," is the true one, John also conveys the idea of death by the use of the perfect participle that points to the permanence of the state into which Lazarus had entered. Martha is described as "the," not "a," sister of Lazarus, perhaps because she was the elder. At any rate throughout this narrative she takes the leading place. Mary consistently remains in the background.

40 Jesus firmly rejects the protest. He reminds Martha of his earlier words, but this introduces a small difficulty, for these exact words have not previously been recorded. As we saw earlier, there is a tendency in this Gospel for slight variations to be introduced when statements are repeated
(see on 3:5), and this may be another example. Alternatively Jesus may be referring to a saying uttered on some other occasion and not recorded. The words are not unlike those of verse 4, but those were not spoken to Martha (though Jesus may be assuming that they have been reported to her). The suggestion that there is a reference to verse 26 is improbable, for the critical words, "the glory of God," are absent from that verse. His words are a challenge to faith ("if you believed"; cf. 2:11) and a reminder of what for Jesus was central — "the glory of God." What was about to happen would be a spectacular miracle, a display of the power of Jesus, an inestimable gift to the sisters. But typically Jesus speaks of none of these. For him "the glory of God" was the one important thing. This means that the real meaning of what he would do would be accessible only to faith. All who were there, believers or not, would see the miracle. But Jesus is promising Martha a sight of the glory. The crowd would see the miracle, but only believers would perceive its real significance, the glory (cf. Guthrie, "many saw Lazarus come from the grave but never saw the glory of God").

41-42 After Jesus' words they moved the stone. Who actually did this is not said, but presumably it was "the Jews" who accompanied Martha and Mary. Jesus raised his eyes in the attitude of prayer (cf. 6:5; 17:1). He addressed God simply as "Father" (cf. 12:27-28; 17:1), not as "our Father" or the like; his relationship to the Father is not the same as that of others. The first words of his prayer are a thanksgiving that the Father has heard him. The aorist points to a prayer already prayed, presumably a prayer that Lazarus be raised. Jesus may have uttered a prayer that John does not mention (he does not mention everything in this story, e.g., Jesus' request for Mary to come to him, v. 28). Or he may want us to think that Jesus prayed within the recesses of his soul so that God heard, though the people did not. The aorist will more naturally refer to a particular prayer than to God's habitual hearing of Jesus. The habitual hearing comes out in the next words, "I knew that you always hear me." "But" is the strong adversative. It was because of the crowd standing around that Jesus had spoken his thanksgiving aloud (not that the Father needed to be told); the emphasis here is on his concern for the people. We should distinguish between his prayer (presumably that Lazarus be raised) that is not recorded, and his thanksgiving that was uttered so that people could hear. As Wright puts it, "The Evangelist does not say that Jesus's prayer was for the sake of the multitude; but that His thanksgiving was for their sakes. Jesus, in other
words, would always have people know that He did nothing of Himself."
"That" introduces the thought of purpose. Jesus spoke "in order that" the
crowd might believe (the aorist tense points to the beginning of faith) that
he had been sent by God. Once again we notice that faith has content and
that that content is concerned with the mission of the Son. It includes the
conviction that he is indeed God's "Sent One" (for "sent" see on 3:17). John
consistently depicts Jesus as dependent on the Father and concerned for his
glory. He is not like the run-of-the-mill popular wonder-workers who
sought to magnify themselves. So here Jesus acts not of his own volition
but in dependence on the Father to whom he addresses his prayer. The
prayer, publicly uttered, would make it clear to all who heard that he
depended on the Father.

43 Jesus summoned the dead man. He cried out in a loud voice and
addressed Lazarus directly by name, calling him to come out of the tomb.
The loud voice was not, of course, because a loud voice was needed to
make the dead hear. It was probably in part at least so that the crowd would
know that this was no work of magic, but the very power of God. Wizards
muttered their incantations and spells (cf. Isa. 8:19). Not so the Son of God.

44 John records that the man who had been dead came out. He notes
that he was still bound hand and feet with the grave clothes. It is difficult
to see how he could walk under such circumstances, and it is possible that
we are to understand what Hoskyns calls "a miracle within a miracle.
Lazarus does not walk out of the grave; he is rather drawn out tightly band-
aged." It is, however, quite possible that the legs were bound separately, in
which case there is no insuperable difficulty. John makes special mention of
the sweatband over his face. It must have been a strange sight indeed.
John concludes his account of the miracle with Jesus' command to loose
Lazarus and let him go. We are reminded of Synoptic incidents that show a
similar thoughtfulness, as when he commanded that something to eat be
given to the daughter of Jairus (Mark 5:43). Jesus was never so carried
away by the wonder of his miracles that he forgot the needs of the person.

5. The Reaction of Faith (11:45)

45 Therefore many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary, and
had seen what Jesus did, put their faith in him.
45 The result of the miracle, as always, is division. Because Jesus is who and what he is he inevitably divides people. John first brings before us those who believed. These were "of the Jews," and John makes it clear that there were "many" of them. Interestingly he describes them as those "who had come" to visit Mary." Throughout this narrative the emphasis has been on Martha; thus it is curious that the Jews are said to have come to the less prominent sister. They were associated with her also in verses 31 and 33. It may be that they were more concerned for Mary than for the bustling Martha. Mary may well have been more emotional, and may perhaps have been in greater need of consolation. Whatever the reason, they are associated with Mary here once more. Linked with "had come" is "had seen." It was the sight of the miracle that brought the effect. "Put their faith in him" = "believed in him," John's favorite construction for genuine trust (see Additional Note E, pp. 296-98). A faith that is based on the miracles is not the highest faith but is accepted throughout this Gospel as better than no faith at all (see on 2:23).

6. **The Reaction of Unbelief (11:46-57)**

46 But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done. 47 Then the chief priests and the Pharisees called a meeting of the Sanhedrin, "What are we accomplishing?" they asked. "Here is this man performing many miraculous signs. 48 If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and then the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation." 49 Then one of them, named Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, spoke up, "You know nothing at all! 50 You do not realize that it is better for you that one man die for the people than that the whole nation perish." 51 He did not say this on his own, but as high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the Jewish nation, 52 and not only for that nation but also for the scattered children of God, to bring them together and make them one. 53 So from that day on they plotted to take his life. 54 Therefore Jesus no longer moved about publicly among the Jews. Instead he withdrew to a region near the desert, to a village called Ephraim, where he stayed with his disciples. 55 When it was
almost time for the Jewish Passover, many went up from the country to Jerusalem for their ceremonial cleansing before the Passover. 56 They kept looking for Jesus, and as they stood in the temple area they asked one another, "What do you think? Isn't he coming to the Feast at all?" 57 But the chief priests and Pharisees had given orders that if anyone found out where Jesus was, he should report it so that they might arrest him.

48 Or temple

Following his brief account of the birth of faith in some who saw the miracle John goes on to speak of those who were repelled. This leads on to the effect of the report. The chief priests and others were so hardened that they plotted against Jesus' life. This in turn leads into the reporting of Caiaphas's unconscious prophecy of the substitutionary death of Jesus. 

46 In contrast with those who believed were others who simply went away to the Pharisees, known to be the enemies of Jesus, and told them the things that Jesus had done. While John makes no explicit declaration about their motive, in the context there can be little doubt but that they acted in a spirit of hostility. They were bearing the latest news to the enemy, not trying to win them over.

47 The result was the gathering of a council of chief priests and Pharisees. This may possibly have been an informal meeting, though the words more probably mean that an official meeting of the Sanhedrin was held. It may well be that this was the real trial of Jesus; by Jewish law in capital cases a verdict of guilty could not be given on the same day as the trial, nor could it be given without the presence of the defendant. That is apparently why John says so little about the Jewish trial after Jesus was arrested; on this view the trial had already been held and all that remained after the arrest was to deliver sentence. It agrees with this that Mark says that when the high priests and others gathered they did not speak of conducting a trial but of putting Jesus to death (Mark 14:1; so also Matt. 26:3-4).

From this point on John does not mention the Pharisees often; the opposition to Jesus is firmly in the hands of the chief priests. In all four Gospels the Pharisees are Jesus' principal opponents throughout his
ministry, but in all four they are rarely mentioned in connection with the
events as-sociated with the Passion. The discussion that took place
apparently included much heart-searching. "What are we accomplishing?"
means that at this point they are not planning a course of action, but
wondering how effective their efforts have been ("What shall we do?" GNB,
misses the point). They may also be implying that they are getting nowhere
in contrast to Jesus, who was doing miracle after miracle. We should not
miss their clear recognition of the fact of the miracles. Jesus,\(^{102}\) they say, "is
... performing (the tense indicates continuous action) many miraculous
signs" (see Additional Note G, pp. 607-13). It has always been the case that
those whose minds are made up to oppose what Christ stands for will not be
convinced by any amount of evidence. In this spirit these men recognize
that the miracles have taken place, but find in this a reason for more
wholehearted opposition, not for faith. In their hardness of heart they
continue on their own chosen way and refuse to consider the evidence
before their eyes.

\(^{48}\) To them it is certain that many will put their trust in Jesus if they
leave him alone. Indeed, they go as far as to say that "everyone" will do so,
an exaggeration that indicates the strength of their fears. The Romans
would not stand by indifferent if there were popular tumult stirred up by
messianic expectations.\(^ {103}\) Since they would certainly take strong action,
the speakers feared the destruction of all they stood for. "Our\(^ {104}\) Place"\(^ {105}\)
probably means the temple (so in Acts 6:13-14; 21:28). It was in a special
sense the place for the Jews (though \textit{REB} goes too far when it translates
"our temple"). The nation, too, they feared, would cease to exist, and with
it, of course, their own special position.

\(^{49}\) John singles out the reaction of Caiaphas. This man was high priest
from about a.d. 18 to a.d. 36. John describes him as "high priest that year;"
which some have drawn into an argument for the view that John had little
idea of what went on in Palestine. They suggest that he was ignorant of the
fact that the high priesthood was normally conferred for life, and that he
thought it an annual appointment. This, however, is to read too much into
the expression. There is a good deal of evidence that John was familiar with
Palestine, and with pre-a.d. 70 Palestine at that. It is not without
significance that he twice repeats the statement (v. 51; 18:13). It is difficult
to think that in as careful and theologically minded a writer as John such
solemn repetition would be given to a minor piece of administrative
information — information, moreover, that he could not have checked for on this view it was erroneous. What he means is "that fateful year." That was the year when the world's salvation was accomplished. In that year of all years it was Caiaphas who was the high priest. The information is the more relevant in that, though the office was not an annual one, the Romans did change the high priest quite often. Caiaphas's first words "You know nothing at all!" demonstrate a rudeness that is alleged to have been typical of the Sadducees. "You" is emphatic and probably contemptuous. He himself clear-sightedly and ruthlessly discerns a line of action that he accounts desirable and he contemptuously dismisses the whole assembly of the Sanhedrin because its members do not see things the same way.

50 Caiaphas continues with his rebuke. "You do not realize" translates a verb that is used of reckoning up accounts and the like. He is saying that they cannot even calculate, cannot even work it out, that such and such a course of action is the expedient one. "It is better for you" concentrates attention on their own position. Neither Caiaphas nor the others were basically concerned for abstract right and wrong, nor yet for the nation as a whole. But the position of the privileged class is threatened and their action would save this privileged class that the high priest recommends. "That one man die for the people" is a simple prophecy of the meaning of the cross. But on Caiaphas's lips it is sheer cynicism. Better that one man, however innocent, should die than that the nation as a whole should perish is the reasoning of this worldly-wise politician. This is, of course, another example of John's irony. The leaders did adopt the expedient of slaying the innocent, but so far from saving the nation this, on John's view, initiated the events that would lead to its destruction.

51-52 John adds his own reflection on these words. They did not originate with Caiaphas. On the contrary, he spoke this way because he was the high priest, and it was because of his office that God spoke through him. What Caiaphas spoke as a piece of cynical political realism, God meant to be understood in a deeper, more significant way. John repeats the important part, namely, "that Jesus would die for the Jewish nation." His death was a death for others, not a death for himself. We should not overlook that this way of putting it means a definitely substitutionary death. Either the nation dies or Jesus dies. But if he dies the nation lives; it is his life instead of theirs. John also sees a wider
purpose in the death of Jesus than the salvation of the Jewish nation. This death would be the means of gathering together the children of God wherever they might have been scattered\textsuperscript{117} (they are called "children" even before they are gathered together). Caiaphas's words are not big enough. John has a worldwide vision. And those who are gathered are gathered into a unity ("make them one;" cf. 10:16). Sin scatters people, but salvation in Christ brings them together. The New Testament always thinks of a very real unity as linking all who are truly Christ's. "The scattered children of God" would normally be taken on the lips of a Jew to mean the Jews of the Dispersion, but here the words point to Gentile Christians.

53 Having concluded his own aside John returns to the Sanhedrin. Caiaphas's words mark a turning point. From that day (John has the habit of noting the time when events took place) they looked for ways and means of killing Jesus. The high priest's words had had the effect of clarifying their ideas; they now knew what they must do. Schonfield: "So that day they decided to kill him."\textsuperscript{118}

54 "Therefore" will denote a much stricter sequence of thought than often in this Gospel. Because of the plot of the chief priests and their allies Jesus no longer walked openly among the Jews. Far from it, he went away to the district near the wilderness. With his customary precision John tells us that he went to a city whose name was Ephraim. The site of this city is not known for certain, but if its identification with Ophrah be accepted it was about fifteen miles from Jerusalem.\textsuperscript{119} Jesus then did not retire to a very great distance. But he went to a place lonely enough for him to be undisturbed. John adds that he stayed there with his disciples. In this difficult period the little band stuck together.

55 As was his custom, once again Jesus draws attention to the approach of a feast, this time the Passover. As in 2:13; 6:4, he characterizes it as "Jewish." Well before the feast many went up out of the countryside in order to purify themselves ceremonially.\textsuperscript{120} The point of mentioning this is to make clear that well before the actual feast itself Jerusalem would be crowded with pilgrims.

56 After the resolve taken in verse 53 Jesus' enemies were looking for him. "Kept looking" signifies a continuing process. And as they looked for him they kept asking one another whether Jesus would come to the feast. The second of their questions seems to show that they expected the answer to be "No"\textsuperscript{121} (Phillips: "Surely he won't come to the Festival?"). They
considered it unlikely that he would be so foolhardy as to put in an appearance.

57 Another reason for this view appears. In furtherance of their plan the authorities had commanded\textsuperscript{122} that anyone who knew Jesus' whereabouts should disclose the information. This would make anyone who came to know where he was but did nothing about it an accessory, and would thus constrain people to supply information and facilitate arrest.\textsuperscript{123}

\textsuperscript{1} Cf. A. Richardson, "The reason for thinking that the Lazarus story is not literally true is not that it is difficult to believe. . . . The difficulty about accepting it as literally true is that it cannot be reconciled with the Synoptic tradition." Earlier he has said, "St John expresses the truth of history by means of a story that is not literally true." But though he is thus alert to the difficulties of the traditional view, he totally ignores the difficulties involved in his own. For example, he never attempts to show how such an attitude to historical truth is compatible with the aim of combating opponents of a "docetic" type, an aim that almost all admit was one of John's motives. These people rejected the historical fact of the Incarnation while accepting Christ as the supreme revelation of truth. But Richardson's evaluation of John's method rather classes him with such men than sets him in opposition to them. Westcott pinpoints another difficulty: "No explanation of the origin of the narrative on the supposition that it is unhistorical, has even a show of plausibility. Those who deny the fact are sooner or later brought to maintain either that the scene was an imposture, or that the record is a fiction. Both of these hypotheses involve moral miracle." In any case it is to be noted that the kind of critic who rejects the historicity of this story because it is not in the Synoptics is usually not ready to accept what is there, the feeding of the multitude, for example. On this Richardson says, "it is clear to us that in the Feeding stories, even in St Mark's version, we do not have simple straightforward historical accounts of 'what happened', but elaborately theological interpretations which have turned the historical facts into profound parables of the significance of the person of Christ and of the Eucharist in his Church" (\textit{An Introduction to the Theology of the New Testament} [London, 1958], p. 102). There appears to be something other than the absence of Synoptic attestation that causes the hesitation.

\textsuperscript{2} Yet possibly we are subconsciously expecting the Evangelists to see things as we see them. Cf. E. M. Sidebottom: "it must be remembered that in the world of those days tales of marvels and omens, rivers running blood and stones gushing out water were of everyday occurrence. . . . The
'tremendous miracle' of the raising of a dead man would not be such a sensation to a first-century writer as to necessitate its inclusion by Mark; Luke's widow of Nain and her son are tucked away into a corner" (The Christ of the Fourth Gospel [London, 1961], p. 179).

3. Hamilton finds it impossible to say what happened. He goes on: "We can, of course, decide on principle that this did not happen, merely because this kind of thing cannot happen. But perhaps it should not be quite so easy for us to make our peace with these difficult portions of the New Testament. If God is really doing something in Jesus Christ that is unique, can we decide on the impossibility of incomprehensible or improbable events with assurance?"

4. The point made by Lagrange with respect to the view that John was concerned not with facts but with the teaching that Jesus confers on believers a life that would triumph over death, should be borne in mind: "To prove it by a symbolical narrative would be plain childishness; it must be an actual happening" (p. 311).

5. Hunter is impressed by these. He does not underestimate the seriousness of the problem posed by the Synoptic silence and thinks it may never be solved. He adds: "But in view (a) of the vivid and lifelike detail of the narrative, and (b) of the abundant evidence that John had access to good independent sources of information about Jesus, the one thing we should not do is to dismiss this famous story as fiction."

6. In v. 8 the disciples say that the Jews "a short while ago" tried to stone Jesus. This appears to refer to the attempt recorded in 10:31, at the Feast of the Dedication (10:22). This was on 25th of Chislev (November-December). Thus the events of ch. 11 took place close to the Feast of Dedication (even allowing for the stay in Perea, 10:40), and hence at some distance from Passover. It accords with this that John says, "from that day on they plotted to take his life" (v. 53). This does not appear to mean that the Passion followed within a few days. It suggests rather that there was plotting over a period.

7. Such considerations induce Temple to say: "I accept the Johannine narrative as correct." He adduces also the placing of the cleansing of the temple in Mark. Since that Evangelist records but one visit to Jerusalem the cleansing had to be included at the end of Jesus' life and gave a motive for the chief priests to intervene. It is difficult, then, to find a place and a reason for the Lazarus story. Holding John to be substantially later than Mark, Temple thinks a further motive for not mentioning the incident was possible em-barrassment to a still living Lazarus. He concludes: "Of course all this is mere conjecture, and by no means satisfactory. All I contend is that the origins of Mark are such that the omission of this story there is not at all decisive; and to accept, as I do, the Johannine narrative is in no way false to the principles of evidence. The story is singularly vivid and has all the characteristics of the record of an eye-witness." Bailey similarly accepts the story despite its difficulties, for he finds it "still more difficult to believe that the fourth evangelist is either misinformed about, or deliberately misplacing or inventing an incident which bears such strong evidence of personal observation."

8. See note 6 above.

9. Cf. Tasker, "Jesus raises Lazarus not solely out of sympathy with Martha and Mary the bereaved friends of Jesus, though His sympathy was great, nor merely because Lazarus was especially dear to Him, though that was equally true, but because through the miracle of his restoration Jesus desires to manifest Himself as the resurrection, and the the life."

10. Some find a difference of meaning between ἀπό (with Βηθανίας) and ἐκ (with τῆς κώμης). The former denoting domicile and the latter origin. Johannine usage, however, is against such a distinction between the prepositions (see on 1:44). It is of course quite possible that the family had changed its place of residence, all the more so since Luke 10:38ff. appears to locate them in Galilee. But the prepositions do not prove this.

11. The name is here given in the form Μαρία, but elsewhere in this Gospel John uses the indeclinable Μαριάμ.
12. יִשְׂרָאֵל is the Old Testament form, but this was later abbreviated to יִשְׂרָא. The name means "God has helped."

13. This has led some to hold that Lazarus was "the disciple whom Jesus loved" (13:23, etc.). But it would be a very curious procedure to speak of him by name 11 times in chapters 11 and 12 and to abandon the name in all subsequent references to him.

14. πρὸς θάνατον, "with a view to death," is an unusual construction (found again in 1 John 5:16-17). By contrast it is ὑπὲρ τῆς δόξης τοῦ θεοῦ, "on behalf of God's glory." Barrett understands ὑπὲρ here as "for revealing," "in order to reveal": "V. 40 shows that the meaning is not 'in order that God may be glorified'; here as elsewhere the glory of God is not his praise, but his activity." For the confident attitude in the face of death we may compare Jesus' words concerning the daughter of Jairus, "The child is not dead but asleep" (Mark 5:39).

15. The verb is ἤγάπα, whereas φιλεῖς was used in v. 3 of Jesus' love for Lazarus. It is difficult to find a difference between the two verbs here, φιλέο is used again in v. 36. See further on 21:15.

16. NIV and GNB translate "yet." Abbott draws attention to the fourfold use of οὖν in this story (vv. 6, 17, 33, 38; NIV omits them all) and comments, "the intention of the narrative as a whole is to represent the Raising of Lazarus as foreordained; and this repetition of 'therefore' may be intended, in particular, to show how the Son, step by step, moved forward in a regular and predetermined sequence to do the Father's will in per-forming the last and greatest of His 'signs' " (2198). This may be so, but we must bear in mind the fact that οὖν is used frequently in this chapter (in addition to the verses listed by Abbott, in 3, 12, 14, 16, 20, 21, 31, 32, 36, 41, 45, 47, 53, 54 and 56). In view of this we may not be able to insist that Abbott's four verses are especially significant. But the word certainly has its normal significance in the present passage and it should not have been translated "yet."

17. ἔπειτα and μετά τοῦτο. The latter expression recurs in v. 11. As used by John the phrase seems to mean much the same as the more frequent μετὰ ταῦτα (see on 2:12).

18. ἤγωμεν is here used intransitively, though the verb is usually transitive. When it is intransitive the first person plural is most common (cf. vv. 15-16).

19. καί is used in the sense of καίτοι, "and yet."

20. The variation in Palestine was between 14 hours 12 minutes and 9 hours 48 minutes (SBk). Barclay points out that this has relevance to our own situation: "If there are twelve hours in the day there is time enough for everything a man should do. There is no need for a rushed haste. If a man uses these twelve hours all that he ought to do can be done in them. . . . But, even if there are twelve hours in the day, there are only twelve hours. They cannot be extended. And, therefore, time cannot be wasted. There is time enough, but there is not too much time."

21. D misses this point, and actually reads "the light is not in it" (αὐτῇ, i.e., the night).

22. For μετά τοῦτο see on 2:12.

23. Thus the verb κοιμάω (used here) denotes literal sleep 4 times and death 14 times. The Christian word for a burial place, "cemetery" (κοιμητήριον), is connected with this root and denotes "a place of sleep." The use of "sleep" for death is not, of course, an invention of Christians; it is also to be found in secular writers. But it is not characteristic of them whereas it is characteristic of Christians.

24. The word for "he will get better" is σωθήσεται, "he will be saved." The verse may perhaps be intended to convey a secondary meaning pointing to a truth of salvation; if a believer "sleeps" (the word in use among Christians for "dies") he will be saved. p75 reads ἤγερθήσεται, but this can scarcely be right.

25. The word is εἶρήκει, the only example of the pluperfect of this verb in John. Abbott thinks this tense "takes the reader, as it were, behind the scenes — after some mention of deeds or words — to tell him what really had been the cause of the result" (2481).

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27. ἐκείνοι δὲ gives the subject emphasis: they in distinction from him.
28. περί της κοιμήσεως τοῦ ύπνου. The noun κοίμησις is found here only in the New Testament (Horsley thinks the idea "thoroughly Greek"; New Documents, 3, p. 93); ύπνος occurs 6 times in the New Testament, but here only in John.

29. παρρησία often has the meaning "boldly," and this may be mind here. Jesus boldly spoke the truth, trusting that his disciples would not fail, but would receive it. If this is correct, the reaction of Thomas (v. 16) is an immediate vindication of Jesus' action.

30. Unless with Black we take it as the rendering of a Semitic perfect (AA, p. 93), when the continuing state will be in mind.

31. Abbott, 2102. He has a long note on the passage (2099-2102).

32. Cf. Temple, "It is hard to know what one's faith is worth till some severe test comes. I believe — in some measure; of that I am quite sure. But in which measure I do not know. I pray God to do for me, or to me, or in me, whatever will have the result that I may believe."

33. The Greek Δίδυμος and the Hebrew דידם. It is not said to whom Thomas was twin, and in some of the apocryphal literature he is even said to have been the twin of Jesus (e.g., Acts of Thomas, 31), and to have resembled him (Acts of Thomas, 11). His personal name is said to have been Judas (Acts of Thomas, 1). Plummer thinks he may have been twin to Matthew, with whom he is linked in all the lists in the Gospels. MM, however, points out that Δίδυμος was quite capable of standing alone; one brother might be given a name and the other called simply "Twin." In the Synoptic Gospels Thomas is mentioned only in the lists of the Twelve, but in this Gospel, in addition to the present incident, he is mentioned in connection with a question asked in the upper room (14:5) and twice in the resurrection narratives (20:24-25, 26-29). The Hebrew name does not appear to be attested before the New Testament (EB, IV, 5058), but Δίδυμος is much earlier.

34. τοίς συμμαθηταίς. The noun is used here only in the New Testament. The choice of the unusual word may possibly be meant to hint that Thomas and the rest had a fellow feeling. Thomas was not isolated in his view.

35. ίνα expresses purpose: "Let us go in order that. . . ."

36. It is grammatically possible to take μετ' αὐτοῦ to mean "with Lazarus," but this is a highly improbable understanding of the passage. Thomas is seeking to avoid a situation in which Jesus would die alone, not in seeking to rejoin Lazarus.

37. Cf. Loyd, "Here is a sufficient rule to walk by, whether our faith be dim or clear; namely, sheer loyalty."

38. Torrey translates, "Let us also go, to mourn with him," and asks, "Is it not probable that ἵνα πενθώμεν was mistakenly copied as ἴνα ἀποθάνωμεν?" This presupposes an unlikely mistake and an original that appeals to have left no trace in the MS tradition. His further suggestion that even if Jesus were to be executed the disciples had no cause for fear is unrealistic.

39. For the accusative of time after the verb έχω see oil 5:5.

40. "R. Abba b. R. Pappai and R. Joshua of Siknin said in the name of R. Levi: For three days (after death) the soul hovers over the body, intending to re-enter it, but as soon as it sees its appearance change, it departs. . . . Bar Kappara said: The full force of mourning lasts for three days. Why? Because (for that length of time) the shape of the face is recognisable" (Lev. Rab. 18:1; Soncino edn., p. 226; see also Eccl. Rab. 12:6). In line with this the Mishnah provides that evidence of the identity of a corpse may be given only during the three days after death (Yeb. 16:3).

41. See SBk, Π, p. 544 for the relevant passages. On the significance cf. Strachan, "The conception that the mourning reaches its height on the fourth day implies that all hope of any restoration to life by what might be called natural means, is banished. Restoration can only be accomplished by a new creative act of God. Such a creative act, Jesus is represented as accomplishing."

42. NIV puts the distance in modern measure. John speaks of fifteen στάδια and a στάδιον measured 606 3/4 feet, so NIV is correct.
43. The Greek order is rather curious: ἐγγὺς τῶν Ἱεροσολύμων ὡς ἀπὸ σταδίων δεκαπέντε. We would expect ἀπὸ to precede τῶν Ἱεροσολύμων (cf. 21:8 and Luke 24:13). But our translation certainly gives the sense correctly. We should probably understand the measurement to be conceived as beginning "from" Jerusalem. Some suggest that this is a Latinism, but BDF deny this (161 [1]), as does Moulton (M, I, p. 102). For the article with Ἱεροσόλυμα see on 2:23.

44. The received text reads τὰς περί Μάρθα καὶ Μαρίαμ (with Α Θ fl fl3 etc.), making the Jews come not so much to Martha and Mary as to their (feminine) friends or perhaps their household. This is inherently unlikely, and the better texts read τήν. Bernard suggests that τὰς περί may have come from (αὐ)τάς περί in the next line; the better texts lack both words here. We should have anticipated that there would be no article or that it should be repeated before Μαριάμ. The expression τήν Μάρθα καὶ Μαρίαμ is possibly meant to indicate something of a unity. The two sisters now made up the household.

45. The pluperfect ἔληλύθεισα denotes previous action. The Jews "had come" before Jesus made his appearance.

46. A. Edersheim speaks of a threefold division in the time of mourning. The first three days were days of weeping; then there was deep mourning for the rest of the week, and lighter mourning for the remainder of thirty days (Sketches of Jewish Social Life [London, n.d.l, p. 174; see also LT, Π, p. 320; SBk, IV, pp. 592-607). The regulation is given in the Talmud: "Three days for weeping and seven for lamenting and thirty (to refrain) from cutting the hair and (donning) pressed clothes" (MK 27b; Soncino edn., p. 180).

47. Ryle thinks that Martha comes off best in this incident: "There is such a thing as being so crushed and stunned by our affliction that we do not adom our profession under it. Is there not something of this in Mary's conduct throughout this chapter? There is a time to stir, as well as to sit still; and here, by not stirring, Mary certainly missed hearing our Lord's glorious declaration about Himself. I would not be mistaken in saying this. Both these holy women were true disciples; yet if Mary showed more grace on a former occasion than Martha, I think Martha here showed more than Mary." Strachan also commends Martha here above Mary. Curiously Newbigin downgrades her, saying that Mary does not offer Jesus "her total worship" and that "She has yet to reach the point where — in the fullest sense — she believes."

48. Cf. Edersheim, "Immediately after the body is carried out of the house all chairs and couches are reversed, and the mourners sit (except on the Sabbath, and on the Friday only for one hour) on the ground or on a low stool" (Sketches of Jewish Social Life, p. 174).

49. It is probable that for ἀπέθανεν at the end of the verse we should read ἐτεθνήκει (see the discussion on v. 32).

50. Martha uses the verb αἰτέω. While Jesus uses this verb of people's prayers (14:13; 15:7, 16, etc.) he never uses it of his own prayers. Instead he employes ἐρωτάω (14:16; 16:26; 17:9 [twice], 15, 20), which, with the exception of 1 John 5:16, is used of prayer to God only in this Gospel, and always of the prayers of Jesus, unless 16:23 is an exception). But too much ought not to be built on this. It is hard to establish a consistent difference between the two verbs in late Greek. Perhaps there is a slight hint at equality, or at least of less inequality, in ἐρωτάω that originally meant to ask a question rather than to make a request. But we must not overlook the fact that the verb is once used of the prayers of people (1 John 5:16). See also on 1:19.

51. This, of course, was the accepted teaching of the Pharisees, but was denied by the Sadducees.

52. And according to Godet they were meant to lead up to something of the sort: "If she speaks only of the final resurrection, which is to her mind certain, it is that she may give to Jesus the opportunity to explain Himself, and to declare expressly what she scarcely dares to hope for in the present case."

53. ἀνίστημι is not a common word in this Gospel, being found only in v. 24 and twice in 5:29. Similarly the verb ἀνίστημι occurs only in 6:39, 40, 44, 54; 20:9 outside this chapter, ζωή by
contrast is one of the great concepts of this Gospel, being found throughout (36 times).

54. The words καί ἡ ζωή are lacking in p^{45} (vid) a I syr^5 Cyp Or. This is scarcely sufficient to
establish the shorter reading as original, and in any case the meaning will be much the same.

55. Calvin comments, "First, He calls Himself the resurrection; for restoration from death to
life precedes the state of life. But the whole human race is plunged in death. Therefore, no man will
possess life unless he is first risen from the dead. Hence Christ teaches that He is the beginning of
life. Afterwards He adds that the continuity of life is also the work of His grace."

56. "Never" renders οὔ μή . . . είς τον αἰώνα, the emphatic double negative coupled with a
reference to the age to come.

57. As in 10:28 (where see note) Barrett argues that the meaning is "shall never die" and denies
that the meaning is "shall not die eternally." His idea appears to be that there is a kind of death that
believers do not die ("The only death that is worth regarding cannot affect those who believe in
Christ"), and that this is all that is in view here. But I do not see how this is to be separated from the
idea that the life believers have is eternal life. It may well be true that Jesus is saying that there is a
kind of death believers do not die, but to say that this does not refer to dying eternally seems to
misrepresent the situation. The wonderful truth he is enunciating is that the believer "to all eternity
cannot die" (Knox). The believer has eternal life. The believer will not undergo the worst of deaths,
eternal death.

58. This is the only place in this Gospel where πιστεύω is followed by the accusative.

59. This is the force of πεπίστευκα. Cf. the use of the perfect also in 3:18; 6:69; 8:31; 16:27;
20:29. Martha's use of this tense is all the more remarkable in that the present would have been the
natural tense to use in reply to Jesus' question.

60. Lindars views this declaration as "the climax of this theological section of the chapter."

61. Schnackenburg says that Mary "gives the impression of being nothing but a complaining
woman." But this is surely untrue and unfair.

62. λάθρα may go either with the preceding or the following: "called Mary secretly and said" or
"called Mary and said secretly." But there is no great difference in meaning. NIV's "aside" is not the
meaning.

63. διδάσκαλος is used by Matthew 12 times, Mark 12 times, Luke 17 times, and John 8 times,
and with the exception of the general statement of the relationship of μαθητής to διδάσκαλος (Matt.
10:24-25 and parallels), the statement about the child Jesus sitting among the teachers (Luke 2:46),
and the information that Nicodemus was "Israel's teacher" (3:10) they all refer to Jesus. In
addition,ρεκββεί is used of him by Matthew twice, Mark 3 times, and John 8 times and ραββουνεί by
Mark and John once each.

64. Many MSS do read ἡγέρθη, but the present, attested by p^{45} p^{66} AC C Θ fl f 13 etc. is
perhaps preferable.

65. The present is found in p^{45} p^{66} A D Θ fl fl3 lat etc. It is possible that past tenses were
substituted for presents on account of the preceding ἧκουσεν.

66. "Quickly" here is ταχέως, while in verse 29 it is ταχύ. There seems to be no difference in
meaning, this being another of John's variants. BDF speaks of ταχέως as "the more literary" (102
[2]), but this will scarcely be significant in the present passage, where indeed they think it "likely an
interpolation." Neither form occurs elsewhere in this Gospel.

67. Martha's verb is probably ἐπέθανεν and Mary's ἀπέθανεν, while μου is differently placed.
In view of John's habit of making slight alterations when statements are repeated these variations
should not be regarded as significant (see on 3:5). Most MSS read ἐπέθανεν in ν. 21, but this seems
an assimilation to the present passage; therefore ἐπέθανεν is to be preferred there with A C^3 Γ Δ Λ Θ
Ψ. John uses ἀποθνησκω 28 times and θνήσκω but twice, so there would be a tendency for scribes to
replace the less familiar verb with the more common one.

68. κλαίω is defined as "cry, wait, lament, of any loud expression of pain or sorrow" (LS).
69. ἐνεβριμήσατο. Elsewhere in the New Testament it is found only in verse 38; Matt. 9:30; Mark 1:43; 14:5. LS give its meaning as "snort in . . . of horses."

70. Beasley-Murray points out that while the English tradition understands this term of deep emotion, the German tradition has seen it as referring to anger. He himself takes the latter view and sees Jesus as angry because the mourners "mourned 'like the rest of men'." But this seems unnecessarily harsh.

71. Thus Barrett says, "It is beyond question that ἐμβριμάσθαι... implies anger. This is suggested by biblical . . . and other . . . usage of the word itself, by the use of the simple form βριμάσθα... of which ἐμβριμάσθαι is here only an intensive, and by the usage of the cognates." This view may be supported by appealing to the Greek commentators.

72. This view has nowhere been better put than by B. B. Warfield: "It is death that is the object of his wrath, and behind death him who has the power of death, and whom he has come into the world to destroy. Tears of sympathy may fill his eyes, but this is incidental. His soul is held by rage: and he advances to the tomb, in Calvin's words again, 'as a champion who prepares for conflict.' The raising of Lazarus thus becomes, not an isolated marvel, but — as indeed it is presented throughout the whole narrative ... — a decisive instance and open symbol of Jesus' conquest of death and hell. What John does for us in this particular statement is to uncover to us the heart of Jesus, as he wins for us our salvation. Not in cold unconcern, but in flaming wrath against the foe, Jesus smites in our behalf" (The Person and Work of Christ [Philadelphia, 1950], p. 117). There is little to be said for Plummer's idea that it is wrath against the Jews for their hypocritical wailing, for, as we shall see, there is no reason to accuse them of insincerity.

73. Thus Bernard can say: "anger is not primarily suggested by the verb ἐμβριμάσθαι, nor does the idea of Jesus being angry enter into the story of the Raising of Lazarus." Lagrange points out that the ancient versions such as the Latin, Syriac, and Sahidic do not take the word to mean anger. Black finds in the expression a Syriacism meaning "he was deeply moved in his spirit" (AA, pp. 174ff.).

74. Chrysostom takes the dative τω πνεύματι as the object of the verb (like the dative in Matt. 9:30; Mark 1:43) and thinks that Jesus rebuked his spirit for feeling so troubled: "He weepeth, and is troubled; for grief is wont to stir up the feelings. Then rebuking those feelings (for He 'groaned in spirit' meaneth, 'restrained His trouble,')..." (63.1; p. 232).

75. ἔταραξεν εαυτόν. Later Jesus says, "Now my heart is troubled" (12:27), and the Evangelist says, "Jesus was troubled in spirit" (13:21). These references together form another example of John's habit of variation in repeated statements (see on 3:5). The present passage is the one example of the active voice of this verb in this Gospel, "He troubled himself" (NIV omits "himself"). Cf. Lightfoot, "the expression used here implies that He now voluntarily and deliberately accepts and makes His own the emotion and the experience from which it is His purpose to deliver men." For the last point cf. 14:1, 27. The expression is a way of showing that Jesus of his own free will entered fully into the human lot, identifying himself with the griefs of his friends. As Morgan puts it, "He made Himself responsible, and gathered up into His own personality all the misery resulting from sin, represented in a dead man and broken-hearted people round about Him. This was voluntary identification with the sorrow that issues from sin, and was the outcome of righteous wrath against the sin that caused the sorrow. It is a most remarkable unveiling of the heart of Jesus."

76. Barrett understands it thus: "Jesus perceives that the presence and grief of the sisters and of the Jews are almost forcing a miracle upon him, and as in 2.4 the request for miraculous activity evokes a firm, almost rough, answer, here, in circumstances of increased tension, it arouses his wrath. This miracle it will be impossible to hide (cf. vv. 28, 30); and this miracle, Jesus perceives, will be the immediate occasion of his death (vv.49-53)." Richardson's view is similar. I find such interpretations impossible to accept, I do not see how the presence of grief almost forced a miracle on Jesus (who had decided to "wake" Lazarus even before he left trans-Jordan, v. 11). This would be quite out of harmony with the position taken up consistently throughout this Gospel that Jesus is supremely the Master of every situation and that he is not coerced by any. In this very chapter he has
refused to move when informed of Lazarus's illness and has awaited God's time for action (v. 6, where see note). And in this very sentence John does not say "he was troubled" but "he troubled himself." Nor is it any easier to think of the anger as caused by the prospect of his death. Throughout his Gospel Jesus moves majestically to the appointed consummation, and there seems to be no reason for him to rebel now. It is, moreover, completely out of character for Jesus to give way to anger against friends who, even if misguided, sought him no harm. Lindars examines a number of ways of understanding the passage and accepts "the classic interpretation of this verse as a testimony to the human feeling of Jesus, who shares with all men in their pain and distress."

77. δακρύω means "to shed tears." Though the verb is found here only in the New Testament the cognate noun δάκρυον occurs ten times. The aorist here should probably be taken to signify "burst into tears."

78. Lightfoot comments, "He Himself, in His first words recorded in this gospel, at 1:35-42, had invited two of John's disciples, who were following Him, to 'come and see' where He abode; and this had resulted in their own discipleship and that of others; in other words, by following Him, they had themselves received 'the light of life' (8:12). But now He is Himself invited by the mourners round Him to leave the place and the light which are His by nature and by right, and to 'come and see' (ll:34) — and so, if the analogy with 1:38,39 may be pressed, to become associated with — darkness and death, since those around Him regard darkness and death as being in control of the situation; and the strain upon Him finds expression in an outburst of tears."

79. See Hoskyns for a succinct account of the great variety of interpretations that have been given this passage in both ancient and modern times.

80. The aorist infinitive ποιησαι looks for some particular act, not for an attitude or a continuous activity.

81. Calvin finds here something of the cost of the miracle: "Christ does not come to the sepulchre as an idle spectator, but like a wrestler preparing for the contest. Therefore no wonder that He groans again, for the violent tyranny of death which He had to overcome stands before His eyes."

82. μνημεῖον is "a memorial" and so a monument to the memory of the dead. It was used of burial places in general, σπήλαιον, "a cave," might be used of a robbers' haunt (Mark 11:17) or a place of refuge (Heb. 11:38). But a natural cave might also be used for a burial place, as here.

83. τεταρτάς: "he is a fourth day man." The Jews used spices at burials, but this was not embalming (as in the case of the Egyptians); it did not prevent decomposition.

84. The words are omitted by Θ it syr6 ac2. This is an interesting combination, but the strong probability is that the words are genuine.

85. Chrysostom thinks that Jesus made the Jews move the stone, rather than simply raising Lazarus without their aid, so that they would know for a certainty that it was indeed Lazarus who had been raised. They would not, he says, be like those who disputed in the case of the blind man, with some saying "It is he" and others "It is like him" (63.2; p. 233). Similarly he thinks that later Jesus commanded the Jews to release Lazarus from the grave clothes for the same reason (64.3; p. 239).

86. ἀλλά. Abbott cites this as all instance of the usage "where, without a negative in the context, it introduces something different from the past, something for which the past has not prepared us, but which nevertheless will take place" (2058).

87. ἵνα.

88. χραυγάζω of itself means "cry loudly"; here it is reinforced with φωνῇ μεγάλῃ. This is the one place (out of six occurrences) where John uses the verb of Jesus. E. K. Lee thinks that the word often indicates passion and lack of self-control and that it is significant that the one place where Jesus uses it is when he is concerned for others (ExT, LXI [1949-50], pp. 146f.).

89. δεῦρο is an adverb of place that may be used as an imperative like our "Here!" This is the only place where it occurs in this Gospel. Jesus' command is wonderfully succinct: "Here! Outside!"
90. ό τεθνηκώς. In v. 39 ό τετελευτηκώς is used. No difference of meaning is apparent; and we must regard this as another example of John's love of variation. Burton sees the perfect here as used "to denote a state existing antecedent to the time of the principal verb. The action of which it is the result is, of course, still earlier" (Moods, p. 156).

91. κειρίαις. The word denotes "bandages" (see LS; MM note its use "several times in the fragments of a medical papyrus"), so that we are to think of narrow strips wound round the body.

92. σουδαρίῳ. The word is a transliteration of the Latin sudarium, defined by BAGD as "face-cloth for wiping perspiration, corresp. somewhat to our handkerchief."

93. We might have expected τῶν ἐλθόντων. The expression is difficult, but ὀ ἐλθόντες must be taken as in apposition with πολλοί and explanatory of it: "many of the Jews, namely the ones who came . . ." or as Rieu, "many of the Jews, those who had visited Mary and witnessed what he did." The Greek says simply "had come to Mary"; NIV supplies "to visit."

94. One article links ἐλθόντες and θεασάμενοι. The same people performed both actions.

95. This assumes the reading ὄ with p66*(vid) A C B D f l sa ac2 & p45 A W 28 33 f l 3 lat. The attestation for ὃ is perhaps slightly stronger, but this reading may well have crept into the text to make it agree with the next verse. On the whole the singular is more likely. The thing that carried conviction at this point was the great, stupendous miracle, a single act. But when some went to report to the Pharisees they spoke of a number of things.

96. C. H. Dodd examines the pericope, vv. 47-53, in the Cullmann Festschrift (Neotestamentica et Patristica [Leiden, 1962], pp. 134ff.). He decides that the many primitive touches show that the Evangelist "was in a position to draw, directly or indirectly, upon a source of information deriving from a very early Jewish Christian circle still in close association with the synagogue" (p. 143).

97. τινὲς ἔλθων could mean "some of the Jews" or "some of the Jews who had come to Mary." The former seems required, for the language of v. 45 (οί ἐλθόντες θεασάμενοι) implies that all who had come to Mary and seen what Jesus did believed. These people are distinguished from those.

98. The separate articles with "chief priests" and "Pharisees" possibly point to two groups combining for the purpose.

99. This is the only occurrence of συνέδριον in this Gospel, and the only place in the New Testament where the singular is found without the article (the plural is so found, giving the sense "councils"). It may thus mean "a" sanhedrin or council rather than "the" Sanhedrin. This would be supported by the fact that Caiaphas is called "one of them" (v. 49), whereas in the Sanhedrin he would have been president. But this may be reading too much into the absence of the article.

100. For the first point see Mishnah, Sank. 4:1, and for the second John 7:51.


102. For John's use of αὐτῷς Jesus see on 4:29.

103. There is evidence from Jewish sources that the authorities were rather nervous for some time before the Jewish War. Thus Josephus speaks of all manner of pottents that occurred in Jerusalem (Bell. 6.288ff.). It is clear that the leading men would not have tolerated anything that looked as if it were provoking disorder.

104. ἡμῶν stands before ξαί τὸν τὸν τόπον ξαί τὸ ἔθνος, which Abbott finds to be possibly the one example in the Gospels of "the precedent unemphatic possessive with ἡμῶν" (2559a). Other pronouns such as μου and σου are used much more often in this way. So also BDF (473[I]). Hoskyns and Bernard think ἡμῶν here to be emphatic, but perhaps wrongly.

105. Cf. Mishnah Bikk. 2:2, ("Second) Tithe and First-fruits require to be brought to the Place. . . ." Both here and in the passage we are discussing the "place" could be Jerusalem, but the Temple seems more likely. In 2 Macc. 5:19 the reference is plainly to the Temple: "the Lord did not choose the nation for the place's sake, but the place for the nation's sake."

106. "As E. A, Abbott well says, 'Luke dates the coming of "the word of God" about Jesus from (inter alia) "Annas and Caiaphas." John dates Caiaphas from Jesus' " (FGRCI, p. 189).
107. There is an emphatic double negative, οὐχ οἶδατε οὐδέν. Barclay translates, “You are witless creatures.” Cf. P. D. Duke, “Irony can hardly be richer. Caiaphas, who has waited in the wings these many chapters, now steps on stage to utter his only line. He delivers it with proper conviction and flourish, but cannot hear how he mocks himself, and never perceives that his unseen audience looks on with amusement and pity ... the ignorance for which the high priest berates them is the very ignorance in which he will excel them” (Irony in the Fourth Gospel [Atlanta, 1985], p. 87).

108. Cf. Josephus: "The Sadducees ... are, even among themselves, rather boorish in their behavior, and in their intercourse with their peers are as rude as to aliens" (Bell. 2.166).

109. λογίζεσθε. MM say that this verb "is common in the sense of 'reckon,' 'put down to one's account.'"

110. In Gen. Rab. XCIV.9 there is a discussion of whether one man should be given up to save the lives of others, based on the incident in 2 Sam. 20 in which Sheba was slain and the city of Abel spared. Most agreed that one man should die and thus save others.

111. But Rieu is probably too strong with "These words, it must be noted, were put into his mouth." John does not mean that Caiaphas had no control over his words. He was not speaking like Balaam. He had thought the matter out and he gave his verdict. But God so overruled that, while Caiaphas meant one thing, his words had another and a deeper and more important meaning.

112. He uses the strong adversative ἀλλά (see on 1:8).

113. Prophecy was associated with the high priest, as in the manipulation of the oracle (Num. 27:21). David calls Zadok a seer (2 Sam. 15:27). Philo can speak of the true priest as necessarily a prophet (De Spec. Leg. 4.192), and Josephus claims that since he was of priestly descent he was himself able in some measure to foretell the future (though his emphasis is on knowledge of the prophetical books, Bell. 3.352). It was held among the Jews that prophecy was often, perhaps even usually, unconscious, as a number of passages testify (SBk, II, p. 546).

114. ἐμελέλειν adds a touch of certainty.

115. John's interpretation twice uses ἔθνος for "nation." In v. 50 Caiaphas has used both λαός and ἔθνος. The former word is that usual for the people of God, whereas ἔθνος is the general word for a nation, and in the plural it is the ordinary expression for "the Gentiles." John's avoidance of λαός in his interpretation of Caiaphas's remarks may be due to an unwillingness to use an expression that might imply that the Jews were the people of God. Yet this cannot be pressed because John is prone to slight alterations when he repeats, and in any case Caiaphas applies both words to the Jews.

116. Moule lists this as one of the passages in which there is not much difference between ὑπέρ and ἀντί (IBNTG, p. 64), For ὑπέρ see on 6:51.

117. The perfect διεσκορπισμένα may perhaps indicate the permanence of the scattering, apart from Christ's saving work.

118. BAGD gives the meaning of βουλεύω here as "resolve, decide." There may have been a formal resolution of the Sanhedrin.

119. This town is mentioned in 2 Chron. 13:19 with Bethel in the immediate context. Josephus also links it with Bethel (Bell. 4.551). Most are inclined to identify it with the modern El-Tayibeh.

120. Ceremonial defilement disqualified anyone from keeping the Passover (Lev. 7:21; Num. 9:6; cf. 2 Chron. 30:17-18). Depending on what was involved, the rites for purification might last as long as a week so that, with large numbers involved, it might be well to come to the city early. The "whitewashed tombs" of which Jesus spoke (Matt. 23:27) were whitened to make them conspicuous so that people at festival time would not contract defilement accidentally.

121. See Moulton (M, I, pp. 188ff.) for a valuable note on the use of οὐ μὴ in the New Testament. He combats the view that it is used so often that it has lost its emphatic sense, pointing out that most examples are in quotations from LXX or in the words of Christ. Apart from these the expression is rare, and when it does occur, as here, it must be given its full weight of emphasis.

122. The pluperfect δεδώκεσαν may be meant to indicate the permanent nature of the order. The command was given and remained in force. BDF points out that the pluperfect includes the idea...
of lasting consequence; otherwise the aorist is used (347). This is John’s one use of "orders" (ἐντολάς) for anything other than a command of God or of Christ (see on 10:18).

123. ὡς πίσσωσιν αὐτὸν is the one example of the use of ὡς in this Gospel. Interestingly Mark also has it once, but Matthew 17 times and Luke 7 times. Here the word may be used simply for the sake of variety as John has just used ἵνα, which is his usual conjunction for expressing purpose.
JOHN 12

S. THE CLOSE OF JESUS' PUBLIC MINISTRY (12:1-50)

John has practically concluded his account of the public ministry. Chapter 13 begins the section on the final discourses addressed to the disciples in the upper room after which John goes on to the events surrounding the Passion. This chapter then contains Jesus' last teaching and acts before the general public. John selects three incidents: the anointing at Bethany, the triumphal entry, and the visit of the Greeks to Jesus. Then he rounds the section off with an appeal to prophecy, showing why it was that some did not believe, followed by a rousing call to faith, spoken by Jesus himself.

1. The Anointing at Bethany (12:1-8)

1 Six days before the Passover, Jesus arrived at Bethany, where Lazarus lived, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. 2Here a dinner was given in Jesus' honor. Martha served, while Lazarus was among those reclining at the table with him. 3Then Mary took about a pint of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus' feet and wiped his feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. 4 But one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, who was later to betray him, objected, 5 "Why wasn't this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? It was worth a year's wages." 6 He did not say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief; as keeper of the money bag, he used to help himself to what was put into it. 7 "Leave her alone," Jesus replied, "It was meant that she should save this perfume for the day of my burial. 8 You will always have the poor among you, but you will not always have me."
There are accounts of an anointing of Jesus by a woman in all four Gospels, and the question of the relationship between the accounts is complicated. The first is found in Mark 14:3-9 (Matt. 26:6-13). It tells of an anointing in Bethany by a woman who poured "very expensive perfume, made of pure nard" over Jesus' head. This provoked great indignation among some who thought the perfume might have been sold and the money given to the poor. But Jesus defended the woman, saying, "She did what she could. She poured perfume on my body beforehand to prepare for my burial (Mark 14:8)." The second story is in Luke 7:36-50. It appears to take place in Galilee earlier in Jesus' ministry and is located in the house of a Pharisee. His name is given as Simon, but he is not called a leper (as in Mark), nor indeed could he be under the circumstances. In any case Simon was one of the commonest of names, so we need not think of these persons as identical. The woman who carried out the anointing is called "a sinner." She first wet Jesus' feet with her tears, then wiped them with her hair, kissed them, and finally anointed them. This led the Pharisee to think that Jesus could not even be a prophet, and this opened the way for Jesus to speak of the greatness of the woman's love. The story in John is clearly different from that in Luke. There is no reason for equating Mary of Bethany with Luke's "sinner" and, although the anointing is of the feet, and the hair is used to wipe them, the time, the circumstances, and the discussion are all different.¹

It is otherwise with the Markan story. There the similarities are great. Both use the most unusual expression "pure nard"² for the perfume. Both locate the incident in Bethany, and if Mark says the house belonged to Simon the leper,³ John does not say to whom it belonged. Perhaps he means that the house belonged to Lazarus and the sisters, but more probably he does not say whose it was because the owner had no part in his story. Particularly strong are the resemblances in the reaction aroused by the anointing. In both the suggestion is made that the unguent should have been sold. In both a sum of three hundred denarii is mentioned (in Mark the price is "more than" this), and in both it is suggested that the money be given to the poor. In both Jesus' answer includes "Leave her alone" and a reference to his burial. The chief differences are that Mark appears to place the incident after the triumphal entry,⁴ John before, and second that Mark
speaks of an anointing of the head\(^5\) and John of an anointing of the feet.\(^6\) The amount of perfume used is considerable, and we should bear in mind that Jesus speaks of his "body" as being anointed (Mark 14:8), which is an unusual way of referring to the head (or for that matter, the feet). Carson is surely right when he says, "it is reasonable to suppose that what actually happened was comprehensive enough to generate" both accounts.\(^7\) There are also minor differences of wording and word order, and Mark's words about the woman's having done a good work are absent from John, as is the reference to people being able to do good to the poor when they will. Mark does not name the woman, but John says it was Mary. Mark speaks of the woman as breaking an alabaster cruse to release the unguent, and he reports Jesus as saying that wherever the gospel is preached the story will be told in memory of the woman, neither of which is in John. He also refers generally to some of those present as being indignant, whereas John says that Judas objected.\(^8\)

In some points John's account is nearer that of Matthew than of Mark. Thus Matthew says it was "the disciples" who were indignant (John specifically names Judas), and he omits Jesus' words about being able to do good to the poor at any time.

It is difficult to escape the conclusion that Matthew, Mark, and John all refer to the same incident. But Luke's story appears to be different.

1 "Therefore" (which NIV omits) ties this section of the narrative to the preceding. The chief priests and the Pharisees were seeking to put Jesus to death. He had no intention of rushing needlessly into danger and accordingly had retired to a quiet spot (12:54). But this Gospel is written out of a deep conviction that Jesus came to die for sinners. It was in the purpose of God that he should lay down his life for others. "Therefore" at the set time he came to the city where he would be delivered up to death. John's interest in precise detail comes out in that he tells us exactly when Jesus came to Bethany, locating his arrival characteristically with a reference to one of the great feasts. Six days before Passover\(^9\) would be the Sabbath, presuming that the 14th of Nisan that year fell on a Friday. Jesus may have arrived on the Friday after sunset, or alternatively he may not have traveled very far so as not to exceed the Sabbath Day's journey. John proceeds to characterize Bethany by the great miracle he has just described. It was the place "where Lazarus lived, whom Jesus had raised from the
dead." The repetition of the name Jesus in this verse may be a way of emphasizing the personal activity of the Lord.

2 The result of Jesus' visit was a dinner. John does not say who arranged it, and his "they" may mean the people of the village who were impressed by the miracle, though, of course, it could denote the people of the household. Martha is mentioned first, which may indicate that she was acting as hostess. She was active in serving (Moffatt, "waited on him"); the imperfect tense denotes a continuing activity. This agrees with Luke's portrait of her on another occasion when Jesus visited the family (Luke 10:40; "the work" there is cognate with "served" here). Lazarus is placed among the guests; he was one of those who reclined at table with Jesus. This is perhaps a more natural remark if the meal were in another house than Lazarus's own. His presence among the guests could be assumed in his own home.

3 John introduces a third consecutive verse with "therefore" (NIV's refusal to translate it means that the reader misses the way John is tying the anointing in with the preceding happenings). Mary now took "about a pint" of very costly unguent. This would be a scented oil that might be poured on the head as a mark of festivity. "Perfume" gives the sense of it. The quantity Mary used is quite a large one and this perfume was expensive, so that Mary's was a very costly action. John goes out of his way to emphasize the cost involved. The use of unguents was very common among first-century Jews, especially on festive occasions. But the oil was normally poured on the head, and the peculiar thing about this anointing was that Mary poured it on Jesus' feet. This is probably to be taken as an act of utter humility. Mary is taking the lowliest possible place. A little later in this Gospel there is an incident in which Jesus rebuked the disciples by washing their feet, a menial task that none of them would willingly undertake (13:2ff.). To attend to the feet was the task of the most lowly slave, so that Mary's action involved great humility as well as great devotion. This is further emphasized by her using her hair to wipe the feet. It is perhaps curious that the oil was wiped off at all. In the case of the incident in Luke 7 it is understandable that the tears be wiped off before the oil was applied, but wiping off the perfume is different. But Coakley points out that a large amount of perfume was used and that Mary was simply dealing with the excess; some of the perfume would remain. Be that as it may, the use of the hair rather than a towel or the like may also indicate
something of personal involvement. The act is all the more striking in that a Jewish lady never unbound her hair in public. This was apparently seen as a mark of loose morals. But Mary did not stop to calculate public reaction. Her heart went out to her Lord, and she gave expression to her feelings in this beautiful and touching act. The repetition of "feet" may be a way of stressing Mary's willing acceptance of the lowliest place. Lightfoot reminds us that Jesus' words to Peter in connection with the feet washing imply that the washing of the feet "is equivalent to a complete washing" (13:9-10). He adds, "possibly the same principle may hold good here. If so, the reader is invited to see in Mary's action a symbolical embalming of His body for burial, as though He were already dead." Calvin thinks the reference to the feet means that the "whole body was anointed down to the feet." John recalls that "the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume." This looks like the reminiscence of someone who was there. It is possible also that it has a further significance. There is a rabbinic saying: "(The scent of) good oil is diffused from the bed-chamber to the dining-hall while a good name is diffused from one end of the world to the other." If some such thought is in mind, this may be John's equivalent of the saying that the action would be spoken of throughout the world (Mark 14:9).

4 Mark simply tells us that "Some of those present were saying indignantly to one another ..." (Mark 14:4). John, however, singles out Judas for mention and characterizes the man in three ways: he gives his surname, Iscariot (see on 6:71), he speaks of him as one of Jesus' disciples, and he reminds us that he would betray Jesus. He does not launch out on a tirade against the traitor. The only way he brings out the enormity of the offense is by setting side by side the statements that he was a disciple and that he would betray the Lord.

5 Judas points out that the nard was valuable. He asks why it was not sold for 300 denarii and the proceeds given to poor folk. The sum is a large one. A laborer was paid a denarius a day (Matt. 20:2), so that, allowing for Sabbaths, it was about "a year's wages" for a laboring man (NIV).

6 Such a gift would have been a worthwhile benefaction especially considering the small size of the apostolic group. But John now volunteers the information that Judas did not speak in this way out of concern for the poor but from motives of dishonesty (Tenney remarks that his words here "revealed that he had a sharp sense of financial values and no appreciation
of human values"; *EBC*). This is the one place in the four Gospels wherein Judas is shown to be of bad character prior to the betrayal. John characterizes him as "a thief," his word indicating something like a sneak thief.\(^{22}\) He also gives us the information that Judas was the "treasurer"\(^{23}\) of the little band, which argues that he was a man of some ability. It also meant that he would be in a position to help himself from time to time.\(^{24}\) It further opens up the possibility that disappointed avarice may have been one of the motives leading Judas to betray Jesus. This is especially clear in the arrangement of the narrative in Matthew and Mark. These two Evangelists speak of Judas as going away to the chief priests and making his agreement with them immediately at the close of this incident. The impression left is that Judas, seeing one source of personal enrichment lost, hastened to create another. And if this is the character of the man, we may well feel that he was dissatisfied with the way the mission of Jesus was turning out. Certainly he would have hoped for better pickings when he first attached himself to the little band.

7 Jesus immediately took Mary's part. He would have nothing to do with the criticism brought against her, though there is difficulty in understanding the precise bearing of his defense. In the first place it is curious that he should refer to his "burial."\(^{25}\) Anointing was usually a mark of festivity. Its omission was an act of discourtesy toward a guest (Luke 7:46). When people were engaged in solemn activities such as fasting, they sometimes refrained from anointing as a way of drawing attention to what they were doing, a practice that Jesus discouraged (Matt. 6:16-17). Anointing was thus associated with revelry rather than with funerals. A remark about a burial is not at all what we would have expected. We must take this as a measure of the extent to which the Passion was in Jesus' mind at this time. It loomed large in his thoughts and therefore an action that at another time might arouse very different associations he immediately linked with his death. And he associated Mary with this view. He may mean that she had entered more fully into his mind than others and knew that the end could not be far off. Or he may mean that she had procured the perfume with a view to his final anointing. Probably the former.

Another difficulty is in understanding what meaning we are to put into the word "save,"\(^{26}\) for Mary had just done the very opposite of "saving" the perfume. She had poured it out, and it was irrevocably lost. Perhaps the meaning is that Mary should "save" the perfume for the use she had in
mind, and not devote it to the use of which Judas had spoken. That is to say, she had kept it for a special purpose. In view of Jesus' imminent death now was the time to accomplish that purpose. 27 Little appears to be said for the view of Bernard, Richardson, and others that part only of the perfume was used and the rest kept until the burial (cf. v. 3; Mark 14:3). 28 Such a view is difficult to reconcile with Judas's remarks. He was complaining that the perfume had been wasted, not that it was being reserved for a wrong purpose. 29

8 Opportunity is to be seized while it is there. The poor are always present (cf. Deut. 15:11). But Jesus 30 is not. He will not live to old age but will soon be taken from among them. The time for actions of devotion toward him is much shorter than those at table think. 31 Jesus accordingly welcomes Mary's action.

2. The Triumphal Entry (12:9-19)

9 Meanwhile a large crowd of Jews found out that Jesus was there and came, not only because of him but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. 10 So the chief priests made plans to kill Lazarus as well, 11 for on account of him many of the Jews were going over to Jesus and putting their faith in him. 12 The next day the great crowd that had come for the Feast heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem. 13 They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting, "Hosanna!" "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" 14 Jesus found a young donkey and sat upon it, as it is written,

15 "Do not be afraid, O Daughter of Zion; see, your king is coming, seated on a donkey's colt."

16 At first his disciples did not understand all this. Only after Jesus was glorified did they realize that these things had been written about him and that they had done these things to him. 17 Now the crowd that was with him had continued to spread the word that he had called Lazarus from the tomb, raising him from the dead. 18 Many people, because they had heard that he had given this miraculous sign, went out to meet him. 19 So the Pharisees said to one another, "See, this is getting us nowhere. Look how the whole world has gone after him!"
a. 13 A Hebrew expression meaning "Save!" which became an exclamation of praise  
b. 13 Psalm 118:25, 26  
c. 15 Zech. 9:9  
d. 17 Or *Now the crowd that had been with him when he called Lazarus from the tomb and raised him from the dead were telling everyone*  

The narrative of the triumphal entry is found in all four Gospels. At this point accordingly John's story links up with those in the Synoptic Gospels. John does not include all the details we find elsewhere, and, for example, he says little about the procuring of the ass, saying only that Jesus "found a young donkey and sat upon it" (v. 14). But John tells us enough to bring out the royalty of Jesus. Characteristically he does not think of this as a glorification of Jesus (for that he looks to the cross, v. 16). But he leaves no doubt that the challenge of Jesus was felt and appreciated. He has some touches of his own. He alone dates the incident on the Sunday preceding the Passover. He alone mentions the palms, the reference to the raising of Lazarus, the fact that the disciples did not understand the significance of these happenings until after Jesus "was glorified," and the pessimistic utterance of the Pharisees.

9 It was not difficult to make the journey from Jerusalem to Bethany, and a great crowd of people came. The expression is similar to that which KJV renders "the common people" in Mark 12:37, but the word order is different, and it would seem that John's meaning is "the great crowd." While obviously this will include many of the "common people," yet this is not what John says and his intention should be respected. The crowd is described as "of the Jews" (*NIV* omits the article), an expression which in this Gospel naturally applies to Jesus' enemies rather than to those who were disposed to be friendly toward him. They came to know that Jesus was there, and so they came. John makes it plain that Lazarus was a great attraction for them. They came not simply to see Jesus but on account of Lazarus. To this man's name John adds "whom he had raised from the dead." He does not let his readers lose sight of the stupendous miracle.

10-11 John now records the effect on the high priests. They took counsel in order that they might kill Lazarus (the construction indicates purpose). This seems a strange desire since death had not been able to hold
him in the face of Jesus' command. But the "as well" is significant. They wanted to destroy both Lazarus and the Man who had raised him. Perhaps, too, they felt that the raising had not been genuine so that if they could really secure Lazarus's death it would be an end to the mischief that the reports of his raising were causing. Caiaphas had said, "it is better for you that one man die . . ." (11:50). But one was not enough; now it had to be two. Thus does evil grow. For the Sadducees Lazarus was a double embarrassment. Not only did he cause people to go over to the side of Christ, but he was also a standing condemnation of their doctrine. They denied that there would be a resurrection and here was a man who had lived through death. "Many of the Jews," that is of the group normally opposed to Jesus, "were going over to Jesus."35 John uses the imperfect tense, which may indicate continuity, in which case he sees the process as going on for quite some time. Or it may be inceptive, "they began to go away," "they began to believe." The construction used for "putting their faith" in Jesus is that which John habitually uses for a deep and genuine faith (see Additional Note E, pp. 296-98).

12-13 "The next day" is a typical Johannine note of time, and refers back to verse 1. "The great crowd"36 is the same expression as that used in verse 9 (where see note), but it does not refer to the same people. There it designated the people from Jerusalem who went out to Bethany; here it refers to the people from other parts who were coming up to Jerusalem for the feast, probably many of them from Galilee.37 Some of them had apparently reached Jerusalem and now "went out" to meet Jesus. These would accordingly be people among whom the greater part of his ministry had been exercised, a fact that perhaps explains their enthusiasm. Doubtless many of them had felt for some time that Jesus' teaching and miracles showed him to be the Messiah. But until now he would not make the claim. He would never set himself up as King. When on this occasion he did not reject their acclamation, their enthusiasm knew no bounds. He was now doing, they thought, what they had always wanted him to do. As John tells it, these people did not happen to be in the way as Jesus came. They heard38 that he was coming and went out of set purpose to meet him.39

They took palm branches and they cried out (the imperfect tense means that they cried out persistently; cf. Berkeley, "shouting all the while"). Both the actions and the words expressed their praise. John's word for "branches"40 is found only here in the New Testament. It is not clear why
the Synoptists do not indicate the kind of branches that were used on this occasion, but it is to John that we owe the information that they were palms. The law provided that palms should be used at the Feast of Tabernacles (Lev. 23:40), and later they were used on other festal occasions also (1 Macc. 13:51; 2 Macc. 10:7). In keeping with this we read in Revelation of a multitude before the throne with palms in their hands (Rev. 7:9). Palms were an emblem of victory, and in John's mention of them here we must detect a reference to the triumph of Christ.

The word "Hosanna" is the transliteration of an Aramaic or Hebrew expression with the meaning, "Save, I pray" (Torrey translates "God save him!"). It is not likely that the crowd used the term with a clear idea of its etymological significance (any more than we do when we say "Good-bye"). But John was probably mindful of the meaning, and thought of Jesus as entering the city on a mission of salvation, indeed on a royal, triumphant mission of salvation. The verb to be supplied after "blessed" might be "be" or, as NIV, "is." Usually "be" is to be preferred since the expression is used in calling down blessing on a man. But here "is" seems preferable. The crowd are proclaiming the blessedness of Jesus rather than praying that he might be blessed. "He who comes in the name of the Lord" is almost certainly John's meaning (though the Hebrew of Ps. 118:26 should probably be understood as "Blessed in the name of the Lord is he that comes"). The expression here is a messianic title. There is evidence that the Jews looked for "a coming one." The Messiah might be spoken of in various ways. Here the thought is that he comes in God's name. To this the crowd adds that he is "the King of Israel" (this expression does not occur in the prophecy; it is the crowd's addition). In the first chapter Nathanael had greeted Jesus as Israel's King (1:49). Now John brings out the royalty of Jesus by ascribing the same conviction to the multitude at large. In the Synoptics the acclamation is given after the mention of Jesus as seated on the ass and riding into Jerusalem, whereas here it is before. But it is not likely that John is in essential contradiction. It may be that it was the fulfillment of prophecy that drew forth the acclamation and that John's mention of the ass is left till later in order to put emphasis on the acclamation, not with the meaning that the ass was found late. Phillips translates: "For Jesus had found a young ass." Moreover, it is not at all impossible that both accounts are needed for the complete picture. We need not think that Jesus sent the disciples for the ass before there was any
indication at all of the crowd's enthusiasm. When this enthusiasm began to be manifested Jesus chose to accept it. But he rode into Jerusalem on a donkey to symbolize a conception of messiahship very different from that of the crowds. They hailed him as the messianic King. He came as the Prince of peace. There is of course no great significance in the fact that the shouts of the crowd are differently reported in the several accounts. In a crowd people shout many things.

14-15 Nothing is said as to the way Jesus obtained the ass. John simply says that he found it and sat on it. The other Gospels tell how Jesus sent disciples into a village with instructions for finding the animal. They also tell us that when the ass was brought the disciples sat Jesus on it, using their garments as a saddle. John says nothing of these things. But he does go on to speak of the fulfillment of Scripture. For him it is important that the will of God was done. He quotes from Zechariah 9:9. Zion appears originally to have denoted either the citadel at Jerusalem or the hill on which it stood, but the word was used poetically as a designation of the city itself. "Daughter of Zion" is a collective, referring to the inhabitants of Jerusalem as a whole. The words of this prophecy point to a distinctive mark of Christ's kingship. The ass was not normally used by a warlike person. It was the animal of a man of peace, a priest, a merchant, or the like. It might also be used by a person of importance but in connection with peaceable purposes. A conqueror would ride into the city on a war horse, or perhaps march in on foot at the head of his troops. The ass speaks of peace. John sees accordingly not only a fulfillment of prophecy, but such a fulfillment of prophecy as indicates a special kind of king.

16 Later John tells us that when the Holy Spirit came he would lead believers into all the truth. In this verse he gives us an example of this. At first the disciples did not understand what these things meant, things that they themselves had done. It was only when Jesus was "glorified" that they recalled these prophecies and saw how they had been fulfilled (cf. 2:22). The meaning of the happenings in the life of Jesus are not open for every unregenerate person to see. They are revealed only by the Holy Spirit of God. Barrett sees the narrative as self-contradictory: the multitude recognized that Jesus was the messianic King (v. 13), but it was not possible for the disciples to recognize this until after the glorification of Jesus. But what John appears to be saying is that the disciples did not understand the
real significance of these events. They did not comprehend the nature of Jesus' kingship (though they may well have thought of him as in some sense the messianic King). John is not affirming that the multitude correctly evaluated the Person of the Lord. They thought of him as King in a wrong sense. After the glorification the disciples thought of him as King in a right sense. There is no contradiction.

17 John now introduces us to a different group, "the crowd that had been with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead" (NRSV; NIV does not seem to represent the Greek; the crowd in vv. 12 and 18 seems to be people who had come to Jerusalem for the feast, while this crowd was from Bethany). Mention is made both of the calling of Lazarus from the tomb and of his being raised from the dead. The latter was the important thing, but the way Jesus had done it in calling the dead man to come out of the tomb had evidently made a profound impression. The multitude is described as bearing witness (see on 1:7), the imperfect tense denoting a continuing process. In the middle of the scenes of enthusiasm, with Jesus being hailed on all sides as king, those who had seen the stupendous miracle were moved to tell others of what they had seen.

18 For this reason "many people . . . went out to meet him." This, it would seem, is a different crowd from that mentioned in verse 17, though the same expression is used of them. What John evidently means is that those who had seen the miracle bore their witness as a result of which those who had not seen it but now heard of it went out to meet him. They wanted to see for themselves the one who had done such a stupendous thing. In verse 12 the multitude that went with Jesus was clearly the pilgrim crowd streaming into Jerusalem. In this verse it seems to be rather the Jerusalem mob coming out to meet the procession. The reason given is "because they had heard that he had given this miraculous sign." The last word is significant (see Additional Note G, pp. 607-13).

19 The scene provoked the Pharisees to pessimism. "See" is clearly addressed to one another, but it is not at all certain whether it should be taken as an imperative (as NIV), or as an indicative (as NRSV, "You see"). Perhaps the latter is a little more probable, but we cannot be sure. The first part of their statement points to a complete lack of success. They had made no progress at all in what they were doing against Jesus. The second part
points to the great success attending Jesus' efforts. In a magnificent hyperbole they say "the whole world has gone after him!" John may wish us to see in this an unconscious prophecy of the effects of the preaching of the gospel (cf. Acts 17:6). It is ironical. They are concerned that a few Judeans were being influenced. But their words express John's conviction that Jesus was conquering the world.

3. The Greeks (12:20-36a)

   20 Now there were some Greeks among those who went up to worship at the Feast. 21 They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, with a request. "Sir," they said, "we would like to see Jesus." 22 Philip went to tell Andrew; Andrew and Philip in turn told Jesus. 23 Jesus replied, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. 24/ tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. 25 The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. 26 Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me. 27 Now my heart is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour. 28 Father, glorify your name!" Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and will glorify it again." 29 The crowd that was there and heard it said it had thundered; others said an angel had spoken to him. 30 Jesus said, "This voice was for your benefit, not mine. 31 Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out. 32 But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself." 33 He said this to show the kind of death he was going to die. 34 The crowd spoke up, "We have heard from the Law that the Christ will remain forever, so how can you say, 'The Son of Man must be lifted up'? Who is this 'Son of Man'?" 35 Then Jesus told them, "You are going to have the light just a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, before darkness overtakes you. The man who walks in the dark does not know where he is going. 36 Put your trust in the light while you have it, so that you may become sons of light." When he had finished speaking, Jesus left and hid himself from them.
a. 34 Or Messiah

This rather curious incident is rather peculiar to John. I say "rather curious" because it is unusual that we encounter Greeks in a narrative of events at Jerusalem, because the other Evangelists do not mention the incident, and because the Greeks simply say, "Sir, we would like to see Jesus" and then disappear from the narrative. Clearly John regards their coming as significant but he does not treat their presence as important. Jesus recognizes in their coming an indication that the climax of his mission has arrived. Immediately when he hears of them he says, "The hour has come," and goes on to speak of his glorification and of death. In this Gospel we see Jesus as the world's Savior, and evidently John means us to understand that this contact with the Greeks ushered in the climax. The fact that the Greeks had reached the point of wanting to meet Jesus showed that the time had come for him to die for the world. He no longer belongs to Judaism, which in any case has rejected him. But the world, whose Savior he is, awaits him and seeks for him.

20 John introduces us now to certain Greeks. Since these men had come up to worship, it is likely that they were "God-fearers." They may have been proselytes, but if so they would scarcely have been described simply as "Greeks." The "God-fearers" were people who were attracted by the lofty morality and the monotheism of Judaism, but who did not care to become full proselytes by circumcision. They might visit Jerusalem for the great feasts, but they could not pass beyond the court of the Gentiles when they went up to the Temple. These "Greeks" would not necessarily have come from Greece itself. There were many Greeks in Decapolis, for example, and they could have come from such a place. At Passover time worshippers came from widely scattered places throughout the Roman Empire to join in the festivity.

21 It is not clear why they came to Philip. Possibly being Greeks they were attracted by his Greek name (though Andrew, to whom Philip came in perplexity, also has a Greek name). If so, they could easily have been misled, for the name signified little; many Jews bore this Greek name. But if this is not the reason, we have no means of knowing why they selected Philip. John particularizes by telling us that this Philip was the one from Bethsaida of Galilee (see on 1:44). John says that they "came with a
request" (the tense of the verb is continuous, "they kept asking"), but no question is recorded, though one is implied in "Sir, we would like to see Jesus." "See," of course, means something like "interview"; anyone could "see" Jesus as he moved among the people, but the Greeks clearly wanted more than that. They wanted to talk to him and get to know him. They give no reason for this. Until this point John has given no indication that Jesus' reputation was such that Greeks would have heard of him (though, of course, in a place like Decapolis this would not have been difficult). But the general tone of his Gospel leaves us in no doubt as to the point of the inquiry. Jesus was the Savior of the world, and this group of Gentiles symbolically represents the world seeking its salvation from Jesus.

22 Philip did not know what to make of their request (Philip seems frequently to have been in difficulties; see on 1:43). In his perplexity he sought out Andrew. He is mentioned along with Andrew in 1:44; 6:7-8; cf. Mark 3:18. Andrew, as might have been expected, joins Philip in telling the Master (we find Andrew bringing people to Jesus in 1:42; 6:8-9).

23 Jesus' answer is surprising. He totally ignores the Greeks and neither immediately or subsequently makes any reference to them whatever. His words are apparently addressed to Andrew and Philip, but it is impossible to confine the reference to them. Clearly the words are addressed to a wider audience, possibly including the Greeks. Plainly their coming is important. Jesus views it as evidence that his mission has reached its climax and that he is now to die for the world, Greeks included. Barrett comments, "Here John does not represent Jesus in direct conversation with the Greeks; this however is not careless writing, for the rest of the chapter winds up the ministry of Jesus to the Jews in order that the true and spiritual 'conversation' of Jesus with the Greeks may begin — on the other side of the crucifixion." The gospel is a gospel for the whole world only because of the cross. "The hour has come" reminds us of the series of references to "the hour" throughout the Gospel (see on 2:4). Though unobtrusive, this is one of the important themes in this Gospel. It marks that for which Jesus is destined. The verb "has come" is in the perfect tense: "the hour has come and stays with us." There is no going back on it. In referring to his "hour" there is no doubt but that Jesus is referring to his death (see the next verse). But he speaks not of tragedy but of triumph. He is not to be dishonored; he is to be glorified (for "glory" see on 1:14), and that by the way of the cross. "The Son of Man" is Jesus' way of referring to himself, especially
in connection with his mission. Its use in this verse accordingly is significant (see further Additional Note C, pp. 150-52).

24 The solemn "I tell you the truth" (see on 1:51) introduces a statement of importance. The grain of wheat introduces us to a paradox, namely, that the way of fruitfulness lies through death. Unless the wheat falls into the ground and "dies" it will not bear. It is only through "death" that its potentiality for fruitfulness becomes actual. This is a general truth. But it refers particularly to Jesus.

25 The application of the analogy from the grain of wheat is made plain. Anyone who loves his life loses it (cf. Mark 8:35 and parallels). By the very fact of his love for it he loses the possibility of real life. The verb translated "lose" often means "destroy" (Phillips, "The man who loves his own life will destroy it"). John means us to understand that loving the life is a self-defeating process. It destroys the very life it seeks to retain. This may be involved also in the use of the present tense, "loses," where we might expect a future to match "will keep" (NIV actually translates the present by "will lose"!). Jesus is saying that anyone who loves his life is destroying it right now. "Hates," of course, is not to be taken literally, but "hating the life" is the natural antithesis of loving it (cf. Matt. 6:24 - Luke 16:13; Luke 14:26). It points to the attitude that sets no store by this life in itself. People whose priorities are right have such an attitude of love for the things of God that all interest in the affairs of this life appear by comparison as hatred. Such people will keep their life "for eternal life" — unto the life of the age to come (see on 1:4; 3:15).

26 The outcome of all this is the service of Christ. Throughout this verse the first person pronoun is used with emphasis. Personal relationship to Christ is important. The servant must follow his Lord and be where his Lord is. This must be understood in the light of the previous verse: being where the Lord is entails suffering. It means losing the life for the Master's sake. There is no other way of Christian service. But the verse concludes on a different note. Anyone who serves Christ in this fashion will be honored by the Father.

27 The big question in this verse is whether the words "Father, save me from this hour" are a hypothetical prayer that Jesus looked at and declined to pray (his actual prayer being given in v. 28), or whether he actually prayed these words (and immediately took them back). There is no question but that he was deeply moved: "My heart is troubled" signifies deep
perturbation (cf. REB, "my soul is in turmoil") and the perfect points to a continuous state. Jesus first asks "what shall I say?" It may be important that his verb is "say" rather than "choose" or the like; there is no question about whether he will do the Father's will or not. The question is "What is the Father's will?" Some scholars take the next words as a positive prayer (e.g., Beasley-Murray, Bernard, Hendriksen, Barclay). But this is very difficult. If this is the sense, Jesus, immediately after offering his prayer, goes on to repudiate what he has prayed as he recognizes that he came to "this hour" in order to undergo it. NIV is surely correct in taking "Father, save me from this hour" as a possible answer to the question "What shall I say?" (GNB removes all doubt by inserting "Shall I say" before the question). Unless we take it this way it is hard to catch the point of the preceding deliberative subjunctive. It is also difficult to see the point of the strong adversative that begins the next clause unless this be a question. The whole structure of the verse points to a hypothetical rather than an actual prayer; the words are a rhetorical question, the words of a prayer Jesus looks at but refuses to pray. He asks whether he should pray to be saved from this hour and immediately answers that this is the very reason for which he has come. This "hour" must be faced and passed through. The words express the natural human shrinking from death. Since John does not record Jesus' agony in Gethsemane, this may well be his equivalent of the Synoptic prayer in the Garden: "not what I will, but what you will" (Mark 14:36). The "hour" in this Gospel has about it the air of inevitability. It represents the doing of the Father's will. So Jesus affirms that this is the reason for his coming to this "hour." "Here 'for this cause' looks back to 'this hour,' and forward to a phrase in which 'hour' is repeated for emphasis ('to [meet] this hour')."

Jesus prays that the Father will glorify his name, a prayer in which the overruling sovereignty of God is implied. The aorist tense in the verb perhaps indicates a single act, and if so it will be the cross that is in mind. There supremely the name of God was glorified. The response to this prayer is a voice from heaven, the voice of God himself. "I have glorified it" is in the aorist tense, but it is not easy to know which action is in mind. The baptism of Jesus, with the voice from heaven, or the transfiguration with the similar phenomenon, would meet the situation, but unfortunately John records neither. It may be that we should attach little significance to the
tense. The perfect active of the verb is never used in the New Testament and the aorist may well be used here with something of the meaning of the perfect, in which case we need not search for one specific occasion. The future, "will glorify," is a little easier. In this place it will refer to the cross.

29 We do not know where all this took place. There appears to be a break between verses 19 and 20, and it is impossible to say whether this event immediately followed the triumphal entry or not. So we do not know whether "the crowd" is the same as the one referred to in verse 9 or verse 12, or a different group. The crowd is described as standing (NIV omits this verb) and as hearing the voice from heaven, a voice that was variously interpreted. Those who thought it was thunder had Old Testament precedents where thunder is sometimes understood as the voice of God (e.g., Ps. 29:3). Others thought an angel had spoken to Jesus. Clearly John wants us to think of a sound audible to all, even if the meaning was not. He is not describing a subjective vision. We are reminded of the various accounts of the heavenly voice that spoke to Saul of Tarsus, from which it seems clear that Saul's companions heard a sound but did not understand what was said (Acts 9:7; 22:9).

30 Jesus responded to their perplexity. He explained that the voice did not come for his sake but for theirs. But if this removes one difficulty it introduces another. If it was intended primarily for the crowds, why did they not understand it? Perhaps because they lacked the spiritual perception to recognize the voice of God. Jesus enjoyed intimate communion with the Father and did not need to be reassured. But the voice would be of the greatest value to those of his followers who could take in something of its significance, even though they lacked the spiritual perception to understand it fully.

31 The connection of this verse with the preceding one is not clear. But Jesus is now plainly proceeding to the meaning of the cross, the cross that represents the judgment of the world. The world will condemn itself by its treatment of the Son (cf. 3:18-19 and the notes there). "The prince of this world" is, of course, Satan (the expression recurs in 14:30; 16:11 and cf. 2 Cor. 4:4; Eph. 2:2; 6:12). So much is he the ruler of people's minds that he may be spoken of as their "prince." But if the expression stresses his power in this world, it may also be meant to convey a hint of his powerlessness in the other world. And just as the cross represents the judgment of this world, so it represents the defeat of Satan. To people it
appeared as his victory; it looked like the triumph of evil, but in fact it was
the source of the world's greatest good. Satan was defeated in what
appeared outwardly to be the very moment of his triumph. "Driven out" is
not the verb that we expect here. It probably contains a reference to
something like being thrown into the outer darkness of which we read in the

32 "But I" (the Greek means "And I") is emphatic; this is a work for
Christ and no other. In this Gospel "lifted up" refers to the cross (see on
3:14), and here the meaning is made indisputable by the next verse. In this
one Jesus is concerned with the effect rather than the simple fact of his
dearth. "Draw" is used elsewhere in this Gospel to bring out the truth that
people do not naturally come to Christ. It is only as God works in one's soul
and draws one that one can come to Christ (6:44, where see note). "All
men" is something of a problem, for in fact not every person is drawn to
Christ, and this Gospel envisages the possibility that some will not be. We
must accordingly take the expression to mean that all those who come to
Christ are there because they have been drawn. Jesus is not affirming that
the whole world will be saved; he is affirming that all who are saved are
saved in this way. And he is speaking of a universal rather than a narrowly
nationalistic religion. The death of Jesus would mean the end of
particularism. By virtue of that death "all men" and not the Jews alone
would be drawn. And they would be drawn only by virtue of that death.

33 John adds a typical explanatory note. These words of Jesus are to be
understood as indicating the kind of death he would die. This, of course,
does not mean that his exaltation is excluded. As we saw in the note on
3:14, the two thoughts of death and exaltation are combined in John's use of
this word. But this verse makes it quite plain that the verb points us to the
cross. It was there that the "lifting up" took place.

34 The crowd sets itself in contrast to Jesus. Their "we" and their "you"
are both emphatic. They are sure that they are right in saying that Scripture
 teaches certain things about the Christ (see on 1:20, 41), but Jesus is
 teaching something different. They ask for an explanation and base their
questions on "the Law," but it is difficult to find in the Pentateuch any
passage that says "the Christ will remain forever." They may have in mind
passages elsewhere (as Ps. 89:36; 110:4; Isa. 9:7; Dan. 7:14). In this case
"the Law" is being used in the wide sense of "Scripture." The crowd
evidently discerned that "lifting up" referred to death. If "the Son of Man"
(see Additional Note C, pp. 150-52) was the Messiah, they could not reconcile this with their understanding of Scripture. They thought the Messiah would live forever. Their minds were probably full of thoughts aroused by the Triumphal Entry. They were expecting Jesus to claim to be the Messiah of popular expectation. But instead he speaks of death. So they inquire who this Son of Man is; perhaps he is not the Messiah after all. Since John does not say that Jesus used the term "Messiah" there is a difficulty. Perhaps he has given us the substance of what Jesus said, not his exact words. More likely the crowd knew that Jesus called himself "the Son of Man" (he did this in v. 23) and their question means not "Which individual is the Son of Man?" but rather, "What is the function of the Son of Man? Is he distinct from the Messiah?" John may have here one of his many double meanings. The question was natural enough on the lips of the speakers. But it is also the significant question in all religion.

We should not overlook the fact that this is the last mention of the crowd in Jesus' ministry. To the end they remain confused and perplexed, totally unable to appreciate the magnitude of the gift offered to them and the significance of the Person who offers it.

35 Jesus does not answer their question directly. His reply points them to the urgent necessity to act on the light they have. It is reasonable to infer that to do this is to enter into a knowledge of the Son of Man. Let them give up their preconceived notions of messiahship and act on the revelation Jesus is giving them, and their question will be answered. The light is there only for "just a little while longer." This applies to Jesus' earthly presence; he is about to be taken from the earth. But it also points to the timeless truth that if we do not use the light we lose it. So Jesus enjoins his hearers to walk (the present imperative means "keep on walking") while they have the light, "before darkness overcomes" them. Those in darkness do not know where they are going, and this applies to the spiritual realm as to the physical. There is emphasis on "light," which occurs five times in these two verses (NIV omits one of these in v. 36, see NRSV; cf. 3:19-21, and see on 1:4). It is perhaps worth noting that walking in the light or the darkness is not dissimilar to the thought in the Qumran scrolls that there are two ways in which people may walk, light and darkness being used to describe them, though the terminology is not quite that of this Gospel. Perhaps both are indebted to Isaiah 50:10, which refers to "him who walks in the dark, who has no light. ..."
We would expect "while you have the light, walk in the light" but instead we have "Put your trust (i.e., believe) in the light while you have the light." This reminds us that throughout this discussion Jesus himself must be understood as the light (cf. also 8:12; 9:5). The passage is concerned not only with illumination, but with faith. People must put their trust in Jesus. This makes an important difference from the Qumran texts. There there is a good deal about light and about "the sons of light." But the scrolls do not call on people to perform an act of faith in their Lord in order to become "sons of light." They are apparently such because they belong to the good spirit. The major difference between the scrolls and the New Testament is Christ. This is not peripheral but central. People must believe in him. There is an interesting change of tense. "Believe" (NIV, "Put your trust") in the present tense gives the thought of a continuous belief, whereas "become" in the aorist points to a once-for-all becoming sons of light. While faith is an activity to be practiced without ceasing one does not become a "son of light" by degrees. One passes decisively out of death into life (5:24). In Semitic idiom to be a "son of" is to be characterized by the quality in question. "Sons of light" are accordingly not merely people with a slight interest in light, but those whose lives have been so revolutionized that they may be characterized with reference to light (cf. Luke 16:8; Eph. 5:8; 1 Thess. 5:5). One cannot be a follower of Jesus, the light of the world, and be half-hearted about the light.

4. The Witness of Prophecy to Jesus (12:36b-43)

When he had finished speaking, Jesus left and hid himself from them. Even after Jesus had done all these miraculous signs in their presence, they still would not believe in him. This was to fulfill the word of Isaiah the prophet:

"Lord, who has believed our message
and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?"

For this reason they could not believe, because as Isaiah says elsewhere:

"He has blinded their eyes
and deadened their hearts,
so they can neither see with their eyes,
nor understand with their hearts,
nor turn — and I would heal them.  

41 Isaiah said this because he saw Jesus’ glory and spoke about him.
42 Yet at the same time many even among the leaders believed in him.
But because of the Pharisees they would not confess their faith for
fear they would be put out of the synagogue; 43 for they loved praise
from men more than praise from God.

a. 38 Isaiah 53:1
b. 40 Isaiah 6:10

The unbelief of the Jews has been a recurring theme throughout this Gospel.
As John brings his account of the public ministry of Jesus to a close he
brings out this point once more, and this time he gives something of an
explanation of it by pointing us to prophecy. Even the fact of unbelief is not
beyond the power and even the purpose of God. After centuries of Christian
history, during which the church has been almost exclusively Gentile, we
have come to accept it as quite normal that there should be very few Jews in
its membership. But this is not the way it seemed to people in New
Testament days. For them the Jews were the people of God and Jesus was
the Messiah of Jewish expectation. The Jews accordingly ought to have
welcomed him. Paul agonized over the problem of his people, as we see, for
example, from Romans 9-11. John’s contribution to the solution we see
here. The Old Testament again and again denounces the Israelites for their
failure to recognize the messengers of God and to heed their message. And
the same Old Testament shows that God overrules the designs of evil people
to work out his purpose. So John looks to prophecy and sees the Jews’
rejection of Jesus there. 101

36b When he had completed the discourse Jesus went away and was
hidden 102 The previous narrative has made it plain that he will certainly die.
But he will die when he wills. He will not be seized before the right time for
his death.

37 John draws attention both to the intrinsic quality of the miracles and
to their abiding effects. As often, he refers to them as "signs" (see
Additional Note G, pp. 607-13). They are not simply displays of power.
Such an event may become past history, but its abiding meaning does not. It
remains. It is probable that John’s word for "so many" 103 also contains a
hint at the quality. He has in mind not only the number but the kind of signs (cf. Barclay, "such great signs"; Knox, "such great miracles"). "Had done" renders a perfect participle\(^{104}\) that once more points to the permanent character, the continuing quality of Jesus' actions, a quality that ought to have elicited faith. The perfect makes it all in some sense present. The guilt of Jesus' opponents was for John still present, not simply past. He records that they "still would not believe in him," where the tense points to their continuing state. They might perhaps give occasional evidence of a transitory belief, but that is not saving faith (cf. 8:30ff.). See further Additional Note E, pp. 296-98.

38 Unbelief is now seen to be foreshadowed in prophecy.\(^{105}\) John has already made it clear that it is only as God draws us that we can believe. Now we have the further thought that what is written in prophecy must be fulfilled.\(^{106}\) The prophecy cited (Isa. 53:1) speaks both of failure to believe and of a revelation of "the arm of the Lord." In other words, faith and the divine activity are connected. And even unbelief has some place in the purpose of God.

39-40 John is explicit that they were not able\(^{107}\) to believe\(^{108}\) because of another Scripture. The divine sovereignty is strongly insisted upon.\(^{109}\) The quotation is from Isaiah 6:9-10, words that are cited by Jesus himself (Matt. 13:14-15; Mark 4:12; Luke 8:10), and also by Paul (Acts 28:26-27). In Isaiah the words are imperative and might be thought of as indicating punishment for past evil. In the Synoptics they are the illustration of a principle: people who are unbelieving hear the outward words of the parable but they do not discern the inner meaning. Paul sees it as the reason that "God's salvation has been sent to the Gentiles" (Acts 28:28). The present passage ascribes everything to the will of God. Unless his hand is somehow in it nothing is possible. But when John quotes "He has blinded their eyes ... ," he does not mean that the blinding takes place without the will or against the will of these people.\(^{110}\) So with the hardening\(^{111}\) of their hearts. These people chose evil. It was their own deliberate choice, their own fault.\(^{112}\) We should make no mistake about that. Throughout his Gospel John has insisted on the seriousness of the decision forced on the Jews by the presence of Jesus, on their responsibility and on their guilt. He is not now denying any of that. What he is now saying is that the hand of God is in the consequences of their choice (cf. the threefold "God gave
them over" in Rom. 1:24, 26, 28). The ultimate cause of all there is, in a genuinely theistic universe, must be found in the will of God. This passage is very thoroughgoing. John makes it clear that the hand of God is in the whole process, even though this means that people do not "see" nor "understand" nor "turn" nor are they "healed." God's purposes are not frustrated by the opposition of evil people. They are accomplished. In this particular case, while there is certainly an element of the mysterious it is also true that we can discern a little of the divine purpose. Had the Jews accepted the gospel it is difficult to understand how it could have gone out to all the nations. But when the Jews rejected it, it became a world religion. We cannot think that all this took place apart from the will of God.

41 John sees in the words of the prophet primarily a reference to the glory of Christ. Isaiah spoke these things "because he saw Jesus' glory." The words of Isaiah 6:3 refer to the glory of Yahweh, but John makes no hard-and-fast distinction between the two. To him it is plain that Isaiah had in mind the glory revealed in Christ. Again we have the complex idea of glory. It points at once to the supreme greatness of Christ and to the cross as the supreme illustration of his greatness. Here it includes the thought of his rejection, for that, too, is part of his real glory. He, being what he is, stooped to a position where people might and did reject him. Only as we see this can we see what his glory implies. John says that Isaiah "spoke about him." Whatever other application the words of the prophet may have, for John the supremely important thing is that they speak of Jesus.

42 But John does not leave us with the impression that none of the leaders believed. On the contrary, many from among them did just this. They "believed in him," where the construction signifies a genuine faith. Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea are the only ones of whom we have knowledge, but evidently they were but two of a much greater number. The ministry of Jesus was not without its effect even in the highest circles. But by now the opposition to Jesus on the part of the Pharisees was so great that it meant excommunication to confess him. So they were silent.

43 John puts the condemnation of these people in one crisp, memorable phrase, "they loved praise from men more than praise from God." The word NIV renders "praise" is normally translated "glory," and John is surely looking back to his use of the term in verse 41. The glory of Christ sets the
standard. To love the glory of people above the glory of God is the supreme disaster.¹²⁴

5. A Final Challenge to Believe (12:44-50)

Then Jesus cried out, “When a man believes in me, he does not believe in me only, but in the one who sent me. 45 When he looks at me, he sees the one who sent me. 46/ have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness. 47 As for the person who hears my words but does not keep them, I do not judge him. For I did not come to judge the world, but to save it. 48 There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; that very word which I spoke will condemn him at the last day. 49 For I did not speak of my own accord, but the Father who sent me commanded me what to say and how to say it. 50 I know that his command leads to eternal life. So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say.”

John finishes off his account of the public ministry of Jesus with one last appeal to people to believe. He has had some stern things to say about the Pharisees and their ilk, but his last word is not one of condemnation; it is one of tender appeal. Jesus came that people might believe and be saved. It is interesting to notice that in this brief concluding section some of the important themes that run right through this Gospel find expression. Faith, Jesus as the One sent by the Father, light and darkness, judgment now and at the last day, eternal life, all are caught up in this final summary and appeal.

44-45 The occasion is not indicated,¹²⁵ and it is not important. These words of Jesus form the conclusion to John's account of the ministry as a whole. In the light of verse 36 it may be that they were spoken earlier, but are inserted here as a fitting summary of Jesus' message. While we need not doubt that they were spoken on some specific occasion or occasions, yet for John it is not the occasion that is important but the challenge to people to believe. The words were spoken loudly¹²⁶ (cf. Moffatt, "And Jesus cried aloud"), which is probably a way of indicating their importance. The closeness of the Father and the Son is brought out: anyone who trusts Christ trusts not simply the Man of Galilee but God the Father. The two are so
close that to trust the one is to trust the other. Characteristically the Father is not referred to by name, but as "the one who sent me" (for "sent" see on 3:17). Similarly anyone who steadily contemplates the Son contemplates him who sent him (cf. 1:18; 13:20; 14:9). The two are not to be separated.

46 "I" is emphatic (and this is repeated in vv. 47, 49, and 50). Whatever be the case with others, Christ's own activities and purposes are clear. "Have come"\(^{127}\) in the perfect tense denotes a coming forth and remaining. For Christ as "the Light" see on 8:12. Once again we have the duality of light\(^{128}\) and darkness (see on 1:4). Darkness is the state in which people find themselves naturally, but Jesus came to deliver us from this state. It is not his purpose that we should continue in darkness. In view of the preceding section with its strong emphasis on the hand of God even in the unbelief of sinners this verse is important. The purpose of Christ's coming was salvation. He came to deliver us from darkness, not to imprison us within it.

47 The same truth now receives emphasis from another direction. Those who have an intelligent understanding of Jesus' teaching\(^{129}\) and yet do not keep it are certainly condemned. But Jesus can say, "I do not judge him." We are not to think of him as standing over people as a judge. There is indeed a sense in which he judges (5:22, 27, 30; 8:16, 26; 9:39), but in a very real sense people judge themselves (3:18-19). John puts a certain emphasis on "the world" by repeating it (cf. 3:17, and see NRSV here, "... not to judge the world, but to save the world"); the pronoun "it" could easily have been used (and NIV does exactly this, thus obscuring John's emphasis).

48 As always in this Gospel, there is another side to the saving action. Where the saving word is spoken and where anyone despises the Speaker and persistently rejects\(^{130}\) his sayings, that person does not go unscathed, but has a judge, and that judge is the very saving word itself. In the last day the judgment will be that the word of salvation came to that person and that person rejected it.\(^{131}\)

49 "For" introduces the reason for the foregoing. It is because Jesus' message is divine in origin that it is the fitting judge of people on the last day. "I did not speak of my own accord"\(^{132}\) is an emphatic disclaimer of personal responsibility for the message. Jesus is not, of course, saying that he disagrees with it. It is the word he has always proclaimed. What he is saying, and saying in the strongest possible terms, is that the saving word
did not originate in any human source. It is the Father who gave\textsuperscript{133} the commandment (see on 4:34). Once again the Father is characterized in terms of the Son's mission, "the Father who sent me." That is to say, the Father is bound up with the mission of the Son. He has, so to speak, committed himself in the Son. "He" is emphatic (though NIV omits it).\textsuperscript{134} It stresses that it is the Father and no other who gives the commandment. "Commanded" is in the perfect tense, which shows that the message is permanent. It is not withdrawn nor will it be. It is not easy to make a distinction between the two verbs "say" and "speak."\textsuperscript{135} But the two words together stress the totality of Jesus' message. For the thought cf. Deuteronomy 18:18-19.

\textbf{50} The final words of Jesus' public ministry contain a renewed note of certainty. The Father's commandment is no harsh restriction; on the contrary, it "is life eternal." It does not simply speak of life eternal, nor is it the case that keeping it leads to life eternal (as NIV, "leads to eternal life"). The commandment is life eternal. It is God's great love acting upon us, and acting upon us for our salvation.\textsuperscript{136} "Therefore" (the word is important; NIV has "So") the things that Jesus speaks he speaks just as the Father has spoken to him. "Has told me" (NIV inserts "to say") in the perfect tense stresses the permanence of the message, while the present "I say" indicates that Jesus continues right to this moment to speak in this way. The whole verse puts emphasis on the permanent relation between the Father and the Son. This is a striking note on which to end the account of the ministry of Jesus. "Jesus is not a figure of independent greatness; he is the Word of God, or he is nothing at all" (Barrett).
1. Yet some argue that all three accounts refer to the same anointing. A variant is that put forward by, for example, Bernard. He argues that Mark and John describe the same incident, and that Luke describes an earlier incident with the same woman. He identifies Mary of Bethany with Mary Magdalene and thinks of her as saved from a life of sin by Jesus. The first anointing expresses her penitence and gratitude; the second recalls the first, which is why the feet are anointed and why the hair is used. But this time there are no tears, for Mary cannot go back to her earlier emotions. Perhaps the strongest argument for this view is that the present passage clearly indicates that Mary of Bethany had an interest in Jesus' burial, yet none of the Gospels speak of her at the tomb, whereas all four mention Mary Magdalene. Bernard further points out that the identification of Mary as the one who anointed Jesus' feet and wiped them with her hair (11:2) demands that only one woman had done this. If two did the same thing, it would not identify her. Temple, Bailey, and others take up similar positions. Strachan thinks that John is working on oral tradition that included details from the traditions underlying both the Marcan and the Lucan stories. Dodd thinks that Mark, Luke, and John all worked on oral tradition, but "each evangelist used independently a separate strand of tradition, and the strands overlapped" (HTFG, p. 172). Brown holds that Luke tells of a woman who wiped tears from Jesus' feet and Mark and John of Mary as anointing Jesus' head, but that during the period of oral transmission details were transferred from each story to the other. The strength of the case is the difficulty of understanding why in the one story feet should be anointed, and why in the other perfume should be wiped off.

2. νάρδου πιστικής. This highly unusual expression is nowhere attested before the Gospels. H. E. Edwards refuses to see in it evidence of literary dependence: "We might compare it to the phrase 'a mess of pottage', which, as nine people out of ten will tell you, was the price for which Esau sold his birthright. The phrase is not to be found in Scripture at all, either in Genesis, where the story is told, or in Hebrews, where allusion is made to it. It has come down to us orally, preserved in our memories by its pithy and unusual form" (The Disciple Who Wrote These Things [London, 1953], p. 98).

3. R. A. Cole thinks that Simon the leper was the father of Lazarus and the sisters. Thus the house was his, but for practical purposes belonged to the children. He reminds us of Uzziah living in isolation while his son Jotham reigned (The Gospel according to Mark2 [Leicester and Grand Rapids, 1989], p. 285).

4. Yet it is to be borne in mind that neither Matthew nor Mark dates the incident with precision. Both simply recount it in immediate juxtaposition to Judas's betrayal. The place where they insert it may be due to a desire to draw a sharp contrast with the traitor rather than to put it in its correct chronological position. C. E. B. Cranfield says, "As Mark seems to have interpolated vv. 3-9 between vv. If. and 10f., it may be that the Johannine dating is more correct" (The Gospel according to Saint Mark [Cambridge, 1959], p. 415). W. L. Lane also argues that Mark has "intercalated" the anointing story (The Gospel according to Mark [Grand Rapids, 1974], p. 492, n. 18).

5. The anointing of the head is probably to be understood as a recognition of Jesus' royal place as Messiah. Cf. R. V. G. Tasker: "she pours the fragrant perfume, her most costly possession, over His head as though she were anointing a king" (The Gospel according to St. Matthew [London, 1961], p. 242).

6. Anointing the feet is most unusual, to say the least. In neither incident is a reason given for such an anointing, but it appears to indicate the taking of a very lowly place.

7. Cf. the anointing of Aaron in Ps. 133:2 when the oil ran down his beard and "over his body," as Leslie C. Allen translates (he points out that the traditional "over his collar" is linguistically unsatisfactory and that the beard would extend below the collar (Word Biblical Commentary: Psalms 101-150 [Waco, 1983], p. 212).

8. J. F. Coakley, in an important article "The Anointing at Bethany and the Priority of John" (JBL CVII [1988], pp. 241-56), argues that John's account is independent of the accounts of anointings in the Synoptic Gospels and that it may readily be understood on the hypothesis of the
priority of John. He draws attention to a number of anointings of feet attested in ancient literature, so that Mary's gesture was not as unusual as is often argued.

9. He does not in fact say six days before the Passover," but προ ἑξ ἡμέρων τοῦ πάσχα, that is six days before, beginning from the Passover. Some think the construction is a Latinism, but Moulton points out that the earliest Greek examples are pre-Roman and finds "the hypothesis of Latinism utterly improbable" (M, I, p. 101). The construction is certainly like ante diem tertium Kalendas, but in view of the early occurrence of the Greek all that we can say is that the similar Latin may have stimulated its use. A parallel expression is found in Amos 1:1, πρὸ δύο ετῶν τοῦ σεμινάριοῦ G. D. Fee informs us that in p66, instead of 6ξ, we have the singular reading πέντε (JBL, LXXXIV [1965], p. 71).

10. δειπνον can denote a meal at any time of the day (see LS). In the New Testament, however, it appears to be the main meal of the day, held toward evening. Elsewhere in this Gospel it is used only of the Last Supper.

11. The words are διακονία and διακονέω. Morgan makes the point that in the Lukian passage where she served a meal for four people Martha was distracted; here she probably had seventeen, but "there is not a word here about being distracted. Martha had learned something on that sad, dark day. . . . Her service had not ceased, but some secret had been learned, which kept her from distraction."

12. "With" is σύν, an preposition found elsewhere in this Gospel only at 18:1; 21:3. If, as is generally held, its use is a mark of literary rather than spoken Greek, it is of interest that it occurs 4 times in Matthew, 6 times in Mark, but 23 times in Luke, and 52 times in Acts.

13. λίτρα is a Latin loanword that equals libra. It is a measure of weight, not volume and denotes a Roman pound, that is 12 ounces, or 327.45 grams (BAGD). It is found again in the New Testament only in 19:39.

14. There are some difficulties about this perfume, νάρδος is fairly straightforward. It refers in the first place to the plant and in the second to the perfumed oil the nard plant yields. But the adjective πιστική is more difficult. It is not found before the Gospels, so that there are no earlier passages with which to compare this one. There seem to be four possibilities. The word may derive from πίστις with a meaning like "faithful," "trustworthy," hence "genuine" (hence NIV's "pure"). Nard was apparently adulterated on occasion, and this would mean that this specimen was of the pure type. A second view is that it derives from πῖνω and means "drinkable," that is "liquid" (LS favors this view); BAGD is surely right in regarding this as "very improbable." The third view connects the word with πιστάκια, "pistachio tree," but it is hard to understand how this is relevant. The fourth view sees in it a place name (so Augustine) or a trade name "pistic nard," the significance of which now eludes us. A small point in favor of the last is the absence of καί before πολυτίμου, for this may indicate that νάρδου πιστικής is being treated as something like a compound noun (so Abbott, 2168).


16. In Num. 5:18 the priest loosed the hair of the woman suspected of adultery; cf. also Sot. 8a where the priest undoes the hair of the adulteress. J. Lightfoot cites a rabbinic passage: "Kamitha had seven sons, who all performed the office of high-priests: they ask of her, how she came to this honour? She answered, The rafters of my house never saw the hairs of my head" (HHT, p. 361). A respectable woman always kept her hair covered.

17. This is the one place in the New Testament where πληρόω is followed by εξ. This preposition follows γέμω in Matt. 23:25 and γεμίζω in Luke 15:16; Rev. 8:5, but it is rather rare with all verbs of filling.


19. John has a similar statement about Judas in 6:71, but characteristically in repeating it he makes slight changes. The word order is different, for while in the earlier passage, εξ is used before τῶν δώδεκα, here it is not (some MSS have it here, but this does not seem to be the true text); there we have τῶν δώδεκα, here τῶν μαθητῶν, to which αύτοῦ is added; and while the former has ἔμελλεν this passage reads ὁ μέλλων.
20. There is no article with πτωχοῖς, so that the meaning is "to poor people" rather than "to the poor."

21. The construction is impersonal, ούχ διὶ περὶ τῶν πτωχῶν ἐμελεῖν αὐτῶ. The only other example of this construction in John is in 10:13 where it is used of the hired hand who "cares nothing for the sheep." This may be more than a coincidence.

22. κλέπτης.

23. το γλωσσόκομον ἔχων. The noun denotes a small box or case, originally one for the mouthpiece of a flute (γλώτται). From its proper use for the flute it appears to have been used for any small case, but in the New Testament its two occurrences (here and 13:29) both refer to a money box. MM comments: "This out-of-the-way-looking word proves to be decidedly vernacular, and quite in place in Jn 126, 1329, where it is 'moneybox' (cf. RV marg.); its original meaning, as 'receptacle' (κομίζω) for the 'tongues' or mouthpieces of flutes, had long been forgotten, and influenced it only by stamping on it generally the sense of small size and portability." They cite numerous examples. See also Field, p. 97. What is clear is that it referred to a box made of wood or other rigid material, not a "bag" (as NIV) or "purse" (REB).

24. βαστάζω has a double meaning, not unlike the English word "lift." It means "to carry" (as KJV, "bare"), but it may also mean "to carry away" and thus "to pilfer" (see MM). Judas not only "carried" what was put in the box, but "carried it off."

25. ενταφιασμός refers properly not so much to the burial as to the "laying out" of the corpse, the preparation for burial (MM). In 19:40 the wrapping in linen with spices is described as the Jewish custom ένταφιάζειν.

26. There is some difficulty with the construction άφες αὐτήν, ίνα τηρησΗ. Moulton points out that άφες is possibly used more or less as an auxiliary, which would here give the meaning "let her keep it." The accusative αὐτήν, however, and the similar expression in Mark 14:6 are against the auxiliary idea, and favor "Let her alone: let her keep it" (Μ, I, pp. 175-76). The former interpretation is behind ARV. "Suffer her to keep it," but the latter seems preferable with NRSV, GNB, REB, etc. Barrett lists a number of possible meanings but concludes, "It cannot be said that any of these is wholly satisfying."

27. This accords with the view of Lagrange, who points out that ετήρηκεν of the received text, while not the true reading, has yet preserved the true sense. Compare the words of Jesus, "She poured perfume on my body beforehand to prepare for my burial" (Mark 14:8). See also Lindars, "The occasion is symbolically equivalent to the day of burial, and for this reason she was right to keep the ointment and use it in this extravagant way." Bruce gives the meaning as "Let her keep the credit of having performed the last rites for me here and now, against the day of my burial."

28. Jesus does not refer to part of it, but to "i t " (αὐτό). Moreover, Mark refers to the alabaster cruse as having been broken (Mark 14:3), which makes it unlikely that any significant amount could have been retained.

29. Torrey makes the words a question: "should she keep it for the day of my burial?"

30. The emphatic έμέ set at the beginning of the clause places Jesus in the sharpest contrast with τους πτωχοὺς.

31. There are Jewish expressions that indicate that care of the dead takes precedence over almsgiving. Thus Sukk. 49b praises Gemiluth Hasadim ("the practice of kindness") above charity, among other reasons because it can be done both to the living and the dead, the later of which is explained as, "By attending to their funeral and burial" (Soncino edn., p. 233, n. 8).

32. Mark has ὁ πολύς δχλος, and John appears to read ὁ δχλος πολύς with the adjective in the predicate position. This is the reading of Β* al, and, though most authorities omit the article, it should probably be accepted. A text without it would read smoothly and there seems to be no reason for inserting it, whereas the omission from a text containing it would seem a fairly obvious correction. There is a division of authorities again over the same expression in verse 12. If we accept the reading ὁ δχλος πολύς, we have another problem. The expression ought to mean "the crowd is
great," but the context makes it clear that "the great crowd" is meant. Lightfoot thinks the unusual expression may be meant to recall the crowd of 6:2, 5 (δύο λος πολύς and πολύς δύο λος), for that crowd had followed Jesus in Galilee and sought to make him King. Westcott regards δύο λος πολύς as a "compound noun." This would simplify the situation, but he gives no reasons.

33. Ingressive aorist.

34. The καί before Lazarus looks back to 11:53 where they plotted to kill Jesus. Now they include Lazarus also in their plans (NIV, "as well").

35. The verb is ύπήγον, a common verb in John. It seems to be used here with the meaning "depart from one's allegiance" (i.e., to the chief priests). Cf. its use in 6:67

36. The article is read by p66* B L Θ f l syrs boh. As in v. 9 it should probably be accepted.

37. Great numbers assembled at Jerusalem at Passover time. Josephus speaks of a crowd exceeding 2,700,000 (Bell. 6.425). Even allowing for some exaggeration it is clear that large numbers could be expected at this feast. J. Jeremias estimates that on such occasions the city could accommodate 150,000 persons (Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus [London, 1969], pp. 82ff.).

38. The plural ἄκουσαντες, coming as it does after the singular noun δύο λος and the singular participle ἔλθων, is to be noted. It would not be so strange if it came after the plural verb ελαβον. Perhaps John is putting some emphasis on plurality in the crowd, which may also be in mind in the adjective πολύς.

39. είς ύπάντησιν αὐτώ. Moulton has a note on the expression in which he denies that it is a Semitism, and regards it as synonymous with είς ἀπάντησιν. Of the latter he says, "It seems that the special idea of the word was the official welcome of a newly arrived dignitary" (M, I, p. 14, n. 3). Similarly MM speaks of it as "a kind of t.t. for the official welcome of a newly arrived dignitary." This, of course, is very much in place in the present context.

40. βαΐα. He speaks of τά βαΐα των φοινίκων, which is peculiar in that either βαΐα or φοινίκων could denote palm branches (though the latter might also mean "palm trees"), so that the whole means "palm branches of palm trees." βαΐα is apparently taken over from the Coptic bai (BAGD).

41. Lightfoot points out that the palm is also found on Jewish coins of the period 140 B.C.—A.D. 70, sometimes with the inscription "the redemption of Zion."

42. Aramaic ⡣ ⢣ ⢣ ⢣, Hebrew ⡣ ⢣ ⢣ ⢣ It is found in Ps. 118:25 where NIV renders "save us." It apparently became a familiar liturgical expression, though our evidence for this is later than the New Testament. The Greek form ωσαννά is not found in LXX, and may be a Christian coinage (so Edwin D. Freed, Old Testament Quotations in the Gospel of John [Leiden, 1965], pp. 71-72). It is not easy to understand why words that have meaning in connection with supplication should be used in this way of acclamation. It is possible that we should take the expression as a prayer addressed to Jesus, who is then implored as Messiah to bring salvation. Against this is the difficulty of taking this meaning with a following ἐν τοις ύψιστοις (Matt. 21:9; Mark 11:10). Others have suggested that the words should be understood as a prayer addressed to God for his Messiah (cf."God save the king"), or that it had become conventionalized and meant something like "Hail" or "Praise" (so, e.g., Augustine, who thought it indicates "rather a state of mind than having any positive significance" (61.2; p. 283); in other words it is an interjection. J. A. Fitzmyer thinks it is a "spontaneous cry of greeting or a cry of homage" (G. F. Hawthorne and O. Betz, eds., Tradition and Interpretation in the
On the whole the last-mentioned or the view of Augustine seems most probable. See further E. Werner, JBL, LXV (1946), pp. 97-122; G. Dalman, 27le Words of Jesus (Edinburgh, 1902), pp. 220-23; Edwin D. Freed, Old Testament Quotations, pp. 66-73.

There is textual doubt, ό βασιλεύς is read by p66 D Θ fl al, but καί is prefixed by p75 (vid.) B W and seems to be right. We should understand it in the sense, "even the King. . . ."

The word is όνάριον, found here only in the New Testament. It is a diminutive in form, but it is not certain whether this should be pressed, since the word often seems to mean simply a "donkey." simply

Some commentators see a contradiction between εύρων here and the Synoptic accounts of the way the disciples brought the ass to Jesus. But this is to be unnecessarily precise. John's εύρων does not mean that Jesus personally went searching for an ass until he found one. It is his way of passing over the details entirely, and concentrating on the main event. In any case, the word could well mean "found by the agency of others."

The form here does not agree exactly, notably in the opening words. The Hebrew יֹמֵד כֶּרֶם is rendered in LXX by Χαίρε σφόδρα, so that John agrees with neither. Some scholars suggest that his Μή φοβοϋ is from Isa. 40:9, but there it is the plural μή φοβεϊσθε. In any case it is scarcely necessary to find a scriptural source for so simple an expression or to imagine that John is using a text different from any known to us. It is quite natural to prefix such words, words, moreover, that were frequently on the lips of Jesus, to a prophecy telling how Jesus comes as the Prince of peace.

The ass had lowly associations. Cf. the dictum: "Fodder and a stick and burdens for an ass" (Sir. 33:24).

As the prophecy goes on to make clear. God will take away the chariots and the war horses, while the battle bow will be broken and "He will proclaim peace to the nations" (Zech. 9:10).

There is a threefold repetition of ταϋτα in this verse. Such a multiplication of pronouns is not common in John (he much prefers to use nouns). It is likely that he wants to lay some stress on the way the events fulfilled prophecy.

The subject of ἐποίησαν will be the same as that of the earlier verbs. John is not talking accordingly about what others, the crowd in general, had done, but about what the disciples themselves had done.

The preposition ἐπί is somewhat unexpected in the expression ταϋτα ἐπ’ αὐτώ γεγραμμένα (BAGD cites Herodotus 1.66 as a parallel [II. 1 .b.δ]). This is all the more the case in that John frequently uses περί with the genitive in the sense "about." John is not fond of ἐπί, which he uses 33 times (and only 5 times with the dative) out of a New Testament total of 878, whereas he uses περί twice as often, namely 66 times out of a New Testament total of 331. His use of ἐπί here is thus far from usual.

John does not repeat δτι before ταύτα ἐποίησαν. It may be that he is hinting at a unity, in that the prophecy and the fulfillment are in some sense one. But this is perhaps too subtle.

"The distinctive emphasis of John is to present Jesus' action as a conscious corrective of a planned political ovation" (Robinson, Priority, p. 230).
Burton notices ὅν here as an example of the present participle used to denote action prior to that of the main verb (Moods, 127).

The significance of καὶ ὑπήντησεν is sometimes overlooked. The position of καὶ shows the meaning to be "For this reason the crowd (besides doing other things) also met him," not "For this cause also (i.e. in addition to other causes)" (as ARV).

Swete, commenting on the Markan narrative, sees two crowds, one pouring out from Jerusalem and the other coming from Bethany (on Mark 11:9).

ήκουσαν is used in much the same sense as the pluperfect, "they had heard."

τούτο is separated from σημεῖον, possibly for greater emphasis: "They heard that he had done this thing — the sign." There is a similar separation of this adjective from its noun in 9:16 (where see note).

Black takes πρὸς ἑαυτοὺς as a reflection of an Aramaic dativus ethicus (AA, p. 77). This, if correct, would strengthen the conviction that an Aramaic source or Aramaic thinking lies behind this Gospel.

A. Cole sees a link with the saying about the destruction of the Temple (2:19), for the abolition of the Temple and the inclusion of the Gentiles are closely linked (The New Temple [London, 1950], p. 31).

His δὲ may indicate a contrast with the preceding. The Pharisees set themselves in opposition to Jesus, but the Greeks came up to Jerusalem and to Jesus.

The present participle, ἀναβαβλοντῶν, may indicate habitual practice, "among those who used to go up..." The verb is used for "going up" to celebrate the festivals.

Εὐλην of course does not necessarily indicate a person of the Greek race. It can stand for the cultured over against the noncultured (Rom. 1:14), or for Gentiles over against Jews (Acts 14:1). In Mark 7:26 a woman is described as Εὐληνίς and then as Συροφοινίκισσα. But if proselytes are meant, some further descriptive word would be natural (though J. A. T. Robinson thinks the meaning "Greek-speaking Jews or proselytes... not Gentiles" [Priority, p. 60]). The fact that they came to Jerusalem to worship does not mean that they were necessarily proselytes, for the Ethiopian eunuch did this (Acts 8:27) and he could not be a proselyte. The word is to be distinguished from 'Ελληνιστής (Acts 6:1 etc.), though this term does not denote Greek-speaking Jews as certainly as one suggest (see the note by H. J. Cadbury, The Beginnings of Christianity, V London, 1933], pp. 59ff). Josephus speaks of many Greeks, Εὐληνες, as being attracted to Judaism (Bell. 7.45).

See SBk, II, pp. 548-51 for the status and limitations of these "half-proselytes."

The rule appears to be that where a verb precedes more than one noun that together constitute its subject it is singular, but where the verb follows it is plural. Thus we have the singular ἔρχεται and the plural λέγουσιν.

This is the significance of ἀποκρίνεται αὐτοῖς (though "them," of course, which MV omits, might refer to the Greeks). This verb occurs 78 times in John, the almost invariable form being the aorist passive. The present is found only here, 13:26, 38; 18:22. It may be meant to make these passages especially vivid. See also on 1:21.

The reference to the hour as come is probably another example of John's habit of introducing slight variations in repetitions. Here and in 17:1 we have ἐλήλυθεν ἡ ὥρα, but in 13:1 Jesus knew διὰ Ἡλήλυθεν αὐτοῦ ἡ ὥρα. Then in 16:32 we read ἔρχεται ὡρα καὶ Ἐλήλυθεν (though in this last-mentioned passage the meaning of "hour" is slightly different).

Cf. G. Bornkamm, "John does not regard the death of Jesus as a passing episode in which a mythical divinity who came from heaven returns to the glory from which he came. It is rather a supremely real event, the triumph of the heavenly glory viewed and interpreted with the eyes of faith" (The New Testament: A Guide to Its Writings [London, 1974], p. 141).

Cf. Barclay, "When He said that, the listeners would catch their breath. They would believe that the trumpet call of eternity had sounded, and that the might of heaven was on the march, and that
the campaign of victory was on the move. But Jesus did not mean by glorified what they meant. By glorified they meant that the subjected kingdoms of the earth would grovel before the conqueror's feet; by glorified He meant crucified."

72. The article with κόκκος denotes the class.
73. οὐτός μόνος puts emphasis on the aloneness of the grain that does not "die."
74. As Augustine long ago pointed out, "He spake of Himself. He Himself was the grain that had to die, and be multiplied; to suffer death through the unbelief of the Jews, and to be multiplied in the faith of many nations" (61.9; p. 285).
75. There is a change from ψυχήν of loving or hating the life, that is, this present, earthly life, to ζωήν of the life proper to the age to come. It may be entered on here and now, but its characteristics concern eternity. McClymont says that ψυχήν here denotes "the natural life of man, with all its appetites, desires, and affections, which seek their gratification irrespective of the will of God. The loving of this life is another name for the spirit of selfishness which is unwilling to spend or be spent for any higher object than self-enjoyment and self-aggrandisement, while the hating of it denotes that spirit of self-sacrifice which counts nothing in this world too dear to be given up in obedience to the Divine will."
76. The first εμοί is especially emphatic; it precedes τις (Rieu has "me" in italics), whereas the third (which is also linked with τις) follows it, though before we put too much emphasis on this we should remember John's habit of making small changes in repetitions. John also has ἐγώ and ἐμός. The first person is prominent throughout the verse.
77. Hunter aptly comments: "It has been said that follow me is the whole of a Christian's duty, as to be where Christ is is the whole of his reward."
78. For the verb ταράσσω see on 11:33. Jesus is to use this verb of theisciples' not being troubled (14:1, 27). But the price of their peace is his trouble of spirit.
79. εὖ does not always signify "out of" a state one is already in. It surely means here, "keep me from coming to be in the hour." Westcott takes the meaning as "bring me safely out of the conflict" (citing Heb. 5:7) rather than "keep me from entering into it." But Heb. 5:7 does not really support him. It says, "During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the one who could save him from death. . . . " The meaning surely is that God had the power to save him even from death (even though in fact he did die).
80. Godet stresses the importance of this strong adversative: "Here Westcott proposes an absolute tour de force. 'But to what purpose say this? The favorable issue is not doubtful.' This sense of but is altogether forced; and there is no more opposition between: to come forth from the struggle, and: to have come for it. However we may turn this phrase, we are always brought back to see in it a hypothetical prayer." Bultmann sees ἀλλά here as " = no, as in classic Greek after a self question" (p. 427, n. 4: cf. BDF 448 [4]; NRSV translates "No").
81. Strachan comments, "The best commentary ever made on this utterance are the terse words of Bengel. Concurribat horror mortis et ardor obedientiae; 'horror of death and ardour of obedience are fused together.' "
82. MacGregor says of this verse: "John thus tacitly corrects the Synoptic tradition that Jesus was ever subject enough to human weakness to pray 'My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass me' (Mt. 26:39)." But in the first place it is unlikely that John had the Synoptists before him, and in the second it is astonishing to have a reference to "human weakness" rejected in a passage in which Jesus says, νῦν ἡ ψυχή μου τετάρακται.
83. ἀλλά indicates that, far from being saved from the "hour," this was the very purpose of his coming.
84. Abbott, 2389a.
85. In rabbinic literature we read of a heavenly voice, the דב קול, lit., "the daughter of a voice." This is explained by the Tosephtist on Sanh. 11a in this way: "One would not hear the sound which went out from heaven, but another sound went out of this sound, as when a man strikes a blow with
violence and one hears a second noise which goes out from it (the blow) in the distance. One would hear such a sound; therefore it is called 'Daughter of the sound' (SBk, I, p. 125). That is to say, it is an echo. Among the rabbis the bath qol was thought of as inferior to prophecy; God no longer spoke to people directly. But in the New Testament on each occasion when a voice is heard from heaven it is the voice of God himself. Thus it is not true that the New Testament reproduces the rabbinic idea of bath qol. The New Testament concept is something different. It is the very voice of God.

86. Cf. Lightfoot: "Unhappily the multitude, owing to the half-light in which it lives, cannot discern or appreciate the import of the utterance from heaven."

87. Bernard points out that neither here, nor on the occasion of the voice at the Baptism or the Transfiguration, is it said that others than Jesus understood the voice, "and if we put this into our modern ways of speech, we should say that their messages were subjective in the sense that they conveyed a meaning to none but Him to whom they were addressed, while objective in the sense that He was not deluded or deceived, for they were truly messages from God" (on v. 28). But this does not do justice to the present passage. The people did hear something objective, and Jesus said it was spoken not on his account but on theirs (v. 30). They were meant to hear.

88. Tasker, however, understands this expression as "probably an example of the Semitic way of expressing comparison, rather than a strict contrast — i.e., 'more for your sake than Mine'. It is clear that on this occasion the voice had considerable significance for Jesus Himself."

89. SBk cites examples of this designation of Satan from Jewish sources (II, p. 552). ξοσμοξράτωρ is transliterated and used also in this sense (the same authority also notes that the rabbis often have in mind not Satan but a leading angel). Schnackenburg refuses to see a reference to Satan here (II, p. 416).

90. The word is ἀρχων, "ruler." K. G. Kuhn finds equivalents in the Qumran texts, and that with a good reference as well as a bad one. He says, "God as well as Satan has such in his army, or (in another image) in his court, always with specific duties. In the Qumran texts and in Jewish apocalyptics — and not in the gnosis — is the place of origin of this idea" (SNT, p. 266, n. 11). Raymond E. Brown reminds us that John never describes Satan as "the leader, spirit, or angel of the forces of darkness" as do the scrolls, but he sees a similarity in the struggle between Christ and "the prince of this world" (SNT, p. 88).

91. έάν here does not introduce a note of uncertainty, and NIV correctly brings out the meaning of the passage with "when."

92. Cf. Calvin, "When He says all it must be referred to the children of God, who are of His flock. Yet I agree with Chrysostom, who says that Christ used the universal word because the Church was to be gathered from Gentiles and Jews alike."

93. "This saying contains the whole of the Fourth Gospel's 'Church-theology'. The Church is anchored in the death and resurrection of Christ. She is thus founded not on myth but on historical reality, called into being not by human hands but by the intervention of God Himself" (A. Corell, Consummation Est [London, 1958], p. 13).

94. The view was, however, held within Judaism, and apparently fairly widely. Cf. 1 Enoch 49:1; 62:14; Sib. Or. 3:49-50; Ps. Sol. 17:4. In other places, however, we find the idea that the Messiah will die, so that this is not the only Jewish teaching on the subject.

95. For "must" in relation to the ministry of Jesus see on 4:4.

96. It is usual to take ὡς here in the sense of ἐως, "while," though elsewhere John does not use it in this fashion (unless those MSS are right which read ὡς at 9:4). But it makes quite good sense to take it in its more usual sense of "as," to yield the meaning, "walk as you have the light," that is "Live and act according to the light that you have" (Weymouth). Cf. Col. 2:6. BDF prefers to read ῧας, "as long as," in this verse and ὡς, "now while," in the next (4:5 [3]).

97. Cf. Hans Urs von Balthasar: "As long as God's presence in the world and for the individual is regarded more or less as a universal philosophical sun which is always available because it neither rises nor sets and is without time and without history, being of the same nature as Ideas, it will
scarcely be possible to grasp the quality of the Johannine 'light' which is always just rising now, always shining just for this present time, and whose dawn always carries with it (even for us!) the threat of denial and withdrawal" (A Theology of History [London and New York, 1964], p. 69).

98. ἀναλάβῃ. "Before" would be better "lest."
99. For ὡς see n. 94 above. Weymouth here translates, "In the degree that you have light. . . ."
100. The form of expression is Semitic, but this exact expression is not common. In fact SBk does not find it attested (Π, p. 219). It is, however, used in the Qumran scrolls to describe the members of the community, a further indication that there may be some connection between Qumran and this Gospel. It must also be borne in mind that such an expression is not difficult in Greek, where it would be equivalent to "enlightened ones."

101. Hoskyns goes as far as to say: "The fact of the unbelief of the Jews is, however, only superficially a scandal to Christian faith (cf. Rom. ix-xi). Rightly understood in the light of the Old Testament Scriptures it is the ground of the manifestation of the inevitable judgement of God upon unbelief. The unbelief of the Jews is not a problem; it is the precise fulfilment of prophecy." Later he says, "The Jews are manifestly culpable, since the Evangelist has recorded the mission of Jesus in such a manner as to exclude the thought that it was impossible for them to recognize Him as the Son of God. The purpose of his final summary of the public ministry of Jesus is not to deny the whole tenor of his narrative, but to point out that the rejection of the Messiah by His own people ought not to surprise those familiar with the Old Testament Scriptures."

102. ἔκροβη is passive, but most expositors take it as equivalent to the middle. See on 8:59. If it is a passive, the meaning will be that he was hidden by God.
103. τοσαύτα (NIV, "all"; NRSV has "so many"). The word is used of quality as well as of quantity (see BAGD, etc.). Yet we should not overlook the fact that elsewhere John always uses it of quantity (6:9; 14:9; 21:11).
104. πεποιηκάτος. The genitive absolute is a construction not often found in this Gospel in the words of Jesus (Abbott, 2031).
105. This is the first occurrence in this Gospel of the formula ἵνα πληρωθη with respect to prophecy (it is frequent in Matthew). It occurs a number of times in subsequent chapters (13:18; 15:25; 17:12; 19:24, 36).
106. ἵνα, as usually in John, denotes purpose.
107. Cf. Plummer, "Grace may be refused so persistently as to destroy the power of accepting it. I will not' leads to 'I cannot.'"
108. The present, "to believe continuously" or "habitually," not the aorist, "to come to believe."
109. Cf. Murray, "We must never forget that it is by God's appointment that if His word does not quicken, it must deaden."
110. J. Painter argues strongly that it is "the prince of this world" (v. 31) who blinds people, and he draws attention to the "remarkable parallel" in 2 Cor. 4:4 (R. Banks, ed., Reconciliation and Hope [Grand Rapids and Exeter, 1974], p. 46).
111. ἐπώρωσεν αὐτῶν τὴν καρδίαν. The verb originally has to do with the forming of a callus and thus is very expressive. Amplified renders "hardened and benumbed." NIV's "deadened" employs other imagery.
112. Bruce speaks of this "Hebraic fashion of expressing result as though it were purpose. . . . Not one of them was fated to be incapable of belief."
113. The aorist here might be constative, of complete knowledge, or ingress!ve, "come to realize" (cf. Moulton, M, I, p. 117).
114. We should notice the future indicative, though apparently this verb, too, is governed by ἵνα. In this context the subject of the verb will be Jesus.
115. Cf. Augustine, "God thus blinds and hardens, simply by letting alone and withdrawing His aid: and God can do this by a judgment that is hidden, although not by one that is unrighteous" (63.6; p. 293).
116. δτι, "because," is read by p66 p75 A B L Θ fl 33 cop etc., and is to be preferred to δτε, "when" with D fl3 565 etc. W reads έπει.

117. The Greek says "his glory"; MV's substitution of "Jesus" is probably a correct interpretation, but we should understand that it is an interpretation, not what John wrote.

118. In the Targum on Isa. 6:1, instead of "I saw the Lord" we read, "I saw the glory of the Lord."

119. "Yet at the same time" renders δμως μέντοι, an expression found here only in the New Testament. The combination forms a very strong adversative.

120. For άποσυνάγωγοι see on 9:22.

121. Calvin comments: "We must also notice, that rulers have less courage and constancy, because ambition almost always reigns in them, and there is nothing more servile than that. To put it in a word, earthly honours may be called golden shackles binding a man so that he cannot freely do his duty."

122. There is an interesting variation of tenses in this verse, ἐπίστευσαν denotes the definite act of faith, the imperfect ώμολόγουν the continuing failure to confess, while with γένωνται we return to the aorist and the decisive act of expulsion from the synagogue.

123. ἦπερ is found here only in the New Testament. Abbott thinks it implies that they loved the glory of God not at all (2092).

124. Godet denies that this verse refers to people like Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea. Rather, those "who remained outwardly attached to the Jewish system, such as Gamaliel and many others, the Erasmuses of that time." Westcott is scathing: "Such ineffective intellectual faith (so to speak) is really the climax of unbelief."

125. NIV's "Then" seems to locate the following words as the immediate sequel to those in v. 43. But δε will not carry this weight; it is better to take it as having adversative force and marking a contrast with the preceding. The words form a concluding summary to Jesus' whole ministry.

126. The verb is κράζω. It is used of Jesus in 7:28 (where see note), 37, and of John the Baptist in 1:15. On each occasion when Jesus is the subject the verb is in the aorist, but the perfect is used when John the Baptist cries. The verb used of the multitude in v. 13 is κραυγάζω.

127. ἐλήλυθα. Three times John has this perfect with εις τον κόσμον (16:28; 18:37), and there are the usual slight differences in repetition. The perfect is found also in other contexts with reference to Jesus' coming (3:19; 5:43; 7:28; 8:42), though the aorist is also common (1:11; 8:14; 9:39; 10:10; 12:27, 47). After the perfect in this verse John immediately moves to the aorist in the next, a typical variation.

128. φως is emphatic from its position: "I light have come. . . ."

129. The genitive after άκούω signifies "hear with appreciation and understanding" (see on 5:25). In John ρνμα always refers to the words of Christ or of God. Here the expression stands for Christ's whole teaching.

130. ό άθετών is a strong expression. Barclay translates, "He who completely disregards me as of no account." Cf. Luke 10:16,

131. Brown points out that in the first part of this verse we have realized eschatology, and in the latter part final eschatology. But the last "is offered as an explanation of the first part — an indication that the sharp contradiction drawn today between realized and final eschatology was not so apparent in NT times."

132. εξ έμαυτοϋ, an expression found here only in this Gospel, though John has άπ' έμαυτοϋ seven times. There seems to be no difference in meaning.

133. For the various things said to have been "given" to the Son by the Father in this Gospel see on 3:35. The tense is most commonly the perfect, as here, indicating the permanence of the gift.

134. The pronoun αύτός follows ό πέμψας με Πατήρ.

135. εΐπω and λαλήσω. NIV tries with "what to say and how to say it," but it is more than dubious whether this is the meaning.
136. Cf. Temple, "His commandment is not a stark precept given by supreme authority; it is direction given by almighty love . . . it is the impact of His holy love upon our consciences and wills."
IV. THE FAREWELL DISCOURSES (13:1-17:26)

The public ministry of Jesus is over. John tells us nothing more of any words spoken by Jesus to the crowds. There are a few words to those who arrested him. There are a few to those who examined him. But apart from these the whole of the rest of the Gospel concerns Jesus' final teaching to his own disciples and the events surrounding the Passion. The section on the farewell discourses is noteworthy. There is nothing like it in the Synoptic Gospels. From them we learn that Jesus ate a final meal with his disciples in the upper room and that he instituted the Holy Communion there. Curiously John says nothing about this, and the reason is by no means clear. It will not do, as some suggest, to affirm that he has given us his eucharistic teaching in the sixth chapter, for, as we saw when we were dealing with that chapter, the hypothesis that Jesus was there talking primarily about the eucharist is not firmly based. It is more likely that to John "the inner significance of what happened in that upper room was in danger of being overlaid by materialistic beliefs" (Wright). He is concerned more with meaning than with ceremonial, and therefore gives us teaching that brings out the significance of the rite everywhere practiced by Christians. Lightfoot draws attention to the fact that after 13:2 John "avoids mention of any particular place or time in connexion with the events and instruction of chs. 13 to 17, until 18:1 is reached." He thinks that John wants his readers to have in mind "not only the original disciples, but all the future members of the Lord's body," and that it may be for this reason that he avoids mentioning the institution of the Lord's Supper, "a narrative describing a unique event." In these chapters John is concerned with principles and significance rather than with specific events. Attempts have been made to locate the point in the Johannine narrative at which the
institution took place. This seems impractical John does not mention it, and he is thus not concerned to provide us with clues as to when it took place.

But if the Synoptists tell us of the institution of the Lord's Supper that John omits, John has much more that they omit. Their narrative leaves the way open for us to think of a discourse being delivered, for they speak of a Passover meal and there was usually teaching on this occasion. But it is to John that we owe the priceless teaching that Jesus gave then.¹

A. TWO SIGNIFICANT ACTIONS (13:1-30)

Before the sustained instruction begins John narrates two important actions Jesus did. The first, that of washing the disciples' feet, is pregnant with meaning, the meaning of the cross that now loomed before Jesus. The second, that of giving the sop to Judas, taken with Jesus' words to the traitor, set in motion the events leading to the passion.

1. The Feet Washing (13:1-11)

1It was just before the Passover Feast. Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he now showed them the full extent of his love. 2The evening meal was being served, and the devil had already prompted Judas Iscariot, son of Simon, to betray Jesus. 3Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; 4so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. 5After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him. 6He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" 7Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand." 8"No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me." 9"Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!" 10Jesus answered, "A person who has had a bath needs only to wash his feet; his whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you." 11 For he knew who
was going to betray him, and that was why he said not every one was clean.

In the Synoptic account of the events of this evening we read of a dispute among the disciples as to which of them would be the greatest. John does not record this, but he tells of an action of Jesus that rebuked their lack of humility more strikingly than any words could have done. Yet we should not take the feet washing, standing as it does at the head of the long section of the Farewell Discourse, as no more than a reaction to the petty-mindedness of the disciples. It is a significant action, setting the tone for all that follows. "It foreshadows the cross itself: the voluntary humility of the Lord cleanses his loved ones and gives to them an example of selfless service which they must follow" (Richardson). All the more is this the case in that it takes place during the meal (v. 2), not on arrival when the feet would normally be washed. This shows that it was an action undertaken deliberately, and not simply the usual act of courtesy. It is a parable in action, setting out that great principle of lowly service which brings cleansing and which finds its supreme embodiment in the cross, setting out also the necessity for the disciple to take the Lord's way, not his own. It is important that we see this. Many take the story as no more than a lesson in humility, quite overlooking the fact that, in that case, Jesus' dialogue with Peter completely obscures its significance! But those words, spoken in the shadow of the cross, have to do with cleansing, that cleansing without which no one belongs to Christ, that cleansing which is given by the cross alone. As Hunter says, "The deeper meaning then is that there is no place in his fellowship for those who have not been cleansed by his atoning death. The episode dramatically symbolizes the truth enunciated in I John 1:7, 'We are being cleansed from every sin by the blood of Jesus'."

1 The chapter opens with a mark of time in the characteristic Johannine manner, though "just before the Passover Feast" (the expression looks back to 12:1) is perhaps not as precise as most such notes. John thinks of Jesus as in complete command of the situation: He "knew" that his hour had come. The verb "know" recurs (vv. 3, 11, 18; cf. 18:4; 19:28) as John brings out this point. "The time," or more literally "the hour" (see on 2:4), did not take Jesus by surprise. He knew that it was this that had now come, and he acted accordingly. The "hour" is not thought of now in terms of glory (as in
12:23), but of leaving the world\(^6\) and going to the Father. It marks the
decisive end of Jesus' ministry. This leads John to a characteristic emphasis
on the love\(^7\) Jesus had for his own.\(^8\) They were in the world and he had
loved them there. Now he showed them "the full extent of his love."\(^9\) The
whole verse with its emphasis on love may be meant to set the tone for the
lengthy section it heads. Until now Jesus has had a ministry to people in
general. From this point he concentrates on those he loves intimately.

2 According to the best text John locates the event he is about to
describe as taking place "during supper."\(^10\) The exact meaning of the second
half of the verse is not clear, and again there is textual difficulty. The best
text appears to read "the devil had already made up\(^11\) his mind that
Judas...." It is not unlikely that we should take "his" as meaning "the
devil's," which gives us a very graphic expression, though some prefer to
understand it as "Judas's." The reading appears to have been altered in
subsequent MSS to give unambiguous expression to the idea that the devil
put the thought into Judas's mind.\(^12\) Whichever reading we accept, it is, of
course, part of the truth that at some time the devil did this. But to say he
did it as this point appears to be in contradiction of verse 27. Here John is
discussing the devil's thoughts rather than those of Judas. For "betray" see
on 6:54.\(^13\)

3 The subject is not expressed, but it must be "Jesus" (as NIV). Again
John stresses Jesus' command of the situation. He knew what was taking
place (see on 2:24; 4:18). Here we have an unexpected twist. Instead of
something like "knowing what Judas would do," we have "knew that the
Father had put all things under his power."\(^14\) The threshold of Calvary
seems an unlikely place for a statement of sovereignty like this. But John
does not view the cross as the casual observer might view it. It is the place
where a great divine work was wrought out and the divine glory shown
forth. So he describes it in terms of the Father's giving all things to the Son
(see on 3:35 for the things the Father gives the Son). The reference to the
Father is important. He is no idle spectator at the Passion, but he does his
will there. John further refers to what is about to take place as a return to
God of him who had gone out from God.\(^15\) This is the consummation of his
mission. Both "from God" and "to God" receive a certain emphasis from
their position. John is about to describe an act in which Jesus will take a
very lowly place. But he does not lose sight for one moment of the truth that the highest possible place is his by right.

4-5 The present tense, "rises" (NIV changes to the past, "got up"), is vivid: the writer sees the scene taking place before his very eyes. The preparations are detailed: the rising from the table, the putting off of the clothing, the taking of a towel, the girding of himself, and the pouring of water into the basin. Then Jesus began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel about his waist. Luke tells us that on this occasion the disciples quarreled as to who would be the greatest and that Jesus rebuked them by saying: "I am among you as one who serves" (Luke 22:24-27). Jesus' action is a sharp rebuke to their attitude. For the significance of the action cf. 1 Samuel 25:41. Barclay quotes some words of T. R. Glover about certain clever intellectuals: "They thought they were being religious when they were merely being fastidious." There was nothing of this about Jesus.

6 There is no mention of any comment until Jesus came to Peter; apparently there was dead silence. But Peter expostulates. His "you" is emphatic, and in the Greek it is immediately followed by "my," thus placing the two in sharp contrast: "Lord, do you my feet wash?"

7 Jesus' reply puts "I" and "you" in emphatic contrast. Peter is far from having a sympathetic understanding of his Lord. "Later" is an indefinite time note. Jesus does not say when it will be. But he does prophesy that one day Peter will understand what at the present moment is hidden from him (cf. 2:22; 12:16). In part Jesus may be referring to the explanation that he is about to give (vv. 12ff.). But in view of the later teaching in this section of the Gospel we may fairly infer that the primary reference is to the illumination of the Holy Spirit that was necessary, and that would be given (cf. 14:26; 16:13).

8 Peter's reaction is characteristically vigorous. He brushes aside Jesus' suggestion that something is happening the significance of which he does not yet know. To him it is unthinkable that Jesus should ever engage in the menial activity of washing his servant's feet. So he says that this will never happen. He will have no part in such goings on. "Peter is humble enough to see the incongruity of Christ's action, yet proud enough to dictate to his Master" (MacGregor). His words evoke the reply that if Jesus does not wash Peter, then Peter has no part with him. "Wash" in the Johannine manner will have a double meaning. In the context it must refer to the
washing of the feet. Unless Peter submits to the feet washing he may not eat with Jesus. But Jesus means more. A literal washing of the feet is not necessary before one can be a Christian. The words point us to a washing free from sin that only Christ can give. Apart from this washing no one can be Christ's.

9 Now we have a characteristic Petrine touch. Convinced by Jesus' words, Peter will not do the thing by halves. Hands and head must be washed as well as feet. Peter may not have meant the words to be taken literally, but as a wholehearted renunciation of his previous refusal to be washed at all. But the answer is still the product of self-will. Peter is reluctant to let Jesus do what he wants. He prefers to dictate the terms. There is also a misunderstanding of the meaning of the action. It is not a way of cleansing the disciples, but a symbol of that cleansing. It is not the area of skin that is washed that matters but the acceptance of Jesus' lowly service.

10 Jesus gently discourages excess. The imagery is that of a man going to a feast. He will bathe at home. Then when he arrives he need only to wash his feet (soiled by the dusty paths) to sit at table wholly clean. Jesus applies this to the spiritual situation of his followers. "A person who has had a bath" points to the permanent character: he is not simply one who once upon a time was washed, but one who continues in the character of "the washed one." Such a person has no need for washing except the washing of the feet, but "his whole body is clean." Cf. Grimm-Thayer, "he whose inmost nature has been renovated does not need radical renewal, but only to be cleansed from every several fault into which he may fall through intercourse with the unrenewed world." This may be true, though I doubt whether the words actually used will yield all of it. Perhaps the meaning is "Such a cleansing as you indicate is not necessary. Anyone who has lined up with me, has identified with me, has been washed by me, has no need to supplement that washing. That person is wholly cleansed." Some see a reference to Christian baptism. But, apart from the fact that this appears to be reading something into the narrative, there is the further point that we have no evidence for thinking that the apostles were baptized (unless with John's baptism). Jesus goes on to affirm that the apostolic band ("you" is plural, showing that he is now looking beyond Peter) are clean in the sense meant, that is, clean from sin (cf. 15:3). He immediately adds, "though not every one of you."
John brings out the meaning of the last expression by noting once again that Jesus knew his betrayer. That was the reason why he said not all were clean. We should not overlook the fact that Jesus does not tell the disciples who the unclean person is. The reader of the Gospel knows, but right until the arrest the disciples know no more than that there is a traitor in their midst.

2. Lowly Service (13:12-20)

When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you? " he asked them. "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. Tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them. I am not referring to all of you; I know those I have chosen. But this is to fulfill the scripture: 'He who shares my bread has lifted up his heel against me.' I am telling you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe that I am He. Tell you the truth, whoever accepts anyone I send accepts me; and whoever accepts me accepts the one who sent me."

a. 18 Psalm 41:9

Jesus proceeds to bring out the implications of his symbolic action. He shows the importance of observing in daily life the principle that underlay that action. Characteristically the paragraph concludes with a reference to the position of Jesus and to his status as One sent by the Father.

12 Jesus completed his task. Evidently he washed the feet of all including Peter (and Judas too!). Then he resumed his garments and returned to his seat. He challenged them to think about the significance of what he had done.

13-14 He reminds them of the way they addressed him. "Teacher," which is equivalent to "Rabbi," was the ordinary respectful way of
addressing a religious leader. "Lord" was not nearly so common (though cf. 20:28; Rev. 4:11; see on 4:1). It expresses a very high reverence, perhaps even having overtones of divinity. Jesus proceeds to endorse this way of speaking. He commends the disciples, for these expressions point to his true position. But precisely because of this there are implications. His repetition of "Lord and Teacher" (the reversed order may be significant) emphasizes his dignity. This exalted Person has washed their feet. They ought to wash one another's feet. It is unlikely that this is to be taken as a regulation promulgated in the interests of pedal cleanliness. Though on occasion disciples ought to perform this needful service for one another, the point of what Jesus has said is rather that they should have a readiness to perform the lowliest service for one another. Nothing was more menial than the washing of the feet (cf. the reference to loosing the sandal thong; see the note on 1:27). No act of service should be beneath them.

15 Jesus makes it clear that his action was no casual event. It set them an example that they were to follow. Temple aptly remarks: "We would gladly wash the feet of our Divine Lord; but He disconcertingly insists on washing ours, and bids us wash our neighbour's feet."

16 For the solemn "I tell you the truth" see on 1:51. It marks the following statement as important. Jesus reminds his followers of their status as "slaves" and "men sent" (NIV, "servant" and "messenger"). They are not to stand on their dignity or think too highly of themselves. If their Master and their Sender does lowly actions, then they, the slaves and the sent ones, should not consider menial tasks beneath their dignity. This saying (with variants) is found on four occasions (here, 15:20; Matt. 10:24; Luke 6:40; and cf. Luke 22:37). It was evidently a saying that Jesus loved to repeat.

17 The construction "If you know these things" carries the implication that in fact they did know them, and NIV brings this out by replacing "If" with "Now." But it is one thing to know and another to act on that knowledge. The disciples (and we) are reminded of the importance of acting on what is known. The precise meaning to be attached to "these things" is not clear. One would naturally refer it to the previous verse, with its teaching that a servant is not greater than his master, nor an agent than his principal. But one cannot "do" these things. Yet the meaning is not really in doubt. The previous passage sets out principles of conduct, and Christ's followers are to act on them. This is one of only two beatitudes in this Gospel (the other is in 20:29).
Once again the tragedy of Judas is brought to the fore. It must have made a big impression on John, for he mentions it so often. Here he records Jesus' explicit denial that his words refer to all of them. He knows whom he chose. The implication is that the choosing is the decisive thing. Once again we have the divine initiative. And once again there is an appeal to Scripture to clinch the argument. The passage quoted is from Psalm 41:9.

The eating of bread together signifies close fellowship. Most commentators understand "lifted up his heel" as a metaphor derived from the lifting up of a horse's hoof preparatory to kicking, and this is probably correct. We should not, however, overlook the possibility that it is the shaking off of the dust from the feet that is meant (cf. Luke 9:5; 10:11). E. F. F. Bishop shows that the pointing of the foot in anyone's direction is among the Arabs a sign of discourtesy, even animosity. The point of the quotation is that Judas's action was unnatural. It represented the betrayal not of an acquaintance but of an intimate friend.

"From now" (NIV omits "from") seems a little strange; "at" rather than "from" this moment seems indicated. Perhaps the expression is meant to indicate an ongoing movement. The prediction is not separated from the fulfillment. And the prediction is given expressly to strengthen the disciples' faith. When it all happens they are to believe "that I am" (NIV adds "He"). The expression almost certainly has overtones of deity, as in 8:28 (where see note). The faith that Jesus looks for is one with a full content. We should not miss the tender concern implied in this prediction. The disciples might well have been seriously shocked and their faith shattered had the betrayal taken them completely unawares. They might have thought Jesus' enemies too resourceful for him. The prediction altered all that. It ensured that, on reflection, they would continue to see his mastery of the situation. When he was betrayed into the hands of his enemies it was just what he had foretold. He was not the deceived and helpless victim of unsuspected treachery, but One sent by God to effect the divine purpose going forward calmly and unafraid, to do what God had planned that he should do.

Again the solemn introduction (cf. v. 16) as the dignity of Christ's messengers is brought out. To receive the messenger is to receive the Sender and to receive the Sender is to receive the Father. The supreme
dignity of Christ is in mind, as is the importance of aligning oneself with him. Earlier in this Gospel the thought of Jesus as being sent is common (see on 3:17). Later, as here, there is also the thought that he sends his people (Matt. 10:40 expresses a similar thought, though the language is different; cf. also Mark 9:37; Luke 9:48; 10:16). Jesus’ followers are people with a mission. These words are to be taken with those in verses 14 and 16. There the disciples are warned not to have too high an opinion of themselves, nor to stand on their dignity. To serve Jesus is to take the way of the cross, and it necessarily leads people into lowly paths. But it is not to be lightly esteemed. It has a high and holy dignity. Those sent by Christ are brought close to God.

3. A Prophecy of the Betrayal (13:21-30)

21 After he had said this, Jesus was troubled in spirit and testified, "I tell you the truth, one of you is going to betray me." 22 His disciples stared at one another, at a loss to know which of them he meant. 23 One of them, the disciple whom Jesus loved, was reclining next to him. 24 Simon Peter motioned to this disciple and said, "Ask him which one he means." 25 Leaning back against Jesus, he asked him, "Lord, who is it? " 26 Jesus answered, "It is the one to whom I will give this piece of bread when I have dipped it in the dish." Then, dipping the piece of bread, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, son of Simon." 27 As soon as Judas took the bread, Satan entered into him. "What you are about to do, do quickly," Jesus told him, 28 but no one at the meal understood why Jesus said this to him. 29 Since Judas had charge of the money, some thought Jesus was telling him to buy what was needed for the Feast, or to give something to the poor. 30 As soon as Judas had taken the bread, he went out. And it was night.

Immediately after the explanation of the footwashing there comes a prophecy that one of those present will betray Jesus. Jesus has already indicated twice that something was amiss in the apostolic band (vv. 10,18), and the Evangelist has explained that the first of these refers to the betrayal (v. 11). But nothing has been said that makes clear to the disciples what is about to take place. Even now nobody, the traitor excepted, really knows what Jesus is speaking about. The reader of the Gospel knows that Judas is
to betray him. The apostles know only that one of them is false in some undefined way.

21 A very human Jesus is described as "troubled in spirit" (see on 11:33). Though John pictures Jesus as in control of the situation he does not let us think of him as unmoved by the events through which he was passing. The words of Jesus are invested with a special solemnity, as we see from the introduction "testified and said" (NIV omits this second verb), and from Jesus' opening words, "I tell you the truth" (see on 1:51). This is the third time that Jesus has referred to the traitor (vv. 10, 18). Previously, however, the reference has been very general. Now Jesus specifically assures the band of disciples (in the same words as Mark 14:18) that from among them will come a betrayer (for "betray" see on 6:64).

22 The announcement brought consternation. The disciples looked at one another in perplexity. It is clear that the news took them completely by surprise. It is interesting that neither here nor elsewhere does anyone express suspicion of Judas. He had covered his duplicity very well.

23 One of the disciples is singled out with the description "whom Jesus loved" (so also 19:26; 20:2; 21:7,20). Neither here nor elsewhere is this disciple named, but there seems no reason for doubting that the apostle John is meant (so Bailey, Bernard, Barclay, and others). This disciple was reclining in Jesus' bosom. The usual arrangement at a formal meal was to have a series of couches arranged in a U around the table. The guests reclined with their heads toward the table and their feet stretched out obliquely away from it. They leaned on the left elbow, which meant that the right hand was free to secure food. The host, or the most important person, reclined in the center of the chief couch, a couch for three, placed at the junction of the two arms of the U. The place of honor was to the left of, and thus slightly behind, the principal person. The second place was to his right, and the guest there would have his head on the breast of the host. The place of the beloved disciple, was clearly on the principal couch where he could lean back on Jesus' breast.

24 Peter's position is not given. From our knowledge of the apostles we might have thought he would be on Jesus' other side, the place of honor. If this were the case, however, he could just as easily ask the question himself. So he probably was elsewhere. We have no way of knowing how seating would be arranged in the apostolic band. But Peter was somewhere where he could be observed by the beloved disciple and he made signs indicating
that he would like to know who it was. It seems not unlikely that Judas was in the chief place. From Matthew's account it seems clear that Jesus could speak to him without being overheard by the others (Matt. 26:25). His position as treasurer would give him a certain status in the little group, and thus make the seat of honor not inappropriate. It is also possible that the giving to Judas of this place was part of Jesus' last appeal to the traitor.

25 The verb translated "leaning back" is the ordinary one for reclining at a meal, and it is used, for example, of Jesus resuming his place in verse 12. The aorist probably means a change of position (see on v. 12). The disciple leaned back as he was. By leaning back in this way he could speak very quietly and still be heard by Jesus.

26 Jesus answers that he will point the traitor out by an action. It is implied, though not actually stated, that the words could be heard only by him to whom they were spoken. It is clear that Jesus did not want the group as a whole to know the identity of the traitor. The giving of the "piece of bread" would not do this; indeed, it might be understood as a mark of honor, and thus help to keep his identity secret. John is referring to a small piece of bread or meal that the host would dip in the common dish and pass on to one of the diners. This he did and gave it to Judas (who must accordingly have been seated fairly close to Jesus). "He takes and gives" (NIV follows a shorter text) is more complicated than need be, perhaps to bring out the solemnity of the action. It may be for the same reason that Judas's full name is given (see on 6:71).

27 Satan (mentioned by name here only in this Gospel) now entered Judas. John is under no delusion as to the magnitude of the issues involved or the real source of Judas's inspiration. It was Satan who entered him and inspired his actions. John sees this as the critical moment. If the giving of the sop was a mark of favor or the like, it would be in the nature of a final appeal to Judas. But Judas did not respond. He gave himself the more fully to Satan's leading. "Therefore" (which NIV omits) indicates that Jesus realized how it was. He accordingly urged Judas to do what he had to do speedily. But his words are general and their real import remained hidden from the eleven.

28 John makes this latter point clear. Of those who reclined at the table none knew the reason for Jesus' words. This seems to imply that the beloved disciple did not grasp the significance of the sop at the time. It will
also explain why he did not denounce the traitor to the others. There is
nothing in the narrative to show that Jesus meant that betrayal was
imminent. From all that has been said so far it may well have been far in the
future. John as well as the rest thought that Judas's departure was concerned
with other things. There seemed to be no reason for taking immediate
action. We should also remember that the Synoptists inform us that when
Jesus predicted the betrayal the disciples asked, "Surely not I, Lord?" They
had no thought at the time of a deliberate act of treachery; they were
thinking of an involuntary betrayal. It should also be borne in mind that
they were still ignorant of Christ's purpose in going to the cross. We are so
used to reading the Gospels with this purpose in mind that we do not always
stop to reflect that on the other side of Calvary it must have seemed
incredible that Jesus should urge Judas to do his work of betrayal more
quickly. Any understanding of his words other than this must have seemed
preferable.

29 John gives us two interpretations that the disciples placed on the
words. This was not necessary for his narrative, but perhaps he wants the
reader to see that the disciples had no idea of what was going on and in this
matter they were in sharp contrast with their Master. Judas was the treasurer
of the little band and thus would be expected to buy anything that was
necessary for the feast or to give alms. The former expression may indicate
that the Passover still lay ahead, though the words might mean the seven
days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Michaels catches the note of irony
in the reference to giving to the poor: "The disciples who thought Judas was
collecting for the poor could hardly have been more mistaken."

30 This verse tells us two things. Judas went out immediately after he
had received the bread. And it was night. Both details point to an
eyewitness. "Night" is surely more than a time note (at Passover there was a
full moon). In view of the teaching of this Gospel as a whole it will point us
to the strife between light and darkness and indicate that it was night, black
night in the soul of Judas (cf. 11:10). He had cut himself off from the light
of the world and accordingly shut himself up to night.

B. THE DISCIPLES' QUESTIONS (13:31-14:31)
It was not until Judas had left them that the discourse proper began. This teaching is for committed followers of Jesus only. The first section is interrupted by a series of questions from the disciples, not always the kind of question we might have anticipated. Jesus uses the questions as a means of bringing out further teaching. He answers the questions, but he usually goes beyond them.

1. The New Commandment (13:31-35)

31 When he was gone, Jesus said, "Now is the Son of Man glorified and God is glorified in him. 32 If God is glorified in him, then God will glorify the Son in himself, and will glorify him at once. 33 My children, I will be with you only a little longer. You will look for me, and just as I told the Jews, so I tell you now: Where I am going, you cannot come. 34 A new commandment I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. 35 All men will know that you are my disciples if you love one another."

a. 32 Many early manuscripts do not have If God be glorified in him.

There is a good deal of discussion among commentators as to whether the discourse that follows should be thought of as coming from Jesus or as the reflections of the author. While few would be prepared to say that nothing in these chapters comes from the narrator, yet the words of Wright should be heeded: "every reader must feel that here he is in touch with the mind of our Lord. Here One is speaking, greater than the Evangelist. If these be the words of the Evangelist, he cannot be less than another Jesus." If Jesus is not speaking to us in these passages we must despair of finding his words anywhere.

A further topic that arouses controversy is whether we have here the original order of the chapters. The end of chapter 14 contemplates an immediate departure, but there are three more chapters before the little band is said to be elsewhere. Many urge, accordingly, that chapters 15 and 16 should be transferred to a position in the middle of 13:31. This helps us over some difficulties but introduces others (17:1 does not really follow well on 14:31; the reference to the "new" commandment in 13:34 does not sound as though it were originally spoken after 15:12, and there are other
difficulties). An old view is that the departure did take place at the end of chapter 14 and that the following chapters are words spoken as the little group walked to Gethsemane. This is not impossible, though it cannot be proved. Another suggestion is that 13:31-14:31 and 15-17 give us alternative versions of the same discourse. Both are Johannine in style, so it is necessary to hold that the original author wrote both. Then either he was removed from the scene before he could decide which to use and someone else put both in, or he could not bring himself to drop either. Even the great names that support such views cannot make them plausible.

Such suggestions rest on the basic premise that these chapters do not conform to our canons of tidy and logical arrangement. But why should they? The writer did not think like a modern man, and it is too much to ask him to arrange his material according to our tastes. He does not do it elsewhere ("dislocations" are found by some critic or other in practically every part of this Gospel), and we ought not to look for it here. There is no MS evidence for any of the suggested rearrangements, nor any support in ancient writers. It is by far the best course to take the writing as it stands, recognizing that the writer was not concerned to arrange his work in accordance with our tastes.

It is significant that Jesus begins with instruction about love. The new thing that Christianity brought into the world was that "you must love one another" just as Jesus loved. It is also important that the themes of "going" and "coming" are prominent throughout the discourse. Dodd points out that in the section 13:31-14:31 "the longest passage without direct reference to going and coming is no more than five verses. This dialogue in fact is occupied with the interpretation of the death and resurrection of Christ." It is the death and resurrection that really show us what love is.

The further time note indicates John's interest in the order of events. The departure of the traitor was a significant happening, for it meant that the little company was now purged of its evil element. It meant also that the betrayal was under way, and therefore that the great saving act to be consummated at Calvary was fairly launched. In these changed circumstances Jesus immediately. Begins his teaching. "Now" points to present circumstances. Now that the betrayal is under way the glorification of the Son has begun. Indeed, this saying regards it as already completed. For "the Son of Man" (used here for the last time in this Gospel) see Additional Note C, pp. 150-52. There are some characteristic Johannine
ideas here. The glorification of Christ is connected with what appears to human understanding as the very opposite of glory. Jesus is looking to the cross as he speaks of glory. Origen employs the striking expression "humble glory" to express this idea. And the glory of the Father is bound up with the glory of the Son. The two are one in the purpose of saving sinners. The glory of Christ as he stoops to save us is the glory of the Father whose will he is doing. The cross reveals the heart of God as well as that of Christ.

32 The text in the opening part of this verse is uncertain. Most MSS read "If God is glorified in him" at the beginning of the verse, but the words are omitted by an important group of MSS, possibly by homoioteleuton or because their retention makes an exceedingly complicated sentence. Even without these words the sentence is not straightforward. If they are retained, the conditional construction implies that the condition has been fulfilled. No doubt is being thrown on God's being glorified in Christ. Rather, Jesus is uttering three certainties. The first is that God is glorified in him (i.e., in his passion; see on v. 31). The second is that God will glorify Jesus in himself (i.e., in heaven; cf. 17:5). The resurrection will follow the crucifixion, and this will be the Father's seal on the work of the Son. Since the Father is glorified in the Son, the Father will certainly vindicate the Son and glorify him. The future tense points beyond the passion to the eternal glory of the Father that the Son will share. "As God is glorified in the Messianic work of the Son, so the Son shall be glorified in the eternal blessedness of the Father" (Plummer). The third is that God will do this without delay. Jesus is looking into the immediate future, not discussing a remote prospect.

33 "My children" is a diminutive expressing affection. Jesus knows that this teaching is difficult, but he wants his hearers to be sure of his tender concern for them. He proceeds to unfold a little more of the meaning of the preceding words. He will be with them only for a little while longer, and then, as he has already said to the Jews (i.e., Jewish leaders opposed to Jesus), they will look for him and will not be able to follow him (7:33-34; 8:21). He does not add, as he did to the Jews on the first occasion, "you will not find me," and this may be significant. The words puzzled the Jews when they were spoken to them and they puzzle the disciples now (v. 36). This saying is noteworthy in that it occurs in exactly the same words in 8:21 and 22 (where see note). It is the only saying I have found in this
Gospel that is repeated exactly in three occurrences (see on 3:5 for John's habit of introducing slight variations). Obviously John attached significance to it. It is possibly also another example of this Evangelist's habit of using expressions to which more than one meaning might be attached, for the words might refer to Jesus' death or to his ascension. If both meanings are in mind, then Jesus is affirming that the disciples as they are go with him neither to death nor to the glory beyond.

34 "A new commandment" (cf. 1 John 2:8) is in an emphatic position in the Greek. It is important. This is the one place in this Gospel where Jesus uses the term "new." The content of the commandment is given very simply: "Love one another." Jesus is not speaking here of love to all people but of love within the community of believers (it "is presented as the marching order for the newly gathering messianic community," Carson). Love itself is not a new commandment, but an old one (Lev. 19:18). The new thing appears to be the mutual affection that Christians have for one another on account of Christ's great love for them. A community has been created on the basis of Jesus' work for us, and there is a new relationship within that community. "It was 'new,' because the love of Christ's friends for Christ's sake was a new thing in the world" (Dods). Jesus himself has set the example. He calls on them now to follow in his steps. He is not asking them to do any more than he himself has done.

35 This is to be the distinguishing mark of Christ's followers. All people will know that they are Jesus' disciples if, and only if, they love one another (cf. 1 John 3:23; 4:7-8, 11-12, 19ff., etc.).

2. A Prophecy of the Denial (13:36-38)

36Simon Peter asked him, "Lord, where are you going?" Jesus replied, "Where I am going, you cannot follow now, but you will follow later." 37 Peter asked, "Lord, why can't I follow you now? I will lay down my life for you." 38Then Jesus answered, "Will you really lay down your life for me? I tell you the truth, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times!"

All the Gospels tell us that Jesus prophesied Peter's threefold denial (Matt. 26:33-35; Mark 14:29-31; Luke 22:31-34). Clearly it made a profound
impression on the early church.

36 The full name "Simon Peter" is used as this apostle ignores the words about love and reverts to the subject of Jesus' departure. He speaks respectfully ("Lord"; for this term see on 4:1), and inquires where the Master is going. Jesus' reply retains the element of mystery. He repeats his earlier statement, though in the singular, making it personal to Peter: "Where I am going, you cannot follow now." But to this he adds a further point: "You will follow later."

37 Peter appears astounded and his pride in his discipleship is hurt. Still using the respectful "Lord" in his address, he goes on to inquire why he cannot follow. He affirms his readiness to lay down his life for Jesus. The words Peter uses are almost exactly the same as those used of the Good Shepherd (10:11). John may well be indulging here in some more of his irony.

Peter affirms his readiness to die for Jesus. The exact opposite is true and that in two ways. In the first place Peter was not really ready, as the sequel would show. And in the second Jesus was about to lay down his life for Peter.

38 Jesus' reply queries his follower's confident assumption. Peter's readiness to die for Jesus is not quite what he thinks it is. His use of the sword in the garden shows that he was ready in certain circumstances to face death boldly. There was truth as well as error in his words. But he was not ready to stand for Jesus when all seemed lost. That demanded a different brand of courage and devotion. Now comes Jesus' prediction of the denial (for Jesus' knowledge see on 4:18). It is introduced with the solemn "I tell you the truth" (see on 1:51). This is no casual remark. It is a solemn pronouncement made in full awareness of its gravity. Jesus assured Peter that a cock would not crow until he has three times denied him (see 18:27 for the fulfillment). The prediction must have come as a shock to Peter. It evidently quite subdued him, and this may be the reason he remained silent throughout the rest of the time in the upper room, though the others apparently spoke freely. We do not hear of him again until 18:10.
1. T. F. Glasson points out that Deuteronomy is the farewell discourse of Moses, and that in these chapters there are many allusions to Deuteronomy (Moses in the Fourth Gospel [London, 1963], pp. 74-78). This is another of the ways in which John sees Moses as helpful for an understanding of the significance of Jesus and what he taught.

2. Hoskyns protests against views that stress the sacraments, or that reduce the action to a lesson in humility. John “is not preoccupied with two sacraments, as Loisy seems to be; he is preoccupied with the Jesus of History, with His life, death, and resurrection ... the washing of the disciples’ feet rests upon and interprets the death of the Lord, and is not a detached action containing in itself a merely ethical lesson." Cf. also the important treatment of the incident by J. A. T. Robinson in Neotestamentica et Patristica: Eine Freundesgabe Herrn Professor Dr. Oscar Cullmann (Leiden, 1962), pp. 144ff. For a notice of the variety of interpretations of this passage see A. Corell, Consummation Est (London, 1958), pp. 69ff.

3. Literal foot washing has been practiced from time to time in the Christian church. For a good account both of the practice and its significance see Hoskyns, Detached Note 7 (pp. 443-46). See also the article "Feet washing" in ERE. Calvin's comment should be heeded by all who take the practice as one to be perpetuated: "Every year they hold a theatrical feet-washing, and when they have discharged this empty and bare ceremony they think they have done their duty finely and are then free to despise their brethren. But more, when they have washed twelve men's feet they cruelly torture all Christ's members and thus spit in the face of Christ Himself. This ceremonial comedy is nothing but a shameful mockery of Christ. At any rate, Christ does not enjoin an annual ceremony here, but tells us to be ready all through our life to wash the feet of our brethren." This is a strong warning against externality. More than an action is required. It is a spirit, an attitude toward others.

4. Hunter adds, "Many people today would like to be Christians but see no need of the cross. They are ready to admire Jesus' life and to praise the sublimity of his moral teaching, but they cannot bring themselves to believe that Christ died for their sins, and that without that death they would be lost in sin. This, as Brunner has said, is one of the prime 'scandals' of Christianity for modern man — and the very heart of the apostolic Gospel."

5. The aorist ἤλθεν signifies "came"; it points to the moment of arrival. Moulton sees in it probably "one of the most ancient uses of the aorist expressive of just happened" (M, I, p. 135).

6. "World" (κόσμος) is a very important concept in John (see Additional Note B, pp. 111-13). In the whole Gospel it occurs 78 times, and 40 of these are in the account of what went on in the upper room. The "world" is of great importance for an understanding of this section of the Gospel. Jesus is preparing his disciples for a mission to "the world."

7. Dodd draws attention to an interesting change in the Johannine vocabulary from this point on. The earlier part of the Gospel is marked by the use of words like life (ζωή, ζήν, ζωοποιεῖν) and light (φῶς, φωτίζειν; σκότος, σκοτία). In chapters 1-12 the words of the former group occur 50 times and the latter 32 times, whereas in chs. 13-17 the "life" words are found but 6 times and the "light" words not at all. By contrast ἀγάπη, ἀγαπαν are found 6 times in chs. 1-12 and 31 times in 13-17 (IFG, p. 398). Clearly love takes on a new prominence in the Farewell Discourses.

8. Moulton notes that ὁ ἴδιος without a noun expressed is used in the papyri "as a term of endearment to near relations" (M, I, p. 90). He cites only the singular, but the plural here has a similar warm content. In 15:19 we have the parallel thought that the world loves its own.

9. εἰς τέλος (this noun is found only here in this Gospel) is ambiguous, meaning both "unto the end" (KJV) and "to the utmost." It is likely that we have here a typical Johannine double meaning, with both meanings intended. If we say that the aorist, ἤγάπησεν, is more consistent with love shown in a single act than with the continuance of love (imperfect), we may also say that boundless love is more significant than love till the end of Jesus’ life (which was very close).
10. γινομένου is read by K*BLW etc. and γενομένου by p66 Κ B fl fl3 etc. The former clearly means "during supper," the latter probably "after supper" (as KJV; Field, however, accepts it and takes it to mean, "a supper was held"); perhaps it could mean "supper having been served." An action like the footwashing would seem more likely after a meal than as an interruption during the course of a meal, which might explain γενομένου. The reverse alteration is more difficult to understand. That the incident took place before the end of the meal is plain from verse 26. For δείπνον see on 12:2.

11. βάλλω is normally used in the New Testament with more of a sense of moving something physical. BAGD, however, cites classical parallels for the idea of putting something into the heart or mind. For τίθημι in a similar construction cf. Luke 21:14.

12. The latter reading requires the genitive 'Ιούδα, which is read by A D Θ fl, but the nominative 'Ιούδας is to be preferred with p66 Κ B etc.

13. The verb is παραδοΐ, which Howard describes as "An obviously vernacular form. . . . Though a late form of the opt. coincides with it, there is not the slightest syntactical reason for doubt that in NT is it always subj." (M, II, p. 211).

14. In 3:35 the Father gave all things έν Τῇ χειρί αὐτοῦ. Here the expression is αὐτῷ εἰς τὰς χεῖρας. Again we see John's habit of introducing small variants without great difference of meaning.

15. This is one of two places in this Gospel where έξέρχομαι is followed by άπό, the other being 16:30. The construction occurs fairly often in Luke, somewhat less so in Matthew, and once only in Mark. John prefers to use έκ. See on 1:44 for John's use of άπό and έκ. The thought is repeated in 16:27-28, another example of John's habit of making minor alterations in repetitions, though without appreciable difference of meaning. For υπάγω see on 7:33.

16. Though the word is plural, τά Ιμάτια, it is possible that a single garment is meant. But it seems more likely that we should take the plural seriously. Elsewhere John uses the singular for one outer garment in 19:2, 5 and the plural for all the garments in 19:23, 24. If Ιμάτια here has the same meaning as in the latter passages, then Jesus stripped to a loin cloth, just like a slave, τίθησιν, "puts aside," is the verb used of Jesus' laying down his life in 10:17-18.

17. λέντιον (only in this passage in the New Testament and not attested in earlier writings) is a loanword from the Latin linteum. It denotes a long towel, so that Jesus could gird himself with it and still use the free end to dry the disciples' feet. Cf. 1 Pet. 5:5.

18. John changes to the aorist διέζωσεν after a succession of presents, but the reason is not apparent. He is the only New Testament writer to use this verb (13:4,5; 21:7).

19. It is not certain what the rare word νιπτήρ means. We are not helped by the fact that it does not appear to occur before this passage. Washing would not be in a basin as with us, but water would be poured over the feet from one vessel and presumably caught in another, and it is not clear which was the νιπτήρ. Rieu renders "jug," but most translators, "basin." In view of the compound ποδονιπτήρ (which p66 actually uses here) it is perhaps more likely to refer to the basin, for it is difficult to see the relevance of the compound to an ewer. This is the only New Testament use of the term. The cognate verb νίπτω, "to wash," used here, is employed by John in 13 of its 17 New Testament occurrences.

20. The verb is often used in the Synoptic Gospels practically as an auxiliary (a Semitic use). But in this, the only place where it occurs in John (though cf. 8:9), it means "began." The order in which Jesus washed the feet is not given. Chrysostom thinks that the Greek indicates that he washed someone else (namely, "the traitor") before coming to Peter (70.2; p. 258).

21. Temple comments: "We rather shrink from this revelation. We are ready, perhaps, to be humble before God; but we do not want Him to be humble in His dealings with us. We should like Him, who has the right, to glory in His goodness and greatness; then we, as we pass from His presence, may be entitled to pride ourselves on such achievements as distinguish us above other men..."
man's humility does not begin with the giving of service; it begins with the readiness to receive it. For there can be much pride and condescension in our giving of service."

22. μετά τούτο. The plural probably points to all the events associated with the Passion.

23. He uses the emphatic double negative οὐ μή (except on the lips of Jesus only in 11:56; 20:25 elsewhere in this Gospel), and backs it up with εἰς τὸν αἰώνα.

24. It is sometimes pointed out that this task was so menial that a Hebrew slave was not required to perform it, though a Gentile slave might be. This is so, but the point must not be overstressed. After all, a wife was obliged to wash her husband's feet, and children those of their father (SBk, II, p. 557). For Christian practice cf. 1 Tim. 5:10.

25. Newbigin points out that to try to add to what Jesus has done "would be comparable to supposing that one could increase the efficacy of a U-turn by turning 360° instead of 180°. One would not have enhanced but negated the usefulness of the action,... Nothing can be added to what Jesus has done on the cross, and nothing can be added to baptism."

26. Such appears to be the force of the perfect ὁ λειλομένος. The verb properly applies to the bathing of the whole body as against νίψασθαι, which is rather the washing of a part.

27. There is a shorter reading that omits εἰ μή τοὺς πόδας. This is supported chiefly by vg Tert Or. It gives the sense "He that is bathed does not need to wash." But the strong preponderance for the longer reading should probably be respected (as Metzger's committee hold). All the more is this the case in view of the difficulty of giving a satisfactory meaning to "bathed" in the context if the shorter reading be accepted (Haenchen asks, "What then is the point of the footwashing?"). Further, the shorter reading contradicts verse 8. It is interesting that Hoskyns, Barrett, and other modern commentators decide for the shorter reading, whereas Phillips, Rieu, NTV, GNB, and most modern translations accept the longer text (REB opts for the shorter reading).

28. Sub καθαρός.

29. Corell even discerns a reference to "the Sacrament of Penance" (Consummatum Est, p. 72!)

30. οὐχί is the strong negative. Abbott points out that in this Gospel the construction οὐ...πάς in the sense "not any" does not occur, but that three times in this passage we have it in the sense "not all," namely verses 10, 11, and 18 (2262-63). οὐχί is most commonly used in this Gospel in questions, so that the use here is noteworthy. Abbott finds no parallel (2265 [i]).

31. For παραδίδωμι see on 6:64. The present here may possibly signify "him that was betraying me." For Jesus' knowledge see on 2:24.

32. ἀνέπεσεν. Plummer points out that this verb (in the New Testament confined to the Gospels) "always implies a change of position."

33. γινώσκετε is usually taken as interrogative, but it might well be imperative: "Understand what I have done" (so Rieu).

34. The nominative ὁ διδάσκαλος καὶ ὁ κύριος is equivalent to a vocative. BDF reminds us that "Attic used the nominative (with article) with simple substantives only in addressing inferiors, who were, so to speak, therefore addressed in the 3rd person... The NT (in passages translated from a Semitic language) and the LXX do not conform to these limitations, but can even say ὁ θεός, ὁ πατήρ etc., in which thearthrous Semitic vocative is being reproduced by the Greek nominative with article" (147 [3]).

35. οὖν is used with full meaning.

36. ἐγώ (see on 1:20) puts emphasis on the subject and stresses Christ's place, which is further brought out with ὁ κύριος καὶ ὁ διδάσκαλος. The insertion of these words without any connecting word poses a problem. Does Jesus mean "If I washed your feet although I am your Lord and Teacher" or "because I am your Lord and Teacher"? Most interpreters take it in the former sense, but the latter is not at all impossible. It would stem from the idea, so plain in this Gospel, that true greatness is seen in lowly service.

37. καὶ ύμεῖς puts emphasis on the apostles. They too must act in the spirit so challengingly demonstrated by their Lord.
38. υπόδειγμα is a word rejected by the Atticists, who preferred παράδειγμα (which is not found in the New Testament). It may refer to an example to be avoided (Heb. 4:11), but more usually to one to follow, καθώς . . . καὶ shows how closely they are to follow the example given. At the same time we should notice that this is not identical with "as I have done." It is the spirit and not the action that is to be imitated.

39. The use of απόστολος for "one sent" and πέμψαντος for the "one sending" is an illustration of the impossibility of seeing a distinction between ἀποστέλλω and μέμπω in this Gospel. See further on 3:17. This is the one place in John where the term απόστολος is found.

40. εί with the indicative. It is interesting that the further protasis, ἐ&ν ποιήτε αὐτά, though connected with the same apodosis, puts the condition with less certainty. Jesus implies that the disciples do know these things, but he leaves it an open question whether they act on their knowledge.

41. For the construction ού . . . πάς see on verse 10.

42. τίνας may mean "what kind of men," as in Barclay's translation: "I know the kind of men whom I have chosen" (so also Rieu and others).

43. For the ellipsis of a principal verb before ίνα see on 1:8. Phillips sees imperatival ίνα with "But let this Scripture be fulfilled" (Goodspeed is similar). It seems better, however, to supply some such words as "this is," as NIV, "this is to fulfill the scripture."

44. For the verb τρώγω see on 6:54. It is not found in LXX of Ps. 41:9. The end of the quotation also differs from LXX, and it seems clear that John has made his own translation from the Hebrew.


46. ἀπ’ ἀρτι. A number of translators take it to mean "from now onwards" and understand λέγω in a future sense (Phillips, Goodspeed, Weymouth, and others). This does seem to be stretching the Greek a little, and it seems better to understand the expression as "now" (Barrett, Rieu, NIV, NRSV, GNB, etc.). BDF cites A. Fridrichsen as supporting the meaning "exactly, certainly," and Debrunner "definitely" (12 [3]). For Debrunner see Coniectanea Neotestamentica, XI (1947), p. 47.

47. The articular infinitive (πρό τοῦ γενέσθαι) is to be noted, for the construction is rare in this Gospel. See on 1:48.

48. The present subjunctive πιστεύητε may be meant to indicate a continuing faith (though we should add that the aorist is read by many MSS).

49. είμι is emphatic, both from its form and its position.

50. μαρτυρέω is most commonly used in this Gospel with reference to the witness borne to Jesus (see on 1:7). Its use here marks the following statement as a solemn affirmation, one not lightly made.

51. ἀπορούμενοι is middle in form (as usually in the New Testament), but active in meaning, though the active also occurs (e.g., Mark 6:20). The verb suggests perplexity, being at a loss, rather than doubt.

52. It has been suggested that the beloved disciple is to be identified with Lazarus on the grounds that this Evangelist specifically tells us that Jesus loved that man (11:3, 5, 36). This is an attractive hypothesis, but it is not easy to fit Lazarus into all the evidence. Nothing in the Gospels leads us to think that Lazarus had entered into the mind of Jesus as fully as the beloved disciple had. Moreover, Mark 14:17 appears to mean that it was the Twelve who were with Jesus at the Last Supper, and this rules Lazarus out. No explanation other than that John the son of Zebedee is meant appears to give a satisfactory explanation of the omission of all reference to that apostle from this Gospel. From the Synoptists it is plain that he was a prominent member of the apostolic band. It is intelligible that he should omit all reference to himself from his Gospel, but why should anyone else do this? The evidence indicates that he was close to Peter (e.g., 13:24; 20:2; 21:7; cf. 18:15; Acts 3). Tradition unanimously supports John. No other name is suggested in antiquity. See further the Introduction, pp. 5ff.; SFG, pp. 246ff.
53. ἐν τῷ κόλπῳ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ. In the only other place where John uses κόλπος it refers to the Son's being in the bosom of the Father (1:18, where see note). It may be that this passage is meant to evoke memories of that one, and that we are to regard the expression as hinting at the tender regard Jesus had for this disciple. But it is going too far to say, "the specially favoured disciple is represented as standing in the same relation to Christ as Christ to the Father" (Barrett).

54. For the conduct of a meal at this period see SBk, IV, 2, pp. 611-39. At other meals Jews might sit or recline, but on special occasions like Passover reclining was mandatory.

55. "The senior takes his place first, the second next above him, and then the third one below him" (Ber. 46b; Soncino edn., p. 283). Brown cites F. Prat for the information that the second place was on Jesus' left, so that the Beloved Disciple was in the third place on Jesus' right, in which place he could lean back with his head on Jesus' chest. So Haenchen, "The actual place of honor was the left hand position," and Carson, "the place of highest honour was at the left hand of the host, not the right."

56. As is usual in this Gospel we have the direct form (rather than an indirect question): "Say 'Who is it... ?' The majority of MSS do read πυθέσθαι τις αν είη, but most agree that this is unlikely to be correct. The direct question has the support of A B lat, and it is most unlikely that an original indirect question would be altered to this form. The reverse procedure is much more likely.

57. Robinson speaks of "the sudden change of posture at this moment, introduced by ἀναπέσων"; he sees this "further enforced in the original by a change in both the prepositions and the nouns, from ἐν to ἐπί, and from κόλπος to στήθος. S. John was reclining on the bosom of his Master, and he suddenly threw back his head upon His breast to ask a question" (Priority, p. 161).

58. On οὖτως Abbott remarks, "The meaning probably is, that the beloved disciple, instead of turning round to speak to Jesus (which would have attracted attention) merely leaned back a little, keeping the same attitude) " (1917).

59. For the rare ἄποκρίνεται see on 12:23.

60. Lagrange thinks that in this case it was meat: "The bread being at the disposal of each of them, one would rather offer a portion of meat." The term ψωμίων is used four times in this narrative and nowhere else in the New Testament.

61. For the significance of the redundant αὐτῷ see on 1:27.

62. Most commentators agree that the giving of a morsel in this fashion was a gracious compliment from the host to one of the guests. This may indeed be the case, but no evidence from antiquity appears to be cited (John Lightfoot says that it "was a very unusual thing to dip a sop [buccellam] and reach it to any one" (HHT, p. 378). Hendriksen denies this significance and sees it as "a warning for Judas," But he does not explain how Judas was to know that it was a warning, nor does he say of what Judas was being warned.

63. τάχιον is comparative in form and strictly means "more quickly." John uses both ταχέως (11:31) and ταχύ (11:29), while in the only other place where he employs τάχιον (20:4) it is a true comparative. It seems probable that we should take the word in its proper sense. John may want us to think of Judas as not originally intending to consummate the betrayal that night. Jesus made him do it "more quickly" than he wished. It is Jesus, not Judas, who determines the time of the passion. It is, of course, possible to take the comparative as equivalent to a superlative and understand it in an elative sense, "very quickly" or the like (cf. Rieu, "The quicker you act the better"). Cf. Luke 12:50 for the state of mind behind the saying.

64. IFG, p. 403.

65. Moulton sees here another example of the aorist used to express what has just happened (see on v. 1).

66. The aorist ἐδοξάσθη contemplates the glorification as a completed whole. It also lends a note of certainty to the saying. Nothing can prevent the complete accomplishment of this glorification. For δοξάζω see on 7:39.

68. The words are read by 2 A C2 Ψ fl3 lat sa etc. But they are omitted by important MSS like p66 K* B C* D W fl it syrs.

69. Note the repeated ἐν αὐτῷ . . . ἐν αὐτῷ. It is countered that, apart from εἰ, the insertion could be explained by dittography. But the εἰ remains as a stumbling block to any theory of accidental addition.

70. εἰ with the indicative.

71. Reading ἐν αὐτῷ or ἐν ἑαυτῷ, as most agree. It is also possible to read ἐν αὐτῷ and understand it to refer to Christ, that is God will glorify him in his own human person: "God will also give him glory of his own" (Rieu). But this is less likely.

72. The Greek means "Little children." τέκνιον is found here only in the Gospels. It appears as a variant reading in Gal. 4:19 and elsewhere in the New Testament only in 1 John, where it occurs 7 times. It is thus a Johannine word, and one not used excessively. Since John has used τέκνιον on three occasions the diminutive should be seen as significant. Jesus is speaking with tenderness, like a father to his little children. The word incidentally is always plural in the New Testament.

73. This is the first example of μικρὸν used substantively in this Gospel, but it recurs in the following chapters (14:19; 16:16 his, 17 bis, 18, 19 bis). The thought of a short interval sounded throughout the final discourse. The expression χρόνον μικρὸν is found in 7:33; 12:35.

74. καινός is used also of the tomb (19:41). Perhaps we should notice also that the risen Lord once uses the comparative of νέος (21:18). Turner sees the present passage as an example of the predicative use of the adjective, with the meaning, "I give you it anew" (M, III, p. 225). This, however, scarcely seems justified.

75. Cf. Plummer, "The commandment to love was not new, for 'thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself' (Lev. xix. 18) was part of the Mosaic Law. But the motive is new; to love our neighbour because Christ has loved us. We have only to read the 'most excellent way' of love set forth in 1 Cor. xiii., and compare it with the measured benevolence of the Pentateuch, to see how new the commandment had become by having this motive added."

76. The men of Qumran were very fierce toward outsiders, but they had a high regard for love within the brotherhood (see, i.e., 1QS 1:10; v. 26). John cannot parallel their hatred for outsiders but the love within the fellowship forms another point of contact.

77. It may be significant that in speaking of his own love Jesus uses the aorist tense ἡγάπησα, but on both occasions when he speaks of the disciples loving one another, the present αγαπάτε (cf. also v. 35; 15:12). His love was strikingly set forth in the cross; they are to keep on loving.

78. Note the significance of καθώς . . . καὶ ἡμεῖς. The second ἡμεῖς will not depend on the first, but rather be coordinate with it, so that the second clause reaffirms and amplifies the first. It is in accordance with John's method that there are slight differences between the two ways the thought is expressed in this verse, and that 15:12 differs from both (see on 3:5). It is also quite Johannine in that the saying here is ambiguous (Christ's love may be the measure or the ground of ours) and that both meanings are probably intended.

79. Turner points out that ἐν means "in," not "to," and sees no reason why the Greek here "should not be construed, 'if you have love among one another' " (Grammatical Insights, p. 121). Tertullian tells us that in his time the heathen commented on the Christians: "See, they say, how they love one another ... how they are ready even to die for one another" (Apol. 39; ANF, III, p. 46). Chrysostom, however, complains that in his day Christians show all too little love: "even now, there is nothing else that causes the heathen to stumble, except that there is no love.... Their own doctrines they have long condemned, and in like manner they admire ours, but they are hindered by our mode of life" (72.5; pp. 266, 267). Such words are not irrelevant in our own day. Beasley-Murray remarks, "The attractive power of communities of love is no less evident in our age, where such communities are increasingly uncommon" (p. 264). For ἀγάπη in John see on 5:42.

80. "Why does not Jesus give a straight answer to that simple question? Because the answer is the whole revelation which can only be given 'afterward' when the work of Jesus is complete"
(Newbigin).

81. It may be significant that this time the personal pronouns are omitted. In verse ἐγώ and ὑμεῖς put Jesus and the disciples in strong contrast. When Jesus repeats the words to Peter, this contrast is not stressed. Instead we find νῦν inserted. The emphasis appears to be on present circumstances.

82. According to the usual text. Κύριε is omitted by a few important MSS such as 565 33 *K vg syrŚ, and it may possibly have crept in by scribes imitating verse 36.

83. For ὑπέρ see on 6:51.

84. For the rare ἀποκρίνεται see on 12:23.

85. There is some evidence that the cock was held to crow at a set time (cf. Mark 13:35 for cock-crow as fixing one of the four watches of the night). NBD says that "in many countries the domestic cock was regarded as an alarm clock" (p. 156). However, in this place it seems that an actual crowing is meant, as the words recording the fulfillment note.

86. The subjunctive after ἔως οὔ indicates that the time is indefinite.
JOHN 14


I "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. 2In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. 3And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. 4You know the way to the place where I am going." 5Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way? " 6Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. 7If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well. From now on you do know him and have seen him."

a. 1 Or You trust in God
b. 7 Some early manuscripts If you really have known me, you will know

Jesus looks beyond the trouble the disciples are about to experience and reassures them. They need not be troubled in heart: he is going to prepare a place in heaven for them. And he is the means of bringing them to the Father.

1 If the present imperative is significant its meaning will be "stop being troubled." Jesus is not urging trouble-free men not to begin to worry. He is talking to men whose hearts are far from tranquil. We should not be misled by the chapter division; these words are to be taken in close connection with the preceding. Peter has been thrown into consternation at the prediction of his threefold denial of Jesus, and we cannot doubt that this had its effect on the others also. If Peter was to deny Jesus, did not that...
mean that some great trial was imminent? Moreover, Jesus had spoken of his impending departure, a departure to a place where they could not follow him. To men who had left everything for their Leader, to be told that he is about to leave them is shattering. They are all very disturbed. And Jesus knows that within a few short hours they will be even more disturbed. So he tells them to be calm.

The meaning of the second part of the verse is uncertain because of the ambiguity of the Greek twice rendered "trust," a verb that may be either imperative or indicative in each case. This means that the expression may be translated in any one of a bewildering variety of ways. It might mean, "You believe in God, you also believe in me," or "Believe in God, believe also in me." Or we could translate, "You believe in God, believe also in me," or even "Believe in God, you also believe in me" (though the "also" makes this rendering rather difficult). It is also possible to take some of these as interrogatives: for example, "Do you believe in God? Believe also in me." Or "You believe in God. Do you also believe in me?" Or we could put a comma after the first word: "Believe, believe in God and also in me" (cf. Moffatt, "You believe — believe in God, believe also in me"). Against the rendering of KJV, "Ye believe in God, believe also in me," it may be urged that, as John understands it, faith in Jesus is not something additional to faith in God, to be exercised by those who choose to do so. Rather, since Jesus is the revelation of God, and there is no way to the Father but through him (v. 6), faith in the Father in any meaningful sense is impossible apart from faith in him. But this leaves us with quite a few possibilities. In view of the preceding imperative it seems best to take both forms as imperative. Jesus is then urging his followers to continue to believe in the Father and to continue to believe also in him, and in this way not to let their hearts be troubled. Yet it must be admitted that other ways of taking the words are possible. Perhaps we have here another example of John's habit of using expressions that can be understood in more ways than one, with a view to calling to mind what each means. We should not miss the challenge implied in the call to have faith in Jesus himself. It is one thing for the disciples to have faith in the God who acted in days of old. It is another to have faith in the Jesus who stands before them, especially when he is even then being betrayed by one of his followers and about to be denied three times by the chief of them, abandoned by the rest, and crucified by his enemies. To call for faith in these circumstances is not to utter a platitude.
2 "My Father's house" clearly refers to heaven. The meaning of "rooms" is not so clear. It seems better to understand the term as "permanent residences" than as "steps along the way of development." The idea of continuing development in the next world, though attractive and possibly true, is not taught in Scripture. The bliss and permanence of heaven, however, are taught, and it seems that it is this to which Jesus is now referring. Another suggestion is that the reference is to progress in this life; Christ has provided many a resting place and place of refreshment for those who move along life's way. The objection to this is that "my Father's house" is scarcely a recognizable description of this world. Moreover, the imagery of temporary resting places, or stages along a journey, within a "house" is very difficult. It is much more likely to be "rooms" or "places of residence." "Many" should not be misinterpreted as though it signified all. "The phrase means that there is room and to spare for all the redeemed in heaven" (Richardson). "If it were not so" underlines this point. There is not the slightest doubt about it, otherwise Jesus' teaching would have been very different. The punctuation of NIV is favored by many, but some delete the full stop after "you" and understand the passage as Rieu, "Were this not so, should I have told you that I am on my way to prepare a place for you?" (so Phillips, Knox, NRSV; but GNB, REB, and others agree with NIV). The big difficulty in Rieu's way of taking the passage is that Jesus is not recorded as having previously said this. This is not a fatal objection, for many sayings of Jesus have not been recorded (cf. 21:25). But we ought not to call on this possibility if a better one lies ready to hand, as it does here. We should probably take the words "if it were not so, I would have told you" as a parenthesis. The sense of the verse is then "In my Father's house are many rooms (if it were not so, I would have told you), for I go to prepare a place for you." All the preceding is shown to be true in that now Jesus goes to prepare their place.

3 This has consequences. If Jesus goes for such a purpose he returns (the use of the present introduces a note of greater certainty). The reference to the Second Advent should not be missed. It is true that John does not refer to this as often as do most other New Testament writers, but it is not true that it is missing from his pages. This is not to deny that John uses the idea of "coming" in more senses than one, nor that in a very real sense Jesus comes to his followers in the here-and-now. But the thought is not confined to this life. Now and then John does look forward to the
Parousia. Nothing is said about the nature of the place that Christ prepares. It is sufficient for believers that we will be with our Lord.\textsuperscript{13}

4 The shorter text in NIV is almost certainly correct.\textsuperscript{14} The longer reading, "and whither I go ye know, and the way ye know" (KJV), is more sonorous. The shorter text almost invites expansion, whereas the longer is not naturally abbreviated. Jesus is asserting\textsuperscript{15} that they know how to follow him. He has been showing them the way in the whole body of his teaching. If they follow that way, they will come where he is.

5 This leads Thomas (see on 11:16) into an expression of perplexity. He wants the position to be clear, and will not let Jesus' words stand as though he understands them when he does not. The man's fundamental honesty shines through his words. He says that he and his companions do not know where Jesus is going (cf. Peter's question, 13:36). Has Jesus himself not said that they cannot come there (13:33, 36)? How then do they know the way? The whole thing is impossible.

6 Jesus now introduces a somewhat different topic. He has been talking about leaving the disciples, and it is with this that Thomas is concerned. But Jesus is to go to the Father (13:3; 16:5, 10, 17), and he now speaks of the way\textsuperscript{16} ("way" is emphasized by repetition, vv. 4, 5, 6). He not only shows people the way (i.e., by revealing it), but he is the way (i.e., he redeems us). In this connection "the truth" (see Additional Note D, pp. 259-62) will have saving significance. It will point to Jesus' utter dependability, but also to the saving truth of the gospel. "The life" (see on 1:4) will likewise take its content from the gospel. Jesus is both life and the source of life to believers.\textsuperscript{17} All this is followed by the explicit statement that no one comes to the Father other than through Christ. "Way," "truth," and "life" all have relevance,\textsuperscript{18} the triple expression emphasizing the manysidedness of the saving work. "Way" speaks of a connection between two persons or things, and here the link between God and sinners. "Truth" reminds us of the complete reliability of Jesus in all that he does and is. And "life" stresses the fact that mere physical existence matters little. The only life worth the name is that which Jesus brings, for he is life itself. Jesus is asserting in strong terms the uniqueness and the sufficiency of his work for sinners. We should not overlook the faith involved both in the utterance and in the acceptance of those words, spoken as they were on the eve of the crucifixion. "I am the Way," said one who would shortly hang impotent on a cross. "I am the Truth," when the lies of evil people were about to enjoy a
spectacular triumph. "I am the Life," when within a matter of hours his corpse would be placed in a tomb.

7 The conditional construction implies that the disciples have not really known Christ, and accordingly that they have not known the Father. In a sense, of course, they had known Jesus. They had known him well enough to leave their homes and friends and livelihood to follow him wherever he went. But they did not know him in his full significance. Really to know him is to know his Father. Until now all has been preparation. They have not really come to the full knowledge of Jesus and his significance. But from now on it is to be different. For they know him and have seen him. This is to be understood in terms of 1:18, "No one has ever seen God, but God the only Son, who is at the Father's side, has made him known." God cannot be seen in the literal sense, but to know Jesus fully is to see the heavenly Father. We should not miss the advance on Old Testament teaching. Throughout the Old Testament, as Dodd has pointed out, the knowledge of God is not normally claimed. It is looked for as a future blessing, or people may be urged to know God, but it is very rare indeed to find assertions that people know God (as in Ps. 36:10). John sees this whole situation as changed in Christ. As a result of what he has done ("From now on") his followers really know God. It is a revolution both in religious experience and in theological understanding.

4. The Father and the Son (14:8-14)

8. Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us." 9Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? 10Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. 11 Believe me when I say that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves. 12I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. 13And I will do whatever you
ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. 14You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.

A question from Philip opens the way for some teaching on the intimate relation existing between Jesus and the Father. The two are so closely connected that anyone who has seen the Son has seen the Father. Since this has consequences for the prayer life of the disciples, Jesus proceeds to bring some of them out.

8 Philip (see on 1:43) is attracted by the words about seeing the Father. It seems to him that really to see the Father might well be the end of many a difficulty. So he asks Jesus to show them the Father. "That's all we want," he says. He is apparently looking for a theophany such as we find from time to time in the Old Testament (Exod. 24:10; 33:17ff.; Isa. 6:1). See on 2:20 for John's habit of using misunderstandings as a way of introducing further explanation.

9 Jesus' reply is a gentle rebuke. Though Jesus has been with them all ("you" is plural) for "such a long time," Philip has not really known him. "Such a long time" is not defined with precision, but it indicates a ministry of some duration. Philip might have been expected to know more about Jesus than he did. His question reveals the limitations of his knowledge. And now comes the explanation, staggering in its simplicity and its profundity. To see Jesus is to see the Father (cf. 12:45; 13:20). This means that Jesus is the revelation of the Father. In 1:18 Jesus is said to have declared the Father. If anything this goes further. It is difficult to interpret it without seeing the Father and the Son as in some sense one. These are words that no mere human has the right to use. There is some emphasis on "you" ("how can you say . . . ?"). Philip, being one of the apostolic band, one of Jesus' intimates, might have been expected to know better.

10 Now comes a statement about the mutual interpenetration of the Father and the Son. Each is "in" the other, and this is put as something that Philip might have been expected to believe; the question, "Don't you believe . . . ?" looks for the answer "Yes." In 10:38 even "the Jews" might have been expected to believe in some sense; much more an intimate disciple. Apparently it was Jesus' teaching that should have brought this home to Philip, for Jesus goes on immediately to speak of his words. These are not merely of human origin (cf. 7:17, etc.). Jesus says, "The words I say to you I do not speak from myself" (NIV gives the sense, but not an exact
translation). Then, when we expect something like "but the Father abiding in me speaks the words," we get instead, "the Father... does his works" (see Additional Note G, pp. 607-13). Throughout this Gospel the deeds are "signs," and the words are God in action. The deeds and the words of Jesus are both a revelation of God. Both proceed from the Father and reveal what the Father is like. Though from a human point of view Jesus does them, they are said to be done by the Father (i.e., through Jesus), and they are called "his" works. "Living" points to a permanent relation. The argument is much like that in 10:38 and forms another example of John's habit of using minor variations in repeated statements.

11 Believe me "that" (NIV, "when I say that") is significant. In modern times it is often stressed that faith is not merely adherence to certain intellectual propositions, but rather trust in a living person. This may be conceded without any implication that the content of faith is unimportant. While it is true that the New Testament looks for a vital faith in a living person, it is also true that this is not a blind credulity. Faith has an intellectual content. So here Jesus calls on Philip and the others (the verb is plural) to believe him, not only to believe in him. Faith includes the recognition that what Jesus says is true. Jesus also calls on Philip to believe "that." We might well ask where faith in Christ would be without the idea that Jesus is worthy of faith. Faith that there is a mutual indwelling of the Father and the Son is part of the faith whereby one commits oneself to Christ. If there is no such indwelling there can scarcely be full commitment.

The last part of the verse draws attention to Jesus' miracles (for the appeal to the miracles cf. 5:36; 10:25, 38). As elsewhere in this Gospel, faith on the basis of miracles is better than no faith at all. This is not really a contradiction of the temptation narrative that we see in the Synoptic Gospels. There Jesus resisted the temptation to be a miracle worker performing wonders that would bludgeon people into belief. In John the characteristic of the miracles is not that they are wonders, nor that they show mighty power, but that they are "signs." For those who have eyes to see they point people to God. The miracles are spoken of here as "works" (NIV actually translates as "miracles," but the word means "works"). What for us is a miracle is for Jesus nothing more than a normal work. See further Additional Note G, pp. 607-13.

12 For the solemn "I tell you the truth" see on 1:51; it underlines the following statement as important. "Anyone who has faith in me" (for the
construction see on 1:12) stresses personal commitment; Jesus is not talking about the merely formal believer. He goes on to say that anyone who really trusts him will do the works that he does, and greater things than these. The reason for this is that Jesus "goes" to the Father; in other words, his saving work is consummated. This is probably to be explained in terms of the coming of the Holy Spirit, who will not come until the Son goes away (16:7; cf. 7:39). What Jesus means we may see in the narratives in Acts. There are a few miracles of healing, but the emphasis is on the mighty works of conversion. On the day of Pentecost alone more believers were added to the little band of Jesus' followers than throughout his entire earthly life. There we see a literal fulfillment of doing "even greater things than these." During his life-time the Son of God was confined in his influence to a comparatively small sector in Palestine. After his departure his followers were able to influence much larger numbers of people and to work in widely scattered places. But they did it all on the basis of Christ's return to the Father. They were in no sense acting independently of him. On the contrary, in doing their "greater things" they were but his agents.

13 This leads directly to the importance of prayer. Whatever the disciples ask in his name Christ will do. This does not mean simply using the name as a formula. It means that prayer is to be in accordance with all that that name stands for. It is prayer proceeding from faith in Christ, prayer that gives expression to oneness with Christ, prayer that seeks to glorify Christ. And the purpose of it all is the glory of God, a glory that is "in the Son" (NIV rewords the sentence to make "the Son" the subject; NRSV is better here, "so that the Father may be glorified in the Son"). The two are inseparable, as throughout this paragraph. That is why prayer may be addressed to either. It is a characteristic Johannine thought that the Father and the Son are so intimately related that what one does the other does also. We should not overlook the importance of the fact that Christ says that he himself will answer prayer.

14 There is no object to the verb "ask" in verse 13, so that it is not certain whether it is Christ or the Father who is to be asked (though it is Christ who will "do" the response). Since the subject is prayer it is perhaps more natural that we should think of the Father as the object, and we expect the same to be true of this verse. However, the true text appears to be, "if you ask me anything in my name." Prayer may be addressed to the Son as well as to the Father, but it is still "in my name." The basic condition is the
same. Praying to Christ in his own name may be thought to be difficult, but there is good Old Testament precedent in that the Father is appealed to "for the sake of your name" (e.g., Ps. 25:11; 79:9). As in the previous verse, the prayer will be answered by Christ himself. Indeed, there is some emphasis on this. 37 "Anything" makes this promise very wide indeed. There is no limit to the power of prayer. Passing from verse 13 to this verse, we notice the characteristic Johannine habit of introducing slight variations when a statement is repeated. 38

5. The Corning of the Spirit (14:15-17)

"If you love me, you will obey what I command. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever— the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you."

a. 17 Some early manuscripts and is

This passage introduces the first of an important series of references to the Holy Spirit (14:26; 15:26; 16:7-15). Little is said about him in the earlier part of the Gospel, but his work is spoken of in each of chapters 14, 15, and 16. The important point made in this passage is that when Jesus goes away the Spirit will be with his followers. They will not be left without resource.

Jesus' previous words have emphasized the importance of believing and have given the disciples a tremendous promise about what they would receive through prayer. There is a change now with an emphasis on love (the verb occurs eight times in vv. 15-24). Jesus follows the promise of verse 14 with a reminder of the ethical implications of being his follower. If anyone really loves Jesus, then that love will be shown in keeping his commandments. There is a certain emphasis on "my commandments" (NIV, "what I command"). 39 It is a thought to which Jesus returns (v. 21). The present tense is probably significant. He is talking about a continuing attitude of love. 40

For those who are serious about their commitment to him, those who both love him and keep his commandments, Jesus promises that he
will pray.\(^{42}\) And the effect of his prayer is that the Father will give the disciples "another\(^{43}\) Counselor." Jesus' bodily presence was about to be withdrawn from them. Never again would they know the warm intimate companionship of the days of his earthly ministry. But this does not mean that they will be bereft. "Another Counselor" will be with them. Traditionally the noun has been translated "Comforter,"\(^{44}\) But its modern associations render this word unsuited to conveying the meaning of the Greek term. The thought is rather that of the advocacy of one's cause than of comforting in our sense of the term; modern translations favor "Advocate" (Rieu, \textit{REB}) or "Counselor" (as \textit{NIV}). The word means a friend, especially a legal friend. See further Additional Note F, pp. 587-91. The Counselor will be with the disciples "forever."\(^{45}\) The new state of affairs will be permanent. The Spirit once given will not be withdrawn.

17 The Advocate is now called "the Spirit of truth" (cf. 15:26; 16:13)\(^{46}\) It is interesting to see the Spirit associated with truth, for we have just had Jesus describe himself as "the truth" (v. 6), and we earlier learned that those who worship the Father must do so "in truth" (4:23-24). Clearly truth is very closely associated with the Godhead. The expression probably means "the Spirit who communicates truth" (Barrett). Jesus then proceeds to contrast the world with the disciples in their attitudes to the Spirit. First he tells them that the world (see Additional Note B, pp. 111-13) "cannot\(^{47}\) accept" the Spirit. This is a strong expression.\(^{48}\) It is further explained as that the world neither sees nor knows him. "Sees" is equivalent to "perceives." The world is quite unaware of the Spirit's activities. Therefore it does not know him. It enters into no personal relations with him. But it is not so with the disciples. They\(^{49}\) do know him. The present, "he lives with\(^{50}\) you," indicates a continuing reality,\(^{51}\) just as "will be in you" means a future certainty.\(^{52}\)

6. \textit{The Manifestation of Christ to the Disciples (14:18-24)}

18 "I will not leave you as orphans: I will come to you. 19Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. 20On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. 21 Whoever has my
commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him." 22Then Judas (not Judas Iscariot) said, "But, Lord, why do you intend to show yourself to us and not to the world?" 23Jesus replied, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. 24He who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me."

Arising out of the thought that the Spirit will be within the disciples though the world does not even recognize his existence, Jesus goes on to speak of the way he will manifest himself to the disciples but not to the world. The relationship of Jesus to his followers is one that the worldly cannot appreciate. Christians "know" Christ with the fullest meaning that that word will take. But the world has no knowledge of him at all.

18 Jesus has several times spoken of going away from the disciples (13:33, 36; 14:2ff.). He has also said that he will come back again (v. 3), though we have seen that the thought there is primarily that of the second coming. Now Jesus takes up the thought of a return to the disciples that will meet their immediate need. "Orphans" harmonizes with the address "children" (13:33). Jesus will not leave the disciples to battle their way through the world alone. He assures them that he will come to them, the present tense giving greater certainty (see on v. 3). It is true, as many commentators point out, that he comes in the coming of the Holy Spirit. But here Jesus is surely referring to the post-resurrection appearances.

19 "Before long" (the Greek means "yet a little while"; see on 13:33) is a further indication that Jesus is not speaking of events in the remote future. The crucifixion is very near now. It will mean a sharp division between "the world" and the disciples. After Jesus' death the world will see him no more. Physically he will be removed from them, and spiritually they have never approached him. With the disciples it will be different. The crucifixion will indeed separate them from him, but this will be only for a little while. "You will see me" (the verb is actually present) is difficult. The crucifixion meant the same separation for them as for the world. They then saw Jesus no more than the world did. Probably we should understand the saying to look right through the crucifixion to the resurrection. Certainly that is in mind at the end of the verse. After being taken from them Jesus will "live." And his
living has implications for them. His resurrection is the guarantee that they will not be overcome by death. His life means life for them (cf. 6:57). In the Johannine manner the saying probably has a deeper reference. Throughout history it has always been the case that the world has not "seen" Christ, though his followers have done so.

20 "On that day" is not defined, but apparently we must understand it of the day of Jesus' resurrection. Another suggestion is that the reference is to the coming of the Holy Spirit, but if this is accepted it must be in the sense of 20.22, where the Spirit was in some sense given on the day of resurrection. All this will give the disciples certainty, a certainty based on Christ's indwelling in God and the mutual indwelling of Christ and believers. When he is risen they will know the truth of his relationship to the Father and they will know that he is in them and they in him.

21 Once again love to Christ is expressed in ethical terms (see v. 15). The man who loves Christ is the one who "has" his commands and "obeys" them. To "have" commandments is an unusual expression and does not seem to be exactly paralleled (though cf. 1 John 4:21). The meaning appears to be to make the commandments one's own, to take them into one's inner being. Jesus speaks not only of "having" the commandments but also of "keeping" them. This means that it is more important to obey them in daily life than to have a firm intellectual grasp of their content. This does not mean that the Father's love is merited by this obedience: in the first place Jesus is saying that love for him is not only a matter of words; if it is real it is shown by deeds. The lover does what the loved one asks. In the second place he is saying that the Father is not indifferent to the attitude people take toward the Son. This does not mean that God hands out rewards on the basis of merit, but rather that love calls to love. Not only will such people be loved by the Father, but Jesus will love them too. He further says that he will "show" himself to them. He does not explain this, but simply says that in some undefined way he will reveal himself to those who love him.

22 This provokes a question from Judas, who is expressly distinguished from Iscariot. This is the one place where this apostle is mentioned in this Gospel. He is mentioned once in Luke and once in Acts, from which we learn that he was the son (or perhaps brother) of James (Luke 6:16; Acts 1:13). He may be the same person as Thaddeus (Matt. 10:3; Mark 3:18). Very little is known about him. Incidentally the repeated interruptions of
this solemn discourse, as the disciples put the questions that puzzle them, illustrates graphically the fact that they were indeed the "friends" of Jesus (15:14-5) and were perfectly at home with him. Judas now voices what must have been the perplexity of the whole band. He asks what has happened (in view of Jesus' words we might perhaps have anticipated a future) that Jesus will manifest himself to the disciples and not to the world. Evidently he understands "show" as "show physically." Like the Jews in general he expects the Messiah to stand forth in all his glory before all the people. The way he puts it seems to imply that he now thinks that something has happened to disrupt Jesus' planned program.

23 The answer to Judas's question is love. As in verses 15 and 21, Jesus insists that love to him will be expressed in deeds. Anyone who truly loves Jesus will keep his word (cf. 8:51; 17:6). This leads to the further thoughts that the Father will love that person and that both the Father and the Son will come to make their home with him or her. "Home" will have its full force. Jesus is not speaking of a temporary place of lodging, but of a permanent dwelling. Elsewhere we read that God is love, that no one has ever seen God, and that if anyone abides in love that person abides in God (1 John 4:12, 16). The thought here is akin to that. John is not thinking of the second coming, nor of the postresurrection appearances, but of that state of believers in which they experience the immediate presence of the Deity.

24 The negative side of the same thing now receives expression. Those who do not love Christ do not keep his teaching. Love is not regarded in this Gospel as an abstract emotion but as something intensely practical. It involves obedience. The seriousness of this is brought out with the reminder that the word Jesus preaches is not his own, but that of the Father (cf. 7:16; 8:28; 12:49). There can be no higher authority. Characteristically the Father is spoken of as the one who sent the Son (see on 3:17). The mission of Christ is never far from view in this Gospel. And it points to the permanence of God's purpose of love.

7. "I Go to the Father" (14:25-31)

25 "All this I have spoken while still with you. 26 But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will
teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. 27 Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. 28 You heard me say, 'I am going away and I am coming back to you.' If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. 29 I have told you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe. 30 I will not speak with you much longer, for the prince of this world is coming. He has no hold on me, 31 but the world must learn that I love the Father and that I do exactly what my Father has commanded me. Come now; let us leave."

This section of the discourse closes with a renewed emphasis on Jesus' going away and its consequences for the disciples. These consequences are not put in terms of sorrow and the like, as we might have anticipated, but of blessing. The Holy Spirit will be active in the believers. Christ's peace will remain among them. They should rejoice at the prospect of Christ's being with his Father.

25 "These things" (NIV, "All this") will mean the words of this discourse rather than the whole of the teaching of Jesus.70 "While still with you" indicates that Jesus' earthly time with them was near its end. There may also be something of a contrast with "we will... make our home with him" (v. 23).

26 This is the fullest description of the Spirit to be found in this Gospel. For "the Counselor" see Additional Note F, pp. 587-91. In the previous passage he was called "the Spirit of truth"; now he is entitled "the Holy Spirit."71 This characteristic designation, found throughout the New Testament, does not draw attention to the power of the Spirit, his greatness, or the like. For the first Christians the important thing was that he is holy. His character mattered most of all. This verse shows him to be closely related to both the Father and the Son. He is to be sent by the Father, but in the name of the Son. In 15:26 he is sent by the Son from the Father. Probably no great difference should be put between these ways of putting it; John has a tendency to vary statements a little when they are repeated. What he is saying in both places is that the Spirit's mission derives exclusively neither from the Father nor the Son. It comes from both. For "in my name" see on verse 13. Here it can scarcely mean that the disciples ask in Christ's
name. He may mean that he himself will ask (as in v. 16), or perhaps that the Spirit will be sent to continue the work of Christ, to be in his place\(^72\) ("if he is sent in Jesus' name, he is Jesus' emissary [not simply his substitute, \textit{contra} Brown . . .]," Carson). The particular function of the Spirit stressed here is that of teacher.\(^73\) "All things" is comprehensive and probably means "all that you will need to know." The Spirit is to be the guide and teacher of the church. This does not mean that he will make new revelations; rather he will bring back to the disciples' memory all the things that Jesus\(^74\) had told them. John has made it clear that the disciples did not grasp the significance of much that their Master taught them. It seems likely that they let slip some of the things they did not understand. Jesus is now saying that the Holy Spirit will supply their lack. The things of which he will remind them are the things that Jesus has spoken\(^75\) to them. In other words, the Spirit will not dispense with the teaching of Jesus. The teaching to be recalled is his.

27 In a way this verse introduces a new subject. There has been no talk of peace until now. But in another way there is nothing new, for the peace that Jesus gives is the natural result of the presence within people of the Holy Spirit of whom Jesus has been speaking. Peace is Jesus' bequest\(^76\) to his disciples. Peace was commonly used at this time as a word of greeting (20:19, 21, 26) or of farewell. It thus comes in aptly in this final discourse of our Lord's. But the expression used here is not the usual formula of farewell; Jesus is using the term in his own way and for his own purpose. The repetition of "peace" is impressive.\(^77\) The concept is important. Having stated positively what he gives, Jesus goes on to differentiate this gift from anything that the world can give. When the world uses "Peace" in a greeting it expresses a hope. It can do no more. And even that it usually does in no more than a conventional sense like our "Good-bye" (= "God be with you"). But Christ effectually gives people peace. Moreover, the peace of which he speaks is not dependent on outward circumstances, as any peace the world can give must necessarily be. Because he gives\(^78\) people such a peace Jesus can enjoin them not to be troubled in heart\(^79\) nor cowardly.\(^80\) A Christ-given serenity excludes both. In the Bible "peace" is given a wider and deeper meaning than in other Greek writings. For the Greeks (as for us) peace was essentially negative, the absence of war. But for the Hebrews it meant positive blessing, especially a right relationship with God. This is to be seen
in the Old Testament, and it is carried over into the New.\textsuperscript{81} The word here has its fullest content.

\textbf{28} Jesus recalls his teaching of verse 3 that he will go away\textsuperscript{82} and come again. This had perturbed the disciples at the time, and Jesus had dealt with their question and perplexities. Now he returns to the thought of his impending departure. If they really loved him, this would have been a matter for rejoicing (the Greek conditional implies that they neither loved nor rejoiced),\textsuperscript{83} not for consternation. The thought that Jesus goes to the Father is not one to cause sorrow. It is a joyful thought. "The Father is greater than I" presents difficulties to those who hold a trinitarian faith. The reference, however, is not to Christ's essential being, but to his incarnate state. The incarnation involved the acceptance of a certain subordination, as is insisted upon throughout the New Testament. The words must be understood in the light of "I and the Father are one" (10:30).\textsuperscript{84} John is not asserting, as the Arians maintained, that Jesus was a created being. He is talking about the departure of the human Jesus from this earth to be with the Father. In the light of this Jesus sees it as a matter for rejoicing that he returns to the Father. True love will recognize this.

\textbf{29} Jesus' words will have a greater effect in the future. When the things of which he speaks actually come to pass the disciples will recall the words and believe. This last verb probably means more than give credence to the words of Jesus. They will trust\textsuperscript{85} their Master all the more when they see his words verified. For the thought of this verse cf. 13:19.

\textbf{30} These words would suit the close of Jesus' discourse, but they do not, as some advocates of rearranging these chapters maintain, require it.\textsuperscript{86} As a matter of fact, he could have put these words at the very beginning of the entire final discourse. The reason given for the cessation of Jesus' teaching is the coming of Satan. The human agents are not forgotten, but they receive no stress. In the coming of Judas and the soldiers Jesus saw the coming of the evil one. He was especially active in the crucifixion. There the forces of good and evil were engaged. For "the prince of this world" see on 12:31. The meaning of "He has no hold on me" in detail is not easy to understand, though the general sense is clear enough. It is sin that gives Satan his hold on people, but there is no sin in Jesus as there is in others. Perhaps "There is no point at which he can take hold" is somewhere near the sense of it (Tenney cites the colloquial "Has nothing on me"; \textit{EBC}).\textsuperscript{87}
There is dispute as to the correct punctuation of this verse. It has been suggested that we place a comma instead of a full stop after "even so I do" (NIV, "I do exactly") to give the sense, "but that the world may know . . . arise, let us go." This cannot be ruled out as impossible, but NIV seems to give the better sense. In other places Jesus lays on his followers the necessity for obedience if they are to show their love (vv. 15, 21, 23). Now he says that he does the same thing himself (see on 4:34). "I do exactly . . ." might refer to the whole of Jesus' life. From first to last he was obedient to the Father's commands. But in this context we should probably think particularly of the cross. Jesus is about to die in obedience to the command of his Father, and this will demonstrate to the world that he loves the Father. "Come now; let us leave" is curious at this stage of the discourse. It has been a major factor in inducing many scholars to think of a dislocation of the material in these chapters. But this does not necessarily follow. It is not impossible that the words were followed immediately by action, so that, as many interpreters held in earlier days and some still do (e.g., Haenchen, though on 15:1 he says this "is not a realistic picture"), the words in the following two chapters were spoken as the little band walked to Gethsemane. A variant is that they were spoken at a halt somewhere along the way, possibly at the Temple. But such hypotheses are not necessary. Anyone who has tried to get a group of a dozen or so people to leave a particular place at a particular time will appreciate that it takes more than the brief exhortation "let us leave" to accomplish this. There is nothing at all unlikely in an interval between the uttering of the words and the departure of the group. And if an interval, then there is no reason why Jesus should not have continued to speak during it.

But it is more likely, as Lightfoot thinks, that we should take the words about departing as marking a stage in the teaching. The stages leading up to the passion "consist, on one side, of the external events of the passion, and, on the other, of internal resolution and self-dedication by the Lord, as He increasingly imparts Himself to His disciples. This paragraph will then represent the close of one such stage, on the internal side; and it is noteworthy that, whereas at its close, in His devotion and obedience to the Father, He invites the disciples to arise and act along with Him, the first person plural being used, at the close of the next instruction He is the only Agent in the conquest of the world (16:33); the first person singular alone is used." Hoskyns and Dodd also see in the words a pause in the discourse rather
than a change of scene. Most of our trouble is caused by our natural inclination to expect the writer to arrange his material in accordance with our modern standards of logic and coherence. But John has his own standards, and he arranges his work to produce effects in his own way. All theories of dislocation and rearrangement come up against the difficulty that the final redactor must have seen the meaning of the words at the end of this chapter just as clearly as we do. Yet he retained (or created!) the present order. By far the simplest proceeding appears to be to take the narrative as it stands, and recognize a major division in the discourse at the end of this chapter.94

ADDITIONAL NOTE F: THE PARACLETE

The Greek adjective παράκλητος, being passive in form, should have the meaning, "called to the side of" (i.e., for the purpose of helping). As a substantive it was used (though not often),95 like its Latin equivalent advocatus, as a legal term indicating the counsel for the defense. Thus LS defines the word in this way: "called to one's aid, in a court of justice: as Subst., legal assistant, advocate" (the other meanings given are "summoned" and "intercessor"). Westcott in a valuable Additional Note (II, pp. 188ff.) points out that the form of the word is "unquestionably passive" and that the classical use "is equally clear. The word is used technically for the 'advocates' of a party in a cause, and specially for advocates for the defence." He finds a similar usage in rabbinic writers96 and in early Christian writings like the Epistle of Barnabas. Strangely, however, the Greek Fathers seem normally to have used the word in the active sense, "consoler," "comforter." No reason appears to be given for this, and, though one must always pay respect to the Greek Fathers in their interpretation of a Greek word, in this particular case it is hard to escape the impression that they are not correct. Neither Greek use in general, nor that in the Greek Bible supports them.

In the New Testament the word is applied to Jesus on one occasion (1 John 2:1), and perhaps by implication in another, namely in the expression "another παράκλητος" (John 14:16). In the former passage the legal aspect of the word is clearly prominent, so that the translation "Advocate" is in order. Christ is thought of as pleading his people's cause before the Father.
All the other New Testament references employ the word of the Holy Spirit (John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7). The παράκλητος is "the Holy Spirit" (14:26) and "the Spirit of truth" (15:26). No one aspect of the Spirit then appears to be in mind when παράκλητος is used. But these two descriptions remind us that there is an important moral aspect to the work of the Spirit. This may be in mind also when "the world" is opposed to the Spirit as neither seeing nor understanding him (14:17).

In this Gospel the word is always used by Jesus, who speaks of the Spirit as sent to supply the need of his followers after his departure. The Spirit is to be with the disciples continually, and, indeed, to be in them (14:16-17). He is to be their teacher, and to remind them of all that Jesus has said (14:26). He bears witness to Christ (15:26). He has one work to do in unbelievers, namely to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment (16:8). He can come only when Jesus goes away (16:7). This appears to mean that the work of the Spirit in the believer is a consequence of the saving work of Christ and not something separate from it. The same truth may be implied in the statement that the Spirit is sent in the name of Jesus (14:26). It is only because Jesus has died for us and put away our sin that the Holy Spirit can be found at work within our hearts.

Without exception, the functions ascribed to the Spirit are elsewhere in this Gospel assigned to Christ. Thus he is in the disciples (14:20; 15:4, 5); he is their teacher (7:14; 13:13). As the Paraclete bears witness, so does Jesus (8:14). Much more could be cited. There is point in Jesus referring to "another" Paraclete (14:16).

What then are we to say is the fundamental idea in παράκλητος? There is fairly general agreement that "Comforter" is not the idea, but not so very much agreement on anything else. "Comforter," which we owe in the English translation to Wycliffe, can be defended, it would seem, only if the word be taken in its etymological sense (Latin — con, "with," and fortis, "strong"). It will then denote "Strengther," or "Helper." Several modern translations adopt this last-mentioned word as the best rendering (e.g., GNB). But in modern times "comfort" has come to have a meaning much like "consolation," It points to a making the best of a difficult situation, whereas the idea in παράκλητος is not so much this as that of providing the assistance that will deliver from the difficult situation. "Helper" is better, but it does not really face the fact that the word is not active in meaning.
N. H. Snaith argues strongly for the meaning "'Convincer,' i.e. He who convinces men of the things of God, and accomplishes in them a change of heart."\(^{100}\) This seems to be going too far in one direction, for the Spirit does not necessarily convince in every one of the relevant passages, or even in most of them, and not far enough in another, for this does not cover, for example, the case of reminding the disciples of Christ's teaching.

C. K. Barrett contends that "the Paraclete is the Spirit of Christian paraclesis."\(^{101}\) He takes the expression as John's way of bringing together "the Church's doctrine of the Spirit . . . and the gospel tradition." To make this combination "was to surrender any attempt to represent historically the words of Jesus."\(^{102}\) It is tempting to link the Spirit with the general Christian *paraclesis*. But the price paid is too high. John's method throughout his Gospel will not allow us to think that he surrendered "any attempt to represent historically the words of Jesus." Rather the reverse. Nor can a good case be made out for linking παράκλητος with παρακαλέω in general. Though superficially attractive, this hypothesis will not really meet the case.

"Advocate" seems to many the best English equivalent, and this is the translation adopted, for example, by *NRSV, REB*, Rieu, and Weymouth; "Counselor" (*NIV*) appears to have much the same meaning. Plummer argues that this is the fundamental idea in the use of the term in the Fourth Gospel as well as in 1 John: "the idea of pleading, arguing, convincing, instructing, is prominent in every instance.... In short, He is represented as the Advocate, the Counsel, who suggests true reasonings to our minds and true courses for our lives, convicts our adversary the world of wrong, and pleads our cause before God our Father" (on 14:16). It may be relevant to notice the frequent references to keeping the commandments in the context, at any rate of the first sayings (14:15, 21, 23, and 24). This is to be understood in the light of the fact that judgment is one of the great themes of this Gospel. A high standard is set before Christians, one that they do not meet. Precisely because of the standard expected and the certainty of judgment, they need a παράκλητος.

Yet when all is said, this fails to carry complete conviction. To take the last point, though it is true that the Christian needs an Advocate on account of failures to keep the commandments, yet παράκλητος in John is never connected with such a failure. Again, while the παράκλητος engages in activities like arguing and instructing, it is not clear that these are always
those associated with an Advocate. Such a person would certainly argue, but on behalf of his client. He would instruct, but not the client. He would instruct the court. In John the παράκλητος is found instructing those whose παράκλητος he is.

We may be helped by reflecting that the παράκλητος as the Greeks knew this legal functionary was not as precisely defined as our counsel for the defense. There might be more than one παράκλητος, and he was not necessarily a trained legal person, in sole charge of the conduct of the defendant's case. Any friend who would take action to help in time of legal need might be called a παράκλητος. C. K. Williams translates the word "Friend," while Knox has renderings like "another to befriend you." G. Johnston sees both legal and nonlegal functions in the Paraclete's work and thinks that "The most useful word in English to cover all the meanings of the Greek παράκλητος is the word 'representative'." It seems as if something like "friend" is needed, though the legal background of the term is not to be overlooked. John is thinking of the Friend at court, but characteristically he fills the world with a specifically Christian content. The one who stands for us as the Friend at the heavenly court will perform functions that would not be required in any earthly court. Thus he will remind us of what Jesus has said (14:26). For heavenly purposes in certain circumstances this may well be the most important thing that can be done. So with his teaching of us, his bearing witness to Christ, his convicting of the world, and the rest. In all these things he is the legal helper, the friend who does whatever is necessary to forward their best interests. But it is impossible to find one English word that will cover all that the παράκλητος does. We must content ourselves with a term that brings out a limited aspect or aspects, or else use such a term as "Paraclete."


1. Μή ταρασσέσθω. The verb is used of Jesus' trouble of soul (11:33; 12:27; 13:21) and of the "troubling" of the waters of Bethesda (5:7). It is found later in another exhortation to the disciples not to be troubled in heart (14:27). John uses it six times, but outside this Gospel it is not common (Acts with three times is the next most frequent use).

2. Turner has an interesting table to illustrate his point that "Contrary to normal Greek and Latin practice, the NT sometimes follows the Aram, and Heb. preference for a distributive sing. Something belonging to each person in a group of people is placed in the sing.," though in other places the plural is used (M, III, pp. 23-24). John uses καρδία in this way in the singular five times (including one quotation from LXX), but never in the plural. His only other appearance in the table is also a singular (χείρ, 10:39).

3. Lüthi brings out the significance of this: "Peter and Thomas and the others are thoroughly shocked, and with good reason. They have followed Jesus, burning their boats, and blowing up the bridges behind them, so to speak. . . . And now He has disclosed to them that He is about to go where they cannot follow Him as yet. That means that they must part from Him. The reason why they are so deeply shocked is that separation from their Lord is absolutely unthinkable to them."

4. πιστεύετε.

5. Cf. Schnackenburg, "trust in God is shaken if faith in Jesus is not preserved."

6. Unless, with S. Aalen, we take "house" to mean the people of God in the manner of Heb. 3:2ff. He thinks that the present passage is dependent on the targum of 1 Chron. 17:9, "And I will make (or, appoint) for my people a prepared place, and they shall dwell in their places, and they shall not tremble more" (NTS, 8 [1961-62], p. 238). The words in italics indicate the close resemblances. Very attractive is the suggestion of MiM, that "my Father's house" includes earth as well as heaven, so that wherever we are we are in that house. But on this view it is not easy to understand why Jesus should "go" in order to prepare a place for us. Not unlike this is the view of Kysar that Christians "already experience the future in their present. God's benefits for humanity are not confined to a blessed past. Nor is it that there will be 'pie in the sky by and by.' Now is the time for the bestowal of those gifts for which all humanity yearns" (John the Maverick Gospel [Atlanta, 1976], p. 110).

7. οὐσία (only here and v. 23 in the New Testament) is cognate with μένω, which occurs so frequently in this Gospel. It is used both of temporary and permanent abiding. BAGD cites οὐσία

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ποιείσθαι in the sense "live, stay." In later times the noun is used for "monastery" (MM, Lampe). In the present chapter on both occasions it is the sense of permanence that is required. The translation "mansions" is derived from the Vulgate mansiones ("lodging-places"), but the modern associations of the term make this misleading. Robert H. Gundry stresses the connection with μένω, and sees a reference to "spiritual positions in Christ, much as in Pauline theology" (ZNTW, 58 [1967], p. 70).

8. εἶ δέ μή is found in John only here and in v. 11. In both cases it follows πιστεύετε.
9. Taking δότι to mean "that" rather than "because."
10. πορεύομαι is used here and in verse 3, but ὑπάγω in 13:33, 36; 14:4, 5; Johannine usage does not warrant the drawing of a distinction between the two verbs. See also on v. 28 and for John's use of ὑπάγω on 7:33.

11. The term "place" is used in almost a technical sense in the so-called Gospel of Thomas. Thus in Saying 60 we read, "He said to them: You too seek for yourselves a place within for rest" (cited from R. M. Grant and D. N. Freedman, The Secret Sayings of Jesus [London, 1960], p. 157). But here, as elsewhere, the "place" is within the believer; it is an inward state of peace. John is concerned with something quite different. His concept is eschatological. Of his preparing T. D. Bernard says, "We understand how men are prepared for the place; but not how the place is prepared for men" (The Central Teaching of Jesus Christ [London, 1900], p. 134). Jesus is engaged on some activity for us that passes our comprehension.

12. BDF classes this among the presents of which it says, "In confident assertions regarding the future, a vivid, realistic present may be used for the future (in the vernacular; a counterpart to the historical present. . .)" (323).

13. ίνα (see on 1:8) is fully telic here. This is the purpose of Jesus' going away and coming again. John uses δότι twice as often as anyone else in the New Testament (30 times; next is Mark with 15 times; John has more than one third of the New Testament total of 82).

14. The addition καὶ τὴν ὀδόν οἴδατε is found in Ῥ W Θ fl fl3 syr5 sa, but this can scarcely outweigh the testimony of the important MSS that omit the words, together with the probability of an addition being made to the shorter text. Some texts stop at οἴδατε, but τὴν ὀδόν should be read with Ῥ 66c Κ B W etc.

15. MacGregor takes the words as a question: "And do you know the way to the place where I am going?" But there seems to be no good reason for having a question here.

16. For the seven "I am's" of this Gospel see on 6:35. For Jesus as the Way, cf. Heb. 10:20. In Acts "the Way" is sometimes used of Christianity (e.g., Acts 9:2; 19:9, 23; 24:14, 22).

17. The threefold article is something of a puzzle. Moule sees that with ὀδός as required by the context, but are the others due simply to accommodation to this one? Or the use with the abstract noun? He asks whether we should translate "I am the Way, I am Truth, I am Life" (IBNTG, p. 112). Turner cites Zerwick as finding these articles inexplicable unless the reference "is to Christ as the real truth, life, light, etc.; all other truths, lives, lights, being transitory" (M, III, p. 178). This seems the best suggestion.

18. The three nouns may form a construction that John Lightfoot quaintly calls "a Hebrew idiom" signifying "true and living way" (HHT, p. 382). Cf. Moffatt: "I am the real and living way." This is possible but does not carry conviction since elsewhere this Gospel uses other forms for "true" and for "living." Some expositors find the emphasis on "life": "I am the true way to life." Another view has it that the words mean "I am the way to truth and life." But it is better to see the three as coordinate, not as depending on one another.

19. There is a natural tendency to put the emphasis on "me," which we then contrast with "my Father." But the enclitic με cannot be emphatic. The stress in the first clause is on ἐγνώκειτε. The stress in the second is on τὸν Πατέρα μου, as its position in the clause and its relationship to &v shows. The whole thus means: "If you had really known (with all that that knowledge implies) you would have known (no less than) my Father."
20. εἰ with a past tense of the indicative in the protasis and αὐ with the indicative in the apodosis. The words are a rebuke. There is another reading, found, for example, in ρ66, which has εἰ ἐγνώκατε . . . γνώσεσθε (without αὐ). This would make the words a promise: "If (as is the case) you have come to know me, you will know my Father also." The attestation of this reading is inferior, and the context makes the rebuke more likely.

21. It is possible to take γινώσκετε as imperative: "From now onwards you are to recognize him" (Knox). But the indicative seems more likely.

22. Barclay comments: "It may well be that to the ancient world this was the most staggering thing that Jesus ever said. To the Greeks God was characteristically The Invisible. The Jew would count it as an article of faith that no man has seen God at any time."

23. IFG, pp. 163ff.

24. τοσούτων χρόνων. (κ* read τοσούτω χρόνω), but the meaning is not essentially different.) The verb εἰμί also gives the thought of duration, regarding the action as continuing through past time right up to the moment of speaking.

25. It is not certain whether we should attach "Philip" to the preceding or the following. It is usually taken in the former way, but it makes quite good sense to read, "Have I been so long time with you, and you do not know me? Philip, he who has seen me. . . ."

26. This may well be another example of John's habit of introducing slight variations in repetitions (see 12:45; 13:20). 13:20 has to do with receiving rather than seeing, and if this be excluded we have a twofold variation, for 12:45 differs slightly from this verse. But it may be included since all three deal with the intimate relationship between Christ and the Father such that what is done to one is done also to the other.

27. There appears to be no appreciable difference between λέγω and λαλώ; some MSS read λαλώ in both places. "You" here is plural; Jesus is referring to what he says to them all, not only to Philip.

28. Reading μοι with ρ75 A B Θ fl fl3 it boh etc. The word is not found in ρ66, but should probably be read. The attestation is strong. It would, moreover, be easy to omit it and thus get a smoother sentence.

29. In the repetition of the statement from v. 10 there is in the Johannine manner a slight variation, the omission here of ἐστιν.

30. ἐγὼ (see on 1:20) and κάκεινος are both emphatic, ἔργα is not repeated with μείζονα. ARV supplies "works," but probably NIV is better with "things" (so REB, Knox, etc.). Jesus is not speaking of doing miracles, but of service of a more general kind.

31. For this use of the present to denote a future certainty see on v. 3.

32. Cf. Ryle: "'greater works' means more conversions. There is no greater work than the conversion of a soul."

33. δ τι αν is indefinite and includes anything at all. Similarly, τι in the next verse sets no limit.

34. For αἰτέω and έρωτάω in prayer see on 11:22.

35. There is a sevenfold occurrence of ἐν τῷ ὄνοματί μου: here, 14:14, 26; 15:16; 16:23, 24, 26. The Father's "name" is also referred to seven times, though not always in exactly the same words: 5:43; 10:25; 12:13; 17:6, 11, 12, 26. For "the name" in antiquity see on 1:12.

36. Bernard can comment, "The difference between δώσει, 'He will give,' of 16:23, and ποιήσω, 'I will do,' of 14:13 is the difference between the Jewish and the Christian doctrine of prayer."

37. The pronoun ἐγώ is used, as it was not in the preceding verse, τούτω, it is true, is read by some authorities (A B L etc.), but most scholars agree that ἐγώ is the true text.

38. The whole of this verse is omitted by some authorities (X Λ fl 565 syr5-c etc.). με is omitted by some that do read the verse (A D it co etc.). It seems likely that the verse is original and that the omissions are different attempts to deal with the problem posed by the addressing of prayer to Christ.
in his own name immediately after a reference to praying to the Father. Or the omission of the whole verse may be due to homoioteleuton, the eye passing from the first έάν to the second.

39. τάς έντολάς τάς έμάς is used, and it comes first in the clause. It is more emphatic than τίς έντολάς μου, though, as John uses it, less so than τάς έμάς έντολάς (see on 3:29). But we should not put much weight on this form in the light of τάς έντολάς a few verses later (v. 21). The position of the words is more important.

40. For ἀγαπάω see on 3:16.

41. κάγώ is emphatic (see on 1:31): "no less than I."

42. This is the first example in this Gospel of the use of ἐρωτάω referring to Jesus' prayers (until now it has been used of people asking questions). For the difference between αίτεω and ἐρωτάω see on 11:22. The latter is the more common word in John, being found 27 times, whereas αίτεω occurs 11 times.

43. άλλον is said to mean "another of the same kind," whereas έτερον would mean "another of a different kind." Thus J. B. Lightfoot affirms that έτερον "implies a difference of kind, which is not involved in άλλο. The primary distinction between the words appears to be, that άλλος is another as 'one besides,' έτερος another as 'one of two.' . . άλλος adds, while έτερος distinguishes. Now when our attention is confined to two objects, we naturally compare and contrast them; hence έτερος gets to signify 'unlike, opposite' . . while άλλος is generally confined to a negation of identity, έτερος sometimes implies the negation of resemblance" (Saint Paul's Epistle to the Galatians [London, 1902], p. 76; he adds that on some occasions the two terms are interchangeable). The Spirit is thus said to be a Counselor like Christ. This may well be so, but not all writers observe the difference between the two terms. And since John uses έτερος only once (19:37), we cannot be sure whether he employs the words strictly or not. Abbott points out that Christ has not called himself a παράκλητος, and he feels accordingly that we should take άλλον to mean not "another than myself," but "other than yourselves," that is, "The Father will send you Another, a Spirit like yours but beyond yours, (as) Paraclete (to you)" (2793). Similarly W. Michaelis understands the passage to signify, "another, and to be sure as a Paraclete" (Coniectanea Neotestamentica, XI [1947], p. 153). Against this it can be contended that though Jesus has not used the word Paraclete of himself he has spoken of performing actions that a Paraclete might well perform. H. B. Swete is definite: the Spirit is "a second of the same and not of a different order." He further says, "It is impossible to conceive of έτερον παράκλητον standing in this context" (The Holy Spirit in the New Testament [London, 1910], p. 300 and n. 2). It seems best to understand Jesus as a Paraclete (all the more so since this term is actually used of him, 1 John 2:1) and the Spirit as another.

44. The Greek is παράκλητος, which means an advocate rather than a comforter in our sense of the term. The translation "Comforter" seems to come from Wycliffe.

45. Black draws attention to qui, which is a variant of ἰνα in the Old Latin MSS m and q. He sees in these variants different ways of understanding the Aramaic 'l and concludes: "we have here a piece of valuable evidence for an Aramaic tradition behind a Johannine saying of Jesus" (AA, p. 59).

46. In the Qumran scrolls we read of "the spirits of truth and of error (or 'perversity')" (1QS 3:18f.). This is a striking coincidence of language since the expression is not at all common. But it is a coincidence of language, not thought. Where John thinks of "the Spirit of truth" as a Being to be associated with the Father and the Son, the scrolls refer to two spirits, one good and one evil, and fairly evenly matched, which strive for mastery within people. Again, the scrolls equate the "prince of lights" with the spirit of truth, whereas John prefers to associate light with Christ. See further my The Dead Sea Scrolls and St. John's Gospel (London, 1960), pp. 5-7. "The spirit of truth" is referred to in Test. Jud. 20:1, 5, but again the coincidence is in language, not thought. The passage in the Testaments appears to be a development of the Jewish doctrine of the two Yetzers (which makes it unlikely that this is a Christian interpolation).

47. For John's interest in what can and what cannot be done see on 3:4.
48. Bultmann reminds us that this "does not mean that the unbeliever cannot become a believer"; rather it means that "The world qua world cannot receive the Spirit" (p. 616).

49. ύμεῖς is emphatic: the disciples stand in sharp contrast to the world.

50. In this passage three prepositions are used to describe the Spirit's association with believers, μεθ' ύμών (v. 16) does not seem to differ much from παρ' ύμΐν (here). It is possible that both point to the Spirit's presence in the church, whereas εν ύμίν (here) stresses rather his indwelling in the individual Christian (as Barrett, e.g., thinks). But the three forms may result simply from John's love of a variety of expression.

51. That is, if it is a present, μένει could be accented μενεϊ, which would make it a future (so Torrey, Knox). But the present seems more likely.

52. Just as there is a slight uncertainty whether μένει should not be read as a future, so there is doubt, this time textual, as to whether we should read "will be" or "is." ἐστὶν is read by nearly all MSS, but ἐστίν by B D* W fl 565 syr0 and a few others. But the present seems to be due to a desire to harmonize this verb with the two preceding presents, γινώσκετε and μένει.

53. ὀρφανοῦς. In the only two other places where it occurs in the New Testament it is used in the literal sense (Mark 12:40, v.l, Jas. 1:27). Horsley shows that the word is used of children who have lost one or both parents (New Docs. 4, pp. 162-64).

54. John makes more use of this negative, ού, than any of the other Evangelists does. Matthew has it 204 times, Mark 117 times, Luke 174 times, but John 286 times. John often uses his negative as a way of introducing an important positive, as he does here. See further on 1:5.

55. ἀφήσω is a strong term. It can be used in the sense "abandon."

56. Cf. Hoskyns, "This advent of the Christ is not an interpretation of the coming of the Spirit, as many commentators ancient and modern have supposed.... It is, rather, a distinct appearance, and the primary reference is to the Resurrection appearances." So also Barrett, who, however, thinks that John may have deliberately used language "applicable to both the resurrection and the parousia."

57. John's emphatic ύμεῖς sets the disciples over against the world. Then ἐγώ and ύμεῖς emphasize the places of Jesus and his followers.

58. Taking διτι to mean "because" and καί "also." Others prefer to make them mean "that" and "and" respectively, to give the meaning: "the world taketh note of me no more, but ye take note of me that I live and ye shall live" (Temple). It is also possible to take διτι as "because," but to run the sentence on thus: "the world will see Me no more but you will see Me, because I am really alive and you will be alive, too" (Phillips).

59. Augustine describes the person who fulfills this saying as one "who hath them orally, and keepeth them morally" (75.5; p. 336).

60. This is the one place in this Gospel where John uses υπό with the genitive. It is a fairly common construction and his avoidance of it is evidently due to a preference for using the active of verbs (though perhaps we should notice that he uses υπό very rarely, twice only in fact, whereas Matthew has it 28 times, Mark 12 times and Luke 30 times). Why he should have departed from his normal practice in this passage is not clear unless it is that he wished to repeat ό άγαπών με. Westcott thinks that the passive "seems to bring out the idea of the conscious experience of love by the object of it."

61. ἑμφανίζω, found only here and in the next verse in this Gospel. It is not the usual word for "manifest" (φανερόω). BAGD defines it as "make visible" while MM speaks of it as used in the papyri in a "quasi-technical sense" for "make an official report." Obviously that is not the use here, which is rather, as Westcott puts it, "presentation in a clear, conspicuous form." It is used of Moses' desire for a visible manifestation of God (Exod. 33:13, 18). But it can also be used of God's manifesting himself to those who do not distrust him (Wis. 1:2). It is in somewhat this sense that the word is used here.

62. τί γεγονεν; NIV reads "why?"

63. ἡμίν is emphatic from its position: "to us, not to the world."
The strong negative ὁχί puts emphasis on not to the world.

"Make" renders ποιησόμεθα, apparently the only example of the middle of this verb in this Gospel. It appears, however, to be used in much the sense of the active.

παρ' αὐτῷ is literally "beside him," but from v. 17 we see that it does not differ greatly from ἐν αὐτῷ.

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Morgan paraphrases neatly: "Now He said in effect: You ask Me, Jude, why I have abandoned the world? I have not abandoned the world. My Father and I are coming to dwell in you, and in all who shall, like you, love Me."

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70. The perfect λελάληκα may be meant to indicate the permanence of the words spoken. The expression ταύτα λελάληκα ἰμίν is found seven times in the farewell discourse and nowhere else in this Gospel (here, 15:11; 16:1, 4, 6, 25, 33).

71. This is the one place in this Gospel where the full form τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ Ἁγιον occurs. It puts a certain stress on the quality of the Spirit as holy.

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73. The pronoun ἐκεῖνος is not grammatically necessary and, especially following the neuter πνεῦμα, it reminds us that the Spirit is a person. Cf. Westcott, "The emphatic masculine pronoun brings out the personality of the Advocate."

74. ἐγώ (see on 1:20) is emphatic, both from its form and its position. The dispensation of the Spirit will not be radically new in the sense of dispensing with what Jesus has taught. Rather it will emphasize that teaching. Cf. Bultmann, "the Spirit does not speak in new revelations, loosed from the ties of history, but in the continuity of the office of proclamation" (p. 626, n. 5).

75. The perfect λελάληκα may be meant to indicate the permanence of the words spoken. The expression ταύτα λελάληκα ἰμίν is found seven times in the farewell discourse and nowhere else in this Gospel (here, 15:11; 16:1, 4, 6, 25, 33).

76. ἀφίημι will have the sense here of "leave behind," "leave as a bequest" (for this use of the verb cf. Ps. 17:14). Here Jesus refers to peace not as a salutation, but as a special gift of his own and to his own. Cf. Col. 3:15; 2 Thess. 3:16, etc. Apart from the greetings in 20:19, 21, 26, εἰρήνη is used only here and in 16:33 in this Gospel. In both places it is the gift of Christ.

77. We would expect the article with the second εἰρήνην, all the more so as it is followed by τήν ἐμήν. Its absence may mean that attention is drawn to the quality of the peace in question. It is not the usual peace, but Christ's own peace. BDF sees this as an example of a construction in which "the definiteness of the substantive is supplied only as an afterthought through the additional phrase" (270[3]).

78. The multiplication of δίδωμι in this verse is a characteristic Johannine way of driving a point home. It is a gift of Jesus.

79. For the singular καρδία see on v. 1.

80. This is the significance of δειλιάχω. The verb is defined by BAGD as "be cowardly, timid."

It is found only here in the New Testament.

81. The Hebrew יִשָּׂרָאֵל has a fuller content than the Greek εἰρήνη, but when in LXX the latter term was used to translate the former it acquired this fuller meaning. The New Testament writers then used it in the LXX sense rather than in that of contemporary Greek writers in general. See further my The Apostolic Preaching of the Cross (London and Grand Rapids, 1965), pp. 237-44, and the literature there cited.

82. The use of ύπάγω and πορεύομαι in this verse shows that John makes little distinction between the two. Some students assert that in this Gospel the former word means "go home" and the
latter "go on a journey." But the evidence will not sustain this. See also on v. 2.

83. εἴ ἤγαπάτε . . . ἔχάρητε ὄν. It is possible, as some commentators think, that Jesus is being gently playful with the disciples. But he is certainly showing the limitations of their love.

84. Westcott has an excellent note in which he sets out the principal patristic views on this passage. See also the valuable note in Hoskyns. Godet sagely remarks: "our passage breathes, in Him who thus speaks, the most lively feeling of His participation in divinity. God alone can compare Himself with God." Schnackenburg sees the Arian subordinationist view as "not relevant to the gospel of John, in which the voluntary subordination of the Son to the Father is dialectically combined with the Son's claim to equal fulness of life (5:26), the same divine being (1:1 . . .), and the same glory (17:5) as the Father."

85. The aorist πιστεύσητε may well mean "come to trust."

86. Advocates of rearrangement might well heed some wise words of Wright: "The only real objection to the present order is that it is felt to involve an illogical or unchronological sequence. Such an objection, in our own judgement, is in large measure dictated by the demand that the Evangelist ought to have conformed to more modern standards of writing. Our study of the Gospel up to this point has already made it abundantly clear that the author had a mind of his own, and a way of writing which is not that of us moderns. Is it not possible that he would have been, shall we say, mildly surprised and perhaps a little amused, at our modern endeavours to achieve a logical harmony for his writings? A little of the grace of humour would have saved many critics from their dogmatic pronouncements on the original order of the discourses" (p. 295). Dodd has some scathing criticism: "This is an example of precisely the kind of wooden criticism which ought never to be applied to the work of a mind like our evangelist's. However long these discourses may be, they are burdened from beginning to end with the sense of parting, and the time is short" (IFG, p. 407, η. 1).

87. Amplified gives the various possibilities, "he has no claim on Me — he has nothing in common with Me, there is nothing in Me that belongs to him, and he has no power over Me." The disadvantage, of course, is that it gives no indication which is to be preferred.

88. Plummer sees in this arrangement of the words "a want of solemnity, if not a savour of 'theatrical effect,' " and he proceeds, "Moreover it is less in harmony with S. John's style." Dodd, however, argues strongly for this division (IFG, pp. 406-9). In his view ἂγωμεν is used in the military sense of advancing to meet the enemy, so that ἐγείρεσθε ἂγωμεν ἐντεύθεν means, "let us go to meet the advancing enemy." He takes the whole verse in this way: "In order that the world may learn (a) that Jesus loves the Father, since (b) He is obedient to His command ... He goes to meet His assailant." He suggests such a translation as, "The Ruler of this world is coming. He has no claim upon me; but to show the world that I love the Father, and do exactly as He commands — up, let us march to meet him!" (IFG, p. 409). This is a very attractive understanding of the words, though it does seem to rest heavily on a particular interpretation of ἂγωμεν,

89. Some MSS read "gave me commandment" (as ARV); for the things the Father "gave" the Son see on 3:35.

90. This is the 23rd occurrence of "Father" in this chapter. Such a concentration of references is unusual and puts a strong emphasis on Fatherhood as characteristic of God. See on 1:14.

91. For 'ίνα with the omission of the preceding principal verb see on 1:8.

92. This is the one place in the New Testament in which Jesus' love for the Father is explicitly mentioned. There are, of course, many passages in which the love of the Father for the Son is referred to, and the love of the Son is implied everywhere. But this is the one place where it comes to expression.

93. Matthew and Mark relate that at the end of the scene in Gethsemane, after rebuking the disciples for sleeping, Jesus used the same words: ἐγείρεσθε ἂγωμεν (Matt. 26:46; Mark 14:42).

94. C. C. Torrey points out that, apart from the words ἐγείρεσθε, ἂγωμεν ἐντεύθεν, "the connection here is perfect." He postulates a misreading of an Aramaic original that was singular: "I will arise and go hence" (HThR, XVI [1923], p. 342).
But the technical mng. 'lawyer', 'attorney' is rare" (BAGD). Behm also denies this usage (TWNT, V, p. 799).

The Greek word is simply taken over and transliterated סקפיט, a fact that is of interest. There appears to be no Semitic word of which παράκλητος is the translation. We must get our information from Greek, not Hebrew sources.

Cf. Abbott: "emphasis is laid on the Paraclete, or Advocate, as not being one of the ordinary kind — the kind that takes up a client's cause, good or bad, and makes the best of it — but as being 'holy,' and — which is twice repeated — 'a Spirit of truth1932) "').


For an excellent summary of the various English translations of the word see E. J. Goodspeed, Problems of New Testament Translation (Chicago, 1945), pp. 110-11. He concludes: "The best opinion seems to be that the word meant one called to someone's aid in court, a helper, intercessor, pleader; a character witness. . . . 'Defender' is a very close equivalent, yet more than a defense witness seems intended. The work of teaching and reminding them seems to go far beyond this meaning and calls for a looser and broader word, as it is used in the gospel" (p. 111). He suggests "another Helper" for the translation in the Gospel, and "one who will intercede for us" in the Epistle.

ExT, LVII (1945-46), p. 50; see also his The Distinctive Ideas of the Old Testament (London, 1950), pp. 180-81


P. 15.

Johnston, p. 87. He takes up and italicizes Brown's view that the Paraclete is "the presence of Jesus when Jesus is absent" (p. 94).

Cf. R. E, Brown: "the Paraclete is a witness in defence of Jesus and a spokesman for him in the context of the trial of Jesus by his enemies; the Paraclete is a consooler of the disciples; more important, he is their teacher and guide and thus, in an extended sense, their helper. No one translation captures the complexity of these functions. . . . Christian usage has given a peculiar connotation and status to παράκλητος — a connotation not entirely independent of related Hebrew concepts and of the secular Greek meaning of the words, but a connotation that is unique just the same" (art. cit., p. 118). Cf. also G. M. Burge, "The variety of traits given to the Paraclete defy any attempt to give him a comprehensive title." He cites H. Windisch for "the convergence of three themes: a witness that vindicates and judges; a helper and aid; a counselor and teacher." He proceeds to note "the great multiplicity of activities in the Paraclete's role" (The Anointed Community [Grand Rapids, 1987], p. 9).
I am the true vine and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he trims clean so that it will be even more fruitful. You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples. As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one that this, that one lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command. No longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you to go and bear fruit—fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name.
The allegory of the vine\footnote{1} brings before us the importance of fruitfulness in the Christian life and the truth that this is the result, not of human achievement, but of abiding in Christ. There is a stem side to this. Branches that are not fruitful are purged out. Jesus is not simply issuing some comforting advice. He is outlining the difficult but important way of service. There seems little doubt that he has in mind passages in the Old Testament that regard Israel as a vine (Ps. 80:8-16; Isa. 5:1-7; Jer. 2:21; Ezek. 15; 19:10; Hos. 10:1). Indeed, in time the vine became a symbol of Israel, and it is found, for example, on coins of the Maccabees.\footnote{2}

Interestingly, all the Old Testament passages that use this symbol appear to regard Israel as faithless or as the object of severe punishment. Jesus' description of himself as the "true" vine is to be seen against this background. The passage is the Johannine counterpart of the Pauline view of the church as the body of Christ and of believers as "in" Christ. Both are ways of bringing out the vital connection that exists between Christ and his own.

1 Jesus begins by laying it down that he himself is "the true vine."\footnote{3} For the "I am" sayings see on 6:35; this is the only one followed by a predicate ("my Father is the gardener"). Jesus does not say that the church is the vine but that he is. The church is no more than the branches that are "in" the vine. And not only is Jesus the vine, but he is the "true" vine. As we have seen, the vine is often the symbol of Israel, and this adjective may point to Israel as the degenerate vine (Jer. 2:21) now replaced by the true one.\footnote{5} In a way characteristic of the Fourth Gospel there is an immediate reference to the Father. Father and Son are never regarded as separate entities each going his way regardless of the other. John sees them as at work together. So when he reports that Jesus spoke of himself as the true vine he immediately goes on to the thought that the Father is the "gardener."\footnote{6}

2 The part of the Father here is decisive. He watches over the vine and takes action like that of a vinedresser to secure fruitfulness. Every fruitless branch\footnote{7} he takes away (cf. Matt. 3:10).\footnote{8} We should not regard this as a proof that true believers may fall away. It is part of the viticultural picture, and the point could not be made without it. The emphasis is on the bearing of fruit.\footnote{9} That is the only reason for growing a vine; as Ezekiel pointed out long before, a vine does not yield timber (Ezek. 15). In a vineyard fruitfulness is not simply desirable; it is imperative; that is the whole point
of the vineyard; it is what the vineyard is for. Pruning is resorted to to ensure that this takes place. Left to itself a vine will produce a good deal of unproductive growth. For maximum fruitful-ness extensive pruning is essential. This is a suggestive figure for the Christian life. The fruit of Christian service is never the result of allowing the natural energies and inclinations to run riot. "Trims clean," more literally "cleans," where we might have expected "prunes," shows that we have now moved into the spiritual sphere. The interest is in what happens with people rather than with vines. The action of the Father is such as to cleanse his people so that they will live fruitful lives. The "fruit" is not defined here, but we need not doubt that qualities of Christian character are in mind as elsewhere in the New Testament (Matt. 3:8; 7:20; Rom. 6:22; Gal. 5:22; Eph. 5:9; Phil. 1:11, etc.). Bultmann speaks of it as "every demonstration of vitality of faith, to which, according to vv. 9-17, reciprocal love above all belongs" (pp. 532-33).

3 The disciples are not to think that they are being singled out for criticism. They are already clean on account of Jesus' word (i.e., his whole message) spoken to them. He is not reproaching them, but encouraging them. He is pointing out the way in which they may continue to progress spiritually.

4 But they must not presume. Let them take care that they abide (NIV, "remain") in Christ. "And I in you" (NIV, "and I will remain in you") could conceivably be an imperative that Jesus directs to himself with the meaning, "You must abide in me and I must abide in you." It could be a promise, "Abide in me, and I will abide in you." But it is perhaps more probable that it is a continuation of the command to the disciples, "Abide in me, and see that I abide in you." Jesus means that the disciples should live such lives that he will continue to abide in them. The two "abidings" cannot be separated, and "abiding" is the necessary prerequisite of fruitfulness. No branch bears fruit in isolation. Every fruitful branch has vital connection with the vine. So to abide in Christ is the necessary prerequisite of fruitfulness for the Christian. Fruitfulness doubtless includes both the production of Christian character and the winning of others to follow Christ; it includes everything that results from vital union with Christ (see on v. 2).

5 For "I am the vine" see on verse 1. "I" and "you" are set over against each other by the use of the emphatic pronouns. The roles of Christ and of
his followers are not to be confused. But there is a mutual indwelling, and this is the condition of fruitfulness. Those who so abide in Christ and have Christ abiding in them keep on bearing fruit in quantity. The verse concludes with an emphatic declaration of human helplessness apart from Christ. In isolation from him no spiritual achievement is possible. For the complementary truth compare "I can do everything through him who gives me strength" (Phil. 4:13).

6 Should anyone not remain in Christ, that person is thrown out like a branch. The fate of such branches is known. They wither away, "they gather them and throw them into the fire" (it is not said who does the gathering and the throwing, and both may simply be equivalent to the passive). These are strong words that emphasize the necessity of remaining in vital contact with Christ if fruitfulness is to continue.

7 From fruit-bearing in general Jesus moves on to prayer. The passage has to do with abiding; the condition of prevailing prayer is abiding in Christ. But whereas before he has spoken of his own abiding in believers, now he speaks of his words abiding in them (cf. 14:21, 23). This is not a different attitude to prayer from that in the previous chapter. There prayer must be offered "in the name" of Christ (14:14) and obedience is strongly insisted on. The same spiritual attitude is in mind here, but from a different standpoint. The prayers of those who are truly abiding in Christ will certainly be "in the name of Christ," that is in accordance with all that Christ stands for. And if they are really abiding in Christ they will live in obedience to the words of Christ. We should not overlook the importance of "my words." The teaching of Jesus is important and not lightly to be passed over in the interests of promoting religious feeling. When believers abide in Christ and Christ's words abide in them, they live as close to Christ as well may be. Then their prayers will be prayers that are in accord with God's will and they will be fully answered.

8 "In this" (NIV omits "in") is forward-looking. The Father is glorified in that the disciples bear much fruit. God is glorified in the work of the Son (13:31-32). Now we have the other truth that God is also glorified in the work of believers who abide in the Son. There is an air of completeness and of certainty about it. The disciples will surely glorify the Father by their continual fruit-bearing; since they cannot bear fruit of themselves (v. 4) their fruitfulness is evidence of the Father at work in them.
and thus it glorifies him. The last part of the verse is difficult. One would have thought that those Jesus was addressing were already disciples. It is possible, with ARV, to supply "so" (this word is not in the Greek). The meaning then would be that the bearing of fruit shows that they are disciples. It is also possible that we should not supply "so." The meaning then is that the Father is glorified both in the bearing of fruit and in their continuing to be disciples. In either case there is also the thought that discipleship is not static, but a growing and developing way of life. Always the true disciple is becoming more fully a disciple.

9 From the obligations resting on his disciples Jesus turns to his love for them. He first tells them that his love for them is like the Father's love for him. Then he commands them to continue in his love. It is possible for people to live without being mindful of Christ's love for them and so break the closeness of the fellowship. Jesus commands them not to do this.

10 The obligations resting on the disciples intertwine with the thought of the blessings there are in Christ. So now Jesus returns to the thought of keeping the commandments. This is done as an explanation of the way they abide in his love. This is not some mystical experience. It is simple obedience. It is when we keep Christ's commandments that we abide in his love. Once again appeal is made to Christ's own example. He kept the Father's commandments and thus abides continually in the Father's love.

11 For "I have told you this" see on 14:25. The purpose of Jesus' words is now defined in terms of joy. He has spoken these things in order that his joy might be in them. This may mean that he looks for their conduct to be such that he can rejoice in them (NIV, "so that my joy may be in you"). More probably Jesus means that he had the joy of living the completely fruitful life and he wants the joy that he already has to be in them too as they live fruitfully (Cassirer, "so that the joy which is mine may be found in you"). He looks for their joy to be filled, that is complete. It is no cheerless, barren existence that Jesus plans for his people. But the joy of which he speaks comes only as they are wholehearted in their obedience to his commands. To be half hearted is to get the worst of both worlds. The note of joy is a new one, for the word "joy" has been used in this Gospel hitherto only in 3:29. But in the upper room we find it seven times (in this verse twice; 16:20, 21, 22, 24; 17:13). In his comment on 17:13 Strachan reminds us that "joy" and "pleasure" must not be confused. "The joy of Jesus is the
joy that arises from the sense of a finished work. It is creative joy, like the joy of the artist. It produces a sense of unexhausted power for fresh creation. This joy in the heart of Jesus is both the joy of victory (xv.11), and the sense of having brought His Church into being." It is an inspiring thought that Jesus calls his followers into joy. The Christian life is not some shallow, insipid following of a traditional pattern. It is a life characterized by "unexhausted (and inexhaustible) power for fresh creation."

12 The "commands" of verse 10 are reduced to one, the command to love one another as Christ has loved them.29 This is the "new commandment" of 13:34 (where see note). Augustine's saying, "Love, and do what thou wilt"30 is a clear expression of what Jesus is teaching here. If we love, in the sense in which Jesus uses the term, we need no other rule.

13 Now comes the reference to the greatest love of all. There is no love greater than that of one who lays down his life for others. Anything else must be less. This is the supreme test of love. In the context this must refer primarily to the love of Jesus shown on the cross. There he laid down his life on behalf of his friends. Some have raised the question whether the love that dies for enemies is not greater than that which is concerned for friends, but that is not before us here. In this passage Jesus is not comparing the love that sacrifices for enemies with that which sacrifices for friends. He is in the midst of friends and is speaking only of friends. With respect to them he is saying that one cannot have greater love than to die for them. When it is a question of enemies Jesus did in fact die for them (Rom. 5:10). And as Loyd says, "in truth love has sunk below its proper level if it begins to ask who is my friend and who my enemy. Love gives, and gives everything, for all men." That is the thought of this verse. Jesus gives everything, even life itself, for others. There is no greater proof of love.32

14 Jesus makes it clear that the members of the apostolic band are his friends (cf. Luke 12:4). But friendship depends on common aims and outlook and thus Jesus qualifies "You are my friends" by "if you do what I command."33 Once again obedience is the test of discipleship. The friends of Jesus are those who habitually obey him.34

15 Jesus will no longer call them "servants," that is "slaves." He has not actually used this term of them previously, though 13:16 comes very near it, and 13:13 certainly implies it. The characteristic of the slave that Jesus picks out is that he "does not know his master's business." The slave is no more than an instrument. It is not for him to enter intelligently into the
purposes of his owner. His task is simply to do what he is told. But this is 
not the pattern of relationship between Jesus and his disciples. He has called 
them "friends." He has kept nothing back from them. He has revealed to 
them all that the Father has made known to him. This is not a 
contradiction of 16:12. Here Jesus denies that he has treated them like 
slaves — he has taken them fully into his confidence. There the thought is 
rather that their knowledge is not as yet exhaustive. They still have much to 
learn, and Jesus will disclose it in due time through the Spirit.

16 We always tend to feel that the initiative is with us. Jesus now 
assures his followers that this is not the case. It was not they who chose 
him, as was normally the case when disciples attached themselves to a 
particular rabbi. Students the world over delight to seek out the teacher of 
their choice and attach themselves to him or her. But Jesus' disciples did not 
hold the initiative. On the contrary, it was he who chose them. And not 
only did he choose them, but he appointed them to their task. This is, first, 
to go; the idea of mission is frequent in this Gospel. The first function then 
of the disciples is that they are to be emissaries of Christ. The second thing 
is that they should "bear fruit" (see on v. 2). The fruit they bear is not 
transient but abiding. It is possible that here the bearing of fruit includes the 
thought of service leading to the conversion of others (why else should they 
"go"?), as in 4:36. It is perhaps unexpected that this is subordinate to the 
aim of prevailing prayer. The disciples are to bear fruit, so that their fruit 
may abide, so that whatever they ask God he may give it (the latter thought 
is repeated with slight variations in 16:23). "Whatever" is very 
 thoroughgoing. Nothing is held back. For "in my name" see on 14:13. Here 
it is the Father who answers prayer, not Christ as in 14:14. Jesus foresaw 
that when he left the disciples they would not find life easy. The gospel they 
preached would bring them into collision with the worldly-minded, and 
indeed with the religious people of the day. So now he gives them counsel, 
warning them of persecution to come. For the true Christian opposition is 
ievitable.

D. PERSECUTION (15:17-25)

1. Suffering for Christ’s Sake (15:17-21)
17"This is my command: Love each other. 18If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. 19If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you. 20Remember the words I spoke, to you: 'No servant is greater than his master.' a If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also. If they obeyed my teaching, they will obey yours also. 21 They will treat you this way because of my name, for they do not know the One who sent me.

a. 20 John 13:16

It is not certain whether we should take verse 17 as the conclusion of the previous section (in which case Jesus rounds it off with the command to love), or whether it begins this new section on persecution. Somewhat hesitantly I adopt the latter course. This views the words as a renewal of the command to love as characteristic of the Christian life. And it is precisely because this life is what it is that it attracts the persecution of the world. Jesus points out first that the world will hate his followers as it has hated him (vv. 18-20), then that it will hate them because it hated him (vv. 21-25). He reminds them that there is a sharp distinction between themselves and the world. And because they are identified with him, his followers will be treated by the world in much the same way as it treated him. The world does not know God. Therefore the world ill-treats the people of God.

17 The plural "these things" (which NIV, REB, GNB and others render with a singular) is somewhat surprising. The singular would give an easier sense, looking forward to the single command to love one another. The plural may mean that all the injunctions in the preceding discourse really amount to this, Love one another. Or, more probably, it may signify that all the commandments in the discourse are for a single purpose, that the disciples may engage in mutual love.

18 Now the world is set in sharp contrast. "If the world hates you" does not imply that there is any doubt about the matter. Rather the reverse. The world will certainly hate them. But when that happens they have the knowledge that no new and surprising thing has befallen them. The world hated Jesus first. And because it hated him it is not in the least strange that it comes to hate his followers (cf. Matt. 10:25). It is not without its
significance that the disciples are to be known by their love, the world by its hatred.\textsuperscript{45}

19 This last point is made clear. "If you belonged to the world" implies that in fact they do not. Therefore they are not recipients of the world's love, for the world loves only its own. The disciples "do not belong to the world,"\textsuperscript{46} for Jesus has chosen them out of it\textsuperscript{47} (incidentally a further indication of the divine initiative: divine election means a good deal throughout this Gospel). The necessary consequence is that the world hates them. The present tense in this last verb indicates a continuing attitude. This verse is a good example of the way John can give emphasis by repeating a word. Here he makes "world" linger in the mind by using the word five times in a single verse (NIV drops one of them). And the world being what it is and Christians being what they are, it is inevitable that the world reacts against Christians as it did against their Master. It is important to realize this, for we sometimes act as though it is surprising that upright worldly people oppose the things of God. On the contrary, it is inevitable.\textsuperscript{48}

20 Jesus now recalls an earlier saying of his (13:16, where see note), and calls on his hearers to remember it.\textsuperscript{49} The quotation is exact, which is fairly rare in this Gospel (see on 3:5). We may be meant to think of the saying as especially important. It reminds them that the treatment given the Master determines that accorded the servant. They persecuted Jesus. They will persecute his followers then.\textsuperscript{50} They will keep the "word" of Jesus' followers only to the extent that they kept his (NIV has "teaching" for "word").\textsuperscript{51} Basically this, of course, points to rejection. But the positive aspect should not be overlooked. Some had in fact kept Jesus' word, and some would keep theirs.

21 The root cause of persecution is now traced to the world's ignorance of God.\textsuperscript{52} This is characteristic Johannine teaching (cf. 16:3). The Father ("the One who sent me"; see on 3:17) is known in the mission of the Son. When the world rejects Jesus it accordingly rejects the Father who is made known in Jesus Christ. And when the world rejects the God who is thus revealed, the world proceeds to reject and ill-treat the ministers of that God. Persecution accordingly will come to Jesus' followers "because of my name" (see on 1:12; 14:13). It may not be too much to say that when the world persecutes Jesus' followers it persecutes him (cf. Acts 9:4).
2. Christ Reveals People's Sin (15:22-25)

22"If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not be guilty of sin. Now, however, they have no excuse for their sin. 23 He who hates me hates my Father as well. 24 If I had not done among them what no one else did, they would not be guilty of sin. But now they have seen these miracles, and yet they have hated both me and my Father. 25 But this is to fulfill what is written in their Law: 'They hated me without reason.' "

a. 25 Psalms 35:19; 69:4

Jesus now takes up the theme of opposition to himself. He points out that this opposition underlines the guilt of the people. The greatness of the revelation made in Christ is the measure of the guilt of those who rejected him.

22 The seriousness of rejecting Christ is brought out. Jesus does not mean, of course, that the Jews would have been sinless had he not appeared. But he does mean that the sin of rejecting God as he really is would not have been imputed to them had they not had the revelation of God that was made through him. But now, as things are, they have no excuse. There is no way of covering up their sin.

23 Both "me" and "my Father" are emphatic. Jesus leaves no doubt as to the seriousness of the conduct of the people of his day. He lays down the general principle that anyone who hates the Son hates the Father. The two are so closely connected that to hate the one is to hate the other. For the opposite truth see 13:20.

24 The truth of the two preceding verses is further brought out and emphasized. First Jesus points out the significance of the "works" (NIV has "what" for "the works which"). This term certainly includes the miracles, but also more. It covers the whole life of Jesus (which makes inadequate the rendering "miracles," as in Rieu, Weymouth). He had done among the Jews works such as nobody else had ever done (cf. the similar truth concerning his words, 7:46). There was an obligation resting on them accordingly to take note of these works. The appeal to the works is noteworthy and classically Johannine (see further Additional Note G, pp. 607-13). The works are distinctive. Had such works not been done among them they
would not have been held to be sinners. For "having" sin see on verse 22. But now things are different. They have both seen and hated both Christ and the Father. Both verbs are in the perfect tense, which must here indicate a permanent attitude (cf. v. 18). It is interesting that the Father as well as the Son has been "seen." This will be in the sense of 14:9, for right at the beginning of the Gospel John has assured us that nobody has seen God (1:18). Once again the closeness of the unity between the Father and the Son is stressed. The guilt of the Jews consisted in this, that they rejected the revelation of the Father that was made known in the Son. Jesus does not speak of "the Father" but of "my Father." His special relationship to God is very much to the fore.

25 "But" is somewhat unexpected. The meaning evidently is that the Jews' conduct is the opposite of what might reasonably have been anticipated. The construction is elliptical and we must supply "they did this" or "this is" (as NIV). What stands written in the Law must be fulfilled. The Law is called "their" law; it is the Law that they of all people might have been expected to heed. "Law" strictly means the Pentateuch, but sometimes it is used of Scripture in general. It must be the latter use here, for the passage quoted is from Psalm 35:19 (or 69:4, or possibly 109:3). All the suggested passages speak of hatred that lacks any reasonable foundation. It is this kind of hatred that the Jews had exercised toward Jesus. There is more Johannine irony here. The Jews saw themselves as the upholders of the Law, but in their zeal for the Law they incurred the condemnation of the Law by rejecting the Christ to whom the Law bore its witness.

E. THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT (15:26-16:15)

Jesus has a good deal to say about the Holy Spirit in this discourse. Without ceasing to think of persecution he unfolds further teaching on the work of the Spirit. As he is thinking of the attitude of the world to Christians it is perhaps not surprising that he deals here with the one activity of the Spirit toward the world, namely that the Spirit convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment.

1. The Witness of the Spirit (15:26-27)
"When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me; but you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning."

26 For "the Counselor" see Additional Note F, pp. 587-91. Earlier Jesus said that the Father would send the Spirit in response to his prayer (14:16), and that the Father would send him in Christ's name (14:26), but now he says that he himself will send him from the Father. It is plain the Spirit is regarded as connected in the most intimate fashion with both the Father and the Son. The sending of the Spirit is an activity that concerns them both. For "the Spirit of truth" see on 14:17. The Spirit's relationship to the Father is brought out by saying that he "goes out from" the Father." Probably not too much emphasis should be placed on the meaning of this verb. The passage is not concerned with the eternal mutual relationships of the Persons of the Trinity, but with the work the Spirit would do in this world as a continuation of the ministry of Jesus. The particular function of the Spirit that occupies us here is that of witness, and specifically of witness to Christ. For the concept of witness in this Gospel see on 1:7. When Jesus is taken from the earth, the Spirit will continually bear witness concerning him. The passage strengthens the conviction that the word translated "Counselor" has legal significance. The Spirit, so to speak, conducts Christ's case for him before the world. Beasley-Murray rejects the views that Jesus means that the Spirit speaks in defense of the disciples (Dodd) and that he brings evidence against the world (F. Porsch). Rather, in conjunction with the disciples, the Spirit "is to bring to light the truth of the revelation of Jesus in his word and deed, and death and resurrection."

27 The apostles are linked closely with the Spirit in this activity of witness (cf. Acts 4:33). Their witness is linked with that of the Holy Spirit. It is the same Christ to whom they bear witness, and it is the same salvation of which they bear witness. At the same time it is their witness. They cannot simply relax and leave it all to the Spirit. They have a particular function in bearing witness in that they were with Jesus from the very beginning. There is a responsibility resting on all Christians to bear witness to the facts of saving grace. They cannot evade this. But the really
significant witness is that of the Holy Spirit, for he alone can bring home to people's hearts the truth and the significance of the truth.  

**ADDITIONAL NOTE G: MIRACLES**

John has his own particular way of referring to the miracles of Jesus. He never uses δύναμις, the favored word in the Synoptic Gospels. This word is to all intents and purposes the only word for miracles in the first three Gospels (Matthew uses it 12 times, Mark 10 times, and Luke 15 times). This makes John's total omission of the word all the more striking. Instead he uses two words, σημείον, "a sign," and ἐργον, "a work." Neither of these words is absent from the Synoptic Gospels, but neither is used in the Synoptics in the same way as in John, σημείον is found in Matthew 13 times, Mark 7 times, and Luke 11 times, but in none of them is it applied to the miracles of Jesus. It is used of "the signs" that the Jews asked of him and which he refused to supply. And it is used of "the sign of the Son of man," which will appear in the last days. But it is not applied to the actual miracles that Jesus did. It is almost the same with ἐργον. This word is used by Matthew 6 times, Mark twice, and Luke twice. Twice indeed it may refer to Jesus' miracles, namely when Matthew reports that John the Baptist heard in prison of "the works of the Christ" (Matt. 11:2), and when Luke reports that Jesus was "powerful in word and deed" (Luke 24:19). But this is exceptional in these Gospels. John, by contrast, uses both words very freely in a way that reveals his characteristic view of miracles.

He uses σημείον 17 times. On one occasion this refers to John the Baptist, who "did no sign" (10:41). Jesus' opponents used the word on two occasions when they asked him what sign he showed (2:18; 6:30); and on another occasion when they asked themselves whether the Christ when he came would do more signs than Jesus (7:31). Jesus used the word on two occasions. Once he complained that his hearers would not believe unless they saw "signs and wonders" (4:48), and again he referred to those who sought him out because they ate of the loaves, and not because of the signs (6:26).

On the other 11 occasions σημείον always refers to the miracles of Jesus.  

Here we must regard the intrinsic meaning of the word as significant. It is connected with σημαίνω, "to signify, indicate, make
known." In other words, a σημείον is something full of meaning. It is not an end in itself, but it points people beyond itself. The word has no necessary connection with the miraculous. Indeed, in LXX it is usually used of "signs" that are not miraculous. But John uses it exclusively of miracles. The miracle, as John sees it, is a means of teaching people spiritual truth, and specifically of pointing them to God. Thus he quotes the words of Nicodemus, "no one could perform the signs you are doing if God were not with him" (3:2). And negatively he records the words of those who interrogated the man born blind: "How can a sinner do such signs?" (9:16). The signs, then, take their origin from God and point people to God. It is not surprising that they therefore result in faith. On the occasion of the first of them, the changing of water into wine at Cana, it is said that "his disciples put their faith in him" (2:11). Many in Jerusalem came to believe on account of the signs (3:23), and indeed John can speak of his whole Gospel as an account of "signs" recorded that people might believe (20:30-31). In accordance with this, people who saw the signs but refused to believe are blamed for that very reason (12:37). The chief priests and the Pharisees on one occasion expressed their deep concern. Jesus, they said, "is performing many signs," and the consequence, they thought, might well be that "everyone will believe in him" (11:47-48). On more than one occasion John records that people came to Jesus on account of the signs (6:2; 12:18), while on the occasion of the feeding of the multitude the people who saw the sign concluded: "Surely this is the Prophet who is to come into the world" (6:14). It is of interest that Jesus did not reject the faith that rested on the signs. It is not, of course, the highest kind of faith, but it is better than no faith at all. So on one occasion he blamed people who had a wrong attitude to the signs: "you are looking for me, not because you saw signs but because you ate the loaves and had your fill" (6:26). These people went on to ask Jesus for a sign (6:30), but their desire was not granted. No more than the Synoptists does John depict a Jesus who works the kind of miracle that will compel faith. The signs stimulate faith indeed. But they are not of such a type that people must believe when they see them, as John 6 shows. Jesus' words about those who demand "signs and wonders" before they believe leave us in no doubt but that he repudiates their attitude (4:48).

It is plain that John uses "sign" in a distinctive fashion. For him the miracles were significant events. They set forth spiritual truths. We see this,
not only in the meaning of this one word, but in the way John arranges his narratives. In them he exposes facet after facet of human need, showing at the same time human inadequacy and Jesus' all-sufficiency. At Cana with the turning of the water into wine this concerns our inability to cope with the demands of those festivities that are normal to human life. In the case of the nobleman's son and of the man lame for thirty-eight years it is our helplessness in the face of disease and of the tragedy of crippling physical disability. The feeding of the multitude shows up the barrenness of human resources even to supply necessary food (a lesson very much in place in the modern world), while Jesus' walking on the water contrasts with human helplessness in the face of the awesome forces of nature unleashed in, for example, a great storm. The opening of the eyes of the blind man illustrates our failure to cope with innate handicaps while it also shows Jesus to be the light of the world. The raising of dead Lazarus underlines the ultimate human defeat by death while it reveals Jesus as the resurrection and the life. Each miracle is "sign"-iftcant, meaningful. Rightly considered it points people to God, and to God's provision in Jesus. If people will only view the miracles as they should they will be led into deeper faith. From this point of view the σημεία represent a challenge, a call to faith.

For John the "sign" was something akin to the "signs" employed by the prophets and which are now widely recognized as an integral part of their message. The "sign" did things. Thus the sign at Cana set forth the life-giving power of Christ over against the ritualism of Judaism, and his disciples believed (2:11). The healing of the nobleman's son points to Jesus as the Life, and life came to the nobleman and his house (4:53). The healing of the man born blind shows Jesus as "the Light of the world" and leaves the man with light for his body and light for his soul (9:38). So it is with other signs. For John the "sign" is effectual.

On all three occasions when John uses the cognate verb σημαίνω it refers to death (twice the death of Jesus, 12:33; 18:32, and once that of Peter, 21:19). The "signs" are significant, for they are wrought as part of the work of him whose supreme work was to die for sinners.

But this is not all that John has to say about the miracles; thus his use of ἔργον is also important. This word can be used of the deeds people do, whether good or evil. For the evil see 3:19, 20; 7:7; 8:41, and for good deeds 3:21; 6:28, 29; 8:39; 14:12. It is not without its interest that these good deeds may sometimes be called "the works of God" (6:28, 29). It may
be that this hints at the derivative nature of good works. They do not originate within us ourselves. The one passage in which Jesus looks forward to the works that his followers would do after he is taken from them is very striking: "anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father" (14:12).

But John's characteristic use of ἐργάζεσθαι is for the works of Jesus. Of the 27 times he uses the word, 18 times he applies it to what Jesus has done. He uses the term in a variety of ways. Clearly it applies to the miracles on some occasion; for example, "I did one work (NIV "one miracle"), and you are all astonished" (7:21). On other occasions it refers to the whole of Jesus' earthly work, for example when he refers in prayer to "completing the work you gave me to do" (17:4). The word may be used in the singula!—, for an individual act or for the sum total of his earthly life, or the plural may be used of many individual deeds.

Jesus' works are "the works that no one else did" (15:24). They are distinctive and are not to be compared to those of other people. Indeed, in a sense they are not the works of Jesus at all, but of his Father. The Father, he says, "loves the Son and shows him all he does. Yes, to your amazement he will show him even greater works (NIV, 'things') than these" (5:20). There is no doubt that it is the works done by Christ that are meant. But Jesus recognizes these to be the Father's works. He himself does not originate them. "It is the Father, living in me, who is doing his works" (14:10). Thus he can say that it is his very meat to accomplish the Father's work (4:34), and he can speak of the works that the Father has given him to do (5:36). At the end of his life he could speak of "completing the work you gave me to do" (17:4). ἐργάζεσθαι here stands for his complete life's work. On one occasion he says that a man was born blind "that the works of God might be displayed in his life," and he adds, "we must do the works of him who sent me" (9:3-4). Again, Jesus can say to the Jews, "Many good works I showed you from the Father" (10:32). It is plain that Jesus regards his characteristic works as originating with the Father.

Now these works have a function in teaching people. They have value as revelation. More than once Jesus spoke of the works he did as "testifying" of him (5:36; 10:25). And if his works testified, it is important that people heed this testimony. So he could tell his hearers not to believe him if he does not do the works of the Father. He adds, "But if I do them,
even if you do not believe me, believe the works, that you may learn and understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father" (10:37-38). So again he can say, "believe me for the very works' sake" (14:11). His word and his works are closely connected, for he can say, "The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his works" (14:10). Clearly the works, like the signs, have a revelatory function.

From all this we see that ἐργον is an important word in John's understanding of the miracles. It is not without its interest that this is the term Jesus usually employs for the miracles in this Gospel. He uses σημεῖον on two occasions, but apart from these he always refers to ἐργα. This is surely a very important fact, but it is missed by many who see no further than John's preference for σημεῖον over the Synoptic δύναμις. There must be significance in Jesus' own preference for ἐργον. We may discern part of this at any rate from the intrinsic meaning of the word, and the fact that it can be applied to the ordinary deeds people do. What to us are miracles, to God and to Christ are no more than "works." This is their normal way of working.

And besides being used more often than σημεῖον, ἐργον is used in a greater variety of ways. Perhaps it would be true to say that where John sees miracles from one point of view as σημεῖα, activities pointing people to God, from another he sees them as ἐργα, activities that take their origin in God. But because they originate with God they have a revelatory function and they also point people to God. Therefore John can look for faith on the basis of the "works" just as much as on the basis of "signs." ἐργον is for him the fuller word. It includes what we would call the "natural" activities of Jesus as well as the "supernatural." It reminds us that these are all of a piece, that Jesus' whole life was spent consistently in doing the will of God and in accomplishing his purpose. Not only in the miracles, but in all his life he was showing forth God's glory.

There is another thought behind John's use of the term ἐργον. The same word is used consistently in the Old Testament of the works of God. Perhaps especially important are the passages in which it is used of his works in creation (Gen. 2:2-3; Ps. 8:3; 104:24, etc.) and in delivering his people from Egypt (Ps. 44:1; 95:9, etc.). But in view of the way in which Jesus is seen in this Gospel to be fulfilling what is foreshadowed in other works of God in the Old Testament (giving the true manna, the living water,
the true light, etc.) we should not limit the use of the word too narrowly. What John is doing is indicating the continuity of the work of God in the Old Testament with that which he does in the ministry of Jesus. This is seen in all manner of activities, but especially in those of creation and salvation. The "wondrous works" of God are brought to their climax and fulfillment in the "works" of Christ. There is a unity here. And it is probably no coincidence that the great saying, "I and the Father are one" (10:30), is made in a context that deals with the "works." Unity of being means unity of action, and unity of action points to unity of being.80

1. A surprising number of commentators see in the vine a reference to the Eucharist, but this seems farfetched. A vine is not wine, let alone the wine of the Eucharist. And if it were, there is nothing in the passage to indicate the bread. But the biggest objection is the subject matter of the whole section. Jesus is clearly talking about the life of Christians and their relationship to God, not about a liturgical observance.

2. See SBk, II, pp. 563-64 for evidence that the vine symbolism continued to be used among the Jews.

3. John uses ἀμπελός three times only, verses 1, 4, and 5. Characteristically there are slight variants in the repetition. MM cite evidence from the papyri that this word was sometimes used in the sense of ἀμπελών, "vineyard," but there is no reason for thinking that this is the meaning here. A few commentators do accept this meaning, including Calvin, who sees κλήμα as the word for "vine." The meaning then would be that Christ is the vineyard and his disciples the vines. Pallis argues to the same effect from the usage in modern Greek. But this usage has not been shown to be common in the ancient world, and the usual interpretation remains far more probable.

4. For ἀληθινός in John see on 1:9.

5. There are several linguistic connections with Jer. 2:21, where Yahweh says to Israel, "I had planted you like a choice vine of sound and reliable stock."

6. γεωργός is a general word for "one who tills the soil," that is a farmer. Thus some translators prefer "Cultivator" or, as NIV, "Gardener." The context rather than the word shows that here it is activity in connection with vines that is meant. This activity of the Father is not unlike that ascribed to him in Ps. 80:8ff., where the vine is Israel.
κλήμα is found in the New Testament only in this passage (vv. 2, 4, 5, and 6). The term denotes not a branch in our sense of the term (κλάδος), but a cane or shoot of a vine.

The redundant pronoun in the expression πάν κλήμα .. . αφεῖ αυτό is Semitic. The construction is repeated in the next clause.

John uses καρπός 8 times in verses 1-16, and twice only in all the rest of the Gospel.

As we pass from αίρει to καθαιρεί (here only in the New Testament) there is a play on words that it is impossible to reproduce in English. MM cites an example of the use of this latter verb in a papyrus of the third century B.C. for an agricultural process, "... on condition that Heron shall measure out and winnow the produce annually for the State" (it is rendered "winnow"). It cites no example of the verb with the meaning "prune," and the same is true of LS (which cites only this passage). It is often said that the word can mean "prune," but Lagrange denies this. He points out that the thought is conveyed otherwise in the passage from Philo usually cited to prove the point. Dodd is also skeptical about its use for pruning. He does not find the word in a number of documents referring to viticulture and concludes, "I do not think it was a word which a vinegrower would naturally have used" (IFG, p. 136n.). The connection between καθαιρεί and καθαροί of the next verse should also not be missed. This incidentally helps us to see the meaning of the branches that are taken away. The term was applied to the disciples in 13:10, with Judas explicitly excepted: "you are clean, though not every one of you." The branches cut off are people like Judas. This man had had contact with Jesus, even close contact, but was not a real disciple. He was "the one doomed to destruction" (more literally, "the son of perdition") (17:12).

The word is καθαροί, used elsewhere in John only in the incident of the foot washing (13:10f.).

The perfect λελώληκα may be meant to indicate that the word remains with them. For this verb see on 1:37.

E. M. Sidebottom regards "abide" as "a technical term with the rabbis," and he cites as typical, "When ten sit together and occupy themselves with the Torah, the Shekinah abides among them" (The Christ of the Fourth Gospel [London, 1961], p. 37).

Abbott points out that έάν μή with the present subjunctive is rare in the New Testament, being found twice in this verse, and again only in verse 6 and Luke 13:3 in the Gospels. In the Lukan passage there is plainly the thought of retribution, and he thinks that this would make good sense here also, "except a man be (found) abiding" (2521). This is probably too subtle, but the present is certainly unusual.

χωρίς έμού is reinforced with the double negative, ού .. ούδέν. For δύναμαι see on 3:4.

The aorist εβλήθη views the action as completed. Moule adds the point that it suggests immediacy, "he has forthwith been thrown out" (IBNTG, p. 13). έξω seems to mean "out of the vineyard."

The article in the expression τό κλήμα points to a definite branch, the one not in vital contact with the vine. In strict grammar the following αύτό should be αὐτό, but the meaning is not in doubt.

Some scholars find an indication of a Semitic background, since this type of indefinite plural is more common in Semitic languages than in Greek (see Black, AA, pp. 91-92).

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Cf. Strachan, "Unfruitfulness alone separates men from Christ and His Church. The Church without a sense of mission is no church."

Cf. Loyd: "the Lord Jesus can only live and express Himself in us, if we are constantly meditating on His words which we have treasured up for us in the Gospel." Profound piety and study of the words of Jesus go together. For the use of singular and plural see on 14:24.

The aorist ἐδοξάσθε views the glorification as complete, as in 13:31-32. For this verb see on 7:39.

In this understanding of it ivo is followed by the future indicative, a construction not common in John (though cf. 7:3, and some MSS of 17:2). The change of tense and mood will give
this second proposition a certain independence of the first (cf. BDF, 369[3]). It is partly to avoid this construction that "so" is supplied. The second verb in that case is not governed by ίνα. Some MSS read γένησθε (p66 [vid] B D Θ), thus plainly carrying on the construction. But this looks like a scribal emendation. For ίνα see on 1:8.

23. It is possible to punctuate with a comma instead of a colon or full stop after ήγάπησα to give the sense: "As the Father loved me and I loved you, abide in my love." But this would give an unusual sense to κάγω (see on 1:31) and overlook the fact that the normal continuance of that construction would refer to "our" rather than "my" love. 

NIV is better.

24. For άγάπη in John see on 5:42.

25. There are characteristic Johannine slight changes when the thought of abiding in Christ's love is repeated from the previous verse, μου replaces τη έμή and the verb is future.

26. There is emphasis on Jesus' complete keeping of the commandments in the pronoun and the perfect tense, έγώ . . . τετήρηκα. See on 4:34 for Jesus' obedience.

27. ίνα is fully telic.

28. The cognate verb χαίρω is found more often in the intervening chapters (3:29; 4:36; 8:56; 11:15). But in none of these passages does it refer to the joy of the disciples as it does in 16:22; 20:20. Clearly joy receives special emphasis in the upper room. John uses χαρά in all 9 times, which is more than in any other New Testament book (Luke has it 8 times).

29. The present άγαπατε is used of the disciples' love, but the aorist ήγάπησα of Christ's. They are to love habitually; his love is shown strikingly in the cross. When the thought is repeated in verse 17 ταύτα έντέλλομαι ύμΐν replaces αυτή έστι ή έντολή ή έμή of this verse. See also 13:34.


31. For άπέρ see on 6:51.

32. W. D. Davies finds this passage of central importance: "For the author of the Fourth Gospel the words of Jesus do not, explicitly at least, constitute a court of appeal. Rather they are summed up in one commandment — prominent also in Matthew and Paul, as elsewhere — which finds its connotation, primarily at least, not in what Jesus said, but in what he did, and especially in the Cross" (The Setting of the Sermon on the Mount [Cambridge, 1964], p. 413).

33. As often in this discourse the emphatic pronouns bring out the sense, ύμεΐς marks the disciples off as a definite, significant group, "you, and not the world in general." έγώ reminds them whose commands are important, " I and no other" (see on 1:20).

34. Many commentators draw attention to the fact that a small group of specially favored people were called "Friends" of the Emperor. It is not likely that Jesus' words owe anything to this. Perhaps more important is the fact that rabbinic teachers spoke of the Jews as friends of God (see SBk, II, pp. 564-65). This, of course, is found in the Old Testament in the case of Abraham (2 Chron. 20:7; Isa 41:8).

35. Some commentators hold that the aorist έγνώρισα points to a single decisive act, probably the footwashing. But against this is the preceding πάντα, as well as the fact that the perfect of this verb never occurs in the New Testament. It seems as though theorist is used here in the sense of the perfect. The earlier aorist ήκουσα agrees with the fact that in this Gospel the aorist rather than the perfect is always used of what Jesus heard from the Father (3:32; 8:26, 40).


37. John puts some emphasis on this, ούχ negates ύμεϊς, not έξελέξασθε; in other words, "it was not you that chose" rather than "you did not choose." άλλ' is the strong adversative, "on the contrary" (see on 1:8), and this is followed by the pronoun έγώ (see on 1:20). Perhaps this is the place to notice that the Qumran scrolls frequently have the idea of election. It mattered to the covenanter that God had chosen them.

38. The verb is έθηκα, which is used of Jesus' laying down his life for his people (10:11, 15, 17-18; 15:13). Lightfoot comments, " I f this is no accident, it emphasizes, indirectly, that it is the Lord's redemptive death which enables and empowers the disciples to undertake their work in His
name." Hoskyns attempts to convey something of this in English with "He set aside His life and set them to their work."

39. In this case ἵνα will be fully telic. It is omitted by p 66 D e and Nonnus, not a powerful group of authorities, but Barrett thinks it may be the true text. The ἵνα would be due to assimilation to verse 12. He thinks that "without it the sentence is harsher, but stronger. 'These things I charge you: Love one another.' " This is attractive and may well be right. GNB, REB, Phillips, Berkeley, and others take it this way.

40. This is the implication of εἰ with the indicative.

41. γινώσκετε may be indicative or imperative: "You know" or "Know."

42. έμε is emphatic, both from its form and its position.

43. Abbott finds no precedent in Greek literature for rendering πρώτον ὑμῶν "before (it hated) you." He proposes to take it in the sense, "It hath hated me, your First, i.e. your Chief' (1901, 2666). Calvin anticipated this with his view that the expression denotes primacy in rank rather than time. MM, however, argues from the papyri that the similar words in 1:15 mean "before me" and that accordingly this is the meaning here (sub πρώτος). Dods takes it to mean "not only 'before' in point of time, but as the norm or prototype." There is a similar expression in 1:15 (where see note). There is certainly a difficulty since the expression is not the usual one, but it seems best to take it as "before you."

44. The perfect μεμίσηκεν should not be overlooked. It points to a permanent attitude. The world's hatred of Christ was no passing phenomenon.

45. This is in contrast with the men of Qumran. They stress the importance of love within the brotherhood but also of hatred toward outsiders. Thus in the Manual of Discipline we read: "These are the regulations of the way for the wise man in these times, for his love together with his hate, eternal hate for the men of the pit" (DSS, p. 384). There is no equivalent in the New Testament.

46. For causal δτι that introduces this clause, see on 1:50.

47. εί is used in two senses in this verse. On the first two occasions it denotes origin, but on this third occasion the thought is rather that of separation from. For είναι εί see on 3:31.

48. Cf. Ryle, "It is not the weaknesses and inconsistencies of Christians that the world hates, but their grace." So also Barclay, "It is dangerous to have and to practise a higher standard than the standard of the world." He adds, "Nowadays a man can be persecuted for working too hard or too long." Cf. Carson, "Former rebels who have by the grace of the king been won back to loving allegiance to their rightful monarch are not likely to prove popular with those who persist in rebellion."

49. μνημονεύετε may be imperative or indicative. The imperative seems more likely here. Phillips makes it a question: "Do you remember . . . ?"

50. Loyd has an interesting reflection on these words: "How good it would be for us sometimes, when we are worrying about our feelings and about our 'prayer-life,' if an angel were to appear to us and say, 'Don't waste time worrying about these things. What you need to do is to get on with the business of being persecuted!' Not that we are to go out of our way to invite persecution; but we should examine our lives more seriously to see if they are free from compromise with the world."

51. BDF points out that this verse contains an example of μου "in a contrast (probably not intended at first)" (284 [1]).

52. The ἀλλά that begins the verse is rather strange since there is no contrast with the preceding. There may be an implied contrast with what might have been expected.

53. Cf. Temple, "Jews who were loyal to their tradition, the noblest religious tradition in the world, might still be involved in what theologians call 'material sin' so far as that tradition was less than the perfect will of God; but they were not involved in 'formal sin', which is deliberate action in opposition to that which made known. Now that it is made known and they refuse it, the sin becomes inexcusable."
54. The verb ἔχω is used with ἁμαρτίαν as its object in 9:41; 15:22, 24; 19:11 and in 1 John 1:8 only in the New Testament. The expression implies that the sin in question remains like a personal possession with the person who commits it. It is not something that can be over and done with. The form εἶχοσαν is found only here and in verse 24 in the New Testament. BDF notes it as a Doricism still found in one village in Rhodes. The -σαν ending "enlarged its domain still further in the Hellenistic period" (84). It is possibly used here to avoid any confusion, since εἶχον could be understood as first person singular.

55. πρόφασις can denote the real reason for an action (see BAGD). It is what is put forward to justify it, whether this is the real reason or a mere excuse. Jesus is saying that they have nothing to bring forward that can justify the position they have taken up.

56. This is the significance of οὐδεὶς ἄλλος ἐποίησεν.

57. Murray comments: "This is a tremendous sentence. And when we stand face to face with the Cross, we admit its justice. There was no flaw in the presentation of the appeal of His love. Our rejection of that appeal was absolute and inexcusable. Granted that, in the fullest sense, none of those who slew Him were fully aware of what they were doing, yet they were themselves to blame for their ignorance." NIV omits "seen and" before "hated," but the Greek seems plain enough. Cf. NRSV, REB, etc.

58. All the more so since it is the strong adversative ἀλλά (see on 1:8).

59. For this use of ἵνα with the omission of the preceding verb see on 1:8.

60. Cf. Hoskyns, "The writer, moreover, names the Law your Law (viii.17, x.34), not so much that he may dissociate himself from it, as so many modern commentators maintain . . . but rather in order to rivet upon the Jews those scriptures in which they boast themselves so proudly, and then to prove those same scriptures prophetic of their apostasy."

61. δωρεάν is found here only in John. It means "gift-wise," "without payment," and so comes to mean without adequate cause, "gratuitously."

62. ἔγώ is emphatic (see on 1:20). We should also observe that the δταν that introduces the verse leaves the time indefinite, "whenever."

63. After ἐκπορεύεται we would expect the preposition ἐν rather than παρά. But John is fond of this latter preposition to express what comes from God, and he uses it 17 times in this way. Especially does he use it of the Son (1:14; 6:46; 7:29; 9:16, 33; 16:27; 17:8). Westcott thinks that "The use of παρά in this place seems . . . to show decisively that the reference here is to the temporal mission of the Holy Spirit, and not to the eternal Procession." He points out that the creeds that refer to the latter doctrine uniformly use ἐν and that the Greek Fathers who use the present passage to support the doctrine of the Procession change παρά to ἐν.

64. The masculine ἐκεῖνος is noteworthy, for τὸ Πνεῦμα . . . δ is nearer than is Παράκλητος. It does not prove that the Spirit is personal, but it is an indication that John tended to think of the Spirit in personal terms. This, of course, accords also with the function ascribed to him here, that of bearing witness, for this is normally a personal activity. Bernard comments, "However little modern conceptions of personality and of what it implies were present to the mind of the first century, the repeated application of ἐκεῖνος to the Spirit in these chapters (168.13.14) shows that for Jn. τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας meant more than a mere tendency or influence."

65. μαρτυρεῖτε is usually taken as indicative, but it might well be imperative, "And you also, bear your witness . . ." (so Goodspeed, "you must bear testimony"). Berkeley renders with a future, "you too will testify" (Knox, Amplified, and others are similar), but this does not appear to be justified.

66. The pronoun ὑμεῖς puts some emphasis on this.

67. ἀπ’ ἀρχής points to the beginning of Jesus' public ministry. This was the decisive thing. The present tense ἐστε is a continuous tense that "gathers up past and present time into one phrase" (M, I, p. 119),
68. The Spirit, of course, does much of his work through human agency. But his witness is not to be confused with that of people. Cf. Godet: "The Spirit does not teach the facts of history; He reveals their meaning."

69. He uses τέρας, "a wonder," "a portent," only in 4:48, "Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will never believe" (this word is, however, used in Acts of Jesus' miracles). Barclay sees significance in the fact that τέρας, δύναμις, and σημεῖον are all used in the New Testament of Jesus' miracles: "In any miracle, then, there are three things. There is the wonder which leaves men dazzled, astonished, aghast. There is the power which is effective, which can deal with and mend a broken body, an unhinged mind, a bruised heart, a power which can do things. There is the sign which tells us of the love in the heart of the God who does such things for men" (I, pp. 107-8). It is the last point that is significant for John.

70. P. Riga, in an important article, "Signs of Glory," in Interpretation, XVII (1963), pp. 402-24, says that σημεῖον "does not necessarily mean an extraordinary miracle (2:1-12, 14-21), but it can" (p. 407). Elsewhere he distinguishes between "a miraculous happening" and "a supernatural but significant event" (p. 402). I cannot understand this distinction, and I see no evidence that John uses σημεῖον with reference to Christ of any nonmiraculous event.

71. In LXX it most commonly translates ἱππορί, and Barrett can say, "The ἱππορί σημεῖον . . . becomes a special part of the prophetic activity; no mere illustration, but a symbolical anticipation or showing forth of a greater reality of which the σημεῖον is nevertheless a part" (p. 76).

72. R. H. Lightfoot takes the term, as used in the Old Testament and among the Jews, as denoting a present event pointing forward to the future: "In St. John's gospel the contrast in the end is not so much between present and future, as between seen and unseen, external event and internal truth" (p. 22).

73. Hoskyns points out that the "signs" in the Bible, and supremely in John, "are usually of such a kind as to anticipate and show forth the nature both of what will take place and of the work of Him whom they authenticate. . . . They are not narrated as prodigies, or wonders, nor do they merely authenticate Jesus. They are quite properly signs or parables of the nature of His work" (p. 190).

74. Barrett insists on the christological significance of the signs: "The miracles of Jesus, then, are not merely, as in the Synoptic Gospels, signs that the kingdom of God is at hand, but also clear indications that he by whom the signs are wrought is the Son of God and equal to God himself" (p. 78).

75. Riga sees in the signs in the Fourth Gospel an equivalent to the parables of the Synoptics. Both at the same time conceal and reveal truth. And both are a challenge to believe in Jesus. G. Bomkamm says, "The crucial question, however, is what John meant by signs and how he treated them. They are not stupendous deeds in the popular sense, intended to demonstrate the divine power of Jesus to nonbelievers. Their real meaning is perceptible only to faith. Their purpose is not so much to point to the miracleworker; it is really the other way round — the signs receive their meaning from him" (The New Testament: A Guide to Its Writings [London, 1974], p. 135).

76. A. Richardson does not notice this. He says that John "does not call (the miracles) δυνάμεις but σημεῖα; occasionally he uses the relatively colourless word 'works' (ἐργά) . . ." (The Miracle Stories of the Gospels [London, 1959], p. 30). It is perhaps this failure to perceive the importance of John's use of ἐργά that leads him to deny any distinctiveness in the Johannine view of miracles. It is true that for John, as for the Synoptists, the miracles "are evidence (not to the general public, but only to those who have eyes to see) as to Who Jesus is" (Miracle Stories, p. 31). But there is more to it in John. "Works," for him, is not a colorless term, but a way of linking the miracles with the nonmiraculous. It shows that the whole of Jesus' life glowed with the divine glory, and that the miracles and the rest of Jesus' life alike represent the outworking of a single consistent divine purpose.

77. Cf. M. de Jonge, "the term ἐργά is clearly regarded as more suitable to denote the inner meaning of Jesus' actions than the word σημεῖα. Jesus' works are God's works performed by and through Jesus . . . study of the ἐργά passages leads us to the heart of the matter and the center of
Johannine Christology and theology" (Jesus: Stranger from Heaven and Son of God [Missoula, 1977], p. 132).

78. R. H. Lightfoot misses this in his preference for σημείον. He says that Jesus' "whole life is a sign, in action, of the love of God" (p. 23). But to get this into the word he has had to say, "it would be a mistake to confine the word to those of His actions which are expressly so described." The point about ἔργον is that it is not necessary to make such an assertion. Jesus uses it expressly of the whole range of his activities. E. M. Sidebottom can say that the works "include the signs but are also more than these. . . . In the Fourth Gospel the works are closely associated with the manifestation of the character of God. John in fact stresses that like produces like and that only the good produces the good, so that good works reveal God" (The Christ of the Fourth Gospel [London, 1961], p. 157).

79. Westcott says that χη ἔργα in John describes "the whole outward manifestation of Christ's activity, both those acts which we call supernatural and those which we call natural. All alike are wrought in fulfilment of one plan and by one power" (on 5:36).

80. Riga says with reference to John 10:30 as set in a context of works: "The operation or activity of these works is, in reality, that of the Father; the works of salvation and life-giving are given to the Son while remaining the Father's. Christ has the full power of judgment and vivification because he does not work of himself or alone, but works in unity with the power of the Father" ("Signs of Glory," p. 419).
JOHN 16

2. A Warning of Coming Persecutions (16:1-4)

1 "All this I have told you so that you will not go astray. 2 They will put you out of the synagogue; in fact, a time is coming when anyone who kills you will think he is offering a service to God. 3 They will do such things because they have not known the Father or me. 4 I have told you this, so that when the time comes you will remember that I warned you. I did not tell you this at first because I was with you."

The work of the Holy Spirit in the church is done in the context of persecution. The Spirit is not a guide and a helper for those on a straight way perfectly able to manage on their own. He comes to assist people caught up in the thick of battle and tried beyond their strength. Jesus makes it quite plain that the way before his followers is a hard and difficult way.

1 For "All this I have told you" see on 14:25. "So that" indicates purpose; Jesus speaks "so that" his followers will not "go astray." This looks forward to excommunication and the like. Jesus is preparing the disciples for the severe trials they will undergo. "Christians were the non-conformists par excellence in antiquity and they had to pay for that" (Haenchen). As Temple reminds us, "it is hard to believe that a cause is truly God's when it seems to meet with no success, and all power is on the other side." But Jesus prepares them so that they will not be taken by surprise and overcome in the collapse of a starry-eyed optimism.

2 Their enemies will excommunicate them. The term indicates the loss of all fellowship. Jesus has often spoken of his "hour," and in this passage the "hour" (NIV, "time") and again "their hour" (v. 4; NIV, "the time") may possibly be meant to awake memories of the other expression. Be that as it may, Jesus looks forward to a time when people's values will be so perverted that anyone who kills his followers will think that he is serving God. It is not persecution by a secular state that is in mind, but that set in train by religious authorities. Pilcher aptly reminds us that "A sermon was preached at the burning of Archbishop Cranmer, and the horrors of the
Inquisition were carried out with a perfectly good conscience." It is the tragedy of religious people that they so often regard persecution as in line with the will of God.

3 "They will do such things" indicates certainty. Jesus is not speaking about one possible outcome of present circumstances. He is warning his followers of what will inevitably follow. They will suffer for their faith. The reason for the action of the persecutors is their complete ignorance\(^9\) both of the Father and of the Son. Characteristically this passage links the two together. The Father is known as he really is only through the revelation made in the Son. To be ignorant of the one is therefore necessarily to be ignorant of the other. There is, of course, an ignorance that is natural and that is not blame-worthy. But in this Gospel the ignorance of the Jews is always regarded as culpable, because they ought to have known the truth. God had revealed himself, but they had not considered the revelation. In this verse God is called "the Father," not "my Father," nor "him that sent me." Jesus speaks of him in the relationship in which the Jews ought to have recognized him.

4 Jesus gives the reason for his warning at this particular time. It had not been necessary for him to say these things earlier because he had been with them. His presence in the flesh had meant that he could give them guidance day by day, and it had also meant that the venom of the enemy would be directed against him rather than them. While the Master was with them, the disciples were a negligible quantity in the eyes of their opponents. The removal of the Master would transform the situation. Now the hostility will be directed at them. Therefore on the threshold of his departure from them Jesus tells them plainly what is going to happen so that they will not be overtaken by surprise. When the trials come, they will know that they are no more than Jesus\(^10\) had predicted. Thus, instead of being a difficulty to faith, the trials would actually strengthen faith. When the troubles came, the disciples would remember that this is just what Jesus had said would happen. There is dramatic fitness in the use of "their hour" (NIV, "the time"). Just as Jesus' "hour" would certainly come (see on 2:4), so would his enemies' "hour" certainly come. But in how different a sense! This section of the discourse ends with an indication that things were changing. At the beginning\(^11\) Jesus had not said these things, for he was with them. The implication is that persecution then would fall on him, not them (cf. 18:8-9). But not at the time of which he speaks. Things will be different.
**3. The Work of the Spirit (16:5-15)**

5 "Now I am going to him who sent me, yet none of you asks me, 'Where are you going?' Because I have said these things, you are filled with grief. 7 But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. 8 When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment: 9 in regard to sin, because men do not believe in me; 10 in regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; 11 and in regard to judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned. 12 I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. 13 But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. 14 He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you. 15 All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you."

From the thought of the persecutions his followers must face, Jesus turns to the resources available to them. He will send them the Spirit, who will supply their need abundantly. We have already had the thought of the Spirit as a Helper and Advocate (14:16-17, 26; 15:26-27). Now we have the additional thought that he is a Prosecutor, convicting sinful people of being in the wrong.

5 "But now" (NIV omits "But") points to altered circumstances. A change is imminent. Jesus is about to go to the Father (cf. 17:13), typically spoken of as "him who sent me" (cf. 7:33; and see on 3:17); Jesus' sense of mission remains. A difficulty is posed by his statement that nobody asks, "Where are you going?" in the light of Simon Peter's earlier question, "Lord, where are you going?" (13:36; cf. also 14:5). But that question had not really been a serious inquiry as to Jesus' destination. Peter had been diverted im-mediately, and he made no real attempt to find out where Jesus was going. He had been concerned with the thought of parting from Jesus, not with that of the Master's destination. He had in mind only the consequences for himself and for his companions. Neither he nor they had
as yet made serious inquiry as to what was to become of Jesus. So does self-interest blind us.

6 For "I have said these things" see on 14:25. Because of Jesus' words, sorrow, he says, "has filled your heart" (for the singular, "heart," see on 14:1; NIV paraphrases with "you are filled with grief"). The perfect is somewhat strange since sorrow was to give way to joy (v. 20). The thought may be that when Jesus was taken from them a sorrow would enter their hearts that would not cease until the Easter joy replaced it. The pain of parting would be very real.

7 Jesus assures the disciples that it is expedient for them that he should leave them. The expression "It is for your good" is the same as that used by Caiaphas (11:50, there rendered, "it is better for you"). We may profitably reflect that this is the supreme illustration of the way God uses the acts of wicked people to effect his purpose. Caiaphas thought the crucifixion expedient. So it was, but in a way and for a reason that he could not guess. The statement here is important, and Jesus prefixes it with "But I tell you the truth" (cf. 8:45-46). These words are not necessary for the sense, but they add weight and emphasis to what follows. The expression "It is for your good" should be noted. To the disciples the departure of Jesus seemed disastrous: actually it was for their profit. Two things are involved. The one is that it is better for them not to be dependent on the visible bodily presence of Jesus. But the other, and more important, reason is that the Spirit (for "the Counselor" see Additional Note F, pp. 587-91) will not come until Jesus goes away. Why is not said, but in 7:39 (where see note) John has explained that the Spirit was not then given "since Jesus had not yet been glorified." So now the implication is that the cross is critical. Before that Jesus could not send the Spirit. Afterward he will send him (cf. 15:26). It is the divine concern to bring about a full salvation for people. That salvation can be based on nothing but Christ's atoning work. Only when that is accomplished can people receive the Spirit in all his fullness. The truth behind Jesus' words may be discerned by reflecting that at the end of his visible sojourn with them "every-one deserted him and fled" (Mark 14:50). But at the beginning of the new era inaugurated by the coming of the Spirit they "spoke the word of God boldly" (Acts 4:31); they were found "rejoicing because they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name" (Acts 5:41).
8 When the Spirit is come he will "convict the world." This is the one place in Scripture where the Spirit is spoken of as performing a work in "the world." The many other references speak of what he will do in believers. This is an important passage, for here "we see that the Spirit is not the domesticated auxiliary of the Church; he is the powerful advocate who goes before the Church to bring the world under conviction" (Newbigin). We have seen that the word translated "Counselor" is a word with legal implications (see Additional Note F, pp. 587-91). Normally it denotes a person whose activities are in favor of the defendant, but here the meaning is that the Spirit will act as prosecutor and bring about the world's conviction. This involves a threefold activity that is further developed in the succeeding verses. Apart from the Holy Spirit people do not really know the truth about sin or righteousness or judgment.

9 The Greek underlying these verses may be taken in any one of three principal ways. It may mean "he will convict the world (of wrong ideas) of sin, in that they do not believe" (cf. NEB, he will "show where wrong and right and judgement lie"), "he will convict the world of its sin because they do not believe" (i.e., their unbelief is a classic illustration of their sin), or "He will convict the world of its sin (which consists in the fact) that they do not believe" (i.e., their unbelief is their sin). None of these is impossible, and in the Johannine manner more than one may be intended. If we have to choose, then (with Barrett) it seems as though the second is more likely to be correct. The basic sin is the sin that puts self at the center of things and consequently refuses to believe. This is the world's characteristic sin, and it received classic expression when God sent his Son into the world and the world refused to believe in him. The world is guilty, but it requires the Spirit to sheet this home. The Spirit convicts the world in two senses. In the first place he "shows the world to be guilty," that is he secures a verdict of "Guilty" against the world. But in the second place we should take the words to mean that the Spirit brings the world's guilt home to itself. The Spirit convicts the individual sinner's conscience. Otherwise people would never come to see themselves as sinners.

10 The righteousness that is shown by Christ's going to the Father is surely the righteousness that is established by Christ. It is precisely this righteousness that requires the work of the Holy Spirit for people to be convinced about it. The Spirit shows people (and no one else can do this)
that righteousness is not the acquiring of merit that they think it is; righteousness before God depends not on their own efforts but on Christ's atoning work for them. "You can see me no longer" may refer to what happened at the cross, when Jesus was removed from them. Or it might look through the cross to the ascension when his bodily form was finally taken away from them.

11 The work of judgment refers to the defeat of Satan (for "the prince of this world" see on 12:31) on the cross. This defeat is not an arbitrary feat of power, but a judgment. Justice is done in the overthrow of the evil one. "Judgment" is not the favorable declaration that the world thinks it will attain before God; it is the just condemnation and overthrow of no less than Satan.

All three aspects of the work of the Holy Spirit that come before us in these verses are interpreted christologically. Sin, righteousness, and judgment are all to be understood because of the way they relate to the Christ.

12-13 From the work of the Spirit in the world Jesus turns to his work in believers. First he speaks of having many things yet to say to his disciples. He does not explain "more than you can now bear." "Bear" is an unusual word in such a connection. It may signify that their experience so far sets a limit to their ability to perceive. There are vistas of truth before them that they cannot as yet even see but that they will know when the Spirit comes. More probably it refers to their inability, until the Spirit should come, to live out the implications of the revelation. This latter is more in keeping with the meaning of the verb "bear." The Spirit is called "the Spirit of truth" (see on 14:17), for his work here is to guide the followers of Jesus into "all truth." As the days go by, the Spirit will lead them deeper and deeper into the knowledge of truth. In passing we should notice that the attempt of some scholars to "go back to the original Jesus" and bypass the teaching of the apostles is shown by Jesus himself to be misguided. The same source lies behind both. The Spirit's teaching is not from himself, but he teaches "only what he hears." It is not said whether he hears them from the Father or the Son, but the point is probably not material. The emphasis in these verses is on the Spirit rather than on either of the other Persons. This expression will indicate his harmony with them. He is not originating something radically new, but leading people in accordance with the teaching already given from the Father and the Son. The declaring of "what is yet to come" is somewhat puzzling. While the
Spirit has on occasion revealed the future, that is not his characteristic work. Usually even spiritually minded Christians are ignorant of what lies ahead. Perhaps the expression means that he will supply what is needed as it is needed. More likely "what is yet to come" is a way of referring to the whole Christian system, yet future when Jesus spoke, and to be revealed to his followers by the Spirit, not by natural insight. Not a few scholars discern an eschatological reference. They remind us of the fact that Jesus foretold calamities, and specifically dire persecution of his followers, in the last days. They remind us also that he promised the help of the Spirit when they stood before hostile tribunals (Mark 13:11). They see this passage accordingly as the Johannine counterpart of this strand of Synoptic teaching. This is not impossible, but it does seem to be reading something into the words. It is better to take the sense as, "He will show you the whole Christian way." Hoskyns sees verses 16-24 as supporting if not actually rendering necessary the view that "what is yet to come" refers to what is imminent rather than to the End.

14 The work of the Spirit is Christocentric. He will draw attention not to himself, but to Christ. He will glorify Christ. It is the things of Christ that he takes and declares, that is, his ministry is built upon and is the necessary sequel to that of Christ.

15 There is no division in the Godhead. What the Father has the Son has (cf. 17:10). The previous verse does not mean that the Spirit will concentrate attention on Christ to the exclusion of the Father. It is just because of the community between the Father and himself that Jesus can speak in the way he has just done. Just as the Spirit is concerned to set forward the things of Christ, so is he concerned to set forward the things of the Father.
F. SOME DIFFICULTIES SOLVED (16:16-33)

Jesus proceeds to deal with certain difficulties felt by the disciples. This does not mean that his words were fully understood immediately or or that the disciples consciously felt that their problems had been solved. In some ways they were just as puzzled as before. But important truths were spoken. Answers were given. In due course the full implications of Jesus' words would be unfolded.

1. The Disciples' Perplexity (16:16-18)

16 "In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me." 17 Some of his disciples said to one another, "What does he mean by saying, 'In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me,' and 'Because I am going to the Father'?' 18 They kept asking, "What does he mean by 'a little while'? We don't understand what he is saying."

It is not surprising that these words of Jesus proved difficult to the men in the upper room. They have puzzled Christians ever since. The main problem concerns the meaning of the coming again of which Jesus speaks. Does he mean that he will come again in the person and work of the Holy Spirit? Or is he referring to the post-resurrection appearances? Or even to the ascension and the parousia? Great names can be urged in support of each of these views. Barrett is of the opinion that the ambiguity is deliberate: "By this ambiguity John means to convey that the death and resurrection were themselves eschatological events which both prefigured and anticipated the final events." In these verses we are concerned not with the resolution of the difficulty, but with stating it. But it seems that the language accords better with a reference to Jesus' death and then to the post-resurrection appearances than to anything else (though this is not to deny that, as often, there may be a secondary meaning as well).

16 Jesus declares that there is but "a little while" before he will be taken from them. 37 There can scarcely be any doubt but that this refers to his approaching death. He uses the same expression, "a little while," for the
time interval before they will see him again. The words favor a literal seeing of Jesus himself rather than a metaphorical reference to the work of the Spirit. As far as they go, then, the words point to the post-resurrection appearances.

17 The words were certainly mysterious to men who stood on the other side of the cross. It is not surprising that the disciples were puzzled. Some of them express their bewilderment (characteristically there is a small change from the way Jesus has put it in the previous verse). It is noteworthy that they couple "Because I am going to the Father" with the words about the "little while" when they will not see him and then will see him. Either they perceive that there is some link between the two, or else they are carrying on a difficulty that they felt earlier (the words about going to the Father were spoken in v. 10). They do not ask Jesus to explain himself; their words are spoken "to one another."

18 The heart of the difficulty for them was the reference to "a little while." They concentrate on that. And they see no solution. Godet sagely remarks, "Where for us all is clear, for them all was mysterious. If Jesus wishes to found the Messianic kingdom, why go away? If He does not wish it, why return?"

2. The Disciples' Joy (16:19-24)

19 Jesus saw that they wanted to ask him about this, so he said to them, "Are you asking one another what I meant when I said, 'In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me'? 20 I tell you the truth, you will weep and mourn while the world rejoices. You will grieve, but your grief will turn to joy. 21 A woman giving birth to a child has pain because her time has come; but when her baby is born she forgets the anguish because of her joy that a child is born into the world. 22 So with you: Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy. 23 In that day you will no longer ask me anything. I tell you the truth, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. 24 Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete."
Jesus replies to the need, rather than to the question, of the disciples. He points out that there may be anguish that is purposeful (like that of a travailing woman). It must be gone through, but when that is done the person forgets it for the joy of the result. So they must go through a time of deep sorrow. But out of it will emerge an abounding joy.

19 It is not likely that John wants us to think of Jesus' understanding that the disciples were perplexed as due to supernatural knowledge. After all, they were speaking openly to one another. Jesus repeats their words. Interestingly he does not use exactly the same words as in his original statement (v. 16), though the difference is slight. There was apparently some constraint on the part of the disciples. They wanted to ask him, yet they did not do this.

20 For "I tell you the truth" see on 1:51. The following words are marked out as important. Jesus makes it clear that his followers will have a difficult time while their enemies triumph, but he does not explain this in detail. The saying is enigmatic. "Weep and mourn" combines the thoughts of deep grief and of the outward expression given to that grief, while there is an emphatic contrast between "you" and "the world" (for this latter term see Additional Note B, pp. 111-13). But Jesus does not end on the note of sorrow. The disciples' grief will become joy (cf. 20:20). Again he does not define this closely. They would still not understand exactly what he had in mind. It may be significant that he does not speak of their sorrow as being replaced by joy, but of turning into it. The very same thing, the cross, would be to them first a cause of sorrow but later a source of joy. This corresponds to the illustration that follows. In childbirth it is the same thing what is first a source of pain, then of joy. Jesus is not speaking of anguish that would be replaced by a quite different joy. Calvin sees a further thought: "Christ means that the sorrow which they will endure for the sake of the Gospel will be fruitful."

21 Elsewhere in Scripture the thought of the travailing woman is generally used to bring out such thoughts as the suddenness and the inevitability of the birth when the time has come. Here the thought is rather, the contrast between the state of mind of the mother before and after the birth. During travail she is in great distress, but when the child is born the distress is forgotten. What matters then is that "a child is born into the world." The background to these words is found in Old Testament passages
(like Isa. 26:17ff., which combines the thoughts of childbirth and resurrection; Hos. 13:13-15; and perhaps Isa. 66:7-14\textsuperscript{54}). Such passages point to an anguish like that of childbirth from which the new Israel would emerge. This leads to the well-known thought of the birth pangs that would precede the coming of the Messiah. Such thoughts are important for an understanding of the present passage.\textsuperscript{55}

22 The point of "therefore" (which NIV omits) is difficult to see. What is clear is that Jesus sees the "grief" of the disciples\textsuperscript{56} as already present. He is not looking to the distant future, but speaking of something that is imminent. It is even now upon them. But that is not the end. He will see them again.\textsuperscript{57} This is not explained, but it seems to be another reference to the post-resurrection appearances. When these take place a new state of affairs will have emerged. The disciples will then rejoice\textsuperscript{58} in a way that is permanent. No one will take away the joy they will then have. The thought is not, of course, that believers will never know sorrow. It is rather that after they have come to understand the significance of the cross they will be possessed by a deep-seated joy, a joy independent of the world. The world did not give it and the world cannot take it away.\textsuperscript{59}

23 "In that day" perhaps points us to the rather frequent use of "that day" (or the plural, "those days") for the last great day (Mark 13:17, 19, 24, 32, etc.; cf. also Mark 13:11). But the primary reference will surely be to the time after the resurrection. It is not certain what meaning we should give to the word for "ask" in the first part of the verse.\textsuperscript{60} It may mean "ask a question" or "ask for a gift." If we take it in the former way Jesus is saying that after the resurrection the disciples will not look for further information from him.\textsuperscript{61} This points to an activity of the Holy Spirit who would be with them to teach them "all things" and remind them of all that Jesus had said (14:26) and also to guide them into all the truth (16:13). The disciples would have all the knowledge they needed. We should probably take this as the correct meaning of the words. The disciples had asked Jesus many questions, not least in the upper room (cf. 13:6, 25, 36-37; 14:5, 22), and this makes a reference to questions very appropriate. But they had not prayed to him, so there is no reason for thinking that at this time the words would have led them to think of prayer. Moreover, "I tell you the truth" commonly introduces a new thought; it does not simply repeat the thought. The asking in prayer at the end of the verse thus appears to be something
different from the asking at the beginning. The alternative view is that the whole verse has to do with prayer. In that case Jesus is saying that prayer will be directed not to him, but to the Father. In either case the events now to take place will alter everything. The disciples will not again return to the kind of situation in which they have been hitherto. In the future they will direct their prayers to the Father who will give them "whatever" they ask in the name of his Son. The expression "in my name" is usually attached to asking rather than to giving, and most translations agree with NIV (though the word order may be held to favor .IB, the Father "will grant in my name"). In either case Jesus is saying that on the basis of his atoning work people will approach God and know that their prayers will be answered. The words do not, of course, exclude the possibility of prayer to the Son. But they remind us that, for Christians, prayer is normally addressed to the Father in the name of the Son and that such prayer is all-prevailing. It is on the grounds of all that the Son is and does that we receive gifts from the Father.  

24 A new state of affairs is about to be inaugurated. Until now the disciples have asked Jesus for things directly or they have asked the Father directly. They have not asked the Father for anything in the name of the Son. Jesus tells them to ask (the present tense may have its full significance, "keep on asking") and assures them that they will receive. And the purpose of all this is their "joy." God is interested in the well-being and happiness of his people. They will go through trials (cf. v. 33), but when they put their trust in him he puts a joy into their hearts that can never be removed. Notice that this is connected with prayer. They are to pray in order that their joy may be made "complete." It cannot be made complete in any other way.

3. The Disciples' Faith (16:25-30)

25 "Though I have been speaking figuratively, a time is coming when I will no longer use this kind of language but will tell you plainly about my Father. 26 In that day you will ask in my name. I am not saying that I will ask the Father on your behalf. 27 No, the Father himself loves you because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God. 28 I came from the Father and entered the world: now I
am leaving the world and going back to the Father." 29 Then Jesus' disciples said, "Now you are speaking clearly and without figures of speech. 30 Now we can see that you know all things and that you do not even need to have anyone ask you questions. This makes us believe that you came from God."

Jesus further explains his going away. He is to leave the world and go to the Father. The disciples find this plain speaking, and it elicits from them a statement of faith — they believe now that Jesus came from God.

25 For "These things I have spoken to you" (NIV paraphrases) see on 14:25. A good deal here hinges on the meaning of the word rendered "figures of speech" in NRSV (NIV, "figuratively"). It can mean parables, but it is also used of a variety of clever sayings of one kind or another. There is often the implication that the meaning does not lie on the surface, but must be searched for and thought about. "Dark sayings" (ARV) brings out an important part of what the word conveys; cf. Schonfield "I have spoken to you enigmatically. ..." Until now Jesus has spoken figuratively, with the implication that the figure is not easy to penetrate. The reference will be to the discourse as a whole rather than to the immediately preceding figure of the woman in childbirth (which is fairly obvious; it is not a "dark saying" even though there are depths of meaning that the disciples are as yet unable to plumb). Jesus goes on to refer to an "hour" (NIV, "time") when he will speak plainly. One would have expected that this would be now, and, indeed, the disciples apparently take it this way (v. 29). Yet Jesus does seem to be looking forward to the time after the resurrection (v. 26), and this was the time when things that had been obscure began to become clear for them. There is a marked difference in the apostles when we come to Acts. Then there is a sureness of touch, a certainty, a conviction, that could not take place until after the events narrated in the Gospels.

26 In the light of their fuller knowledge the disciples will then pray as they should, in Christ's name (cf. vv. 23-24). Jesus does not undertake to intercede for them then (contrast 14:16; 17:9, but these refer to prayers of Jesus during his earthly ministry; after the resurrection there will be a new state of affairs). Asking in Jesus' name is not a way of enlisting his support. It is rather a pleading of his person and of his work for sinners. It is praying on the basis of all that he is and has done for our salvation. There is no contradiction with passages that speak of his perpetual intercession for his
people (Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25), nor with that in which John calls him "an advocate with the Father" (1 John 2:1, NRSV). In all four passages there is one basic underlying thought, namely, that our approach to the Father rests firmly on Christ's priestly work for us.\textsuperscript{66} That work is itself a perpetual intercession. It does not need to be supplemented by further intervention on our behalf. There is also a firm exclusion of the thought that the disciples should enlist Christ's prayers for them as though he were more merciful and more ready to hear than is the Father. Rather the passage insists on the unity of the Son with the Father.\textsuperscript{67} The Son does not persuade the Father to be gracious. The whole of the work of the Son rests on the loving care of the Father who sent him.

27 The reason that Christ will not intercede for them is now given. There will be no need. The Father \textit{himself}\textsuperscript{68} loves them. He does not need to be persuaded to be gracious. In this case the ground of acceptance is the relationship in which they stand to Jesus. They have loved him (the perfect tense in this verb and the next probably implies continuance).\textsuperscript{69} This does not, of course, mean that their love merits the Father's love, or that he loves them only because of their prior love for Jesus. Rather they owe their love to Christ to a prior divine work in them, and this proceeds from God's love. As Augustine says, "He would not have wrought in us something He could love, were it not that He loved ourselves before he wrought it."\textsuperscript{70} They have also had faith in Christ, faith that he "came from God."\textsuperscript{71} A right faith is informed. It has regard to Christ's heavenly origin. It is true that from one point of view the Father loves all people. But it is also true that he has a special regard for those who believe, and it is this that is in mind here.

28 Here we have the great movement of salvation. It is a twofold movement, from heaven to earth\textsuperscript{73} and back again.\textsuperscript{74} Christ's heavenly origin is important, else he would not be our Savior. But his heavenly destination is also important, for it witnesses to the Father's seal on the Son's saving work.

29 These words of Jesus cause the disciples to say that he is no longer using "figures of speech" (for this expression see on v. 25 and 10:6). They appear to think that their difficulty has been cleared up, but it is not easy to hold that this is really the case. It is true that Jesus is not now speaking figuratively, and their words are justified to that extent. He is indeed speaking plainly. The difficulty is not so much with the words as with the
situation in which the disciples find themselves. On the farther side of Calvary no one could know what was involved in Christ's leaving the Father and then return-ing to him. There is probably more of John's irony here. Had the disciples really possessed the understanding they claim, they would have reacted very differently when the crisis came.

30 It is probably significant that they do not say that they understand fully all that Jesus is saying. Instead they say that they know that he knows all things. They have full confidence in him. Jesus has answered the question in their heart (it had not been spoken, v. 19), and they ascribe to him the power to do this always (cf. 2:25). There is no need for anyone to ask him. This in turn gives them assurance of his divine origin. Their confession is certainly an inadequate one, but we should not overlook the fact that they bring their words to a close with an expression of trust.

4. The Disciples' Peace (16:31-33)

31 "You believe at last!"a Jesus answered. 32"But a time is coming, and has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home. You will leave me all alone. Yet I am not alone, for my Father is with me. 33I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

a31 Or "Do you now believe?"

Jesus shows that he is not deceived by the disciples' confidence. He knows that there are limitations to their faith, and that these limitations will speedily be shown up. But his final word to them is one of peace. The opposition of the world is real. But Jesus has overcome it.

31 Jesus' words might be taken as a statement or as a question. McClymont comments that "it is more an exclamation than a question," and NIV takes it that way. Jesus is not expressing doubt about the reality of the disciples' faith, but directing attention to its inadequacy. They do believe. But they do not, as yet, know the quality of the faith that stands firm in the face of difficulty and danger. There is possibly some emphasis on "now" (NIV, "at last"). At this time they have professed to believe (v. 30), but, as
Jesus’ next words show, in reality they have not yet come to know some of the important consequences of faith in him. Jesus uses "believe" absolutely, whereas the disciples had said that they believed that — , but the two are not so very different (see further Additional Note E, pp. 296-98).

32 The limitations of the disciples' faith are shown in that they will shortly abandon their Lord. Their failure at the moment of crisis is faithfully recorded and has its importance. The church depends ultimately on what God has done in Christ, not on the courage and wit of its first members. The limitations of the disciples' faith are shown in that they will shortly abandon their Lord. Their failure at the moment of crisis is faithfully recorded and has its importance. The church depends ultimately on what God has done in Christ, not on the courage and wit of its first members.

77 "A time (better, "hour," as NRSV) is coming, and has come" (cf. 12:23) stresses the imminence of all this. They have just professed faith. But in the immediate future they will be unable to stand the test. They will be scattered, probably to their homes; at any rate they will be separated from one another and from him (cf. Mark 14:50). The little band will have lost all cohesion. The disaster will destroy it as an entity (though only temporarily). Jesus they will abandon, but the thought that he will be left "all alone" leads on to the other thought that in view of his relationship to the Father he will not really be alone. The present tenses, which Jesus uses of the Father's presence with him, are natural for an abiding reality. Always the Father is with him (cf. 8:16, 29).

33 For "I have told you these things" see on 14:25, and for "peace" on 14:27. Jesus' words to the disciples conclude on the notes of peace and victory. There are three contrasts here: "in me" is set over against "in this world," "you may have" over against "you will have," and "peace" over against "trouble." The second of these does not, of course, mean that there is any doubt that those who are "in" Christ have peace. Rather it points to the contrast between the life that all must lead, a life in this world, and a life that all do not lead, a life in Christ. All must live in the world and thus have trouble. But people may also live in Christ, and when they do they have peace. The speaking of these words just at this time has a significance rather like the reference to the trials that would befall them in verse 4. When they had all forsaken Jesus they might well feel so ashamed that they would remain uneasy whenever they thought of him. But he predicted their desertion in the very saying in which he assured them of the peace he would give them. He loved them for what they were and despite their shortcomings. When in the future they looked back on their desertion they could reflect that Jesus had predicted it. And, in the full knowledge that they would act in this way, he had promised them peace. The world will
infallibly bring them "trouble." That is its characteristic. But he can bid them "take heart!" He had overcome the world, the perfect tense denoting an abiding victory. This statement, spoken as it is in the shadow of the cross, is audacious. 'The cross would seem to the outsider to be Jesus' total defeat. He sees it as his complete victory over all that the world is and can do to him. He goes to the cross not in fear or in gloom, but as a conqueror.

1. For σκανδαλίζω see on 6:61; "go astray" scarcely brings out the force of the metaphor. Knox's rendering, "so that your faith may not be taken unawares," brings out the element of surprise involved in the release of the bait stick of a trap, while Berkeley's "so you may not be trapped" stresses the metaphor. Cf. Lenski: "The disciples are fully informed as to what discipleship really means; all of its hard and painful features are fully disclosed — no trap is laid for them."

2. For ἀποσυνάγωγος see on 9:22.

3. The strong adversative ἀλλ' (NIV, "in fact") is used once again to introduce a proposition contrary, not to the preceding statement, but to everything that might have been expected. BDF holds it to be an example of ἀλλά in the sense, "not only this, but also', used to introduce an additional point in an emphatic way" (448 [6]). Turner sees it as "Introducing a strong addition" with the sense, "yes, indeed" (Μ, III, p. 330). For John's use of the term see on 1:8.

4. ἔρχεται ὥρα is a rather stately expression and not at all what we might have anticipated. Indeed, the point could well have been made without it. Thus we are reminded of other references in this Gospel to a coming "hour" (see on 2:4). On the other hand, there is no article with ὥρα and this may be significant. We should probably not connect it too closely with these other passages.

5. The characteristic πας ό with participle for "he who." The aorist (which is not common in John in this connection) depicts the act as a completed whole.

6. Is δόςη connected with John's frequent use of δόξα? The error of the killer is that he has a wrong idea of δόξα.

7. λατρεία, here only in John (elsewhere in the New Testament, Rom. 9:4; 12:1; Heb. 9:1, 6), denotes worship as well as the more general idea of the service of God. This gives a piquant flavor to the use of the term here. Twentieth Century translates, "will think that he is making an offering to God." It may be that there is another example of Johannine irony here: the killers think they are serving God in killing Jesus, Jesus who offers perfect service to God.
8. In the Mishnah homicide was encouraged against those who committed certain offenses (Sanh 9:6). SBk cites a Midrash on Num. 25:13, "whoever sheds the blood of the godless is as one who offers a sacrifice" (Π, p. 565).

9. The aorist ούκ ἐγνώσαν may signify "failed to recognize" (Weymouth); cf. Rieu, "did not learn to know:"

10. There is an emphatic εγώ: "that I told you" (see on 1:20).

11. For the unusual ἐξ αρχῆς see on 6:64.

12. χαί is used in the sense of καίτοι, "and yet," as often in this Gospel, especially in the expression χαί οὐδείς (see on 1:5). Strachan reminds us that this can be the case still: "Exclusive interest to-day in the historic Jesus, as distinct from the risen and ascended Lord, still exemplifies this refusal to ask the question He desired His disciples to ask, Whither goest thou? We cannot understand Jesus, and the mind of Jesus, unless we take into account that He himself did not regard His earthly life as a sufficient revelation."

13. For causal δτι see on 1:50.

14. For "go away" ἀπέλθω replaces ύπάγω of verse 5, while a third verb, πορευθώ, appears in "but if I go." It seems useless to try to distinguish between these. The changes from one to another are sufficiently accounted for by John's habit of introducing minor changes in repetitions. There is no significant difference in meaning. For John's use of ύπάγω see on 7:33.

15. Cf. Bernard, "έλεγχειν is to cross-examine for the purpose of convincing or refuting an opponent (the word being specially used of legal proceedings)." He sees an example of what is meant in Acts 2:36-37, where those who heard the preaching were "cut to the heart." The expression used here is found also in 8:46; cf. also 1 Cor. 14:24. Some measure of the difficulty of finding an exact English equivalent may be gauged from the fact that both Rieu and Phillips use four different translations for the word in verses 8-11, but they do not agree in any one of the four places.

16. sisμφέρει ύμίν. BAGD gives the meaning of the verb as "1. bring together ... 2. help, confer a benefit, be advantageous or profitable or useful. ..."

17. Bernard comments, "there is a better education in discipleship than that which can be supplied by a visible master, whose will for his disciples can never be misunderstood. The braver and more perfect disciple is he who can walk by faith, and not by sight only...." He goes on to quote Gore, "the Coming of the Holy Ghost was not merely to supply the absence of the Son, but to complete His presence."

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20. Cf. Westcott, "He will not simply convict the world as sinful, as without righteousness, as under judgment, but He will show beyond contradiction that it is wanting in the knowledge of what sin, righteousness, and judgement really are." He further points out that the world regarded Jesus as a sinner (9:24) and itself as righteous (Luke 18:9), and that it was on the point of giving judgment against him. On all three points it was in disastrous error and needed correction.

21. Taking περί to mean "with regard to."

22. In the second and third cases ἔλεγχειν means "to convict of," but in the second case ὅτι means "because" and in the third, "that."

23. δικαιοσύνη is found in John only here and in verse 8. Barrett takes the death and resurrection of Jesus as showing the righteousness both of Christ and of God: "Jesus' death proved his complete obedience to the will of God, and his exaltation proved that his righteousness was approved by more than human acclamation."

24. Cf. E. Schweizer, "righteousness or justice is not what the world thinks it is, for the world crucified Jesus in the name of justice; genuine righteousness is found in the works of Jesus" (The Holy Spirit [London, 1980], p. 106).
ultmann points out that "the terminology is that of the lawsuit" so that "innocence" here is not "in the moral sense of uprightness, but in the forensic sense of being in the right, of winning one's case. As the lawsuit here is between God and the world, it is equally clear that it is a question of δικ. in the sense of righteousness adjudged by God" (p. 564). Barclay comments: "When you think of it, it is an amazing thing that men should put their trust for all eternity in a crucified Jewish criminal. What convinces men that this crucified Jew is the Son of God? That is the work of the Holy Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit who convinces men of the sheer righteousness of Christ. ..."

βαστάζω is used of picking up stones (10:31), of carrying a burden (19:17 and often), and figuratively of enduring anything burdensome (Gal. 6:2). It may be used of bearing Christ's name (Acts 9:15), but the present passage is the only one that refers to "bearing" words. Pallis suggests that this may be a Latinism, reproducing tenere.

The conjunction ἐξεῖνος, τό Πνεῦμα τῆς ἐληθείας is noteworthy, with the masculine pronoun in immediate juxtaposition with the neuter noun. It emphasizes the fact that John thought of the Spirit as personal.

Cf. MiM: "the most glorious and encouraging truths may become a burden to one too immature to bear them. Not, therefore, because the disciples could not in a certain sense even now understand further revelation, but because they had not yet the Christian experience to give that revelation power, does Jesus say that they cannot bear the many things that He has yet to say unto them."

This is the only occurrence of the verb ὁδηγέω in this Gospel (cf. Rev. 7:17). It may connect with the fact that Christ is the ὁδός, as he is also the truth to which the Spirit leads (14:6).

There are textual problems in this verse, notably whether we should read εἰς τὴν ἐληθείαν πάσαν with A B (πάσαν τὴν ἐληθείαν, f13 28 700) or εἰς τὴν ἐληθεία πάση with Ν D W (Θ). Some scholars consider the variants significant, the former signifying "lead you into all the truth," that is bring you to further knowledge, and the latter, "lead you in all the truth," that is, lead you in the paths of the truth already revealed. In view of the difficulty of making a firm distinction between εἰς and εἰ, not too much, however, should be made of this. It seems that εἰς should be accepted as the right reading, but even if εἰ be preferred, the meaning will not differ greatly. Barrett, however, who accepts εἰ, thinks this reading "suggests guidance in the whole sphere of truth." FF renders, "He will instruct you in all the truth." I. de la Potterie argues that εἰς in John always has a dynamic sense as in the classics (Biblica, XLIII [1962], pp. 366-87). In this verse he discerns a "formula which describes very well the penetration into (εἰς) the whole truth of Christ under the action of the Spirit" (p. 373).

The significance of the article in τὴν ἐληθείαν is stressed by Tasker. The words do not mean that the church will be led to a full knowledge of what is true on all manner of subjects. The meaning is rather "the specific truth about the Person of Jesus and the significance of what He said and did." Perhaps we could say that the words must be interpreted in the light of 14:6.

Calvin takes the words in this sense: "in my opinion it signifies the future state of His spiritual kingdom, which the apostles saw soon after His resurrection but were then quite unable to comprehend."

ἐμέ is emphatic both from its form and its position. There is some emphasis also on ἐκεῖνος.

There is a typical Johannine variation, ἐν τοῦ ἐμοῦ . . . ἐν τοῦ ἐμοῦ. There does not seem to be a real difference between singular and plural.

There is another Johannine variation in the threefold "he shall declare unto you" (vv. 13, 14, and 15). First the object is τὰ ἔρχομενον, while in both the others it is ἐκ τοῦ ἐμοῦ. Another Johannine characteristic is the repetition of the words ἀναγέλει ὑμίν, which puts emphasis on this aspect of the Spirit's work.

For μικρόν see on 13:33.

ουκέτι, rendered "no more" ("you will see me no more"), means "no longer." It carries no necessary implication of "never again" (for John's use of οὐκέτι see on 4:42).
38. ὀψεσθε is sometimes used of spiritual vision (1:51), and it is argued that here it must refer to the coming of the Holy Spirit (so also in v. 19). This, however, scarcely seems to be justified. The verb can be used of ordinary, earthly sight (1:39). That it is suitable for referring to the post-resurrection appearances seems clear from the use of the perfect ἔώρακα for seeing the risen Lord in 20:18, 25, and 29. It is not easy to find in the verb itself evidence that the coming of the Spirit is meant (though cf. ὠφθησαν of the tongues of fire in Acts 2:3). A small point telling against the distinction from θεωρέω is the double use of the latter verb in 14:19, where we might legitimately have expected variation if John really did distinguish between the two verbs. For ὀράω see on 1:18 and for θεωρέω on 2:23.

39. Jesus says οὐκέτι θεωρείτε με, but their negative is οὐ: "not" is substituted for "no more." In taking up their words (v. 19) Jesus uses their version and not his own original form of the saying.

40. "The way in which the changes are rung on the expression a little while, suggests that the Evangelist has before him the actual expression used by Jesus" (Strachan).

41. The article before μικρόν has the effect of marking out this word as the difficult one.

42. ἔλεγον may well be continuous: "they were saying" or "they kept saying"; cf. Weymouth, "they asked one another repeatedly."

43. Abbott notes a difference between θέλω with the aorist (e.g., 6:21; 7:44) and with the present, even when, as here, the reference is to particular actions. He suggests that, perhaps, ἐρωτάν, "to be asking,' means 'to ask all about' the mysterious saying, and not merely to put a definite question. Or possibly ... the present may denote an action almost begun but stopped because Jesus anticipated the question, 'they wished (and were almost beginning) to ask' " (2498).

44. There is no thought of dispute. In John μετά after a verb of speaking etc. always seems to imply that the speakers are in agreement (6:43; 11:56; cf. Abbott, 2349). Moreover, the verb is ζητείτε, not συζητείτε.

45. The negative is changed from οὐκέτι to οὐ. In both places John uses θεωρείτε in the first clause and όψεσθε in the second. For the suggestion that δψεσθε denotes spiritual vision and thus points to the coming of the Spirit see on verse 16.

46. The emphatic pronoun ύμείς is used, and it is placed at the very end of its clause, immediately before ὁ δέ κόσμος.

47. Again the emphatic ύμείς puts emphasis on the fact that it is they who will suffer sorrow.

48. But in this clause is ἀλλά, and not δέ as in the preceding. It indicates that there is something unexpected in the joy that follows the sorrow (cf. Abbott, 2058).

49. Loyd sees another point: the woman "finds herself again in her child. The disciples found themselves again in the risen Lord. Here is another purpose of this darkness and anguish that we have to endure; namely, that we may die to ourselves, in order that we may live in Christ, and through Him in others."

50. ἡ γυνή is general, the article denoting the class. Bernard points out that Abbott's view that it means the woman of a household, that is the wife, "is to miss the point." The words are "universally true."

51. λύπη and θλιψις are both strong words. There is to be no doubt about the reality of the anguish that is to be turned into joy.

52. There is a change of tense: τίκτη depicts the woman as in the act of childbirth, but the aorist γεννήσῃ sees the process as complete, "when she has given birth."

53. ἄνθρωπος is used in its proper sense, a human being (contrast ἄνήρ, an adult male) (Barrett).

54. ee note 57 below.

55. Chrysostom says with reference to "a man" being born, "to my mind He here alludeth to His own Resurrection, and that He should be born not unto that death which bare the birth-pang, but unto the Kingdom" (79.1; p. 292).
56. For the third time in this passage the emphatic ύμείς is used when referring to the sorrow of the disciples. There can be no missing the point.

57. The language resembles that of Isa. 66:14, καὶ όψεσθε, καὶ χαρήσεται ύμων ἡ καρδία. We might have expected όψεσθε here also, but cf. 1 Cor. 13:12; Gal. 4:9. It is the divine knowledge and sight that matter, not the human.

58. For the singular καρδία ("your heart will rejoice") see on 14:1.

59. Cf. Beasley-Murray, "Easter is not an isolated event but the beginning of the new creation (20:22), wherein disciples will know the presence of the Lord in a manner impossible in the days of his flesh. From that time on, therefore, life for them is existence in the shared fellowship of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (14:21, 23, 26)."

60. ερωτήσετε. In the second part of this verse and in the next the verb is αἰτέω. See on 11:22 for these two verbs in John.

61. εμέ is emphatic both from its form and its position.

62. τι is very general. It sets no limit to what the Father will give.

63. Dods comments: "Prayer must have been rather hindered by the visible presence of a sufficient helper, but henceforth it was to be the medium of communication between the disciples and the source of spiritual power."

64. There is an emphatic double negative: οὐκ ἠτέσατε οὐδέν. Perhaps we should also notice that the Holy Spirit is to be sent "in the name" of Jesus (14:26).

65. παροιμία (παρά + οίμος, a way, a path), is "a wayside saying ... a byword, maxim, proverb" (AS). BAGD speaks of it as denoting "in Johannine usage dark saying, figure of speech, in which esp, lofty ideas are concealed." See further on 10:6.

66. Cf. Calvin, "when Christ is said to intercede with the Father for us, let us not imagine anything fleshly about Him, as if He were on His knees before the Father offering humble supplications. But the power of His sacrifice, by which He once pacified God towards us, is always powerful and efficacious. The blood by which He atoned for our sins, the obedience which He rendered, is a continual intercession for us. This is a remarkable passage, by which we are taught that we have the heart of God as soon as we place before Him the name of His Son."

67. perhaps also with the believer. Cf. MacGregor: "John so closely identifies Christ with the Father, and the believer with Christ, that he regards no such separate intercession on the part of the Risen Christ as necessary."

68. αὐτός puts some emphasis on the fact that it is the Father, and none less than he, that loves them. Barrett notes and rejects the suggestion that αὐτός is unemphatic, being simply the representation of "an Aramaic proleptic pronoun."

69. The verb is φιλέω; in the very similar statements in 14:21, 23 John uses ἀγαπάω. Clearly he makes no great distinction between the two verbs.

70. 103.5; p. 391.

71. In the expression "from God" the preposition is παρά, in verse 28 the MSS are divided between παρά and έx, and when the disciples take up the words they use άπό (v. 30). It is difficult to think that John wants us to see different meanings. The prepositions are not used with narrowly defined meanings.

72. ARV and others accept the reading τοῦ Πατρός with BC*D co etc., but most recent commentators prefer τοῦ θεοῦ with C3 W fl fl3 28 565 700 or θεοῦ. They are probably right, for, in addition to the attestation, as Godet puts it, "It is the divine origin and mission of Jesus, and not his filial relation with God, which must be emphasized at this moment."

73. John uses the aorist ἐξήλθον for the act of leaving the Father (cf. 8:42, etc.), but the perfect ἐλήλυθα of arriving (and staying) in the world (so also in 12:46; 18:37).

74. Abbott takes πάλιν here in the sense "reversely, or returning back, I leave the world" (2649 [ii]). But this seems unnecessary. The sense "again" is sufficient.
75. BDF sees in ἐν τούτῳ an example of the extension of instrumental ἐν in imitation of the Hebrew 3 with the meaning, "for that reason" (219 [2]).

76. Cf. Westcott, "This common confession of faith shows how little even yet the disciples had apprehended the nature of Christ. As a body they had not advanced as far as the Baptist." So also R. H. Lightfoot, "a belief resting on the ground of His knowledge was found at the outset in Nathanael (147-50) and in the Samaritan woman (429); and a faith which has now seen greater things than these (150) should have a deeper basis."

77. Cf. Dodd, "It is part of the character and genius of the Church that its foundation members were discredited men; it owed its existence not to their faith, courage, or virtue, but to what Christ had done with them; and this they could never forget" (IFG, p. 416, η. 1).

78. This is the meaning of εἰς τὰ ἱδία in 19:27 and elsewhere, and it may be what is meant here. There is a contrast in καίμε. They will go to their homes, but Jesus they will abandon (ἀφήτε) and leave lonely.

79. καί is used in the sense of καίτοι, as often in John.

80. It has been suggested that John is writing in conscious contradiction of the saying in Mark 15:34: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" But this seems to be reading a great deal into the present passage. It is better to see Mark as presenting starkly one aspect of the truth, that at the crisis of the process in which God made Christ sin for us (2 Cor. 5:21) the presence of the Father was in some sense withdrawn. John is giving us another part of the picture, namely, that when the disciples forsook Jesus he was not alone. Human abandonment could not make him alone. His communion with the Father was too real for that. The two Evangelists are speaking about different things. See further the note in Tasker.

81. In the expression ἵνα ἐν ἐμοί εἴρηνην ἔχητε the conjunction ἵνα is fully telic. It is Jesus' purpose that they have peace.

82. The word is θλυψις (used in this Gospel elsewhere only in v. 21). It denotes great and pressing affliction, not some mild malady.

83. For the strong adversative ἀλλά that introduces the clause cf. v. 20 and the note there (see also on 1:8). It indicates that this is something for which the circumstances have not prepared them.

84. ἐγώ is emphatic: "I, none else, have overcome" (see on 1:20).

85. The verb νικάω is used here only in this Gospel. It is found 6 times in 1 John, including the expression νικά τὸν κόσμον (1 John 5:4-5), as here. It is especially frequent in Revelation (17 times), being used there as here of Christ's victory.
G. THE HIGH-PRIESTLY PRAYER (17:1-26)

The farewell discourse is followed by the great high-priestly prayer. Barrett objects to describing the prayer in this way or as the "prayer of consecration," since this "does not do justice to the full range of material contained in it." Everything I suppose depends on the range one would expect to find in a "high-priestly prayer." This common name does draw attention to the solemn consecration that is so much a feature of the prayer and to the way it looks forward to the cross as the consummation of Christ's priestly work. This is the longest of Jesus' recorded prayers, and, spoken as it is in the shadow of the cross, it is invested with a peculiar solemnity. "No attempt to describe the prayer can give a just idea of its sublimity, its pathos, its touching yet exalted character, its tone at once of tenderness and triumphant expectation" (MiM). The last words are important. We so often understand this prayer as though it were rather gloomy. It is not. It is uttered by One who has just affirmed that he has overcome the world (16:33), and it starts from this Conviction. Jesus is looking forward to the cross, but in a mood of hope and joy, not one of despondency. The prayer marks the end of Jesus' earthly ministry, but it looks forward to the ongoing work that would now be the responsibility first of the immediate disciples and then of those who would later believe through them. Jesus prays for them all.

The prayer is difficult to subdivide, for it is essentially a unity, but it is possible to discern a movement. At the beginning Jesus prays about his own glorification (vv. 1-5), then he goes on to the main part of the prayer, which concerns the circle of the disciples (vv. 6-19), and he concludes by praying for those who will believe through their ministry (vv. 20-26). Common to all three sections is the desire that the Father's purpose be set forward.¹
1. Prayer for the Glorification of the Son (17:1-5)

1After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed: "Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. 2For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. 3Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. 4I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do. 5And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began."

This part of the prayer is often said to be Jesus' prayer for himself. As he prays that he may be glorified (vv. 1, 5) there is perhaps something in this. But this is not prayer "for" himself in the way we usually understand this. Since his glorification is to be seen in the cross it is a prayer rather that the Father's will may be done in him. If we do talk about this as Jesus' prayer for himself we should at least be clear that there is no self-seeking in it.

1 The farewell discourse is ended and now comes prayer. Lifting up the eyes to heaven was the accepted posture for prayer (cf. 11:41; Ps. 123:1; Mark 7:34; it was a mark of recognition of personal unworthiness when the tax collector in the parable would not lift up his eyes to heaven, Luke 18:13). The form of address is the simple "Father," the address of a child to its parent (it is used six times in this prayer). It marks the close familiarity between Jesus and the Father. For "the hour" (NIV, "the time") in this Gospel see on 2:4. Now with the cross in immediate prospect Jesus can speak of the hour as having come. This is that to which the whole ministry of Jesus has led up. For the idea of "glory" see on 1:14; cf. also 12:28. It is significant that with the cross in view Jesus prays that God will glorify him. To human view the cross was an instrument of shame. To Christ it was the means of true glory. The prayer makes it clear, moreover, that the glory of the Son and the glory of the Father are closely connected. To glorify the Son is to glorify the Father. The two are one.

2 The thought of glory continues ("even as"; NIV, For"). The giving of eternal life to people is the outworking of the glory of which Jesus speaks. His authority is God-given, and it is an authority over the whole human race (cf. 5:27; Matt. 11:27; 28:18). This does not mean that he exercises a
sovereignty over the people like the sovereignty of earthly kings. It is an authority given for the express purpose of conferring eternal life (cf. 3:35-36; 10:28; see on 1:4; 3:15). The thought that the authority is given to Christ to confer life, used as it is in a context dealing with the passion, reminds us of that other thought that meant so much to some of the Fathers, that Christ reigned from the tree. The cross was to be not defeat but victory. He exercised authority in bringing people life even as he hung, apparently helpless, on the cross. But, though life is his gift, he does not confer it on all indiscriminately. Once again we have the thought of the divine predestination. Life is given "to all those you have given him." For a discussion of "eternal life," see the commentary on 3:15.

3 Here we have something of a definition of eternal life. Really to know God means more than knowing the way to life. It is life. In this world we are familiar with the truth that it is a blessing and an inspiration to know certain people. Much more is it the case when we know God. To know him transforms us and introduces us to a different quality of living. Eternal life is simply the knowledge of God. Throughout this chapter there is an emphasis on knowing rather than on John's characteristic thought of believing. Jesus stresses that there is but one God (cf. 5:44), and he is the true God. It is not knowledge of "a god" that is meant, but knowledge of the supreme Ruler of the universe. This is linked with the knowledge of Christ. The only way to know God is through the revelation he has made, and he has revealed himself in his Son. It is not possible to know God in any way that we choose. We must know him in the one whom he has sent, namely Jesus Christ (for "Christ" see on 1:20, 41).

4 Now comes a statement that Jesus has completed the task for which he came. "I have brought you glory" indicates a completed task. This is further described as "by completing the work you gave me to do." Jesus says that he has brought to its due end the task that was assigned him (see on 4:34). There is nothing flamboyant about this utterance. But there is a quiet recognition that Jesus has completed his task adequately, and brought glory to the Father in the process. The supreme place of the Father is guarded with the expression "gave." Even the work that Jesus did was work that the Father gave him. The initiative is seen as resting with the Father.

5 Now Jesus prays God to glorify him. He looks for glory in the last place that people would look for it, namely in the cross. And he sees this
glory for which he prays as linked with his preincarnate\textsuperscript{21} glory with the Father.\textsuperscript{22} There is a clear assertion of Christ's pre-existence here (we have already seen such a claim, 1:1; 8:58; 16:28). There is also the claim that he had enjoyed a unique glory with the Father in that preexistent state.\textsuperscript{23} And now, as evil men are about to do their worst to him, he looks for the Father to glorify him again in the same way.\textsuperscript{24} It is the Father who will glorify him with true glory in the cross, and in what follows. Paul tells us that Christ "was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father" (Rom. 6:4). In the passion and all that was associated with it Jesus would be glorified with the true glory, a glory con-tinuous with, and indeed identical with, the glory he had "before the world began." For "the world" see Additional Note B, pp. 111-13. The noun occurs eighteen times in this prayer, which is considerably more than in any section of comparable length anywhere else in this Gospel. Clearly the right relation-ship of the disciples to the world was of great moment to our Lord as he contemplated leaving them.

2. Prayer for the Disciples (17:6-19)

6 "I have revealed you\textsuperscript{a} to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word. 7Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you. 8For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me. 9I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours. 10All I have is yours, and all you have is mine. And glory has come to me through them. 11I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name — the name you gave me — so that they may be one as we are one. 12While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that name you gave me. None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled. 13/ am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them. 14/ have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world
any more than I am of the world. 15My prayer is not that you take
them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one.

6They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. 17Sanctify\textsuperscript{b} them by
the truth; your word is truth. 18As you sent me into the world, I have
sent them into the world. 19For them I sanctify myself, that they too
may be truly sanctified."

a. 6 Greek your name; also in verse 26
b. 17 Greek hagiaz\textsuperscript{b} (set apart for sacred use or make holy);
also in verse 19

The main part of the prayer is concerned with the disciples. They had
depended very heavily on the visible presence of their Master, a presence
that was about to be taken from them. Though Jesus has already promised
them that the Holy Spirit will come, and has even assured them that this
will be better for them than his continuing bodily presence, yet he knows
that the coming hours will be a great shock to them. Despite everything
they are not ready for the stunning impact of Calvary. Tenderly now he
commits them to the care of the heavenly Father.

6 Jesus recalls that he has revealed God to the disciples. The "name"
(see mg.) stands for the whole person (see on 1:12). To manifest the name
of God is accordingly to reveal the essential nature of God to people. Later
Jesus says that he has made the Father's "name" known (v. 26), and in
between he twice refers to the disciples as "kept" in the Father's "name" (v.
11, where he prays that God will keep (NIV, "protect") them in this name,
and v. 12, where he says that he himself has kept them in that name).
Clearly "the name" is an important concept for the understanding of this
prayer. Here the point is that the revelation was not made indiscriminately.
It was made to those\textsuperscript{25} whom God gave Jesus (cf. 6:37) out of\textsuperscript{26} the world\textsuperscript{27}
(for "world" see Addi-
tional Note B, pp. 111-13). The priority of the Father
is implied in "yours"; these men belonged to him first, then he gave them to
the Son (for the things the Father gives the Son see on 3:35). The disciples'
continuance in the right way is described as a keeping of the Fathers word.
They have persevered, and they have persevered in keeping the "word" of
God. Elsewhere we are told that Jesus keeps God's word (8:55), but this is
the only place where human beings are said to have kept it (as distinct from
commands to keep it). "Word" is an important concept in this Gospel (see Additional Note A, pp. 102-11).

7 "Now" may be either logical or temporal, probably the latter. Jesus seems to be saying that only now, now at long last, have they come into the knowledge of which he speaks. This knowledge is not described so plainly as to be beyond any possible misunderstanding. But it appears to mean the knowledge that Jesus' mission is divine, that he has nothing except what the Father has given him. All is of God. This is an important truth. As long as we stay with the figure of the Galilean Jesus (perhaps romanticizing over the beauty of his holiness and lowliness) so long we miss what really matters. What is central is that all that we see in him is of God. It is not so much the Man of Galilee as the eternal God on whom our attention should rest.

8 "The words you gave me", point to a God-given message. It is this that Jesus passed on to the disciples (cf. 7:16; 12:48-49). It is important to notice the emphasis placed on the divine revelation in this passage. The essential thing is not the example of Jesus or the like, but "the words you gave me." The rest of the verse is taken up with the attitude of the disciples, which is described in three ways. First, they "accepted" these words. This sets them in contrast with other people of their day. Some, like the chief priests or the Pharisees, might have been expected to welcome a genuine divine revelation. They did not. But the disciples did. Second, they came to know, and to know for certain, that Jesus was of divine origin, that he came forth from God. This is, of course, an essential part of the revelation, so central indeed that it is given special mention. The disciples still had misconceptions and their faith was still weak. But Jesus recognizes that basically their attitude to him is right. They know that he has come from God (cf. 16:30). Third, they can be described as men of faith (for the connection between receiving and believing cf. 1:12; the parallel is all the more impressive in that there is no personal object expressed for "accepted" here; NIV supplies "them"). They have come to believe that the Father sent Christ. This point is very much like the previous one (the connection between knowledge and faith is close), but it is not identical. The second point concerns the Son's divine origin, the third his mission. He was sent to perform a divine task. It was this that the disciples had come to believe. There is a similar combination of believing and knowing in 6:69.
Very simply Jesus prays for them. He makes a distinction between the little band of disciples and the world. His prayer here is not for "the world." This does not mean that "the world" is beyond God's love. Elsewhere we are specifically told that he loves it (3:16, and in the Synoptics we learn that he taught people to pray for their enemies, Matt. 5:44, and did this himself, Luke 23:34). Moreover, throughout this chapter it is plain that Jesus came with a mission to the world, and that the disciples were now to carry it on. A little later Jesus prays that the disciples may do certain things "so that the world may believe . . ." (v. 21), and that the world may "know that you sent me . . ." (v. 23). The world is to be reached through the disciples, and Jesus prays for his agents in this task. He could scarcely pray for "the world" as such, which would mean praying that the world might continue in its worldliness and its opposition to God. Prayer for the world could only be that it be converted, and no longer be the world. We see this in Jesus' prayer for those who crucified him (Luke 23:34). Now he prays rather for the little group of his friends. He again describes them in terms of their relationship to the Father. They have been "given" to Christ. They belong to the Father.

It is characteristic of this Gospel to describe the disciples with reference to the divine act rather than their own. It is also a point frequently made that there is community between the Father and the Son. What belongs to the One belongs to the Other. "All you have is mine" goes beyond "all I have is yours." This latter expression might perhaps be used by any creature, but "all you have is mine" points to a very special relationship. As Luther is reported to have said, "This no creature can say with reference to God." Jesus now returns to the thought of glory that we saw in the earlier part of the chapter. But now he says that he has been glorified in the disciples. This is very much like Jesus' attitude to glory seen in the cross. Outwardly the little group was not distinguished. People of the day saw nothing about its members to mark them off as eminent in any respect. But, just as the world's values were all wrong concerning the cross, so were the world's values all wrong concerning the apostolic band. In them the Son of God, none less, was actually glorified.

Jesus' departure from the world is so near that he can refer to it with the present tense. His work in the world is done. He is no longer in it. But the disciples are in it. Just as it is his task to go out of the world, so is it
their task to remain in the world. The address, "Holy Father," is unique (though cf. 1 Pet. 1:15-16; Rev. 4:8; 6:10). Holiness is ascribed to God the Father in surprisingly few New Testament passages, especially considering the importance of holiness in the Old Testament. We are probably right in deducing that the reason for this is that the work of the inspired men of the Old Testament had been well done. In their day people tended to presume on the love and the tender care of God. They thought that because God was the God of their nation they could rely on him to help them no matter what the circumstances. The dishonoring of Israel, they thought, meant the dishonoring of Israel's God. It was necessary that they be taught that God is a holy God and that no one may presume. If Israel did not respect the holiness of God, Israel could not expect the blessing of God. So the sovereignty of God and the awe-fulness of God and the holiness of God received great emphasis. But by New Testament days this lesson had been learned all too well. Now God was often thought of as remote and lofty, as a Being great and dignified indeed, but distant and aloof. The need now was for a stress on his love and his care. So Jesus speaks mostly of God in terms like "Father." But the holiness is still there. It is not to be overlooked or forgotten. The expression "Holy Father" is a reminder of both aspects of God's nature. Jesus goes on to pray that the Holy Father will "keep" (NIV, "protect") the disciples. This probably means keep them from evil, but the object is not expressed, and the end of the verse makes it possible that what is meant is keeping them from disunity. But the wider meaning is more likely.

"By the power of your name" (better "in your name," NRSV; cf. Ps. 20:1; 54:1; Prov. 18:10) points to the whole revealed character of God. Jesus prays that God, the God he has revealed, may in that revealed character keep those who have such need of him. This name is the name that Jesus gave me; Jesus' prayer is that God, the God he has revealed, will in that character keep those who have such need of him. The purpose of his keeping of them is "so that they may be one," a thought that recurs (vv. 21, 22, and 23). The latter half of our Lord's prayer for his followers reveals an impressive concern for unity and is a rebuke to our "unhappy divisions." The unity prayed for is a unity already given: Jesus does not pray that they may "become" one, but that they may "continually be" one. It is a unity "in" the Father and the Son (v. 21). Christ is to be "in" them (v. 23). We should be clear that the unity for which Jesus prays is a unity that
rests on a common basic attitude, that of abiding in him and having him abide in them. "It is the Divine unity of love that is referred to, all wills bowing in the same direction, all affections burning with the same flame, all aims directed to the same end — one blessed harmony of love" (MiM). Enthusiasts for the ecumenical movement sometimes speak as though the reunion of Christendom would be the answer to Jesus' prayer. While it is true that unity of organization can be an impressive witness to unity of spirit, yet as such it is merely outward. It is not this that is in mind here, but something much more difficult, a unity of heart and mind and will. It is well that we work to bring the sundered denominations together. But it is better to look for a grander unity than that, and it is this grander unity for which Jesus prays.

12 Now comes a brief retrospect. During his earthly ministry Jesus used to keep them. He did this "by that name you gave me." Again there is the thought of revelation. It was in the power of the God who revealed himself that Jesus kept the disciples. He guarded them safely so that none perished but Judas. "The one doomed to destruction" points to character rather than destiny. The expression means that he was characterized by "lostness," not that he was predestined to be "lost." Both parts of this statement are important. The disciples need not fear, for Jesus had kept them so that none of them was lost. And if attention be drawn to Judas, then it must be said that the Father's will was done both in the eleven and in the one, for Scripture was fulfilled. The reference to the fulfilling of Scripture brings out the divine purpose. This does not mean that Judas was an automaton. He was a responsible person and acted freely. But God used that man's evil act to bring about his own purpose. There is a combination of the human and the divine, but in this passage it is the divine aspect rather than the human that receives stress. In the end God's will was done in the handing over of Jesus to be crucified. The particular passage of Scripture that is meant is not said, but probably Psalm 41:9 is in mind (though some scholars prefer to see Ps. 109:4-13).

13 Once more we have the thought that Christ was going to the Father. But he is still "in the world." And as he is in the world he speaks these things with a view to the benefit of the disciples. He prays for them so that they may have his joy (see on 15:11) in all its fullness in themselves. On an earlier occasion he had said that he came "that they may have life,
and have it to the full" (10:10). It is something like this that he speaks of here.

14 Jesus' gift to them was God's "word" (cf. v. 6). The supremely significant thing is the revelation. The word of the Father is not a natural possession, but is given only by Christ. "Word" here will mean the entire message that has been revealed. It is a natural transition to the thought that the world hated the disciples. During the time they had been with Jesus they had been given over to learning of God. This meant that inevitably the world opposed them. The disciples and the world were ranged on opposite sides. Now it can be said "they are not of the world." That Jesus is not of the world is easy enough to understand. This Gospel reiterates the truth that his essential being is heavenly; he came from God. But now he says that his followers are "not of the world" even as he is not "of the world." In one sense, of course, they were of the world. They were born into the world and as part of the world. But in his conversation with Nicodemus Jesus has made it clear that people must be born all over again if they are to see the Kingdom of God. It is in this reborn state that the disciples are "not of the world." And the reborn state is the significant state. Berkeley translates: "they are not worldly, just as I am not worldly." This is a valiant attempt, but perhaps it is not quite right; "they do not belong to the world" (Knox, Goodspeed, etc.) is better. It is origin and character rather than outlook that is in mind.48

15 Since they are not "of the world" it might be thought that the prayer would be made that they should be removed from the world. But Jesus now makes it plain that he has nothing of the sort in mind. Their place is still in the world. It would be bad for them and disastrous for the world if they were taken out of the world. Moses and Elijah and Jonah all prayed that they be taken out of the world (Num. 11:15; 1 Kings 19:4; Jon. 4:3, 8), but in no case was the request granted. The place for the people of God is in the world, though, of course, not of the world. The church has often sought to contract out, to become a kind of holy club. But this is not the prayer of the Master. Rather he prays that they would be kept from evil, or perhaps better, "from the evil one." With our background we should expect here a general reference to evil (Lagrange takes this view), but the thought is probably akin to that in 1 John 5:19, "We know that we are children of God, and that the whole world is under the control of the evil one." Jesus recognizes the power of Satan and prays for his own to be kept from him (cf. 1 John 5:18,
and for other significant references to the devil, 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; 1 John 2:13-14; 3:12). They are to be "in" Christ (16:33; 1 John 5:20) and therefore "out of" the evil one. They have a task to do in the world, so it is important that they should be in the world. But it is equally important that they should be kept from evil, for evil is fatal to the discharge of their task.

16 The statement of verse 14 is repeated. As they belong to a Master they share his detachment from the world. The world is no more the source of their distinctives than it is of his.

17 "Sanctify" means "make holy, separate." They are not to be worldly people. They are to be holy men, men separated from the world to be of service to the world. This sanctification is to be "in (NIV 'by') the truth" (for "truth" see Additional Note D, pp. 259-62). Elsewhere we read that the disciples are to "do" the truth (3:21), and there may be some such idea here. The sanctification that Jesus looks for the Father to accomplish will be worked out in their doing of the truth. This is now connected with "your word." That is to say, the divine revelation is in mind once again. Sanctification is not effected apart from the divine revelation. And the divine revelation is eminently trustworthy. It is not only true, but truth. Jesus earlier connected his own "word" with truth, that truth which makes people free (8:31-32). The Father's word, all that he has revealed, is of the same kind. It is truth and may therefore be unhesitatingly accepted and acted on. It is in this way that sanctification takes place.

18 The mission of Christ forms the pattern for the mission of the apostles. Earlier we have read that the Father sanctified him and sent him into the world (10:36). He has just prayed that the Father would sanctify the apostles and now he sends them into the world. The parallel is impressive. Their lives are not to be aimless. They are given a definite commission by their Lord. Their task is to discharge it, even as he discharged his.

19 Again we have the thought of sanctification, but now Jesus says that he sanctifies himself. He sets himself apart for the doing of the Father's will, and in this context this must mean death. He dedicates himself to Calvary with all that Calvary means. This is connected with the disciples in two ways. It is "for them." He dies for them, to do for them that which they could not do for themselves. And further it is "that they too may be truly sanctified." It is purposeful. He dies with a view to the disciples being sanctified, being set apart for God. It is only on the basis of
what he has done for them that his prayer for their being sanctified may be answered.


20 "My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, 21 that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. 22 I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: 23 in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. 24 Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world. 25 Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me. 26 I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them."

The concluding section of the prayer is of the greatest of interest, for in it Jesus prays for all believers. It is thus a prayer for us as for those of previous generations. The dominant concern is for unity and for the divine glory.

20 Jesus names those for whom he is about to pray. His intercession is not confined to the needs of the apostles, but looks out to the result of their mission. Jesus prays for all who will believe in him through their message. Three times in this prayer we have had references to "your word" referring to the Father (vv. 6, 14, and 17). Now Jesus refers to "their word" (NIV, "their message"), which will stand for their whole message. That message will be one that will lead to faith in Christ.

21 The content of the prayer follows. The first petition is "that all of them may be one" (cf. 10:30). This is followed by a statement of the mutual indwelling of the Father and the Son and a prayer that believers may be "in" them both. The structure is markedly similar to that in verse 23, where there is also concern for unity. In both places we have four parts. Here they are as follows: (1) "Father... you are in me," (2) "I am in you," (3)
"May they also be in us," (4) "so that the world may believe that you have sent me." In verse 23 these are the four parts: (1) "I in them" (2) "you in me" (3) that they may be "brought to complete unity" (4) "to let the world know that you sent me." In each case the effect of this structure is to add solemnity and emphasis. Jesus prays first that the disciples may be one and then that they may be "in" the Father and the Son, just as the Father and the Son are "in" one another (cf. 15:4ff.; 1 John 1:3). This does not mean that the unity between the Father and the Son is the same as that between believers and God, but it does mean that there is an analogy. The Father is in the Son and does his works (14:10). The Son is in the Father. The two are one (10:30) and yet are distinct. So in measure is it with believers. Without losing their identity they are to be in the Father and the Son. Apart from the Son they can do nothing (15:5). In other words, the unity for which he prays is to lead to a fuller experience of the Father and the Son. And this in turn will have the further consequences "that the world may believe." Typically the faith that is to be produced in the world is expressed in terms of Christ's mission ("that you have sent me"). The fact that the Father sent the Son is for this Gospel of the first importance.

22 Jesus now says that he has given his followers the glory that the Father gave him. That is to say, just as his true glory was to follow the path of lowly service culminating in the cross, so for them the true glory lay in the path of lowly service wherever it might lead them. The little band and its Master were both insignificant as the world counts importance. But the apostles are right with God and therefore they are supremely significant. They have the true glory. They are walking in the way of God. We have seen often in this Gospel that for Jesus the cross is the true glory. Elsewhere it is recorded that he called on his followers to take up their cross in following him (Luke 9:23). For them, too, the way of the cross is the way to true glory. The purpose of this giving of glory to the disciples is unity. This time Jesus prays that they may be one just as the Father and the Son are one. The bond that unites believers is to be of the very closest.

23 For the structure of this verse and its significance see on verse 21. Indwelling is the secret of it all. Christ indwells believers, and the Father indwells him. It is through Christ that they have their unity with the Father (cf. 14:6). This indwelling is purposive. It looks for the disciples to be "brought to complete unity." They already had a unity of a sort. But this unity is not regarded as being sufficient. There is to be a closer unity, a
"perfected" unity. As in verse 21 the unity of believers is to impress the world. In the former place the purpose was that the world might believe that the Father sent the Son. Here it is that the world may know that the Father sent the Son. Actually there is little difference, since for John believing gives further knowledge, and knowledge to all intents and purposes means faith (cf. v. 8). The world is to know not only that the Father sent the Son, but also that he loves believers as he loves the Son (cf. Rev. 3:9). The unity of believers will be explicable to the world only on the basis of the divine love. It will transcend all human unity. The unity in question, while it is a spiritual unity rather than one of organization, as we have seen, yet has an outward expression, for it is a unity that the world can observe, and that will influence the world.

Jesus' final petition is for them to be with him. "I want" is a verb that expresses the action of the will. It is more than a mere wish. Here when Jesus is thinking of the disciples he uses the expression "I will," but when he is thinking of himself he prays, "not what I will, but what you will" (Mark 14:36). The petition looks for the disciples to be with Jesus in the next world rather than in this (cf. 14:3). He wants them to be "where I am," and he has already said, "I will remain in the world no longer" (v. 11). He looks for them to be with him so that they may see the glory that the Father has given him. It is possible that "glory" here is used in the more common sense, rather than denoting lowliness as earlier in this prayer. Jesus may be referring to the majesty and splendor that will be his in the life to come. It is also possible that he is praying that they will have the insight to know what the true glory really is, that is, that they may see lowly service as truly glorious. Paul gives us a somewhat similar thought when he says that "we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory" (2 Cor. 3:18). The glory that the Father gave the Son arose out of the love with which he loved him before this universe came into existence. Again we have the thought of preexistence, and again the greatness of the love of the Father for the Son.

The last two verses are something of a retrospect. They might, perhaps, be set off as a separate division of the prayer. There is no petition in them. Jesus is no longer praying for those who would believe through the apostolic witness. He is making statements about what he has done and the purpose of his doing it. The address "Righteous Father" is unique (though
cf. "Holy Father," v. 11). It reminds us of the character of the Father. Jesus is not looking for an attitude of favoritism from the Father but bearing in mind, as he prays for his followers, that it is God's nature to be righteous. It is probably significant that immediately after addressing God as righteous he proceeds to distinguish between "the world" and his followers. It is because God is righteous that he treats both groups as he does.耶稣

proceeds to contrast "the world" with himself. The world, in its very nature, is ignorant of God (cf. 8:55). But Jesus is different. He has a complete knowledge of God (see on 4:18). The knowledge of the disciples is related to the incarnation. It is not said that they knew God, but that they knew that God sent Jesus.

26 Throughout the ministry Jesus has made the Father known (cf. v. 6). For the use of "your name" (NIV, "you") in this prayer see on verse 6, and for "the name" on 1:12. Jesus has revealed the Father to his followers, and he says now that he will do this again. This may refer to the revelation in the cross, or it may refer to the work of the Holy Spirit whom he has promised to send (15:26). The following reference to love may perhaps make it a little more likely that it is the cross that is primarily in mind. The purpose of this future revelation is that the love with which the Father loved his Son might be "in" the disciples. In Johannine fashion this probably has a double meaning: the love in question will be "within" them ("in their hearts," Twentieth Century), and also "among" them (the relation uniting them to one another). With this purpose is linked another, that Christ himself may be "in" them (within them and among them). The love of God is thus associated with the indwelling of Christ. We know the love of God because the Son dwells in our hearts. The very last words of the prayer refer to Christ's continuing presence in his followers. Whatever the future holds he will be with them.
1. Bernard draws attention to an interesting group of coincidences with the Lord's Prayer, and says, "None of these coincidences or parallels is likely to have been invented by one setting himself to compose a prayer for the lips of Christ on the eve of His Passion; but, when taken together, they show that the spirit which breathes throughout c. 17 is similar to that with which we have been made familiar when reading Jesus' words as recorded by the Synoptists and elsewhere in Jn." Wright also sees a connection with the Lord's Prayer. He speaks of this prayer as "a kind of expanded paraphrase" of that prayer.

2. The worshipper might prostrate himself in prayer, presumably when he wished to adopt an especially lowly place in earnest petition. Our Lord did this in Gethsemane (Matt. 26:39).

3. G. Dalman points out that the Greek πάτερ (used here), like ὁ πατήρ or πάτερ μου, presupposes an Aramaic  neuken (as in Mark 14:36). The significance of this is that "The usage of family life is transferred to God: it is the language of the child to its father" (The Words of Jesus [Edinburgh, 1902], pp. 191-192), The Jews preferred a less intimate form when addressing God, e.g., "Our Father in heaven."

4. There is an air of finality about the perfect, ἔληλυθεν; cf. 12:23.

5. ινα is fully telic. Jesus prays for his own glorification not as an end in itself, but as a means to the greater glory of the Father. For ινα in John see on 1:8.

6. The repeated use of δίδωμι in this chapter should not be overlooked (see vv. 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 14, 22, and 24). The verb is a favorite one with this Evangelist, being found 76 times in his Gospel (Matthew has it 56 times, Mark 39 times, and Luke 60 times). In this prayer of our Lord it occurs 17 times; mostly the perfect tense is used (11-13 times depending on the resolution of textual points), denoting the permanence of the gift. Thirteen times the Father is the subject of the verb, and on every occasion the gift is made to the Son. The other four occasions all refer to the Son's giving to the disciples. Abbott comments on the frequency of the verb in this Gospel: "What 'grace' is in the Pauline Epistles, 'giving' is in the Fourth Gospel" (2742). For the Father's gifts to the Son see on 3:35.

7. έξουσία is also connected with the giving of life in the Prologue, though there it is translated "the right," and it refers to an authority given to believers (1:12).

8. Again we have the telic ινα. It appears to be followed by the future indicative δώσει, though this is corrected in various ways, some of which have strong attestation. It is, of course, possible that δώσει is no more than an orthographical variant of δώστε!. This latter form presents problems. Some posit a rare future subjunctive that Moulton and Howard dismiss as an "imaginary mood," speaking of all the few examples cited (including the present term) as "only new aorists made from the future stem by the usual analogy" (Μ, II, p. 218).

9. The neuter πᾶν δ, where we might have expected the masculine, puts the emphasis on the quality as God-given, rather than on the persons as such. There is also a hint at unity, which would not be conveyed in πάντες (i.e., "the whole" rather than "all"). In strict grammar, of course, the meaning ought to be "so that he should give them all that you have given him, namely eternal life," but there can be no doubt but that πᾶν refers to all believers, not to all God's gift. There is a similar neuter in v. 24. It is a further example of John's love of variety that he refers to people in the present passage first with the use of "flesh," πᾶσος σαρκός, then with the neuter πᾶν, and finally with the masculine pronoun αὐτοῖς. "All flesh" is, of course, a Hebrew expression to denote all people, especially people as weak and temporary over against the strength and eternity of God.

10. When "eternal life" is repeated in the next verse there is a characteristic slight alteration. Here we have ζωὴν aic&viov, there ή αἰώνιος ζωή. The article, of course, will point back to the previous use of ζωή.

11. This verse is often said to be a parenthesis in which John gives us his view of eternal life. In favor of this is the difficulty of understanding why Jesus should give such an explanation in prayer,
and the use of "Jesus Christ" rather than "me" (but he uses the third person in vv. 1-2). Against it is
the use of the second person (σέ and ἀπέστειλας), and the difficulty of seeing why John should put
his explanation so late in the Gospel after having used the concept so often. A similar passage where
the explanation is that of the writer (and is in the third person) may be seen in 1 John 5:20). John has
the expression "eternal life" 17 times, but this is the only place in which it has the article and where
αιώνιος precedes ζωή.

12. MiM maintains that "know" here "does not mean to know fully or to recognise, but to learn
to know: it expresses not perfect, but inceptive and ever-growing knowledge." This may be reading a
bit much into the use of the present tense, but the point is surely valid that Jesus has in mind an ever-
increasing knowledge, not something given in its completeness once and for all.

13. This is overlooked by Barrett in his otherwise excellent note. He gathers many parallels to
show the stress placed on the knowledge of God in both Hebrew and Hellenistic thought. But when
he says, "Knowledge of God and Christ gives life," he is introducing a different thought. To say that
the knowledge of God and Christ brings life is one thing; to say that it is life is quite another. Temple
writes: "At one time I was much troubled that the climax of the Veni Creator should be
Teach us to know the Father, Son,
And Thee, of Both, to be but One.
It seemed to suggest that the ultimate purpose of the coming of the Holy Spirit was to persuade
us of the truth of an orthodox formula. But that is mere thoughtlessness. If a man once knows the
Spirit within him, the source of all his aspiration after holiness, as indeed the Spirit of Jesus Christ,
and if he knows this Spirit of Jesus Christ within himself as none other than the Spirit of the Eternal
and Almighty God, what more can he want? This is the eternal life." Tenney stresses the importance
of the passage: "the definition of eternal life is important because Jesus differentiated it from the
current concept of endless existence."

14. Philo comes close to this thought without actually reaching it when he speaks of "holding
that the knowledge of him is the consummation of happiness and long life" De Spec. Leg. 1.345).

15. γινώσκω is used 7 times in this chapter, and πιστεύω only 3 times (though it occurs 98
times in the Gospel as a whole).

16. For ἀληθινός see on 1:9. Only here and at 4:23 does John have this adjective used
attributively precede its noun. This makes it emphatic.

17. The compound name "Jesus Christ" is found elsewhere in this Gospel only at 1:17 (where
see note). Here a few scholars take it to mean, "that they know . . . Jesus as Christ" (Lenski, e.g.,
favors this). It seems better, however, to take it in the normal fashion as the compound name. The
alternative does seem to be straining the Greek.

18. The aorist ἀπέστειλας with its indication of a definite act will refer to the incarnation. See
further on 3:17.

19. The juxtaposition of the pronouns ἐγώ and σέ is to be noted (though the latter is not
emphatic. It points to the fact that the work of Christ was nothing other than to glorify the Father.

20. This will be the significance of τελειώσας. Jesus has glorified the Father in that he has
finished his assigned task (cf. Rieu, "by finishing the task"). The expression, of course, looks forward
to the cross (cf. the use of τετέλεσται in 19:30).

21. For the articular infinitive προ τοῦ . . . εἶναι see on 1:48. BDF notes the present passage as
the only one in the New Testament where προ τοῦ is followed by the present infinitive, the aorist
being invariable elsewhere (403).

22. παρά σεαυτῷ looks for a glory with the Father beyond this world, and it is reinforced by
παρά σοι. The preposition παρά when used with the dative often has the meaning "in the house of"
(see LS, s.v.), and there may be a hint at such a meaning here. Cf. also 1:1, πρὸς τὸν θεόν.

23. Murray comments, "His words imply that for His human consciousness, presence in human
flesh in this world involved the surrender, for the time, of the joy of full uninterrupted communion,
an absence from the Father, even the possibility of that hiding of His face which makes the darkest of
all human utterances a true expression of His experience as man: 'My God, my God, why didst Thou forsake me?'"

24. The statement of verse 4 and the prayer of this verse are illuminated by the principle laid down in 1 Sam. 2:30, which reads in LXX, τους δοξάζοντας με δοξάσω.

25. Abbott draws attention to the fact that, whereas the accusative αυτούς is found often in the Synoptists in connection with what Jesus did to "them," it occurs four times only in this way in John until we come to this prayer. Here it is used of the disciples nine times (2376). Cf. also the use of the nominative αυτοί in verses 8, 11, 19, and 21.

26. ἡμι here will have something of the thought of separation from.

27. Cf. Westcott, "It is only by the influence of the Father that men can come to Christ, vi.44, 65. Yet the critical act admits of being described from many sides. The Father is said to 'draw' men (vi.44), and Christ also draws them (xii.32). Christ 'chooses' men (vi.70, xv.16); and men freely obey his call."

28. For τηρέω see on 8:51.

29. Godet comments, "The harvest seems scanty, no doubt: eleven Galilean ar-tisans after three years of labor! But this is enough for Jesus: for in these eleven He beholds the pledge of the continuance of the divine work on the earth."

30. There is emphasis in the use of σου: "They believed that it was none less than you. . . ."

31. For the use of ἐρωτάω (here) and αἰτέω in this Gospel see on 11:22. For περί see on verse 20.

32. Cf. Morgan: "He was praying for the instrument He was creating, through which He would reach the world."

33. Ryle ranges himself with those who think that Jesus did not pray for the world on the grounds "that it is derogatory to our Lord's honour to suppose that He can ever ask anything in vain; and that His intercession specially belongs to 'those who come unto God by Him' (Heb. vii.25)."

34. Haenchen points out that the Johannine community "is persuaded that the community itself is really no better than the others. . . . One does not thank himself or herself for a privileged position; one owes it to divine compassion."

35. Since persons are in view, we might have anticipated the masculine instead of the neuter possessives τά έμά and σά. But the neuter is more general and inclusive. Grammatically αύτοΐς could be neuter and refer to έμά and σά. But it is more likely to be masculine, perhaps looking back to ων (v. 9).

36. The perfect tense δεδόξασμαι may point to the very real measure of glorification that has already taken place. Perhaps it is more likely to be proleptic, looking forward to the glory yet to come, but which was certain. For this verb in John see on 7:39.

37. καθι here in a contrasted statement has much the force of "but" (as NIV). Burney regards this as a literal translation of "I adversative, which is found in both Hebrew and Aramaic (M, II, p. 469; Howard, however, points out that this use of καθι can be found in classical Greek).

38. The use of the pronoun αυτοί marks a certain emphasis on "they."

39. The reading ω, which must be accepted on the evidence, can refer back only to δοξάσας. We might have expected ους (which in fact is read by A C3 D Θ fl fi3 28 69 lat etc.; it seems clearly to be a scribal "correction"). But Jesus here speaks of the "name" as being given him, that is, he has been entrusted with the revelation of God as he is.

40. Seven times in this prayer Jesus prays for his followers with the expression ἵνα ὀνομαί (vv. 11, 19, 21 [bis], 22, 23, 24). Four of these are connected with unity.

41. "One" is neuter, ἕν: "The disciples are to be kept by God not as units but as a unity" (Barrett).

42. This appears to be the force of the present subjunctive ἵνα ὀνομαί. Lenski stresses this, and points out that γένωνται would be required for the sense "get to be one."
43. There is probably little significance in the change of verb from ἔτηρον, "protected," to ἔφυλαξα, "kept safe." The imperfect tense, however, may indicate an activity continued through the years and the aorist regard the action as complete.

44. The exact expression, ὁ γιὸς τῆς άπωλείας, is used of the man of sin in 2 Thess. 2:3. It is perhaps impossible to reproduce in English the wordplay of the original, where ἀπωλείας refers back to ἀπώλετο. Phillips tries with "not one of them was destroyed, except the son of destruction," while REB reads, "Not one of them is lost except the man doomed to be lost."

45. "Any true community of faith may harbor traitors or apostates, but the presence of such cannot endanger God's elect, who are kept safe by the power of his name" (Michaels).

46. Cf. Calvin, "It would be wrong for anyone to infer from this that Judas' fall should be imputed to God rather than to himself, in that necessity was laid on him by the prophecy."

47. ἵνα expresses purpose.

48. It has been suggested that there is a parallel with Qumran with its sharp division between the community and outsiders. But there is an important difference. As Raymond E. Brown puts it, "St. John's theology still presents a great clarification: our hatred is for evil as represented in the world, and not for the people who do evil" (SNT, p. 288, n. 74).

49. Characteristically with a small change, one of word order. In verse 14 we have οὐx είσιν έx τού κόσμου and in this verse, έx τού κόσμου ούκ είσιν.

50. "The word 'sanctify' is not the same as 'purify'; the disciples have already been declared 'clean' (13:10, 15:1). To be sanctified is to be made ready for a specific task, and the prayer seeks the endowment of the disciples for their apostolic mission" (Marsh).

51. With this we might compare the Qumran passage, "cleansing him with a holy spirit from all wicked deeds. And he will sprinkle upon him a spirit of truth" (1QS 6:20-21; DSS, p. 376).

52. This passage is possibly a quotation from LXX of Ps. 119:142. The MS evidence for that passage is divided between νόμος and λόγος, but Swete, for example, reads ὁ λόγος σου ἀλήθεια (cf. 2 Sam. 7:28).

53. There is no article with ἀλήθεια in the final clause. This may well be to indicate that "your word" and "truth" are not interchangeable terms (as the use of the article might be held to imply; see Robertson, p. 768). Or it may be an example of Colwell's rule that definite predicate nouns that precede the verb have no article (see on 1:1).

54. The emphatic ἐμέ and κάγὼ stress this. For "send" see on 3:17.

55. The aorist ἀπέστειλας (referring to Christ) is plain enough. It will refer to a single past action involved in the incarnation. But when we come to the apostles we might have expected a present or a future rather than ἀπέστειλα. Jesus may be referring to his commissioning of his followers earlier, and to his sending of them out on missions. It is perhaps more probable that the word is used proleptically to add a touch of certainty to the future sending out of the disciples.

56. The verb αγιάζω is used in LXX of the setting apart of both people and things for the service of God (more often of people than things). Two uses in particular are important for the present passage, namely, those where the verb is used for the sanctifying of priests (Exod. 28:41; 29:1, 21, etc.), and of sacrifices (Exod. 28:38; Num. 18:9, etc.). Both are appropriate in the present passage. The verb does not signify in itself a setting apart for death, but in this context the meaning can scarcely be anything else. Some interpreters hold that this is excluded by the subsequent statement with respect to the disciples, but this does not follow. Jesus sets himself apart to do the will of God, and he looks for them to be set apart to do God's will. But the implications are not the same in the two cases. For him the consecration issued in an atoning death; for them in lives of service (sometimes crowned with a martyr's death). There does not appear to be a parallel to Jesus' statement, "I sanctify myself." See further the lengthy note in Hoskyns.

57. Cf. Lüthi: "He serves as Mediator between Heaven and earth. He sanctifies Himself by placing Himself completely at His Father's service and saying, 'Not my will, but thine, be done.' His path of duty leads through the Cross and the grave to Resurrection, and up to the right hand of the
Father, from whence He shall come again. This absolute, voluntary filial obedience is the secret of Christ's self-sanctification. That is what He means when He stands alone before the Father here and vows to Him, 'I sanctify myself.'"

58. For ὑπέρ see on 6:51.

59. For ἵνα ὅσιον in this prayer see on verse 11.

60. The preposition is περί, which is usual with this verb to convey the meaning "ask about." But John uses it of praying for people in 16:26; 17:9, as well as here. The meaning is much the same as that of ὑπέρ, to which περί sometimes approximates (see BDF, 229[1]).

61. The present participle, τῶν πιστεύσαντων, might perhaps be held to signify those who at that moment believed on account of the disciples' word, but this is unlikely. The future almost certainly gives the sense of it. Turner regards this as a present participle for the future, perhaps under Hebrew or Aramaic influence (M, III, p. 87).

62. Taking εἰς ἐμέ with τῶν πιστεύσαντων rather than with λόγο (i.e., "their word with respect to me"). The former is more in accordance with Johannine style, but the latter is not impossible and is favored by the word order.

63. For ἵνα ὅσιον in this prayer see the comments on verse 11. John sets πάντες and ἕν side by side to emphasize that the great number of believers is to be one.

64. The address is Πατήρ as in verses 24 and 25, whereas in verses 1, 5, 11 the vocative Πάτερ is used (there is some textual variation, but this appears to be the true text). Clearly there is not much difference between the two.

65. Cf. Barrett: "The unity of the Church is strictly analogous to the unity of the Father and the Son; the Father is active in the Son — it is the Father who does his works (14.10) — and apart from the Father the deeds of the Son are meaningless, and indeed would be impossible; the Son again is in the Father, eternally with him in the unity of the Godhead, active alike in creation and redemption. The Father and the Son are one and yet remain distinct. The believers are to be, and are to be one, in the Father and the Son, distinct from God, yet abiding in God, and themselves the sphere of God's activity (14.12)."

66. Strachan has a helpful note: "The basis of this unity is religious. Even* what is called 'oecumenical' union, the world-wide Church remains imperfect without a unity in our doctrine of God and of salvation, and a unity of purpose in our mission. The size and extent of the Church alone will not impress the world. This inward unity expressing itself in a common mission and message will alone impress the world." J. C. Earwaker is of the opinion that the ἵνα which precedes this clause should not be taken as final but as introducing a third petition. Christ is praying, he thinks, "(1) that all may be one; (2) that they may be in us; (3) that the world may believe" (ExT, LXXV [1963-64], p. 317). This is attractive, but it does not face the fact that the prayer is "for those who will believe in me through their message" (v. 20). It is not easy to understand how a prayer for such people, who before believing were part of "the world," could include a petition "that the world may believe." Moreover, Earwaker's view seems almost to require a καί before the third ἵνα.

67. Cf. Barclay, "We must never think of our cross as our penalty; we must think of it as our glory. . . . The harder the task we give a student, or a craftsman, or a surgeon, the more we honour him. We, in effect, say that we believe that nobody but him could attempt that task at all. So when it is hard to be a Christian, we must regard it as our glory, as our honour given to us by God."

68. ἵνα here is fully telic; for ἵνα see on 1:8 and for κάγω on 1:31.

69. Cf. Lagrange: "The manner of this union is explained here: the Son is in the faithful, He is in the Father: it is thus by Him that the faithful are united with the Father: not that they pass from the one to the other, but because they find the Father in the Son."

70. Again we have telic ἵνα.

71. The perfect τετελειωμένοι may denote a state they should attain and remain in. On the meaning of the verb Temple remarks: "The word translated perfected does not primarily suggest ethical perfection but complete realisation of ideal or type; a fair rendering of the original would be:
that they may become full grown into one." εἰς is somewhat surprising in a context where we would expect ἐν. According to BDF είς here "denotes rather the purpose, the result" (205).

72. Taking ἀυτούς to refer to the same group as the preceding αὐτοῖς. It is possible to take it as an ad sensum construction, referring to "the world" (so Bernard).

73. There is one διὶ for σῷ μὲ ἀπέστειλας and ἡγάπησας αὐτοῖς κτλ. The two are a unity. The love of God and the sending of the Son are inseparable.

74. θέλω. We should bear in mind the point made by Bailey, that "the consciousness of the union of His will with the Father's destroys any distinction between 'I pray' and 'I will.'"

75. As in verse 2 there is an alternation of genders. The neuter δ of that which the Father has given is quite general. Then we have the masculine κάκεΐνοι as the personal note becomes more prominent. The clause with the neuter δ δέδωκας μοι is in an especially prominent position, which may indicate that John wants to give it emphasis. Turner thinks that "the gift is depicted first in its unity = ὅ, then individually = κάκεΐνος" (Μ, III, p. 21).

76. The word order εἰμί ἐγώ distinguishes this from the formula ἐγώ εἰμί used to such effect elsewhere in this Gospel (see on 8:58, etc.). But the personal pronoun enables emphasis to be given to "I" (see on 1:20).

77. Godet comments, "This saying of Jesus is that which leads us farthest into the divine depths. It shows Christian speculation on what path it must seek the solution of the relations of the Trinity; love is the key of this mystery,"

78. Cf. Dods: "The Father's justice is appealed to, that the believing may not share the fate of the unbelieving world." Cf. also Lenski, "Jesus closes with a word of complete confidence in the righteousness of the Father, yet he leaves unsaid what action he expects from this righteousness. He does not need to say this, for the Father will most assuredly act in righteous accord with what Jesus here lays before him."

79. καί before ὁ κόσμος is a little surprising. It can scarcely mean "even," but "also" is not much easier. Perhaps we should take ἐγώ δὲ σε ἐγνώρισα as a parenthesis and understand the two καίς as "both . . . and," "both the world did not know you . . . and these knew . . . " The ignorance of the world and the knowledge of the disciples form a pair. Moule notes that Abbott favors this view, and proceeds, "but the first καί does not seem so easily explicable" (IBNTG, p. 167). However, he gives no alternative explanation, preferring apparently to regard the καί as misplaced. Turner favors the view adopted here (Μ, III, p. 335). REB renders "although" (as also Goodspeed, Schonfield, etc.). FF has "indeed."

80. The aorist ἐγνώρισα points to a completed activity.

81. For ἀγάπη see on 5:42. The cognate accusative coupled with a personal object, ἡ ἀγάπη ἢν ἡγάπησάς με, is most unusual. Abbott finds no parallel except Eph. 2:4, and there the accusative may be due to the attraction of the relative into the case of the antecedent. He thinks that the Evangelist "shrank from representing the love of God as instrumental ('wherewith')" and he proceeds to connect it with the statement that God is love (2014).

82. Cf. Westcott, "The last word of the Lord's prayer corresponds with the last word of His discourses; ἐγὼ νενίκηκα τὸν κόσμον (xvi.33). He is Himself the source of victory and life."
JOHN 18

V. THE CRUCIFIXION (18:1-19:42)

As in the other Gospels it is the events surrounding the crucifixion and resurrection that form the climax of the whole book. John has his own way of handling these events, a way that stresses the divine overruling. Thus his account of the arrest emphasizes Jesus' complete mastery of the situation, and touches like the "It is finished" of the dying Savior indicate plainly that the outcome was completely in God's control. Here supremely we see the purpose of God worked out, and here supremely is the glory of Jesus displayed.

A. THE ARREST (18:1-12)

1 When he had finished praying, Jesus left with his disciples and crossed the Kidron Valley. On the other side there was an olive grove, and he and his disciples went into it. 2Now Judas, who betrayed him, knew the place, because Jesus had often met there with his disciples. 3So Judas came to the grove, guiding a detachment of soldiers and some officials from the chief priests and Pharisees. They were carrying torches, lanterns and weapons. 4Jesus, knowing all that was going to happen to him, went out and asked them, "Who is it you want?" 5"Jesus of Nazareth,"they replied. "I am he," Jesus said. (And Judas the traitor was standing there with them.) 6When Jesus said, "I am he," they drew back and fell to the ground. 7Again he asked them, "Who is it you want?" And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth," 8"I told you that I am he," Jesus answered. "If you are looking for me, then let these men go." 9This happened so that the words he had spoken would be fulfilled: "I have not lost one of those you gave me." 10Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant, cutting off his right ear. (The servant's name was Malchus.) 11Jesus commanded Peter, "Put your sword away! Shall I not drink the cup the
Then the detachment of soldiers with its commander and the Jewish officials arrested Jesus.

a. 9 John 6:39

As in the Synoptists, Jesus is arrested in the Garden. But there are important differences. A striking omission is the agony in Gethsemane. Many conjectures have been put forward to account for this, but none is universally accepted. Perhaps the most convincing is that John was not giving a complete account of all that happened, but painting a picture. This incident did not suit his purpose, so he omitted it (though such words as those of 12:27; 18:11 show that he has the essential teaching of the incident).\(^1\) John makes it clear, as the others do not, that the Garden was a frequent resort of Jesus and his followers (though cf. Luke 22:39). He also uses a technical term for the band of soldiers (Matthew and Mark use this term, but not in connection with the arrest, Matt. 27:27; Mark 15:16). Above all, he stresses the majesty of Jesus by telling us that he spoke and acted in such a way as to strike awe into the soldiers who came to arrest him, so that they "drew back and fell to the ground" (v. 6).

1 The opening words perhaps militate against the view that some of the preceding discourse was spoken on the road. They seem to indicate that it was after it was concluded that Jesus "left" (i.e., left the house) with\(^2\) the apostles. It is not impossible that the meaning is "went out of the city," but "went out of the house" seems more probable. It is John alone who tells us that they went to a garden,\(^3\) though he does not name the place (as do Matthew and Mark). He does, however, give its location, namely on the further side of the Kidron.\(^4\)

2 Judas is characterized, as elsewhere, by the betrayal. John uses the present participle, which conveys the meaning "who was betraying him (i.e., at that moment)." The information that Jesus and the disciples often went to the Garden is found here only, though Luke tells us that Jesus lodged "on" the Mount of Olives every night during passion week (Luke 21:37). This probably means that he and the disciples used to bivouac, sleeping in the open air, and probably in this very garden. Ryle reminds us that "Excepting at the institution of the Lord's Supper, we have no mention of our Lord ever being in any house in Jerusalem." "Often" would be a curious way of referring to Jesus' custom on the present visit only. It
probably indicates that he had been in the habit of using the Garden through the years.

3 "Detachment" is a technical term for "cohort." 

Judas apparently was guiding a knot of Roman soldiers, and if the article is significant it will have been a known, definite cohort (cf. Abbott, "A.V. ['a band'] has missed the reference to 'the band' that regularly kept guard in the fortress called Antonia"). Some commentators hold that there could not have been Romans in the posse, but Newbigin finds it "not very surprising in view of the evidence of good relations between Caiaphas and Pilate . . . and in view of constant Roman anxiety about outbreaks of violence at the great festivals." It is likely that the Jewish authorities would have brought in the Romans as soon as possible in view of their ultimate aim (and, we might add, in view of the fact that on a previous occasion the Temple guards had failed to arrest Jesus, 7:44ff.). With passions running high at the festival period, the Romans would be unlikely to refuse a request for help from the high priest. They would always have to reckon with the possibility that Jesus and the eleven would resist arrest and that a host of excited Galileans might join them. With the soldiers was a group sent from the Sanhedrin (this will be the force of linking "chief priests" with "Pharisees"). Moffatt distinguishes the two components of this force as "troops" and "attendants." The band was armed and carried lights. They were thus prepared for trouble and equipped to meet it. The lights indicate that they thought Jesus might hide away in the dark recesses of the garden. Since it was full moon, they would not be needed otherwise (unless the night was cloudy; since, however, we are told that it was cold, v. 18, it would seem to have been clear).

4-5 Jesus' complete knowledge of the situation dictates his action (see on 2:24; 4:18). John omits any reference to the kiss Judas gave Jesus (Matt. 26:49; Mark 14:45; Luke 22:47), which would have taken place at this juncture. He is not concerned to tell us everything that happened, but rather to show Jesus' complete control of the situation. Jesus knows all the things that are coming upon him, and in the light of this knowledge goes out to meet the soldiers. He is not "arrested" at all. He has the initiative and he gives himself up. First he asks whom they are seeking. When they say, "Jesus of Nazareth," he replies, "I am," which may well mean "I am Jesus of Nazareth." But the answer is in the style of deity (see on 8:58; John
repeats the words in vv. 6 and 8 and the threefold repetition is significant; cf. also 13:18-19). This must have been a most unexpected move on his part. The soldiers had come out secretly to arrest a fleeing peasant. In the gloom they find themselves confronted by a commanding figure, who so far from running away comes out to meet them and speaks to them in the very language of deity. At this point John reiterates that Judas was there. As in verse 2, he speaks of him in terms of the betrayal. It had obviously made a deep impression on the minds of the early Christians. In the Synoptic Gospels Judas identifies Jesus with a kiss; here he is simply mentioned as standing there, though John's "with them" is probably significant. It indicates on whose side he was.

6 The effect of Jesus' bearing is now brought out. His fearlessness, the gloom with its atmosphere of mystery, his numinous words, all combined to produced a moment of terror, or perhaps awe. The soldiers retreated and fell to the ground. It is possible that those in front recoiled from Jesus' unexpected advance, so that they bumped those behind them, causing them to stumble and fall; C. B. Williams translates: "took a lurch backward and fell to the ground." But clearly what concerns John is the majesty of Jesus thus underlined. Some find it too difficult to think of the soldiers as recoiling, and emend the text to read "he" (i.e., Judas) instead of "they" (so, e.g., Schonfield and Torrey). This certainly makes for an easier text, but it raises the insuperable difficulty of how, if it were original, it has left no mark on the manuscript tradition. It also fails to take note of the fact that John is making it clear that Jesus' behavior was most unusual; unarmed people being arrested habitually showed fear in the presence of armed might. Jesus did not.

7 Jesus repeats his question, and the soldiers their answer (characteristically John has a small variant; he replaces "they replied" with "they said").

8-9 Jesus repeats his declaration of identity (retaining the same mystical words), but this time he adds a request that the soldiers permit his followers to go away. The Good Shepherd takes thought for his sheep at the very hour in which he faces arrest, trial, and death. It may be that this is behind his request for them to repeat that it is "Jesus of Nazareth" that they are looking for. Out of their own mouth he leads them to declare twice over that their business is with him, which means that it is not with the disciples. John adds an interesting expression. It is common to find it said that
something happened "in order that the scripture might be fulfilled." Here (and in v. 32) the same formula is used of words of Jesus: "so that the words he had spoken would be fulfilled." To John it was inconceivable that a saying of Jesus would fail of fulfillment. He puts it into the same category as Scripture. The "word" referred to is found in 17:12 (cf. 6:39), but the repetition, as usually in John, has its variations. Here Jesus speaks of the disciples as given to him, there he referred to their being kept by "your name" (the disciples were earlier said to be "given" to him, 17:6; see also on 3:35). Here there is no reference to his "keeping them safe," while "I have not lost one" replaces "None has been lost." These changes do not affect the sense, and there is exactness in John's affirmation that this saying of Jesus was fulfilled. It has been objected that the object of the saying as originally given was spiritual, whereas here it is physical. But an arrest of the disciples at this moment would have been a very severe test of faith and might well have caused them great spiritual harm. It is unnecessary to see an opposition. To preserve the disciples physically at this moment was to preserve them spiritually.

10 John names Peter as the man who wielded the sword, whereas the Synoptists leave him nameless. The reason is not apparent. It is sometimes said that Mark wishes to spare Peter, but this is difficult to maintain in view of his inclusion of the denial. It may be a further example of John's love for being exact with names and places. He also tells us that the man whose right ear (this detail is shared with Luke) was cut off was Malchus. Nothing more is known of him. The use of the definite article (the servant of the high priest, not a servant) marks Malchus out, but our ignorance of the man and his position prevents us from knowing just what the significance of this is.

11 Jesus immediately intervenes. "Put your sword away" is a somewhat vigorous expression and leaves no doubt but that swordplay is forbidden. Then Jesus speaks of the cup that the Father has given him and his question indicates the necessity of drinking it. There are references to the cup in the other Gospels (Matt. 26:39; Mark 14:36; Luke 22:42), though in them it occurs in the prayer in the Garden. This is the only passage which assigns the origin of the "cup" to the Father. In the Old Testament "cup" often has associations of suffering and of the wrath of God (Ps. 75:8; Isa. 51:17, 22; Jer. 25:15; Ezek. 23:31-33, etc.; cf. Rev. 14:10; 16:19). We
cannot doubt but that in this solemn moment these are the thoughts that the term arouses. Weymouth renders, "cup of sorrow."  

12 Jesus' summary rejection of resistance leads immediately to his arrest. The conjunction of the word rendered "commander" with that translated "detachment of soldiers" seems to make it clear that a cohort of Roman soldiers and their officer are meant (cf. v. 3). Either term is used on occasion of something else, but the conjunction seems to be conclusive. The Jews are linked with them in the arrest. The reason for the binding of Jesus is not apparent. Since, however, there is no suggestion of escape, it must be simply the standard practice in arresting prisoners. There may also be something of a rebound from the soldiers' earlier fear. The Synoptists do not mention this detail. Contrariwise, John does not tell us, as they do, that the disciples all deserted Jesus and ran away (Mark 14:50).

B. THE JEWISH TRIAL AND THE DENIALS (18:13-27)

The narratives of the trial and of Peter's denials in the four Gospels are not easy to fit in with each other. The trial seems to have had several clearly defined stages. All our Gospels speak of a trial before the Jewish authorities (which had two or three stages) and another before Pilate. John is the only one of the four to tell us that Jesus appeared before Annas. There seems little doubt but that Jesus was first given an informal examination, and that he was later brought before the Sanhedrin for the formal sentence. Since the visit to Annas is mentioned only in John, some scholars hold that it should be rejected. But if nothing of the sort took place it is hard to understand why John says it did. It could not have been in order to secure Jesus' condemnation by Annas, for no such condemnation is recorded. Moreover, John was not ignorant of the fact that Jesus was brought before Caiaphas (v. 24), nor of the other fact that it was from Caiaphas that he was taken to Pilate (v. 28). Acceptance of John's story leads to fewer difficulties than its rejection.

Godet reminds us that according to Jewish law a prisoner could not be sentenced on the same day as his trial, and he connects the two examinations with this. The appearance before Annas did not fully meet the legal requirements, but "they must at least try to save appearances as far as possible, and to offer the semblance of a first preliminary meeting, before
that at which the sentence should be pronounced." It has been suggested that the house of Annas was not far from Gethsemane,\textsuperscript{29} and if this was the case it is unlikely that Annas would let the opportunity pass of having a preliminary examination of Jesus before sending him on to Caiaphas. It is also to be borne in mind that, though we naturally think of Jesus as being brought before Annas in that priest's house, his house is not mentioned in the narrative. It is possible that Annas saw Jesus in the Temple (so Barrett on v. 15). The references to the doorkeeper (vv. 16-17), however, make it more probable that a private house is meant, though not necessarily the house of Annas.

There are other difficulties that, it is suggested, may be solved by changes of order. Thus an examination took place before "the high priest" (v. 19), though Jesus was not sent to Caiaphas until verse 24.\textsuperscript{30} Again, John's scheme of things might be held to give us one denial by Peter in the courtyard of Annas and the other two in that of Caiaphas, whereas in the Synoptists the three denials follow on. But this does not necessarily mean a dislocation in John's original order. It is likely that John preserves the order of events, and in any case part of his aim appears to have been to contrast Jesus' steadfastness under stress with Peter's fickleness. This is well brought out by interposing the examination between two of the denials. Some more or less plausible alterations to the order of verses have been suggested,\textsuperscript{31} but these break down on the difficulty of explaining how the present order got into the vast majority of the MSS. No really convincing explanation has been given as to why an original tidy order with no or very little difficulty about Annas and Caiaphas and the denials should have been all but universally corrupted into the present scheme. There is also the suspicion that harmonizing motives have been at work. The Synoptists speak of an examination before Caiaphas, but John does not. If, however, we move verse 24 so that it precedes verse 14 an "agreement" is brought about. But unfortunately this introduces another difficulty: the subject matter of the examination here is different from that in the Synoptists. It is better to accept the order of the bulk of the MSS as John's original order, and to attempt to understand the text as it stands.

\textbf{1. Jesus Brought before Annas (18:13-14)}
13 . . . and brought him first to Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year. Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jews that it would be good if one man died for the people.

13 It might have been thought that Jesus would have been brought before Caiaphas, since he was the ruling high priest. But Annas had been high priest and may well have been thought by many to be still the only legitimate high priest. The high priesthood in the Old Testament was for life, and such depositions as the Romans carried out were not lawful. But we do not know how far people were prepared to accept the authority of the Romans in this matter. In any case Annas appears to have been a very wily man and well able to assert himself. Not only was he high priest, but in time five of his sons occupied that office, as did Caiaphas, his son-in-law. There is little doubt but that through these changes the astute old man at the head of the family exercised a good deal of authority. He was in all probability the real power in the land, whatever the legal technicalities. There is nothing surprising in Jesus' being brought before him, especially if his house was near the scene of the arrest. We owe to John the information that Caiaphas had married Annas's daughter, and John proceeds to tell us that this man held the office of high priest. "That year" (as in 11:49, 51) should not be taken to signify that John thought of the office as an annual one. It surely means "at that time," "that fateful year," "that year of all years." John tells us that Jesus was brought "first" to Annas. This requires a "second," which is evidently the appearance before Caiaphas (v. 24).

14 In John's mind the thing that marked out Caiaphas was his unconscious prophecy that Jesus would die for the people (11:49-50). So here he distinguishes him by referring back to this prophecy. His recall of those words may also be meant to indicate that Jesus might expect little from such a judge. Here was no idealist ready to see that justice was done, but a cynical politician who had already spoken in favor of Jesus' death.

2. Peter's First Denial (18:15-18)

Simon Peter and another disciple were following Jesus. Because this disciple was known to the high priest, he went with Jesus into the high priest's courtyard, but Peter had to wait outside at the door.
The other disciple, who was known to the high priest, came back, spoke to the girl on duty there and brought Peter in. 17 "Surely you are not another of this man's disciples?" the girl at the door asked Peter. He replied, "I am not." 18 It was cold, and the servants and officials stood around a fire they had made to keep warm. Peter also was standing with them, warming himself.

There are difficulties about the story of the denials. One of them arises from the fact that John separates the first denial (v. 17) from the second and third (v. 25-27) by interposing the story of the examination of Jesus before the high priest. To some this appears to place one denial in the courtyard of Annas and the others in that of Caiaphas (unless there has been dislocation of the text). This, however, does not follow. It is quite possible that Caiaphas and Annas shared the same palace (Godet holds that John's narrative leads us to this conclusion; Hendriksen and Dods also think of one residence). But even this is not necessary. Wherever they lived, it would have been quite possible for them both to have been in the same place on this particular night. In any case it is not necessary to postulate a change of courtyard. It is true that verse 24 speaks of Annas sending Jesus to Caiaphas, but this may be John's way of rounding off this part of his narrative. Then, having finished with Annas, he returns to complete the story of the denials. He does not speak of Peter as moving from one courtyard to another, and it is not necessary to read this into his narrative. Even if Jesus was taken from one building to another, or even from one part of Jerusalem to another, it does not follow that Peter moved between his denials. John does not always narrate events in strict sequence, and we have no reason for demanding this of him here. This still leaves us with the problem that, whereas the Synoptists tell of the three denials in order, John interposes an examination of Jesus by the high priest between the first and second. The Synoptists finish off their denial stories once they start, but this means neither that there was nor that there was not an interval between the denials. The Synoptists must not be pressed as though they meant that the denials followed in quick sequence and that nothing happened in between. They simply do not address themselves to the problem (except that Luke puts the second "a little later" than the first and the third "about an hour later" than the second, Luke 22:58-59). There is nothing unlikely about John's statement. On the contrary it seems probable that an interval of time
elapsed between Peter's withstanding of the challenge of the doorkeeper and the raising of the issue by the others.

15 The reason why Peter followed Jesus is not given. It is clear, though, that neither the incident with Malchus nor the subsequent flight of the disciples had completely shaken him. It is probable that he simply wished to see what the outcome of the arrest would be, and in any case it is natural in such a man to want to be near his Lord. Another disciple is now introduced, but not named. He is simply described as "known to the high priest." It has often been suggested that he was John, the beloved disciple. In favor of this is the fact that, if so, it would explain some of the peculiar knowledge of this Evangelist. It would mean that he had a close connection with Jerusalem and access to sources not normally open to the Christians. But against it is urged the improbability that a son of Zebedee would occupy a position of such eminence. Other names have been suggested, such as Joseph of Arimathea or Nicodemus. Such men would have the entree to the high priest's house and one of them may well have known Peter. But all this is conjecture. There is really no way of identifying him. But his acquaintance with the high priest was such that he was readily admitted to the courtyard, whereas Peter was not.

16 Peter stood outside at the door. But the unknown had sufficient influence to secure his admission. He spoke to the doorkeeper (for a female doorkeeper cf. Acts 12:13 and the references in MM), and this was enough to ensure that Peter came in.

17 But the doorkeeper clearly had some reservations. She proceeded to resolve her doubts by asking Peter whether he were one of Jesus disciples. All four Gospels agree that this first challenge came from a slave girl. It may be that this is part of the reason for Peter's fall. He may well have been nerving himself to face some stiff opposition. But instead he was asked a simple question by a little slave girl. Her question incidentally implies that the answer will be "No." "You aren't one of the disciples of this man, too, are you?" is the force of it, And Peter went along with this. "I am not," he said. The question suggested a line of escape and Peter gratefully took it up. Almost certainly he did not reflect where it would lead him. Once committed, he must have found it hard to go back on his denial.

18 Now we have a little detail about the circumstances. It was evidently a cold night, and the slaves and officers of the high priests had made a
charcoal\(^{44}\) fire in the courtyard. They were standing around it warming themselves and Peter joined them. There was possibly danger in this, but then there would probably have been danger in not doing it. It would have been conspicuous to stay in the courtyard, but away from the group. And in any case Peter was cold. He warmed himself with the others.

3. The Examination before Annas (18:19-24)

19Meanwhile, the high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and his teaching. 20"I have spoken openly to the world," Jesus replied. "I always taught in synagogues or at the temple, where all the Jews come together. I said nothing in secret. 21 Why question me? Ask those who heard me. Surely they know what I said." 22 When Jesus said this, one of the officials nearby struck him in the face. "Is that any way to answer the high priest?" he demanded. 23 "If I said something wrong," Jesus replied, "testify to what is wrong. But if I spoke the truth, why did you strike me?" 24 Then Annas sent him, still bound, to Caiaphas the high priest.

a. 24 Or (Now Annas had sent him, still bound, to Caiaphas the high priest.)

As we have already noted, none of the other Evangelists mentions that Jesus was brought before Annas. Moreover, John has already told us that Caiaphas was high priest at that time (v. 13). It is accordingly possible that this examination was in fact conducted by Caiaphas and not Annas (though in Annas's house). Sometimes this view is furthered by transferring verse 24 to a place between verses 13 and 14 (as one very old MS does), which would remove any doubt. But unless we resort to this tactic it is difficult to understand how the case can be made out. The natural force of the present arrangement of the text is that Jesus was brought before Annas first (v. 13), and that he remained there until that worthy sent him on to Caiaphas (v. 24). As already noted, there is evidence that men such as Annas who had once held the office of high priest were still called by that title. This would be all the more likely in the case of Annas in that he was in strictness still the legitimate high priest according to Jewish law.
The high priest interrogated Jesus. In a trial this was not legal, for Jewish law provided safeguards for the accused. He was not to be called upon to incriminate himself. The case had to be established by witnesses. It was the responsibility of Jesus' accusers to bring forth their witnesses; it was not his responsibility to demonstrate his innocence. Perhaps Annas regarded this as an informal inquiry, where the rules of court procedure would not apply. His question about the disciples is puzzling. One would have thought that they would have been known (though we must bear in mind that apparently those of the household did not know Peter by sight). But possibly the high priest was inquiring as to what they did, what was expected of them, rather than as to who they were. This is rendered all the more likely in that the other topic of his questioning was Jesus' teaching.

Jesus' reply does not mention the disciples. He is clearly determined to protect them to the end. This may be the significance of the fact that three times he uses the emphatic "I": 'I have spoken openly ... I always taught... they know what I said." He takes attention away from his followers and fixes it on himself. From our standpoint we might perhaps incline to regard his answer as uncooperative. It is not. Jesus is not refraining from any attempt to help the high priest or to let him know what he stood for. He is making the point that the high priest is not proceeding in the correct legal form. It was his duty to produce his witnesses (and in Jewish law witnesses for the defense should be called first). Jesus is saying that that should not be at all difficult. He had always spoken openly in places like the synagogues and the Temple. The Jews had heard him often. He had not taught in secret. There was no reason accordingly for addressing questions to him. The law has been set in motion. An arrest has been made. The right way to continue was to bring the witnesses and let them tell their story. We should not misunderstand what Jesus says about teaching in secret. He does not mean that he had nothing to say to his followers when they were away from the crowds. All four Gospels disprove this. What he means is that he did not have two kinds of teaching, a harmless one for the general public and a very different one for the secret revolutionaries. What he said to the disciples did but unfold the implications of his words to people at large. The essence of his teaching was public property.

One of the high priest's retainers did not like this independent tone, so he struck Jesus with his hand. He does not appear to have been a
person of any importance, being simply described as "one of the officials nearby." His action was, of course, a further illegality.\(^{54}\)

23 Jesus brings out the wrongness of this action by inviting the man to bear witness of any evil he has spoken. That is surely the right course of action. Incidentally it is worth noting that throughout this Gospel there is a stress on witness. It accords with this that now at the climax Jesus demands that his enemies bear witness. \(\text{REB}\) brings out the legal flavor of the term by rendering, "produce evidence to prove it." And if they cannot bear witness to any evil he has spoken, the question remains: "why did you strike me?"\(^{55}\)

24 This concludes the examination.\(^{56}\) Annas apparently decided that he would get nothing from such a prisoner, and sent\(^ {57}\) him on. Caiaphas would have to be the one to take action before Pilate, so to him Jesus must go. John notes that Jesus was "bound" as he was sent. Precisely opposite conclusions have been drawn from this. Some understand it to mean "still bound" (\(NIV,\ \text{Goodspeed}\)), "bound as he was," and infer that he had been bound throughout the interrogation. Others maintain that it was standard practice to free a prisoner's hands while he was examined, but that Jesus was now bound once more. There is no evidence, and we must decide the point on our estimate of the probabilities. John does not say that Jesus was sent to Caiaphas's house, and as far as the language of this verse is concerned he might have been sent to another room within the same building. Or he might have been sent to a session of the Sanhedrin in its normal meeting place, with Caiaphas presiding. In view of what the other Gospels tell us this is probably the way we should take it. The appearance before Annas was a preliminary inquiry after which more formal (though still not strictly legal) proceedings were taken before the Sanhedrin. That John does not say what this meeting did may perhaps be accounted for because he has already recorded a condemnation of Jesus by the Sanhedrin (11:47-53).

4. Peter's Second and Third Denials (18:25-27)

25 As Simon Peter stood warming himself, he was asked, "Surely you are not another of his disciples?" He denied it, saying, "I am not." 26 One of the high priest's servants, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, challenged him, "Didn't I see you with him in the
The sequence of the denials is now resumed. As noted earlier, the scene may still be the courtyard of Annas's house, or Annas and Caiaphas may have shared the same residence, in which case there would have been one courtyard. It is not impossible, as some commentators have thought, that Jesus was taken through the courtyard on the way to the wing where Caiaphas lived, and that this was the occasion for Jesus to turn and look at Peter just after the third denial (Luke 22:61). But we have no certain knowledge on these points.

25 As Peter was warming himself (the tense is continuous) another approach was made. There is a difficulty arising from the fact that the Gospels do not agree as to the way in which the question was put. John does not particularize, but simply says "they" spoke to him. Matthew and Mark men-tion a girl (Matt. 26:71; Mark 14:69; Mark appears to have in mind the same girl as on the first occasion, Matthew another one), while Luke speaks of a man (Luke 22:58). Our difficulty probably arises from the fact that we un-consciously think that in each case one person asked the question and that was that. A moment's reflection, however, shows that this would almost certainly not have been the case. With a group of servants talking informally around a fire in the courtyard, when one asked whether Peter were a disciple it is almost certain that others would take the question up, especially if there were any hesitation about the answer. Matthew and Mark do not say that their girls addressed Peter. They said, "This fellow was. . ." Clearly the servants, more especially the maidservants, were talking among themselves. Luke's "man" and John's "they" specifically address Peter. It is perhaps significant that Luke says Peter replied to the questioner ("Man, I don't know what you're talking about!"), whereas in the other three the denial is quite general and is not said to be addressed to the girls or to the crowd. 58 What certainly happened was that somebody posed the question and it was taken up by others. This is perfectly natural and seems implied by Mark. It is not to be understood that John's "they" means a chorus. It points rather to several people taking up the question from one another. 59 Mark says that the second denial took place in the porch (Mark 14:68; cf. Matt. 26:71), whereas John appears to mean that it took place in the courtyard. Hendriksen suggests that John omits Mark's second denial,
and he breaks up Mark's third into two. It might be better to break up the second, with Peter retreating to the porch after being challenged and there repeating his denial. In this case Mark would be speaking of the end, so to speak, of the second denial and John of its beginning. Again the form of the question looks for the answer, "No." This was the last place where one might expect to find one of Jesus' followers. This may explain why no attempt was made to hold Peter for questioning, though he was asked a number of times whether he followed Jesus. The question was indeed put, but the questioners did not treat the possibility seriously. And now, as before, they received a prompt and emphatic denial.

26 The last questioner was different, and his question looks for an affirmative answer. He was related to Malchus (only John tells us this), and therefore would have had a peculiar interest in the man who had struck out with a sword. But it had been done in an uncertain light, and the relative could not be absolutely sure that it was Peter that he had seen. All the more would this be so in that he was now seeing that apostle in a very dim light indeed. A charcoal fire glows red, but it does not emit bright flames. But he was more confident than the earlier questioners, as his words show. He refers to the incident, and asks whether he did not see Peter in the garden.

27 For the third time Peter denies any connection with Jesus. John does not give his exact words this time, but simply says, "Again Peter denied it." He records the fact that a rooster crowed at that moment (cf. 13:38), but he says nothing of its effect on Peter (Mark 14:72-73; Luke 22:62-63). Lightfoot points out that, except for Pilate's fear (19:8), no mention is made of people's emotions throughout chapters 18 and 19. John concentrates rather on the facts.

C. THE ROMAN TRIAL (18:28-19:16)

In contrast to his handling of the Jewish trial John gives considerable attention to the proceedings before the Romans. He scarcely notices the former, merely contenting himself with a sketchy account of Jesus' interview with Annas, and with the information that it was Caiaphas who sent Jesus on to Pilate. But when he comes to deal with what happened before Pilate his account is much fuller. This would probably have been of great interest to his readers, who must themselves have come in continual
contact with the Romans. And it was part of John's plan to show that Pilate both bore his testimony to the innocence of Jesus (18:38; 19:4, 6) and tried very hard to deliver him. It was only at the insistence of the high-priestly party that he finally consented to the crucifixion. John has several pieces of information that he alone supplies. Indeed, it is to John's account that we owe most of our knowledge of the Roman trial. The Synoptists allude but sketchily to Pilate's examination of Jesus. One example of our debt to John is the wonderful scene in which Jesus confronts Pilate (18:33-38). Westcott conjectures that John may well have entered the Praetorium and thus have been in a position to observe what was going on. He points out that apparently the only thing that kept the Jews outside was their fear of defilement, which would scarcely have deterred a follower of Jesus at that moment. Moreover, the man who entered the high priest's house would not have hesitated at the Praetorium. This is very possible, but we must bear in mind that it is all speculation. We do not know how John got his information.

1. Jesus Delivered Up to Pilate (18:28-32)

28 Then the Jews led Jesus from Caiaphas to the palace of the Roman governor. By now it was early morning, and to avoid ceremonial uncleanness the Jews did not enter the palace; they wanted to be able to eat the Passover. 29 So Pilate came out to them and asked, "What charges are you bringing against this man?" 30 "If he were not a criminal," they replied, "we would not have handed him over to you." 31 Pilate said, "Take him yourselves and judge him by your own law," "But we have no right to execute anyone," the Jews objected. 32 This happened so that the words Jesus had spoken indicating the kind of death he was going to die would be fulfilled.

John tells us nothing of what happened in the house of Caiaphas. He has already said that Jesus was brought there (v. 24), but he adds nothing to that. Evidently his source of information was connected with the house of Annas, for he says nothing about the trial of which the Synoptists write. He simply tells us that Caiaphas sent Jesus on. This opening paragraph of the Roman trial shows us Jesus in the hands of the Romans, and the Jews
unwilling either to see him freed or to enter the Romans' residence lest they be defiled. There is irony in John's concise story.

28 The Praetorium was the official residence of the Roman governor. They brought Jesus there from Caiaphas. John inserts a characteristic time note: "it was early" (for this term see on v. 27, and for John's habit of noting the time of day see on 1:39; NIV's "morning" is not in the Greek). If this word is used in the technical sense to denote the fourth watch of the night the time will have been before 6 a.m. It seems more likely that it was later than this. The day began at this hour, and there was a Jewish law that cases involving the death sentence could not be held during the night. The chief priests may well have held a session of the Sanhedrin after daybreak in order to give a semblance of legality to the proceedings (this would be the "second trial" of Mark 15:1). "Early" will then mean "in the early part of the day," perhaps between 6 a.m. and 7 a.m. We owe to this Evangelist the information that the Jewish leaders would not enter the Praetorium lest they contract defilement and render themselves unable to keep the feast. It was the rule that "The dwelling-places of gentiles are unclean." Any Jew who entered such a dwelling would immediately contract defilement, a defilement that lasted seven days. This would effectively prevent him from observing the feast. It is a curious commentary on human nature that they were scrupulous about contracting a defilement that would prevent them from keeping the feast on the due date, but they were not at all concerned about taking part in an act of judicial murder. And it is a characteristic example of John's irony that he simply mentions the fact without stopping to draw out its implications. For the bearing of this verse on the date of the crucifixion see Additional Note H, pp. 684-95.

29 Pilate is introduced into the narrative somewhat abruptly. John evidently regards him as quite well known. The governor reveals himself as very accommodating in the matter of Jewish scruples. Because the Jews would not go in he came out and asked what accusation they were making. This does not necessarily mean that he did not know what was in their mind. He is simply observing due form and asking for a formal charge.

30 Jesus' enemies were in a somewhat difficult position. They had no charge that would stand up in a Roman court of law, and they knew it. So they did not answer Pilate's question directly, but took refuge in a generality. They called Jesus "a criminal" and let it go at that. But this is
an allegation about his character, not an accusation that he has committed a specific crime. They imply that Pilate should trust them. They would not hand over to him anyone other than a criminal. It is possible that they were taken by surprise at Pilate's indication that he would try the case himself. They had had his cooperation in making the arrest; now they apparently expected that he would take their word for it that the man the Romans had helped to arrest was dangerous and should be executed.

Not unnaturally Pilate wants none of this. If there is no offense against Roman law, then let the Jews look to it themselves. They have their own procedures; they can judge him according to their own law. The Romans respected the laws and customs of conquered peoples and allowed them considerable latitude in their administration of justice. Their governor possessed the supreme power, the *imperium*, which meant that he did pretty much what he liked. But normally he would allow subject peoples to preserve their legal habits. All the more was this the case since the Romans did not normally set up a bureaucracy in conquered countries. The governor had enough assistants to enable him to deal with such matters as came within his purview. But of necessity he left much to the local courts.

Pilate's attitude brings out into the open the Jews' intention and their difficulty. They are out for an execution, and nothing less will suffice them. But they have difficulty in bringing this about and they look to Pilate to resolve their dilemma. The question of whether the Jews could or could not inflict the death penalty is a perplexing one, but the evidence as we have it appears to support John. In any case the Jews are determined to have Pilate pass sentence that will lead to crucifixion. Without ever explaining why, this Evangelist puts some emphasis on the fact that the death of Jesus was by crucifixion and not in some other way, as by stoning. Indeed, twice he records that Jesus escaped stoning (8:59; 10:31), and on another occasion he mentions that the disciples spoke strongly to prevent Jesus dying that way (11:8). By contrast he speaks of Jesus as being "lifted up" (3:14; 8:28) and says both that this signifies the manner of death that he would die (12:32-33), and that he "must" die in this way (12:34).

32 This is the fulfillment of another of Jesus' prophecies (cf. v. 9). Just as is the case with Scripture, a word of Jesus cannot lack fulfillment. The saying John has in mind is evidently "I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself" (12:32), for he uses exactly the same expression to describe that saying as he uses here. In view of the extreme
rarity of exact repetitions in this Gospel this must be held to be significant. Jesus' prophecy was that he would be crucified, and John now records its fulfillment. Caiaphas's determination to secure a crucifixion fulfills the divine purpose.\(^7^4\) This perhaps supports the view that the question at issue was not whether the Jews could execute a man, but the way in which he should die. John sees it as necessarily (and the Jews as demanding) a death by crucifixion. I do not understand how this is to be explained other than by reference to the curse: "anyone who is hung on a tree is under God's curse" (Deut. 21:23). Caiaphas would see this as a way of discrediting Jesus, John as the way Jesus took away the sin of the world.\(^7^5\)

2. Jesus Examined before Pilate (18:33-40)

33Pilate then went back inside the palace, summoned Jesus and asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews? " 34 "Is that your own idea," Jesus asked, "or did others talk to you about me?" 35 "Do you think I am a Jew? " Pilate replied. "It was your people and your chief priests who handed you over to me. What is it you have done?" 36 Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place." 37 "You are a king, then!" said Pilate. Jesus answered, "You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me." 38 "What is truth?" Pilate asked. With this he went out again to the Jews and said, "I find no basis for a charge against him. 39 But it is your custom for me to release to you one prisoner at the time of the Passover. Do you want me to release 'the king of the Jews'?" 40 They shouted back, "No, not him! Give us Barabbas!" Now Barabbas had taken part in a rebellion.

In a scene full of dramatic power John pictures for us the lowly majesty of Jesus confronting the proud majesty of Rome's representative. At this moment all the other actors in the passion disappear from the scene — Annas, Caiaphas, even the disciples with impetuous Peter at their head. Perhaps we should understand the Jews in the background to indicate that the power of the state is swayed by unseen forces. But what is basic is the confrontation of Caesar by Christ, with kingship as the topic for
ubtly, but very definitely, John brings out the supreme royalty of Jesus. He will be slain, but this does not detract from his majesty. He has committed no crime. As Caesar's representative inquires into what Jesus has done he soon comes to the conclusion that the prisoner is innocent. But to come to this conclusion and to act on it are two different things. Pilate does try, even if not very resolutely. He begins by attempting simply to release Jesus in accordance with the custom that a prisoner was set free at that feast. But he is met by the demand that a robber be released instead.

Having talked with the Jews, Pilate went back into the Praetorium to interrogate the prisoner. It is uncertain whether Jesus was brought into the Praetorium only at this point, or whether verse 28 means that he was then brought right inside the Praetorium. It would be interesting to know whether Pilate spoke Aramaic or whether he used Greek, the lingua franca of the Roman world. If the latter, the conversation will be reported in the language in which it was originally spoken. Pilate's opening question shows that more had been said by the Jews than is recorded. His "you" is emphatic: "Are you the king of the Jews?" In all four Gospels this is Pilate's first question to Jesus (Matt. 27:11; Mark 15:2; Luke 23:3), and in all four his "you" is emphatic. Pilate was incredulous. This man a king? From what he had been told he had clearly been expecting a revolutionary, one who set himself up as a monarch and who had styled himself "King of the Jews." One glance at his prisoner was enough for the governor to discern that it was fantastic to see Jesus in this role. Hence his incredulous question.

Jesus is interested to know whether this is Pilate's own line of questioning, or whether he has been coached by others. Pilcher brings out the significance of this. "If Pilate asked it of himself, the question would have meant, 'Art thou a political King, conspiring against Caesar'? If he had asked it of Caiaphas' prompting, it would have meant, 'Art Thou the Messianic King of Israel'?" The answer to the first question would have been, 'No'. The answer to the second question, 'Yes.' The question evokes a contemptuous response. "I am not a Jew, am I?" (C. B. Williams) is the force of it. Pilate cannot be expected to know about things of this kind from his own knowledge. The initiative came from "your people," and from this nation the chief priests are especially singled out for notice. So Pilate inquires what Jesus has done. That, for Pilate, is the important thing. He is not prepared to accept the accusation of the chief priests at its face value.
But something lies behind all this. What is it? Jesus has done something to arouse the hostility of the chief priests. Pilate wishes to drag this out into the open in order to see whether it is something that offends against Roman law or not.

36 Jesus' reply admits that there is a sense in which he has a "kingdom." But he stresses that it is not a kingdom as the world understands kingdoms.\textsuperscript{83} It does not take its origin from this world,\textsuperscript{84} and it is not basically connected with this world. To demonstrate his point Jesus points out that his followers are not engaging in any military activity.\textsuperscript{85} Had he been interested in what this world calls a "kingdom" a necessary first step would have been to recruit soldiers. His servants would be fighting men. But now, as things are, it is plain to all that he looks for no kingdom from this world. The words "to prevent my arrest by the Jews" are rather strange since he is being accused of being "the King of the Jews." But the setting of "the Jews" in opposition to "the King of the Jews" brings out the absurdity of the charge.

37 Pilate's words can be taken in more ways than one.\textsuperscript{86} They might be a statement, "Then (since you speak of a kingdom) you are a king." Or they might be spoken in irony, "So then, it is a king that you are!" More probably they are a question, but if so they will not be a simple request for information. Rather they will signify, "So you are a king?" with a note of irony, an irony underlined by the use of the emphatic pronoun you. Irony or not, the words affirm Jesus' kingship, one of John's great themes. Jesus' reply is not easy to translate. His "you say"\textsuperscript{87} does not negate Pilate's words, but it is not enthusiastic. "I didn't say that, but if you put it that way I can scarcely say 'No' " is about the force of it: "It is your word, not mine."\textsuperscript{88} The kingship that the Jews completely rejected and Pilate affirmed ironically is a fact. John will not let us miss it, though it is a very different kind of kingship from that of which Jesus' enemies spoke. Then Jesus proceeds to the kind of statement he prefers. His "I" stands in sharp contrast with "you"; he distances himself from Pilate. There is a purpose in his life, and this purpose concerns "the truth" (for this term see Additional Note D, pp. 259-62). He came to bear witness to the truth, to point people to the real truth. This is not the abstract concept of truth over against falsehood, but the religious truth that we have seen throughout this Gospel, a truth closely related to Jesus' person (14:6) as well as to his mission. And the witness
that he bears to this truth elicits a response from "everyone on the side of truth." Such will indeed hear Jesus and accept what he says.

Jesus goes on to speak of himself as having been born and as having come into the world, a most unusual statement. Both affirmations can be paralleled elsewhere, but the combination is unusual, and in this situation, unexpected. The governor might not have understood all the meaning that Jesus put into the expression but at least it would impress him with the fact that Jesus was an unusual person and, further, that he was speaking of an unusual entry into this world. It is difficult to see how the implication that Jesus is claiming preexistence is to be avoided. He is saying that he had a purpose in coming into the world in the first place.

Pilate dismisses the subject. It is difficult to be certain whether he is "jesting Pilate" or whether he is wistful — his words could be taken in either sense. Either way his question ends the interview. He does not wait for an answer, which indicates that he did not look to his prisoner for information on the subject. This does not mean that John feels that there is no answer. He records no answer in words, but the whole of the following narrative of the death and resurrection of Jesus is John's answer in action (see further Additional Note D, pp. 259-62). On the cross and at the empty tomb we may learn what God's truth is. But Pilate's question was not an attempt to add to his store of knowledge; it was no more than a way of dismissing the subject. Pilate has learned what he wants to know. Jesus is no revolutionary. He represents no danger to the state. He may safely be released, and indeed he ought in common justice to be released. Pilate accordingly sets himself to do this. He goes outside and speaks to the Jews. John does not refer to "the high priests" or the like. His words seem to mean that Pilate addresses himself to the crowd. He tells them that he has found no crime in Jesus. This statement is found three times altogether (here, and at 19:4, 6), characteristically with slight variations that do not affect the main sense. On this occasion Pilate evidently had in mind an appeal to the sympathies of the crowd. If they could be induced to give support to Jesus it would be easy to release him. It is possible, as Westcott thinks, that there was some division of opinion among the crowds, but that eventually the high priests prevailed (cf. Mark 15:11).

Pilate proposes to release Jesus. He draws attention to a custom that he speaks of as theirs ("it is your custom"), not as his own or that of the Romans. The custom of releasing a prisoner at Passover is not attested
elsewhere, but there is nothing inherently unlikely about it. Prisoners were sometimes released elsewhere on special occasions. The Synoptists do not add much to what John tells us; they simply refer to the custom as known and accepted. We learn from Mark 15:6 that the choice of prisoner to be released lay with the people. We would have gathered that from John's account, but he does not say so in so many words. Pilate was evidently trying to get the best of both worlds. If his plan succeeded he would be able to release Jesus, as he plainly wished to do. But he would also technically be convicting him, and by refraining from an acquittal he doubtless hoped to please the high-priestly party. In framing his question Pilate refers to Jesus as "the king of the Jews." The use of this full title might be expected to sway the people in Jesus' favor.

40 If that was the reason, the ploy failed. John tells us that the people cried out again (this last word is puzzling, as they have not been recorded as crying out up to this point; NIV has "back")\textsuperscript{95} emphatically refusing Jesus and asking for Barabbas.\textsuperscript{96} It may be that some, at any rate, from among the crowd had been hoping for the release of Barabbas, even before Jesus was arrested. It is very likely that his supporters had planned to take advantage of the custom. Even if this were not so, the crowd would surely have thought that Pilate should give them someone other than Jesus. There cannot have been many among them who thought of Jesus as a guilty man, and the amnesty was for the release of a criminal, not of a man undergoing trial and as yet uncondemned. The name Barabbas is thrust into the narrative without warning, and John proceeds to explain that its bearer was a brigand.\textsuperscript{97} Incidentally this is all he does tell us, and it is a mark of his capacity for concentrating on what matters for his story that he does not even tell us that Barabbas was released. Mark tells us that Barabbas was imprisoned with men who had taken part in an insurrection and who had committed murder during it (Mark 15:7), while Luke adds the point that Barabbas himself was a murderer (Luke 23:18-19). Matthew says that Barabbas was "a notorious prisoner" (Matt. 27:16).\textsuperscript{98} When all this is put together, it would seem that Barabbas was a member of the resistance movement. Because of his opposition to the Romans he would be a hero to many of the Jews, and they had no hesitation in preferring him to the Galilean. There is irony in the fact that the chief priests persuaded the people to ask for and secure the release of a man who was guilty of the very crime of which, though he was innocent, they accused Jesus.\textsuperscript{99}
ADDITIONAL NOTE H:
THE LAST SUPPER AND THE PASSOVER

A problem is posed by the fact that the Synoptic Gospels appear to record the Last Supper as a Passover meal (e.g., Mark 14:12ff.), while John seems to indicate that Jesus was crucified at the time when the Passover victims were being slain, so that the Last Supper preceded the Passover (John 13:1, 29; 18:28; 19:36).

The principal points urged in favor of the idea that the Last Supper was a Passover meal are as follows:

Additional Note H: The Last Supper and the Passover

1. There are explicit statements in Matt. 26:2, 17, 18, 19; Mark 14:1, 12, 14, 16; Luke 22:1, 7, 8, 11, 13, 15. These make it plain that the meal held by Jesus and his disciples was in fact a Passover.
2. The meal took place at night as commanded for the Passover, whereas other meals were normally held earlier in the day.
3. The participants reclined instead of sitting (which was the usual posture at ordinary meals). This point is not decisive, but as far as it goes it indicates the Passover.
4. A dish preceded the breaking of bread, whereas at meals other than the Passover the breaking of bread seems usually to have been the first part of the meal.
5. Red wine was drunk, as is prescribed for the Passover.
6. The meal ended with the singing of a hymn, which points to the Hallel at the end of the Passover meal,
7. After the meal Jesus went to Gethsemane, not to Bethany. Bethany was outside the area to which one might go on Passover night, but Gethsemane was not.
8. The words of institution remind us of the custom that the president at the Passover feast explained its significance.
9. The words "to give something to the poor" (13:29) may point to a giving of alms in connection with the feast.
10. The arguments against it may all be fairly disputed.
However, many scholars are not at all convinced and the following reasons are urged against the identification:

1. The bread is called ἄρτος, not ἄζυμα, but at the Passover unleavened bread would have been used. (The Eastern church uses leavened bread at Holy Communion; so apparently did the Western church until about the eleventh century.)

2. There is no mention of the characteristic articles eaten in the Passover feast, namely the paschal victim and the bitter herbs.

3. A common cup was used, whereas individual cups were prescribed for the Passover.

4. The Synoptists tell us that Jesus was not to be arrested during the feast (Matt. 26:5; Mark 14:2). If the Last Supper was the Passover, then he was arrested during the feast.

5. A number of events took place that it is urged were forbidden on the feast day:
   
   (a) Jesus' going to Gethsemane (which was outside the limits of Jerusalem).

   (b) The carrying of arms.

   (c) The session of the Sanhedrin and the condemnation of our Lord on the very night of the Passover.

   (d) The coming of Simon from the fields (Mark 15:21), which seems to mean that he had been working.

   (e) Joseph of Arimathea's purchase of linen on the eve of the feast.

   (f) The burial of the body.

6. The Passover was essentially a family meal, but this does not accord with the Last Supper. There are no women or children present as there would be in a family. And it is Jesus, not the paterfamilias, who presides.

7. There is a Jewish tradition that Jesus was executed "on the eve of the Passover" (Sanh. 43a).

8. The main weight of the case against rests on the Johannine chronology. At the beginning of the farewell discourse John says, "It was just before the Passover Feast. Jesus knew . . ." (John 13:1). It is not impossible to understand this as meaning that Jesus knew certain
things long before the feast. But it can also mean that the events now to be described took place before the feast began. A little later John says, with respect to a remark of Jesus to Judas, "Since Judas had charge of the money, some thought Jesus was telling him to buy what was needed for the Feast" (13:29), which looks as though the feast had not yet come. The next reference is usually held to be more important: "Then the Jews led Jesus from Caiaphas to the palace of the Roman governor. By now it was early morning, and to avoid ceremonial uncleanness the Jews did not enter the palace; they wanted to be able to eat the Passover" (18:28). This seems to mean that the Passover had not yet begun, and it is perhaps reinforced by a later statement, "it was the Preparation of the Passover" (19:14; NIV is not accurate). The doubt arises because "the Preparation" had become almost equivalent to "Friday" (from its use for "the Preparation of the Sabbath"). Thus the term probably means no more than "Friday in Passover week," "Passover Friday."  

Finally, John tells us that a soldier plunged a spear into the side of Jesus rather than breaking his legs, "These things happened so that the Scripture would be fulfilled: 'Not one of his bones will be broken' " (19:36). This appears to be a reference to the requirement that the bones of the Passover victim should not be broken (Exod. 12:46; Num. 9:12). It would seem that John means us to think that Jesus' death was the real Passover sacrifice (cf. the similar view of Paul, 1 Cor. 5:7).  

Such then is the evidence. It is possible to take up any one of a number of positions with respect to it. Confining ourselves to views that allow for substantial historicity in one or more accounts, the following views are possible:

1. The two accounts cannot be harmonized and John is to be preferred.
2. The two accounts cannot be harmonized and the Synoptists are to be preferred.
3. The Passover meal took place as in the Synoptists (i.e., the Last Supper was a Passover meal), and John is not really in contradiction.
4. The Passover took place as in John, and the Synoptists are not really in contradiction.
5. There are calendrical differences so that the Synoptists follow one reckoning and John another.

We need say little about the first two suggestions. The evidence has been summarized. If it be held that no harmonization is possible, then it is a matter of making up one's mind which is to be preferred. Most modern authorities prefer the first view.  

The third suggestion has been adopted by many scholars. On this view John 13:1 is interpreted to mean, "Before the paschal feast began, Jesus already knew that the time had come ..." (Knox's translation; so also Moffatt, Goodspeed, Amplified, Twentieth Century, etc.; Bultmann in his commentary supports this view, though he thinks there is textual confusion here). Grammatically εἰδῶς could be taken with the preceding as required by this translation, though it must be born in mind that ARV is also possible, "Now before the feast of the passover, Jesus knowing that his hour was come. . . ." The principal difficulty in the way of this is the expression "they wanted to be able to eat the Passover" (John 18:28; the same expression for "to eat the Passover" is used in Matt. 26:17; Mark 14:12; Luke 22:15). This has to be taken to mean, "keep the feast of unleavened bread" or perhaps to refer to one or other of the sacrificial meals included in this. In support of this are great names like Zahn and others, and more recently Geldenhuys has embraced this view. The great difficulty in the way of it is the fact that there does not appear to be an example of this expression from antiquity that does not mean "eat the passover supper." Geldenhuys cites examples of the use of τὸ πάσχα to denote the whole feast of unleavened bread (Luke 22:1; Acts 12:1), and says that "John himself frequently uses τὸ πάσχα in this sense, e.g. in John ii.13, vi.4, xi.55, xviii.39 etc.". But in none of these passages is it clear that τὸ πάσχα refers to the Feast of Unleavened Bread in distinction from the Passover supper itself. This is the crucial point. Geldenhuys does not notice that his position requires that τὸ πάσχα should mean not the Passover plus the Feast of Unleavened Bread, but, because on his view the Passover proper had already been eaten when the words of John 18:28 were spoken, the Feast of Unleavened Bread without the Passover. Ogg points out that some students
deny even the former possibility: "Passover, they maintain, never meant anything other than the Paschal Supper; and, had not the need been felt of harmonising the Synoptic and the Johannine Passion narratives, the idea of understanding it in any other way would never have occurred to anyone."\(^{110}\)

I doubt whether Ogg's extreme position can be maintained. The evidence of the New Testament itself, and the other evidence cited by Geldenhuys and others, is clear proof that the word could be used of more than the Paschal supper. But the words of Zahn are important: "the usage of the expression 'to eat the Passover' loosely and popularly for the entire seven days' or, properly, seven and a half days' feast, _beginning with the slaughter of the Passover Lamb_ is adequately attested."\(^{111}\) That the expression could apply to the Passover plus the Feast of Unleavened Bread is, in my opinion, clear. That it could be used of the Feast of Unleavened Bread without the Passover (which is what is required if John 18:28 is to be squared with the theory) is not.

This way of understanding the evidence perhaps cannot be ruled out as impossible. It has commended itself to scholars of great eminence. But it certainly comes a long way short of final demonstration. To my mind the absence of any example of the use of "the Passover" in the sense required is decisive. Until evidence is produced that "the Passover" can mean "the Feast of Unleavened Bread without the Passover," John 18:28 will remain a stumbling block. Carson holds that my contention "has little weight" because he is arguing, "not that 'the Passover' refers to the Feast of Unleavened Bread _apart from_ Passover, but to the _entire_ Passover festival." (p. 590). But he fails to deal with the point that on his view the Jews had already eaten the Passover meal. At the time of which John was writing nothing would have remained but the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Neither Carson nor anyone else known to me has produced evidence that the simple expression "the Passover" was ever used for the second part of the combined feast when the main part had already been eaten. It was the Passover supper that was the high point. It was that supper which gave its name to the whole. That it was possible to extend the word _Passover_ to include what remained after that supper had been eaten is one thing; that it could be used of that remainder by itself is quite another. The meaning here is surely as in _GNB_, "in order to be able to eat the Passover meal."\(^{112}\)

If we adopt number four, that the Passover took place at the time indicated in John, then the meal described in the Synoptics was not the
Passover. One suggestion is that it was a *kiddush.* This was a little ceremony observed by religious groups who met on the eve of a sabbath or festival "to say a prayer of sanctification (kiddush) of the day over a cup of wine." A difficulty that seems to most people to make the idea impossible is that if the Last Supper were a *kiddush* it must have been put back twenty-four hours. Jesus died on Friday afternoon, so the meal must have been held on Thursday evening. But the sabbath *kiddush* could not take place on Thursday evening, which would be twenty-four hours before the commencement of the day in question. The *kiddush* had to take place as the day was beginning, that is, on the Friday evening. It cannot have been the sabbath *kiddush.* Nor can it have been the Passover *kiddush,* for the Passover *kiddush* "is the opening of the Passover meal and is said over the first cup." It could not take place twenty-four hours earlier. It seems that the *kiddush* simply will not do.

Others feel that the situation is best met by thinking of the meal as a *haburah* meal, that is, a meal held by a small company of like-minded people. Dom Gregory Dix argues for this, and he makes the point that had the Eucharist been instituted at a Passover we should have expected it to be an annual observance. The weekly celebration corresponds rather to the *Haburah.* He also argues that Mark's account bears traces of adaptation to liturgical interest. The difficulty with this is that none of the *Haburoth* known to us quite fills the bill. A. J. B. Higgins cites E. Gaugler for the view that "the *haburah* was an association of a particular kind, concerned with the observance of the Torah and with the performance of religious duties including attendance at special ritual meals held in connection with circumcisions, engagements, weddings, and funerals. There is no evidence of any other meals being held by these *haburoth.*" Clearly Jesus and his followers do not form a group of this kind. N. Clark thinks that Higgins is too cavalier, but he likewise finds the *Haburah* hypothesis untenable.

Somewhat akin to this is G. D. Kilpatrick's idea. He agrees that Jeremias has disposed of the idea that the Last Supper was a *kiddush,* but on the basis of an examination of a Jewish romance, *Joseph and Asenath,* he argues that there were other possibilities. There is evidence for the existence of a Jewish religious meal quite distinct from the Passover and sufficiently similar to the Last Supper for these two to have a common origin independent of the Passover.
K. G. Kuhn gives this a somewhat greater precision by arguing from *Joseph and Asenath* to the meals of the Qumran covenanters. He argues that the Qumran cult meal gives us the clue to the Last Supper. There are four important points at which the Supper differs from the Passover, and in each it agrees with Qumran, namely: (1) It was confined to men, whereas the Passover was essentially a family observance with women and children present. (2) It was confined to the Twelve, the chosen members of Jesus' circle. (3) Jesus, not the *paterfamilias*, presides. (4) Jesus pronounces the benedictions over both bread and cup, whereas at the Passover the guest of honor was normally called on to give the benediction over "the cup of blessing." Such arguments provide food for thought, though they have not convinced all. Matthew Black, in fact, rejects any argument based on *Joseph and Asenath*, which he holds "is not only late ... but obviously, in its only available form, a christianized document, and cannot be admitted as evidence."

Another view is that the Supper was a special meal preceding the Passover. This seems more readily demonstrable than that the Synoptists regarded it as such. Any view that denies that the Synoptists regarded the Last Supper as a Passover meal seems unsatisfactory.

The idea that the Last Supper was not the Passover, but a meal of some such sort as those we have noticed cannot be ruled out absolutely. But it appears to be in conflict with the statements in the Synoptic Gospels, and few find the solution satisfactory. The Synoptists do seem to be talking about a Passover meal, and not about a meal of a quite different kind. As G. Ogg says, "According to all three Synoptists it was for a Paschal Supper that Jesus ordered preparation to be made, and that the meal to which he subsequently sat down with his disciples was such a supper is what all three of them plainly intend their readers to understand." Another suggestion is that Jesus anticipated the proper Passover date, knowing that he was about to be killed, and held his own Passover a day early. Against this Ogg quotes Luthardt: "A roasted lamb and a few cups of wine do not make a supper a passover supper. There would be needed in addition a series of ritual presuppositions or preliminaries (slaughtering in temple, etc.), which the individual could not supply for himself, and without which the passover meal was not conceivable for the Jewish consciousness."
Views such as these have not commended themselves as widely as those under heading three, but they cannot be ruled out altogether. While the kiddush view seems to be untenable it is not at all impossible that the Last Supper was a fellowship meal of some sort, but not the Passover. Since it was held very close to Passover time, and it was the only Passover the disciples held that year, for them it became the Passover. But there is a good deal of supposition about all such views.

The fifth view is that put forward originally by D. Chwolson and modified by Strack-Billerbeck. There is some evidence that the Pharisees and the Sadducees used slightly different calendars. For the calculation of the date of the Feast of Weeks there was the instruction "From the day after the Sabbath . . . count off seven full weeks" (Lev. 23:15). The Pharisees took "sabbath" to mean "festival," that is, the Passover, and they counted from the day following Passover whatever day of the week it was. The Sadducees took "sabbath" in its normal sense of the seventh day of the week, so they counted from the Sunday after Passover (Men. 10:3; Hag. 2:4). The Samaritans (or some of them) incidentally seem to have agreed with the Sadducees on this point, as did the Karaites and possibly others.

J. van Goudoever says, "In the beginning of our era there were two rival countings in Israel: a priestly and a more popular counting." He sees John's calendar as different from that in the Synoptics, and he regards it as a compromise between the Pharisaic and the Sadducean. The Talmud gives further evidence of calendrical confusion, as in the dispute recorded between R. Jose and the rabbis (Shab. 86b-87a), with the former holding that the New Moon was fixed on a Sunday and the latter that it came on a Monday. It is perhaps worth pointing out that Matthew may presuppose a different method of counting the beginning of the day when he says, "Now late on the sabbath day, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week" (Matt. 28:1). It is difficult to reconcile this with the view that the day began at sunset unless we translate "after the sabbath" (as NIV does).

J. Morgenstern in a series of articles in the Hebrew Union College Annual has argued that there were three different calendars in use in biblical times. This does not help us in our particular difficulty, but it reinforces the evidence for the use of differing calendars during the period under discussion.
A. Jaubert argues strongly that there were two calendars, the older, priestly calendar that we see in the Book of Jubilees, and the more usual one. She thinks that Jesus was arrested on the Wednesday, not Friday, of Holy Week, an arrangement that would give more time for the events between the arrest and the crucifixion, but that seems to be in conflict with statements in all four Gospels (Matt. 27:62; Mark 15:42; Luke 23:54; John 19:31, 42). This conflict, plus the speculative nature of some of her key material, makes it difficult to accept her theory in its entirety. But the evidence she brings forward strengthens the case for calendrical confusion at the time.

It is sometimes said that there is no evidence of divergent practice over against divergent theory. People might argue about the correct calendar, it is said, but they followed the official one. But this is surely refuted by the practice of the Qumran sect. They had strong views on the calendar and refused to abide by the rules of the Temple authorities, Matthew Black says forthrightly, "we can be certain that the Qumran sectarians or Essenes, an important and numerous minority in the Palestinian scene of the first century, did celebrate the Passover in the year of the Crucifixion at a different time from the official time promulgated by the Jerusalem Temple authorities." W. M. Christie cites a further example, which is even more relevant. He refers to an occasion when the Sadducees bribed witnesses to give false evidence as to the date of the New Moon. The Pharisaic rabbis, however, came to know what had happened and kept the feast on the correct day. The result was that "these were sitting down (reclining) to-day, and those were sitting down on the morrow." Here we have divergent practice as well as different ways of understanding the correct date. A point in favor of the calendar divergence view is that the accounts of the Last Supper make no mention of the lamb nor of such characteristic Passover dishes as the bitter herbs. If the Temple authorities held to one view of the correct day for the Passover and if Jesus and his followers held with those who accepted an alternative view, then they would not have been able to obtain a lamb duly sacrificed at the temple and their celebration would necessarily differ from what might have been expected. This is not final, but it may be a pointer.

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The evidence is thus confusing, and it is not in the least surprising that scholars have come to very different conclusions. I do not see how we can be dogmatic in our present state of knowledge. The most natural reading of the Synoptists shows the Last Supper there to be the Passover. The most natural reading of John shows that Jesus was crucified at the very time the Passover victims were slain in the Temple. While it is undoubtedly possible to interpret the accounts in such a way that we make them tell the same story, it seems better to see them as the result of following different calendars. According to the calendar Jesus was following the meal was the Passover. But the Temple authorities followed another, according to which the sacrificial victims were slain the next day. John appears to make use of this to bring out the truth that Christ was slain as our Passover.\textsuperscript{140}


\textbf{ADDITIONAL NOTE I: THE RIGHT OF THE JEWS TO INFlict THE DEATH PENALTY}

The statement in John 18:31 is categorical: the Jews had no legal right to inflict the death penalty. But the situation is complicated by the fact that the Romans clearly had no hand in the execution of Stephen. It is, of course, possible to regard this death as a lynching rather than an official legal execution. Against this, Stephen was brought before the Sanhedrin (Acts
6:12), presided over by the high priest (Acts 7:1). There were wild scenes at the end of his speech (Acts 7:54, 57), but on the other hand the stoning may have taken place in proper legal form, for the witnesses laid down their clothes, apparently in an orderly manner, at the feet of a young man called Saul (Acts 7:58).

Josephus mentions another stoning at a slightly later time, namely that of James the Lord's brother. But this was carried out at a time when there was no governor in the country and Josephus makes it clear that it was considered highly irregular. Indeed, the high priest was deposed on account of it. The Mishnah, in addition to giving many and detailed regulations about the methods of execution, tells us that R. Eliezer spoke of the execution of a priest's daughter for adultery.

It is argued that the inscription prescribing the death penalty for any Gentile who entered the inner courts of the Temple presupposes the right to carry out the death sentence. Even Romans were subject to this penalty. Actually this proves the opposite. It was a special concession granted by the Romans on account of the delicate situation in Jerusalem. Had the Sanhedrin possessed this power there would have been no necessity for the special arrangement. In any case this provision applied expressly to Gentiles; it gave the Sanhedrin no rights whatever against Jews. Further, certain statements in Josephus appear to mean that only the Romans could inflict the death sentence. There is also a Jewish tradition that the right of executing the death penalty was taken from the Jews forty years before the destruction of the Temple. It is inherently likely that the Romans would forbid the Jews to execute people, for to permit such a practice would open up the way for subject peoples to engage in judicial executions of the supporters of Rome. The number of executions cited by those who hold that the Jews did have the right to carry out the death penalty is very low indeed, which seems to indicate that the procedure was rare and irregular.

The facts are best explained if we hold that the Romans retained for themselves the right to impose the death penalty, but that, in exceptional circumstances, when there was considerable popular support, the Jews might take the law into their own hands without much fear of Roman reprisals. Another view, which amounts to much the same thing, is that they could pass the death sentence, but carry it out only when the Roman authorities confirmed it. On this occasion, however, the amount of popular
support on which the priests could rely was very uncertain. They themselves feared to arrest Jesus during the feast lest there be a riot (Mark 14:2). Clearly this was a time for sticking to the letter of the regulations, and getting the Romans to take action (and bear the responsibility!).

Hoskyns has the interesting view that the use of the verb ἀποκτείνω is important. He holds that it means death by crucifixion and not by stoning (the Jews would not have regarded stoning as "killing" any more than did the officers of the Inquisition the burning of a heretic). The Jews, he thinks, could stone a man but not crucify him. On this occasion they wanted the penalty to be that for sedition, not blasphemy. Hoskyns takes the words, "judge him by your own law," as permission to carry out a stoning. This is perhaps possible, but it falls a long way short of demonstration. Michaels regards "Hoskyns' extremely subtle distinction between killing and the shedding of blood" as doubtful. He argues that 18:31 means that Jesus "has not been convicted of any crime by the Sanhedrin" (NTS, 36 [1990], pp. 474-79; the quotations are from pp. 478 and 478-79). But in this he seems to be over-looking the force of 11:53. His discussion is interesting but not convincing as to the latter point. Incidentally, Chrysostom long ago maintained that the Jews could stone Jesus but that they wanted a crucifixion. Strachan should also be mentioned. He thinks that the Jews retained the right to stone for religious offenses, but that they had no such right in cases of sedition. For reasons of their own they wanted Jesus convicted of the latter offense, which meant crucifixion by the Romans.

The best discussion still appears to be that of A. N. Sherwin-White. He makes it clear that "the capital power was the most jealously guarded of all the attributes of government, not even entrusted to the principal assistants of the governors," and that the available evidence strongly supports John's statement.
1. Cf. Murray: John "has no wish to conceal or deny the reality of the deep waters through which the soul of Jesus had to pass. He has already recorded (12:27) an agony in the Temple Courts. But he seems to have felt, as he looked back over the whole story, that there was another side even to the human experience than that which met the eye. We have already seen that to him the Cross, so far from connoting humiliation and defeat, was the symbol of uplifting, of glory, and of victory. So here, he is content to recall the spiritual struggle by a single phrase (verse 11). He records exclusively words and deeds which shewed that Jesus remained throughout absolute master of the situation. He is so, of course, even in the Synoptic account: but there is so much else in the picture that the fact may easily be overlooked."

2. This is one of only three places in which John uses the preposition σύν (elsewhere, 12:2; 21:3). Some make a distinction of meaning between σύν τοίς μαθηταῖς here and μετά τῶν μαθητῶν in the next verse, but it is better to see this as another example of Johannine variation.

3. His word is κήπος (which some render "orchard"). Matthew and Mark call it a χωρίον (Matt. 26:36; Mark 14:32), while Luke simply says that they went to the Mount of Olives (Luke 22:39). Clearly the place was situated on the lower slopes of Olivet, though we cannot be sure exactly where. A very old garden with olive trees is the traditional site, and it may be correct. But it is impossible to be certain. Indeed, there may be significance in the use of ἦν, "there was (not is) a garden." It may perhaps indicate that the garden had been destroyed by the time the Gospel was written. The verbs "went into" and later "went out" (v. 4) seem to indicate a walled garden.

4. The reading τοῦ Κέδρων, though supported only by A pc lat, has much to commend it, the other two variants, τοῦ Κέδρου and τῶν Κεδρῶν, having the appearance of corrections. This will indicate that the name of the brook was Κεδρών, the word being indeclinable. Some think that the plural article should be read to give the meaning "the brook of the cedars" (τῶν Κέδρων), but this seems less probable. As far as is known, no cedars grew there, and this looks like an attempt at providing an etymology for a previously existent name. Κεδρών is the transliteration of the Hebrew Ḥēber, which appears to have the meaning "dark." The connection with "cedar" is purely fortuitous. The Kedron is described as a χείμαρρος, that is a wadi for the most part dry in summer, but with a flowing stream in winter. John is the only New Testament writer to speak of it.

5. The word is σπείρα, "the Gk. word used to transl. the Lat. 'cohors'. ... In our lit. prob. always cohort" (BAGD). A cohort was the tenth part of a legion and thus normally compromised 600 men (though in practice the number varied a good deal). It was com-manded by a χιλίαρχος (cf. v. 12). John will not, of course, mean that 600 or so soldiers took part in the arrest but that the "cohort" performed the task; in other words, a detachment was sent. Some point out that σπείρα was used on occasion of a maniple, which was one third of a cohort, that is, 200 men. But even this is rather large. John is surely not saying that the whole σπείρα was present, but rather using a form of speech like our "the police came to arrest the man." Yet we must bear in mind that the Romans could use surprisingly large numbers of soldiers where one prisoner was in question (Acts 23:23), and that here they may well have feared a riot.

6. 1994b.

7. Robinson points out that all the Synoptists say that Jesus asked "Do you take me for a bandit (ληστής) . . . ?" and proceeds, "Now if we ask whom we should expect to arrest such a terrorist or freedom fighter, there can only be one answer," and he proceeds to ask who arrested Barabbas whom John calls a ληστής (Priority, p. 241). It is no marvel that the Jews were able to enlist the aid of the Romans in arresting Jesus.

8. The Temple guard was unarmed on occasion (cf. Josephus, Bell. 4.293), but now they, as well as the soldiers, carried weapons.

9. John mentions φανοί as well as λαμπάδες. Commentators cite a statement from Phrynichus that shows that in earlier days the two terms were synonymous. By New Testament times, however, φανοὶ had come to mean a lantern, λαμπάς denoted a torch, made of resinous strips of wood fastened
together. It is sometimes rendered "lamp" in the New Testament, but Plummer suggests that this translation is best left for λύχνος. There is a good discussion of "The Household Lamps of Palestine in New Testament Times" by Robert Houston Smith in BA, XXIX (Feb. 1966), pp. 2-27. He agrees that λαμπάς here denotes a torch, though it will be a lamp in the story of the Ten Virgins (J. Jeremias, however, argues for torches as the meaning here also; "Lampades in Mt 25.1-13," in Soli Deo Gloria, ed. J. McD. Richards [Richmond, Va., 1968], pp. 83ff.). He thinks of φανοί as "roughly cylindrical terracotta vessels with an opening on one side large enough for a household lamp to be inserted, its wick facing outward; a ceramic ring — or strap — handle on the top permitted easy carrying. Occasionally lanterns may have had built-in lamps" (p. 7; no lanterns of precisely this period are known, but Smith describes what are found both before and after).

10. "The objection that lanterns would not have been needed for this was the time of the nearly full paschal moon is weak: common sense indicates that an olive grove would have had dark corners in which a man might hide" (Brown).

11. ἐξήλθεν, corresponding to εἰσῆλθεν (v. 1), probably means that he went out from the Garden. Others suggest that it means out of the gloom into the light of the torches, or out of the recesses of the garden into the open places where the soldiers were.

12. Ἰησούν τον Ναζωραΐον. Jesus is characteristically designated by this term (Ναζωραῖος is found 13 times and Ναζαρηνός 6 times). Its meaning is not certain, and many have pointed out that linguistically the transition from Ναζαρέτ to Ναζωραῖος is not easy. However, it appears to have been made, for there can be no doubt but that in the New Testament Ναζωραῖος = ὁ ἂπο Ναζαρέτ. See the note by G. F. Moore in The Beginnings of Christianity, I (London, 1920), pp. 426-32, and the literature cited in BAGD.

13. Dodd reminds us that the repetition of the saying in the two following verses is not unlike that of ὁ υἱός σου ζη in 4:50, 51, 53. He adds, "In each place an expression entirely natural in the circumstances is given a special importance by a repetition which is sufficiently unnatural to draw the reader's attention" (HTFG, p. 75, n, 2).

14. "Normally such a person would attempt to escape or to defend himself. But a man who in such a situation showed himself fully aware, dignified and active, could not but provoke a moment of uncertainty among a band of ruffians" (de la Potterie, p. 57).

15. The construction εἰ...ζητεῖτε conveys the sense "If (as is the case) you seek me." Jesus accepts the concentration of their attention on himself in order to ensure the freedom of his followers.

16. For Ἡ τον without a preceding principal verb see on 1:8.

17. For the redundant pronoun see on 1:27.

18. μάχαιρα denotes a long knife or a short sword φομφαία being the large sword). It is frequently said that it was illegal to carry such a weapon at Passover. J. Jeremias disposes of this contention by drawing attention to Mishnah Shab. 6:4, wherein R. Eliezer declares that a man's weapons, including his sword, are his "adornments" and therefore legal. Jeremias contends that R. Eliezer is "the constant champion of the earlier tradition" (The Eucharistic Words of Jesus [Oxford, 1955], p. 50). This may be so, but in the passage in question Eliezer is cited for a dissenting opinion, the one put forward being that the weapons are not legal. Jeremias's argument can scarcely be called impressive. This does not, however, mean that it cannot have been the feast. Desperate men do not normally respect ecclesiastical niceties.

19. This is more probable than the view of A. J. Droge that "the author intended to draw attention again to his (i.e. Peter's) obtuseness and inability to comprehend who Jesus was and what he was about to do"; "It is to reveal Peter as one who is not a ὑπηρετής of Jesus" (JBL, 109 [1990], pp. 310, 311). Droge overlooks the fact that in the crisis not only Peter but all the Twelve were found wanting.

20. D. Daube draws attention to Jewish passages referring to the slitting of men's ears as a means of disqualifying them for priestly office and he thinks that the high priest was being insulted through his servant: "he would be seriously and suggestively disgraced by having his servant
mutilated in this particular manner” (JThS, n.s., XI [1960], p. 61). There may be something in this, but I am inclined to think that the striking of the ear was probably not deliberate. After all it is a small target, and Peter was not an expert swordsman. It is more likely that he struck out wildly in the general direction of the head and in the uncertain light hit only the ear.

21. Calvin comments: “it was exceedingly thoughtless in Peter to try to prove his faith by the sword, while he could not do so by his tongue. When he is called to make confession, he denies; but now unbidden by his Master he raises a riot. Warned by such a striking example, let us learn to moderate our zeal. And as the wantonness of our flesh ever itches to dare more than God commands, let us learn that our zeal will turn out badly whenever we dare to undertake anything beyond God's Word.”

22. The verb is βάλε.

23. The emphatic οὐ μή leaves no room for doubt.

24. John does not mention Jesus' agony in the Garden but de la Potterie points out that these words show that he was aware of it (p. 46).

25. ὁ χιλιάρχος and ἡ σπείρα. The former term may, of course, be used of officers other than the tribune, the commander of a cohort; see, for example, Mark 6:21; Rev. 6:15; 19:18. But it is generally used in the technical sense, and the conjunction here with σπείρα seems to put the matter beyond doubt.


27. Cf. Moffatt, "the insuperable difficulty about eliminating the Annas trial is the impossibility of detecting any adequate motive for its invention and introduction" (HDCG. II, p. 751).

28. Lord Chamwood comments that in this scene "there is no doctrinal purpose served, but it is a scene full of character and life, which really enriches the history which we obtain as a whole when we take the Gospels together" (According to John [London, n.d.], p. 99).

29. MacGregor thinks that Annas may have resided at the "bazaars of the sons of Hanan," and that these were on the Mount of Olives. If this were so Annas would have lived close to the place of arrest and it would be very natural to take Jesus there. Calvin also suggests that Annas's house may have been convenient to the place of arrest. But there does not appear to be a great deal of evidence to support the conjecture.

30. It is to be borne in mind that all who had held the office of high priest were designated by the term. Josephus affords a number of examples (e.g., Bell. 4.151, 160). Thus Annas may well be meant (though the reference to Caiaphas in v. 13 makes this less likely. Annas is specifically referred to as high priest (Luke 3:2; Acts 4:6). It is also to be borne in mind that John uses the plural "high priests" in verse 35. It is difficult to envisage what this means unless Annas was included. It is best to retain the order and take the term here to refer to Annas.

31. Some interpreters lay stress on the fact that the Sinaite Syriac has the order 13,24, 14-15,19-23,16-18, 25. Such an order makes sense, but it is more likely that some scribe altered the accepted order to this one because of the difficulties he saw in the text than that this MS alone preserves the correct order. The simplest alternative is to read verse 24 immediately after v. 13. Torrey suggests that this was the original order. He thinks that a scribe when writing verse 13 had in his mind 11:51, so that his eye naturally alighted on verse 14. Having written it, he realized that he had omitted a verse and, to repair the damage, inserted the omitted words at the first opportunity, in
this case after verse 23. But it is too much to say, with Torrey, "the explanation is both simple and
certain." In fact it is neither. And it gives no account of the fact that the MSS almost unanimously
have the present order. This is the big stumbling block. Why should the overwhelming majority of
scribes transform their intelligible order of verses to conform to this one scribe's error (which Torrey
thinks "presents a most astonishing contradiction")? Had scribes no capacity for astonishment?

32. Cf. Barclay, "If the stalls in the Temple which Jesus had overturned really were the property
of Annas and his family, no doubt Annas used his position to arrange that Jesus should be brought to
him first, that he might gloat over the downfall of the presumptuous Galilean" (Crucified and
Crowned, p. 61).

33. For John's use of ἄνθρωπος of Jesus see on 4:29.

34. Cf. Chrysostom, "no one should wonder that he followed, or cry him up for his manliness.
But the wonder was that matter of Peter, that being in such fear, he came even as far as the hall, when
the others had retreated. His coming thither was caused by love, his not entering within by distress
and fear" (83.2; p. 308).

35. On this point cf. Dodd, "It is now generally recognized that γνωστός implies something
more than mere acquaintance. It means that the person so described was a member of the High
Priest's circle, possibly a kinsman and himself of priestly birth, or at any rate one who stood in
intimate relations with the governing high priestly family" (HTFG, pp. 86-87). Horsley provides
documentary evidence for the use of the term in the papyri in the sense "close friend" (New Docs. 4,
p. 143).

36. Murray takes this for granted. Westcott thinks that "The reader cannot fail to identify the
disciple with St. John" (the expression used here, ἀλλός μαθητής, is used of the beloved disciple in
20:2, 3, 4, 8). Calvin, however, calls this "a weak conjecture."

37. It is possible to account for it, however. One line of argument is that John seems to have
come from a priestly family. The woman Salome, who stood by the cross of Jesus, appears to have
been his mother, as a comparison of Mark 15:40 and Matt. 27:56 shows. John does not mention
Salome, nor his own mother specifically, but he does speak of the Virgin Mary's sister (John 19:25)
in such a way as to lead to the conclusion that she is Salome. Now Mary was related to Elizabeth
(Luke 1:36), who is called one of "the daughters of Aaron" (Luke 1:5). Salome thus had priestly
connections. The conclusion is that John came from a priestly family and could well have come in
contact with the high priest in connection with his priestly duties. This is supported by the passage in
the letter of Polycrates (c. a.d. 190) which says that John "was a priest wearing τὸ πέταλον" (Eusebius,
HE 3.31.3). The passage is obscure. It is not known for certain what the πέταλον was, nor
whether others than the high priest might wear it. But Polycrates certainly supports the view that
John was a priest. There is nothing improbable about all this, but the reasoning comes short of proof.
Others point out that there was a large trade in salt fish between Galilee and Jerusalem and that
Zebedee was a sufficiently well-established citizen to employ workmen (Mark 1:20). They suggest
that there is nothing unlikely in holding that merchants in a big way may have had contacts with the
high priest, possibly even to the extent of supplying his household with fish. This, again, is possible,
but it cannot be demonstrated. The most that we can say is that quite reasonable ways in which the
son of Zebedee might have become known to the high priest have been suggested.

38. The expression πρὸς τῇ θύρᾳ is to be noted, for πρὸς with the dative is found in this Gospel
four times only, here, 20:11, 12 (bis) (by contrast John uses this preposition with the accusative 97
times). In each of the four cases close proximity is signified.

39. The subject of εἰσήγαγεν is uncertain. The meaning might be "he brought Peter in" or "she
admitted Peter."

40. The question is introduced by μή, as is that in verse 25. But in verse 26 there is a change to
ό. Moffatt misses this by rendering all three questions as though the answer expected was "Yes."
Rieu translates here, "Surely you are not another of that man's disciples?" (as NIV). He has a similar
rendering in verse 25, but in verse 26: "Didn't I see you with him in the garden?" This is surely the way the Greek should be understood.

41. Temple (on vv. 25-27) remarks that "To accept the suggestion" of this first question "is scarcely more than a refusal to look for trouble. The suggestion is that he is not likely to be a disciple, and no one will suppose he is unless he says so; he had little more to do than to let well alone. But that little more is fatal."

42. οί δούλοι will be the high priest's slaves and οί ύπηρέται members of the temple guard (cf. v. 3).

43. The perfect πεποιηκότες seems a little strange. But John is fond of the perfect and there may be no more significance in it than that.

44. John alone speaks of a charcoal fire. He uses ἀνθρακία again in 21:9, the only places where the word occurs in the New Testament. In both it is a mark of his fondness for exact detail.

45. According to Barrett this is not attested explicitly before Maimonides. But he agrees with Abrahams that the earlier texts that we have imply the principle. Barclay says: "One curious feature of legal procedure in the Sanhedrin was that the man involved was held to be absolutely innocent, and, indeed, not even on trial, until the evidence of the witnesses had been stated and confirmed. The argument about the case could only begin when the testimony of the witnesses was given and confirmed. That is the point of the conversation between Jesus and Annas in John 18.19-21. Jesus in that incident was reminding Annas that he had no right to ask him anything until the evidence of witnesses had been taken and found to agree" (Crucified and Crowned, p. 58).

46. Hendriksen thinks the order of the questions, first the disciples and then the teaching, is significant: "That is exactly what one can expect from Annas! He was far more interested in the 'success' of Jesus — how large was his following? — than in the truthfulness or untruthfulness of that which he had been teaching. That is ever the way of the world."

47. Josephus records that a certain Samaias, "an upright man," said that everyone who came before the Sanhedrin "has shown himself humble and has assumed the manner of one who is fearful and seeks mercy" (Ant. 14.172; Brown draws attention to this passage). Jesus' demeanor must have been very unusual.

48. παρρησία, "openly," is a word that is often rendered "boldly" so that here there will be the thought of outspokenness as well as of publicity.

49. There is no article with ἐν συναγωγῇ, "in synagogue," that is, in the synagogues generally. But there was only one temple, so that the next phrase is ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ.

50. The perfect άκηκοότας may mean "heard and retained."

51. ούτοι and ἐγώ are set in balance at opposite ends of the clause. This puts a certain emphasis on both words and sets them in contrast to one another.

52. Lagrange makes the interesting point that the interrogation was necessarily self-defeating. Annas was looking for something Jesus had not disclosed in his public teaching; that is, the high priest thought Jesus had dissembled. But "What would be the use of his own testimony if one suspected him of having concealed his teaching?"

53. ράπισμα originally meant a blow with a rod or the like, but it came to mean a blow struck with the open hand, a slap, and especially a slap in the face. This seems to be its New Testament meaning. In the New Testament it is found only in the passion narratives (Mark 14:65; John 19:3), and Dodd thinks it may have been suggested from its use in Isa. 50:6 (HTFG, p. 39, n. 3).

54. Commentators sometimes cite this incident as evidence that the examination must have been informal. They reason that before the Sanhedrin an official would not behave in this fashion. It is, however, recorded in the Talmud that in a case before R. Papa an attendant "nudged" (or "kicked"; the verb is פן) one of the parties to make him stand (Sheb. 30b). The inquiry before Annas may well have been informal, but this incident from the Talmud shows that the blow in the face does not prove it.
Those who complain that Jesus is not obeying his own injunction to turn the other cheek (Matt. 5:39) were answered long ago by Augustine: "those great precepts of His are to be fulfilled not by bodily ostentation, but by the preparation of the heart. For it is possible that even an angry man may visibly hold out his other cheek. How much better, then, is it for one who is inwardly pacified to make a truthful answer, and with tranquil mind hold himself ready for the endurance of heavier sufferings to come" (61.4; p. 420).

56. Cf. Hamilton: "the examination is inadequate, illegal, and, in verse 22, brutal."

57. KJV translates the aorist ἀπέστειλεν "had sent." This is a way of getting around the difficulty of the examination before Annas and not Caiaphas. It indicates that, though it is only now mentioned that Jesus has been sent to Caiaphas, this in fact took place earlier. The examination will then have taken place before Caiaphas. But it is more than doubtful whether the translation is legitimate (though it is adopted by Knox). The aorist can, of course, on occasion be rendered by the English pluperfect. But there is nothing in the present context to indicate it and the οὖν makes it very unlikely. Burton, indeed, sees the "valid objection" to the pluperfect "in the presence of οὖν, which is, in John especially, so constantly continuative, and in the absence of any intimation in the context that the events are related out of their chronological order" (Moods, 48).

58. Mark uses the imperfect ἔρνείτο of the second denial (Mark 14:70), whereas he prefers the aorist in the other two cases. This may point to a continuing action. The question kept getting put and Peter kept denying.

59. Milligan and Moulton see in this sort of thing the explanation of all the apparent discrepancies in the stories of the denials. "Not one only but many of the eager and excited spectators would ask the question, and of that number Luke and John might easily single out the person peculiarly prominent" (the last words apply to the third denial).

60. Barclay has a helpful comment: "it was the real Peter who protested his loyalty in the upper room; it was the real Peter who drew his lonely sword in the moonlight of the garden; it was the real Peter who followed Jesus, because he could not leave his Lord alone; it was not the real Peter who cracked beneath the tension and who denied his Lord. And that is just what Jesus could see. . . . The forgiving love of Jesus is so great that He sees our real personality, not in our faithlessness, but in our loyalty, not in our defeat by sin, but in our reaching after goodness, even when we are defeated."

61. A number of scholars think that not an actual rooster's crow is meant, but the bugle call that ended the third watch of the night, the gallicinium, or in Greek, ἀλεκτοροφωνία. This would give a precise time by which Jesus prophesied the denials. Bernard points out that the four watches of the night were called όψε, μεσονύκτιον, ἀλεκτοροφωνία, and πρωί, so that if the trumpet sound were meant there would be singular appropriateness in the use of πρωί in verse 28. The events of that verse would then take place during the period technically known as πρωί. As noted there, however, this is not likely. In any case it is not certain that the Jews (as opposed to the Romans) divided the night into four watches. The Talmud describes a dispute as to whether there were three or four watches, and seems to favor the view that there were three.

62. The traditional view is that Pilate's residence was in the tower of Antonia. This may be right, but it is difficult to find evidence to support it. Philo tells us that on one occasion Pilate hung up some shields in Herod's palace (Leg. ad Gai. 299). Some years later Florus when governor lodged in the same palace (Josephus, Bell. 2.301, 328). This evidence is not enough to prove that Pilate must have lodged there and the whole matter must be regarded as uncertain (though many scholars accept the view that Herod's palace was the Praetorium in Jerusalem). In any case it would have been a temporary residence, for the Roman governor lived in the Praetorium at Caesarea (Acts 23:35).

63. Roman courts seem to have begun the day quite early, so that there would have been no great impropriety in seeking Pilate around dawn. Seneca speaks of "thousands hurrying to the forum at break of day — how base their cases, and how much baser are their advocates!" (De Ira 2.7.3; Loeb translation). Martial, it is true, mentions the third hour: "The first and the second hour wearies
clients at the levee, the third hour sets hoarse advocates to work" (Epigrams 4.8.1-2; Loeb translation). But this can scarcely be taken to mean that the courts did not begin until the third hour.

64. Mishnah Ohol. 18:7. This does not apply to colonnades (Ohol. 18:9), to the open space in a courtyard, and to certain other appurtenances to the dwelling (Ohol. 18:10). Thus the Jews would be able to appear before the Praetorium, but not to enter it.

65. Barrett in his first edition accuses John of error here, saying, "The uncleanness the Jews would have incurred by entering the Praetorium would last only till the end of the day when it could be removed by a bath; in the immediately ensuing evening (the beginning of the next day) the Passover could be eaten." But in his second edition he recognizes that the situation is not so simple. He now says that "the controlling biblical passage" is Num. 9:7-10, which means uncleanness for seven days (those made unclean in this way were to keep the Passover a month later). But he holds that a division of opinion between the schools of Hillel and Shammai complicates the situation and he argues that "John's statement therefore that the Jews acted as they did in order that they might be able to eat the Passover is questionable." But the dispute between Hillel and Shammai concerned the admission to the feast or exclusion from it of someone made a proselyte on the day before Passover. It is irrelevant to the present discussion. It is not a response to the fact that if the priests had become defiled at that time they would have been prevented from eating the Passover that evening and would have had to keep the Second Passover a month later. There is more to be said for John's position than Barrett will allow. It is true that some forms of uncleanness lasted only until evening, but in other cases, specifically that due to contact with a dead body, it lasted for seven days (Num. 19:11). This was so even without physical contact. Anyone who entered a tent in which a man had died was expressly said to be unclean for seven days (Num. 19:14). Now the reason that the houses of Gentiles were regarded as conveying uncleanness was that the Gentiles were thought to throw abortions down the drains (SBk, II, p. 839; Danby, p. 675, n. 10) Thus it was the defilement connected with the dead, and hence a seven-day defilement, that the houses of the Gentiles conveyed. Richardson holds that the Jews simply "wished to avoid having to undergo the necessary rites of purification." But this is assumption; it is not what John says. MiM holds that the priests had had their Passover slain, but that the events of the night had prevented them from eating it. They must eat it almost immediately in order to do so before daybreak, hence they could not afford a defilement that would last until evening. There is a good deal that is conjectural in this. But in any case the hypothesis is unnecessary once we have seen that the uncleanness in question lasted seven days. Jesus' enemies were being careful to avoid a ceremonial defilement that would have compelled them to postpone their eating of the Passover for a month. See further SFG, pp. 192ff.

66. Pilate is usually called a "procurator," but it now seems that the correct designation in pre-Claudian times was praefectus or "prefect." Pilate is given this title in an inscription found in Caesarea and cited in Sherwin-White, p. 12.

67. οὖν must be held to have its full meaning here. Strictly εξω is redundant, but its insertion makes it quite plain that Pilate went outside.

68. For John's use of ἀνθρώπος with reference to Jesus see on 4:29.

69. Their expression is ἐν... κακόν ποιών, "habitually doing wrong"; they emphasize the continuity of his actions, οὕτως is probably contemptuous, "this fellow."

70. His οὕτως is emphatic: "You take him... ."

71. The difficulty arises from the fact that on occasion the Jews did put people to death, for example, Stephen. See Additional Note I, pp. 695-96.

72. ἵνα introducing the clause is sometimes regarded as imperatival ("let the word be fulfilled"). But this seems unlikely. See on 1:8.

73. σημαίνων ποίφ θανάτφ ἡμελλεν ἀποθνήσκειν.

74. Strachan thinks that "the Evangelist sees divine significance in the shrewd and far-seeing determination of Caiaphas and his confederates to have Jesus crucified, not stoned."
75. Cf. A. G. Hebert and N. H. Snaith: "When Caiaphas decided that Jesus must be crucified, there can be no doubt that his intention was to attach to him the curse of Deut. 21.22-23: 'he that is hanged (on a tree) is accursed of God', so that every Jew would regard it as demonstrated that this was not God's Blessed One but a blasphemous imposter on whom God had broken out, and would say 'Jesus is anathema' (cf. 1 Cor. 12:3)" (BT, 3 [1952], p. 112).

76. Cf. Barrett: "It must be repeated that John has with keen insight picked out the key of the passion narrative in the kingship of Jesus, and has made its meaning clearer, perhaps, than any other New Testament writer."

77. Günter Reim agrees with B. A. Mastin that John sees Jesus as God and contributes the thought that in this passage "What the Jesus of the Fourth Gospel utters before Pilate and what he effects on the people who want to arrest him is messianic fulfilment of Ps. 45!" (NTS, 30 [1984], p. 159: Reim's italics).

78. πάλιν here can scarcely be used in the sense of "again," since there is no previous mention of Pilate's entering the Praetorium. The meaning must be "back" as in 6:15; 10:40 (where see notes).

79. There is no mention of Pilate as calling for an interpreter. Since it seems unlikely that the governor would have taken the trouble to learn Aramaic the inference is that Jesus spoke Greek and talked to Pilate in that language. But, of course, it may have been assumed that an interpreter was present.

80. "The trial of Christ was peculiar in that the accused made no attempt to defend himself. This was rare in Roman courts, but to prevent any miscarriage of justice there was a usage by which the direct question was put three times to the defendant before his case was allowed to go by default. Hence it was a correct technicality in Mark and Matthew, and also in John, when Pilate repeated his question to the silent Christ (Mark 15:2-4; Matt. 27:11-14; John 18.33-37)" (A. N. Sherwin-White, in History and Chronology in the New Testament, S.P.C.K. Theological Collections, no. 6 [London, 1865], p. 105).

81. Recent editors tend to read άφ' εαυτού with W θ 33 etc. against ἁπ' εαυτού with K B C etc. Moulton points out that in the plural the reflexive pronouns all tend to take the same form in Hellenistic Greek, namely ἐαυτοῦς. In the singular, however, the variant forms remain except with uncultured scribes. He says: "The presence or absence of this confusion in the singular is a nice test of the degree of culture in a writer of Common Greek. In the papyri there are a few examples of it in very illiterate documents . . . " (M, I, p. 87). He thinks that "late scribes, reflecting the developments of their own time, have introduced it" into the text here, at Rom. 13:9 and perhaps Gal. 5:14 (ibid.). BDF sees only "doubtful authority" for the form anywhere in the New Testament (64 [1]).

82. Μήτι ἐγώ Ιουδαίος είμι; In the New Testament μήτι seems always to imply a strong negative. There is force also in the use of ἐγώ (see on 1:20).

83. βασιλεία here probably has the sense "reign," "rule," perhaps "kingship" (RSV), rather than "realm" (Moffatt).

84. This will be the force of the preposition ἐξ, as also ἐντεύθεν later in the verse. Cf. Jesus' rejection of a worldly kingdom in the Synoptic temptation narrative.

85. The continuous tense ἤγωνίζοντο may be significant: "they would be fighting," that is fighting now, not simply "they would have fought" at the time of the arrest. The same word ὑπηρέται is used of the disciples in this character as was used of the high priest's retainers (18:3, 18, etc.).

86. The problem concerns the significance of οὐκούν. This might be accented οὐκούν, "not therefore," or οὐκούν, "with the negative element lost" (AS), "therefore," "so then." The former, according to LS, is used in impassioned questions and is almost equivalent to οὔ. This would mean that Pilate looked for an affirmative answer, but this is most unlikely. The second way of taking the word would introduce a question expecting an affirmative answer, "So you are a king?" or for that matter a statement, "Well then, you are a king" (Weymouth, "So then you are a king!"). The word should be taken as οὐκούν, and probably most modern versions are right in seeing the words as a
question (so NRSV, REB, GNB, etc.). Moule accepts Westcott's suggestion, "So you are a king, are you?" (IBNTG, p. 165).

87. Σύ λέγεις διὰ βασιλεύς είμι. Turner points out that the personal pronouns do not always convey emphasis in the New Testament, but he singles out this one as significant, "you have said it, not me" (M, III, p. 37; for personal pronouns in John see on 1:20). Moffatt, C. B. Williams, and others are too strong with "Certainly I am a king." Jesus is not receiving the suggestion warmly, but refraining from denying it outright.

88. REB tenders, " 'King' is your word," and Cassirer, "It is you who are saying that I am a king." It is, of course, possible to take the words as a question, "Do you say that I am a king?" but this is hardly likely. A further ambiguity arises from the use of διὰ: "You say that I am a king" or "You say (this) because I am a king." With the question this would be, "Do you say so? For I am a king." BDF is definite on the point, saying, "not 'that, 'because, for' " is the translation of διὰ (441 [3]). Westcott, however, regards this as "both unnatural as a rendering of the original phrase, and alien from the context." In my opinion the word should be translated "that."

89. For the force of the construction ἀκούω with the genitive see on 5:25. There is a parallel to ὁ ων ἐκ της αληθείας in 8:47, namely ὁ ων ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ. For είναι ἐκ see on 3:31. The men of Qumran linked themselves with the truth; see on 5:33.

90. γεγέννημαι strictly refers to the action of the male parent, but here it is used (as often) loosely of the whole process of birth. To "come into the world" is a typically Johannine expression (6:14; 9:39; 11:27; 16:28), though not confined to John (1 Tim. 1:15). Cf. also references to Jesus as being "sent" into the world (3:17; 10:36, etc.).

91. Cf. Francis Bacon's well-known words from his essay Of Truth: "What is truth? said jesting Pilate; and would not stay for an answer."

92. The emphatic position of ούδεμίαν should not be overlooked. Pilate sees nothing at all amiss in Jesus. The pronoun ἐγώ may be meant to convey the sense "Whatever be the case with you, I . . . . " Turner, however, sees no stress in it and takes it to be an example of "superfluous ἐγώ" (Μ, III, p. 37). See further on 1:20.

93. Indeed, it is possible that his question is to be taken as meaning this. Cf. McClymont, "It was the question of a practical politician, who attached no importance to the speculations of philosophers or the dreams of enthusiasts. If truth was all that Jesus was concerned about, there was no need (Pilate thought) to take him seriously."

94. Mark does not mention the Passover but refers to the release of a prisoner κατά ἑορτήν, "at festival time" (Mark 15:6). Some interpreters have felt that Mark wishes this phrase to be taken to mean "at a feast," but this is unjustified (see Vincent Taylor, in 10c.). There is no reason for doubting John's more definite statement.

95. Lightfoot notes that a similar problem arises concerning the same word and the same incident in Mark 15:13. His solution is that πάλιν "not only is often used as a very light and unemphatic particle, but can also have a negative sense, 'on the other hand', e.g. Lk. 64 3 2 Cor. 107 1 Jn 28." Probably a better solution is that of Black, who sees a translation of the Aramaic inferential conjunction τουθ, "thereupon" (AA, p. 82; he is referring to the Marcan passage).

96. Βαραββᾶς = "son of Abba" (or "son of the father"), or less probably יִבְרַבָּא "son of the master." The "son of Abba" is likely to have had a personal name of his own, and it is this that gives point to the reading "Jesus Barabbas" in Matt. 27:16-17. If his name were really Jesus there is obvious reason why the Christians should not have used it, preferring to call him simply "Barabbas." But the evidence is slight and falls a long way short of carrying conviction. Many have drawn attention to the fact that Barabbas, "Son of the father," was released, while Another, who was indeed "the Son of the Father," was condemned.

97. ληστής is used in 10:1, 8 of those set in opposition to the Good Shepherd. The Jews at this critical moment chose a robber in preference to the Shepherd.

98. The use of the article by John may signify much the same thing: "the wellknown Barabbas."
Plummer quotes from Ecce Homo: "Pilate executed Him on the ground that His kingdom was of this world; the Jews procured His execution precisely because it was not."

This is approximate only. The only time note in John is that it was "about the sixth hour," shortly before Pilate delivered Jesus up for crucifixion (19:14). The evening burnt offering was offered at half past the eighth hour unless the eve of the Passover coincided with the eve of a Sabbath when it was half after the seventh hour. The Passover was slaughtered after this (Mishnah Pes. 5:1).

It seems that the outer limit of Jerusalem was regarded as reaching to Bethphage (Men. 11:2 and several passages in the Talmud, as Pes. 63b, 91a; Men. 78b, etc.).


This point will not stand since Jerusalem was regarded as extending to Bethphage (see n. 101). I mention it because it is urged by some, but their point seems quite invalid.

There is a discussion of the term παρασκευή in A. J. B. Higgins, NTS, I, pp. 206ff. He shows that the term had come to mean "Friday" so that in John 19 it will refer to the day of the week rather than to "Passover-eve." The critical point appears to be the absence of evidence that the term was used for the "eve" of any festal day other than the Sabbath. Barrett says categorically that the term does not mean Friday in Passover week (on 19:14; but he cites no example for its use for the eve of any day other than the Sabbath). C. D. Buck says equally categorically, "The day before the Sabbath was called παρασκευή" (A Dictionary of Selected Synonyms in the Principal Indo-European Languages [Chicago, 1949], p. 1008). Bernard points out that had the meaning been "the Preparation day of the Passover" we would expect the definite article (on 19:14). Mark almost gives us a definition when he speaks of Παρασκευή, ὁ ἐστιν προσάββατον (Mark 15:42). This does not, of course, contain the expression τοῦ πάσχα, but it does give a strong presumption that παρασκευή by itself, as in John 19:31, 42, means Friday. And in any case Mark is speaking of the same day as John. MiM draws attention to a weakness in the "day before the Passover" idea; "It has never been shown that the day before the Passover was called 'The preparation of the Passover.' It has been conjectured that it was, because it is believed that the day before the Sabbath was called 'The preparation of the Sabbath.' No such name as this last has been pointed out" (on 19:14). The fact must be faced that no example of the use of παρασκευή is cited for any day other than Friday. The use for Friday is cited, both by linking the term with the Sabbath (Josephus, Ant. 16.163), and, from the second century, absolutely (Didache 8.1; Martyrdom of Polycarp 7.1). The evidence that the term was used for Friday must be accepted.

The Johannine date is supported by an argument from astronomy. The Synoptic date requires that 14th Nisan in the year of the crucifixion fall on a Thursday. G. Ogg cites evidence, mainly from K. Schoch and J. K. Fotheringham, to show that the only year from A.D. 26 to 36 when this happened (unless we assume abnormal circumstances) was A.D. 27, a year most scholars regard as impossible. But 14th Nisan was on a Friday, as required by John, in A.D. 30 and 33, both of which are real possibilities (Historicity and Chronology in the New Testament, S.P.C.K. Theological Collections, no. 6 [London, 1965], pp. 92-96).

N. Geldenhuys has a very important Excursus on "The Day and Date of the Crucifixion" in his Commentary on the Gospel of Luke in this series (pp. 649-70). He lists the principal authorities who hold these views (those who hold to the Synoptists, pp. 649-50; those who prefer the Johannine chronology, p. 650).

G. Ogg finds this the most natural understanding of the Greek: "Standing at the head of the sentence, this time-note is most naturally referred to its direct affirmation, 'he was to show them the full extent of his love'. Since according to what follows he did so on the occasion of the Last Supper, John here indicates clearly that that supper with all that Jesus did and said during and immediately after it took place before Passover" (Historicity and Chronology, p. 76).

B. D. Smith has argued for this position (WThJ, 53, no. 1 [1991], pp. 29-45) but, like the others who hold it, he does not produce any example of "eat the passover" with the meaning "eat the Feast of Unleavened Bread." He does indeed cite Mishnah Hag. 1:3 (p. 41), but this passage does not
apply "Passover" to the feast of unleavened bread in distinction from the Passover and that is the critical point.

112. Cf. Schnackenburg, "τὸ πάσχα φαγεῖν means 'to eat the Passover lamb' " (III, p. 447, n. 11; Schnackenburg's italics). Another view is expressed in NEB mg at John 18:28, namely "Or could share in the offerings of the Passover season." But it is difficult to understand how this could be got out of the Greek and it is rightly abandoned in REB.
115. Higgins, p. 15. This is indicated by Mishnah, Pes. 10:2.
119. ExT, LXIV (1952-53), pp. 4-8; see the reply of Jeremias, pp. 91-92.
120. See SNT, ch. V, especially pp. 83-84.
122. Vincent Taylor cites Chr. N. Ghiaouroff for such a way of reconciling the Synoptists and John (Theology, LVII [1954], pp. 60-61).
126. SBk, II, pp. 812-53.
128. van Goudoever, pp. 22ff.
129. van Goudoever, p. 29.
130. van Goudoever, p. 226.
131. Cf. the discussion by G. R. Driver, JThS, n.s. XVI (1965), pp. 327-31. He thinks that certain groups, "probably Galilean in origin, long clung to the ancient custom of reckoning it from sunrise to sunrise" (p. 327), and he thinks that the men of Qumran did likewise.
133. E. Stauffer says forthrightly: "in Palestinian Judaism in the time of Jesus it is usual for the calendar of feasts to be calculated differently in different groups and regions — particularly in the calculation of the Passover" (Jesus and His Story [London, 1960], p. 95). A. Finkel makes it clear that different calendars were in use in New Testament times (The Pharisees and the Teacher of Nazareth [Leiden, 1964], pp. 70ff.).
135. See the review by J. Jeremias, JThS, n.s. X (1959), pp. 131ff. J. T. Milik also draws attention to some weighty objections (Ten Years of Discovery in the Wilderness of Judaea [London, 1959], pp. 112-13).
136. She is, however, supported by J. Daniélon, The Dead Sea Scrolls and Primitive Christianity (New York, 1962), pp. 27-8, and, more cautiously, by A. Gilmore, SJT, 14 (1961), pp. 256-69.
137. The Scrolls and Christian Origins, pp. 200-201. Black argues for the view that there was calendrical confusion behind the Last Supper. Similarly F. F. Bruce thinks that "a study of the
calendar used by the Qumran community has strengthened the reasons for thinking that the discrepancies between the Synoptists and John regarding the chronology of Holy Week are due to the following of two distinct calendars" (Faith and Thought, 90 [1958], p. 99).

138. ExT, XLIII (1931-32), p. 518; the citation is from Jer. Rosh. 10b.

139. Bertil Gartner argues that Jesus observed a "lambless Passover" such as might have been held anywhere outside Jerusalem (John 6 and the Jewish Passover [Lund, 1959], pp. 44ff.). This could be a further way of reconciling the evidence, with the lambless Passover celebrated in this case a night before the orthodox Passover.

140. Cf. Bruce, "while John times his passion narrative with reference to the official temple date of the Passover, our Lord and his disciples, following (it may be) another calendar, observed the festival earlier" (p. 279). So also I. H. Marshall, "Our conclusion, then, is that Jesus held a Passover meal earlier than the official Jewish date, and that he was able to do so as the result of calendar differences among the Jews" (Last Supper and Lord's Supper [Exeter, 1980], p. 75).

141. Ant. 20.200.
142. Sank 7:2.
143. Josephus, Bell. 6.126.
144. He says that Coponius "was sent out as procurator, entrusted by Augustus with full powers, including the infliction of capital punishment" (Bell. 2.117); that is, from the beginning the procurators had these full powers. Cf. also Ant. 20.200-203.

145. SBk, I, p. 1027.
146. P. 518.
147. 83.4; p. 310.
149. Roman Society, p. 36.
3. Behold, the Man (19:1-6a)

1Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. 2 The soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head. They clothed him in a purple robe 3and went up to him again and again, saying, "Hail, O king of the Jews! "And they struck him in the face. 4 Once more Pilate came out and said to the Jews, "Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no basis for a charge against him." 5When Jesus came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe, Pilate said to them, "Here is the man! " 6As soon as the chief priests and their officials saw him, they shouted, "Crucify! Crucify!"

Pilate's attempt to free Jesus by way of complying with the custom of release of a prisoner at the feast having failed, he tried another tack. He had Jesus flogged, maltreated, mocked, and paraded before the mob. This may have been a way of appealing to the pity of the Jews; he may have reasoned that they might respond when they saw one of their own people treated in this fashion. Perhaps more probably he meant it as a visual demonstration of the impossibility of taking the charge seriously. This helpless object of violence and derision a king? Impossible! If Pilate was making an appeal to the people in either form he was guilty of a serious miscalculation. The only effect of it was to provoke the cry, "Crucify him!"

There is a difficulty in that Matthew and Mark appear to place the scourging after the sentence of crucifixion (though they do not actually say so), whereas here the sentence appears not to have been given. But then neither Matthew nor Mark nor John appears to record a formal sentence, so this is not decisive.¹ John's narrative is supported by Luke 23:16, 22 (though Luke does not actually mention that the scourging took place). It is unlikely that such a fearsome punishment was inflicted twice.² The probability accordingly is that the first two Evangelists are not following chronology too closely at this point. They knew that Jesus had been scourged before being crucified and said so, but they did not bother to insert
it in its exact place in the sequence of events. Alternatively they do insert it in its right place and the trouble arises only because John does not say exactly when sentence was passed. It is perhaps more likely that John has the scourging in its right place. Scourging was standard practice before a crucifixion, and the Synoptists mention it accordingly. But it is only John who lets us see "that Jesus was not scourged in order to be crucified but in order to escape crucifixion" (Lenski).

1 John does apparently intend us to understand that this followed next in sequence. He gives no reason for the scourging. Luke, however, informs us that Pilate said, "I will punish him and then release him" (Luke 23:16, 22), which makes it appear that it was an attempt to induce the Jews to think that Jesus had been punished enough. But neither Luke nor John actually says this, and we are left to infer the motive from the fact. Scourging was a brutal affair. It was inflicted by a whip of several thongs, each of which was loaded with pieces of bone or metal. It could make pulp of a man's back. It is a further example of the reserve of the Gospels that they use but one word to describe this piece of frightfulness. There is no attempt to play on our emotions.

2 Now the soldiers engage in some crude horseplay. The prisoner has been accused of being "King of the Jews," so a "King" they will make him. They plait a chaplet of some thorny material and use this to "crown" him. The purple garment will be the chlamys (Matt. 27:28), a cloak worn by military officers and men in high position. Since it was used by officers, they would have had no great difficulty in obtaining one for their fun. In Matthew and probably Mark, the mockery took place after Jesus' condemnation, and it is more thoroughgoing than here. Westcott suggests that it took place in two stages. He thinks that Pilate arranged the incident recorded here, with a view to presenting Jesus before the crowd and securing his release. Then, immediately before the crucifixion, the soldiers took up the idea on their own initiative and carried it further. There is nothing improbable about this. The mockery will have been aimed at the Jews generally rather than at Jesus specifically. He simply formed a convenient means whereby the soldiers showed their contempt for the nation at large.

3 They "went up to him" seems to mean that they kept coming up, (NIV brings this out by inserting "again and again"), probably in some formal manner, as though doing homage to royalty. "Hail" was a normal
way of greeting (used, e.g., in Matt. 28:9), but it was also used in acclaiming royalty (cf. "Hail, Caesar"). "King of the Jews" shows what had caught the soldiers' attention and what it was that gave point to their mockery. At the same time their choice of words makes it plain that they are mocking. The soldiers doubtless conceived of themselves as witty fellows, able to devise an ironical situation. But the real irony lay in the fact that the one whom they so mocked is indeed "King of kings, and Lord of lords." They struck him, apparently with their hands, which seems to be meant to take the place of some expression of homage, such as the dutiful kiss or the bringing of a present. John's account of the mockery is briefer than those in Matthew and Mark. There we read that the soldiers hit Jesus on the head with a reed, which they had previously put in his hand, apparently as a sceptre. If John is referring to the same thing the blows will be not with the hand, but with this reed. Matthew and Mark also tell us that the soldiers knelt before their prisoner and spat on him.

4 Once again Pilate went outside (as in 18:38). John appears to mean that Pilate came out first and announced that he was going to have Jesus brought out and only after he had told the crowd what he intended did the prisoner come out. Pilate told the people that he found nothing blameworthy in Jesus (cf. v. 6; 18:38) and he was bringing him out so that they could see for themselves. It is not clear how Pilate's bringing of Jesus out will enable the people to know that the governor finds no fault in him. Perhaps his general demeanor is held to show that there is no substance in the charges leveled against him.

5 Jesus therefore came out, dressed as he was in his "royal" robes and wearing his "crown." It was plainly ludicrous to take seriously any suggestion that this figure of scorn had pretensions to kingship. The very sight of him ought to be enough to demonstrate this and allow Pilate to release him. As Jesus came out, the governor introduced him with the words, "Here is the man!" Abbott points out that in the classics this on occasion means "the poor man," "the poor creature." Pilate may be using the words in a somewhat contemptuous manner. The expression need mean no more than "Here is the accused," but it is likely that John saw more in it than that. For John Jesus is THE man, and in this dramatic scene the supreme governing authority gives expression to this truth. It has been suggested that John is making an allusion to "the Son of man," but it is impossible to imagine Pilate voicing such an allusion. It is, however, not
unlikely that John intends "the man" to evoke memories of Jesus' favorite self-designation.\textsuperscript{12}

\textbf{6a} If Pilate had meant to appeal to the pity of the Jews or their natural aspirations or anything else that might prove favorable to Jesus, he was disappointed. The only effect of bringing Jesus out was to cause the chief priests and their retainers\textsuperscript{13} to call\textsuperscript{14} for crucifixion. This is the first use of the term "crucify" in the narrative, and it is perhaps significant that it is not "the Jews" or "the crowd" who raise the cry, but the chief priests and their retainers. Pilate brought forth Jesus apparently in an attempt to win people over to his way of thinking. The chief priests waste no time. They do not attempt to persuade the crowd. They and their henchmen immediately cry, "Crucify!" The use of the verb as a one-word slogan is the kind of cry that a crowd might well take up.

\textbf{4. Pilate's Final Decision (19:6b-16a)}

But Pilate answered, "You take him and crucify him. As for me, I find no basis for a charge against him." \textsuperscript{7}The Jews insisted, "We have a law, and according to that law he must die, because he claimed to be the Son of God. \textsuperscript{8}When Pilate heard this, he was even more afraid, \textsuperscript{9}and he went back inside the palace. "Where do you come from?" he asked Jesus, but Jesus gave him no answer. \textsuperscript{10}"Do you refuse to speak to me?" Pilate said. "Don't you realize I have power either to free you or to crucify you?" \textsuperscript{11}Jesus answered, "You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above. Therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin. \textsuperscript{12}From then on, Pilate tried to set Jesus free, but the Jews kept shouting, "If you let this man go, you are no friend of Caesar. Anyone who claims to be a king opposes Caesar." \textsuperscript{13}When Pilate heard this, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judge's seat at a place known as The Stone Pavement (which in Aramaic is Gabbatha). \textsuperscript{14}It was the day of Preparation of Passover Week, about the sixth hour. "Here is your king," Pilate said to the Jews. \textsuperscript{15}But they shouted, "Take him away! Take him away! Crucify him!" "Shall I crucify your king?" Pilate asked. "We have no king but Caesar," the chief priests answered. \textsuperscript{16}Finally Pilate handed him over to them to be crucified.
Pilate's final abortive attempt to release Jesus was sparked off by the Jews' remark that Jesus had claimed to be the Son of God. This apparently struck a chord in the governor's superstitious nature and led him to speak further with Jesus. Confirmed in his conviction that there was no case against Jesus he tried again to set him free. But when the Jews raised the ominous issue of "Caesar's friend," — that is, a veiled threat to let it be known in Rome if he did not sentence the Galilean as they desired — Pilate capitulated. Jesus was delivered over to crucifixion.

6b Possibly Pilate's reply is somewhat petulant. Otherwise it is difficult to understand why he should have told the Jews to crucify Jesus. They had no power to carry out this form of execution, whatever may be thought of their right to inflict some other form of death penalty (see on 18:31). Moreover, Pilate's "you" and "I" are set in emphatic contrast. It is as though he is saying, "I want nothing to do with this. Do it yourselves." But the Jews could not do it themselves. Their method of execution was by stoning. He may mean, "He will be crucified, but the responsibility will be yours, not mine." The emphatic pronouns are, however, against this; the words seem rather to be the sudden wild statement of a man goaded into speaking unreasonably. He may mean: "If you are not going to take any notice of me, then crucify him yourselves — if you can."

7 Now the Jews come to the real issue. Pilate had used emphatic pronouns in telling them what to do and they respond with one of their own. "We have a law," they say, and imply "whatever be the case with you Romans!" "Law" clearly refers to the law of blasphemy (Lev. 24:16), By this law, they say, Jesus ought to die because he has made himself Son of God (cf. 5:18; 8:53; 10:33 for this accusation). It was his religious claims that antagonized them. "Son of God" is in an emphatic position. It was nothing less than this that he had made himself. 15 Pilate, from his own point of view, sees no crime in Jesus. Very well. Let him look at it from theirs.

8-9 Pilate was evidently superstitious. He can scarcely be called a religious man, but the news that his prisoner had made divine claims scared the governor (his fear cannot be fear of the Jews; it must be fear connected with Jesus in some way). He had possibly been affected by a message from his wife about a dream she had had (Matt. 27:19). And every Roman knew of stories of the gods or their offspring appearing in human guise. "Divine men" were part of the first-century understanding of life. Pilate had plainly been impressed by Jesus as he talked with him. Now that he hears of the
possibility of the supernatural he is profoundly affected. Was he being confronted by a "divine man"? Or in view of the habit of referring to the Roman Emperor as *divi filius* ("Son of God") it may be that Pilate feared that, after all, Jesus was claiming to be King in a political sense. But a superstitious fear seems more likely. He left the Jews and questioned Jesus in the Praetorium. It is not clear when Jesus went back inside. He was brought out (v. 5), but there is no mention of his return. Probably he was still outside during the conversation of verses 6-7, after which Pilate had him brought back inside, preferring to talk to him in the absence of the Jews. He proceeded to ask him where he had come from, a curious question, but one the answer to which might be determinative for any claim to divinity. But Jesus does not answer. The reason is not clear. He had answered Pilate readily enough before. Possibly he felt that then Pilate had been discharging his function as judge, whereas now he was exceeding it. The question to be decided was Jesus' guilt or innocence, and his origin was irrelevant. But, in view of Jesus' free conversation both before and after this, his silence on this one question stands out. It may be that the answer must be such that Pilate would not have understood it. He certainly would never have believed it! It was not a simple question. Or again, it may be that the answer had in effect already been given (18:37). It still stood. Jesus' silence at one point or another of his trial is mentioned in all four Gospels (Matt. 26:63; 27:14; Mark 14:60-61; 15:5; Luke 23:9). Both Augustine and Chrysostom see in this the fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah 53:7.

10 Pilate does not like this. He is very conscious of his dignity and position of power. It is incredible that Jesus will not speak to him of all people. So he reminds his prisoner that he has power either to release him or to crucify him. The question is illuminating. In the last resort it was Pilate alone who could say "Crucify" or "Release," and this frank recognition of it makes nonsense of all the shifts to which he resorted in the attempt to avoid making a decision. Ultimately he could not avoid responsibility, and these words show that deep down he realized this.

11 These are Jesus' final words to Pilate, and, indeed, the only words he is recorded to have said after the scourging. First, he corrects a misapprehension. Pilate has no inherent authority over Jesus, but only that granted him "from above" (cf. 3:27). This will mean "from heaven," not "delegated from your superiors in Rome." Jesus is asserting that God is over all and that an earthly governor can act only as God permits him (cf.
Rom. 13:1). Since then Pilate is limited in what he can do, the greater sin rests with him that handed Jesus over. This surely means Caiaphas ("he must be the high priest Caiaphas," Bruce). It cannot mean Judas, for he did not deliver Jesus to Pilate, but to the Jews. In any case, in this context it must be the man who is ultimately responsible who is in mind, and that means Caiaphas. Judas was no more than a tool. This does not mean that Pilate is excused. After all, "greater sin" implies "lesser sin," and that was the governor's. He did not bear all the responsibility he thought he did. But he was a responsible man, and therefore guilty for his actions in this case.

12 Something in Jesus' answer won Pilate, though it is not easy to see just what. He did not excuse Pilate for what he was doing, but simply affirmed that another had a greater guilt and that Pilate's own part was less than he thought. Perhaps Pilate saw in the answer something that strengthened the case that Jesus was the Son of God. At the very least the answer presupposes a familiarity with God's ways. Therefore (or "from then on") Pilate was trying to release Jesus. John does not tell us in what this attempt consisted. He moves immediately to the opposition it aroused. But the governor probably said something to the Jews. He certainly went outside the Praetorium where he was in verse 11, for here the Jews are addressing him. They give a shout, setting Jesus in opposition to Caesar. "Caesar's friend" may be used in a technical sense, but this seems unlikely. Here it is rather a general term for a loyal supporter of Rome. The Jews are maintaining that there is an antagonism between Jesus and Caesar. Again John is ironical, for there is a sense in which this is true, though not the sense in which the Jews meant it. Jesus was no revolutionary. A just judge could well release an innocent man and still be Caesar's friend. But the claims of Christ are such that Caesar cannot have the principal place. In that sense it is really "Christ or Caesar?" and John will not want his readers to miss this. The Jews go on to point out that the charge they are preferring is one of high treason. To make oneself a king is to oppose Caesar. The Jews do not spell out their threat. But there cannot be any doubt but that the mention of Caesar in this way is meant to remind the governor that, if he released Jesus, they could bring a damaging accusation against him at Rome. They could report that he had failed to deal firmly with a man guilty of treason. A man with a good record need not, of course, take notice of such a palpably false accusation. But Pilate's record was not one to be subjected to a close scrutiny, and Tiberius's suspicious nature
was very well known. Plummer comments on the tactics of the Jewish leaders: "They know their man: it is not a love of justice, but personal feeling which moves him to seek to release Jesus; and they will overcome one personal feeling by another still stronger."

13 Pilate got the message. Humanly speaking, the mention of Caesar sealed Jesus' fate. The prefect made no answer to the Jews, but brought Jesus out and sat down on the judgment seat. This looks like the solemn preparation for the end of the case. Pilate will now give the official sentence that will conclude matters. John gives us both the Greek and the Aramaic names of the place where the judgment seat was set. This is not required by the sense, and it looks like a personal reminiscence.

14 John puts in a characteristic time note (see on 1:39), but this one arouses some problems. "The day of Preparation of Passover Week" (more literally "preparation of the Passover") almost certainly means "Friday in Passover week" rather than "the day before Passover" (see Additional Note H, pp. 684-95). The other problem concerns the time of day. Mark says that Jesus was crucified at "the third hour" (Mark 15:25). Here John speaks of the trial as still not completed at "about the sixth hour." Westcott thought that John used the "Roman" method of computing time, whereby the day began at midnight as with us. The sixth hour would thus be about 6 a.m. whereas Mark, using the Palestinian method of beginning the day at sunrise, would mean about 9 a.m. by his "third hour." This is attractive, but there appears to be no evidence that the so-called Roman method of computing time was used other than in legal matters like leases. At Rome, as elsewhere, the day was reckoned to begin at sunrise. Where a definite hour is given ("the first hour," "the fourth hour," etc.) the reference always appears to be to the time since daybreak and not to the interval since midnight. It is more likely that in neither Mark nor John is the hour to be regarded as more than an approximation. People in antiquity did not have clocks or watches, and the reckoning of time was always approximate. The "third hour" may denote nothing more than a time about the middle of the morning, while "about the sixth hour" can well signify getting on toward noon. Late morning would suit both expressions unless there were some reason for thinking that either was being given with more than usual accuracy. No such reason exists here.
Pilate had Jesus brought out, and he sat on the judgment seat. He did not, however, deliver sentence as might have been expected; in fact, nowhere does John record that he sentenced Jesus. Now he said, "Here is your king." As in the case of "Here is the man!" (v. 5) John's irony lurks behind the words. For Pilate there was no question of kingship; his bedraggled prisoner was the antithesis of all that kingship meant for him. Jesus was not a king in any sense in which he understood the word. He was simply using the terms of the accusation in a last-ditch effort to get the Jews to drop proceedings. But for John the kingship was real. He wants us to see Jesus as King in the very act in which he went to death for the salvation of sinners.

15 Inevitably this feeble effort resulted in failure, just as all Pilate's previous efforts had done. His words provoked a mighty yell, as the crowd called for Jesus to be taken away and crucified. Pilate made yet one more ineffectual protest. When he says, "Shall I crucify your king?" he puts the word "king" in an emphatic position; he gives the title all it will stand. But this is not enough. The mob is past reasoning and wants only blood. Pilate is answered, however, not by the mob but by the chief priests. And they of all people assure him, "We have no king but Caesar"! Nothing could be more ludicrous than this protestation of loyalty on the lips of such men. It is another fine example of Johannine irony. They certainly claimed, in accordance with the Old Testament, to be God's people. They held that God was their King (Judg. 8:23; 1 Sam. 8:7; Schnackenburg points out that in the eleventh of the Eighteen Benedictions they prayed, "May you be our King, you alone"). On this occasion they spoke in terms of cynical expediency. But they expressed the real truth. Their lives showed that they gave no homage to God. The truth was that they had no king but Caesar. And it is die chief priests, the religious leaders, who utter the words.

16 There was nothing more that Pilate could do. He recognized defeat and handed Jesus over to execution. He could now release him only at the cost of facing an accusation of having failed in his duty to Caesar. He had troubles enough without inviting a report to Caesar for taking action in favor of a powerless Galilean peasant. So Pilate handed him over. Grammatically "to them" ought to refer to the chief priests. But the execution was, of course, carried out by the Romans. Crucifixion was not a Jewish form of death, and in any case the Jews would not have been permitted to carry it out. But John's turn of phrase reveals that, whoever did
the actual killing, Jesus was being delivered over to the will of the Jews who sought his death (cf. Luke 23:25). REE renders, "Then at last, to satisfy them, he handed Jesus over to be crucified."

D. JESUS PUT TO DEATH (19:16b42-)

John proceeds to the crucifixion proper. His narrative brings before us some things not recorded in the Synoptics: the information that the title over Jesus' head was in three languages, the Jews' challenge of the wording, and three of Jesus' "words" from the cross: "Dear woman, here is your son" with the corresponding "Here is your mother," "I am thirsty," and "It is finished." It is to John also that we owe the information that Jesus carried his cross during the first part of the journey to Golgotha, that Jesus' side was pierced, and that Nicodemus played an important part in the burial.

1. Jesus Crucified (19:16b-22)

So the soldiers took charge of Jesus, 17Carrying his own cross, he went out to The Place of the Skull (which in Aramaic is called Golgotha). 18Here they crucified him, and with him two others — one on each side and Jesus in the middle. 19Pilate had a notice prepared and fastened to the cross. It read, JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS. 20Many of the Jews read this sign, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and the sign was written in Aramaic, Latin and Greek. 21 The chief priests of the Jews protested to Pilate, "Do not write 'The King of the Jews,' but that this man claimed to be king of the Jews," 22Pilate answered, "What I have written, I have written."

16b NIV reads "the soldiers," but John says no more than "they"; this certainly refers to the soldiers, but the expression is curious. 41

17 It was usual for a condemned prisoner to carry to the place of execution all or part of the cross to which he was to be fastened. John's "for himself" (NIV, "his own") puts a certain emphasis on the fact that Jesus did
this particular piece of work. John's emphasis may be on the fact that Jesus accomplished the world's salvation alone. Many have discerned a reference to Genesis 22:6, Isaac being seen as a type of Christ. The Synoptists tell us that on the way Simon of Cyrene was pressed into service to relieve Jesus of this burden (Matt. 27:32; Mark 15:21; Luke 23:26; Mark and Luke add that he was coming "from the country"). Jesus will thus have carried the cross at first, but along the way, probably because he was weak through the flogging he had endured, he was relieved of the burden. This is the more likely in that the cross piece usually carried was not an unduly heavy burden for a normal man. John tells us the name of the place where the crucifixion took place in both Greek and Aramaic. The name means "a skull," but why a place was given this name is not known. It is another example of John's knowledge of the topography of Jerusalem before its destruction, but we do not share his knowledge. The traditional site or "Gordon's Calvary" may be right. But we have no means of knowing.

John describes the horror that was crucifixion in a single word. As in the case of the scourging, he simply mentions the fact and passes on. Popular piety, both Protestant and Catholic, has often emphasized the sufferings of Jesus; it has reflected on what happened and has dwelt on the anguish the Savior suffered. None of the Gospels does this. The Evangelists record the fact and let it go at that. The death of Jesus for sinners was their concern. They make no attempt to play on the heartstrings of their readers.

John, like the other Evangelists, tells us that there were two others crucified with Jesus, and that Jesus was in the middle. This may have been meant as a final indignity; Jesus was among criminals as he died, and in no sense separate. But John probably records the fact in order to bring out the truth that Jesus was one with sinners in his death.

Pilate wrote out "a notice"; this does not necessarily mean that he wrote it himself (cf. NIV, "had a notice prepared"). NIV omits "also" (see NRSV), which may well mean "in addition to the other indignities he had shown the Jews," The "notice" was a placard listing the crimes of the condemned, and attached to the cross. Over Jesus he wrote, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews," thus maintaining the position he took up in verses 14-15, and securing a certain grim revenge on those who had hounded him into consenting to Jesus' execution. John stresses the kingship
motif right to the end. For him the royalty of Jesus is the significant thing. He does not let us forget it.

20 John adds some information not found in the other Gospels. The title was read by many people. Probably not a great number had heard Pilate when he spoke of Jesus as King outside the Praetorium. But executions were popular functions in the first century and people would tend to watch a crucifixion, especially in a case like this where it was close to the city. The reading was aided also by the fact that the inscription was trilingual. Anyone in the crowd who could read could almost certainly read Aramaic or Latin or Greek. Thus Pilate's description of Jesus would become widely known through the city and beyond. Moreover, each of the languages has a significance of its own. Aramaic was the language of the country, Latin the official language, and Greek the common language of communication throughout the Roman world. This will surely emphasize the universality of Jesus' kingship. Incidentally, the fact that the inscription was in three languages will sufficiently account for the fact that divergent accounts are given of its content in the four Gospels.

21-22 Not unnaturally the chief priests (here called "the chief priests of the Jews") did not like this. They had refused to have Jesus as their King, though they had made his claim to being a king a chief point in their accusation before the governor. They lodged an objection, though with the title already written and affixed it was a little late in the day. They wanted to have substituted for "The King of the Jews" something that said that he claimed that he was King. Instead of the fact, they wanted the claim. But Pilate would not hear of it. With an air of finality he refused to alter what he had written. John will want us to see that there is a kingship that Jesus exercises, and that nothing can change this. Whether Pilate sensed anything of this or whether his title is a further mockery of Jesus or of Jesus' accusers John does not say. Perhaps the last-mentioned is most probable.

2. The Division of Jesus' Clothing (19:23-24)

23 When the soldiers crucified Jesus, they took his clothes, dividing them into four shares, one for each of them, with the undergarment remaining. This garment was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom. 24 "Let's not tear it," they said to one another. "Let's decide by
lot who will get it." This happened that the Scripture might be fulfilled which said,

"They divided my garments among them
and cast lots for my clothing."^a

So this is what the solders did.

a, 24 Psalm 22:18

23 It was customary for the soldiers who performed a crucifixion to take the clothing of the executed man; this was a recognized perquisite of their office. In accordance with this custom the soldiers who crucified Jesus divided his clothing^55 into four, one part for each soldier. It is this that enables us to see that there were four soldiers in the execution squad. The "undergarment," instead of being made out of separate pieces of cloth sewn together, was woven in one piece, without a seam.^56 It was thus of some value.

24 Accordingly the soldiers decided not to divide it up among them but to give it to one of their number as it was. They cast lots^57 to determine who should be the fortunate fellow. John sees in this a literal fulfillment of Scripture (Ps. 22:18).^58 He stresses that this is the reason for the soldiers' action.^59 Once again we see that his master thought that God was over all that was done, so directing things that his will was accomplished, not that of puny men. It was because of this^60 that the soldiers acted as they did.

3. Jesus Provides for Mary (19:25-27)

25 Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary of Magdala. 26 When Jesus saw his mother there, and. the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Dear woman, here is your son," 27 and to the disciple, "Here is your mother. "From that time on, this disciple took her into his home.
Jesus was not entirely forsaken in the hour of his death; some women stood by his cross. It is not certain how many there were. It is possible to think of two, "his mother" and "his mother's sister," who are then given their names. There are three if we equate "his mother's sister" with "the wife of Cleopas," but this would involve two sisters both with the name "Mary," which seems very improbable. It is most natural to understand John to mean four women, the first two described, the third and fourth named. Thus four believing women stood by the cross. They will stand over against the four unbelieving soldiers who crucified Jesus, quite in the Johannine manner. Jesus' mother is mentioned first, unnamed as always in this Gospel. It is probable that "his mother's sister" is to be equated with Salome (Mark 15:40), and that she was "the mother of Zebedee's sons" (Matt. 27:56), who was standing at a distance with the other women when Jesus died. If so, and if the beloved disciple is John the son of Zebedee, a reason for the omission of her name appears. John never names himself or his brother or any of his family. It would be quite in keeping that he should not name his mother.

Clopas is mentioned here only in the New Testament. Mary Magdalene is mentioned here for the first time in this Gospel, but in the next chapter John tells us of Jesus' appearance to her after the resurrection.

Even in his bitter anguish Jesus took thought for his mother. He saw her and the disciple "whom he loved" (see on 13:23). This man has not been mentioned, though the others by the cross are listed. Is this perhaps the touch of one who remembers who were there, but records them as he saw them and thus does not mention himself? Jesus then said to Mary, "Dear woman, here is your son." This is surely a way of saying that the beloved disciple would take his place in being her protector and provider, now that his earthly course was finished. It is perhaps a little strange that Jesus commends Mary to the beloved disciple rather than to his brothers. But they did not believe in him (7:5) and Mary did. The crucifixion and resurrection, however, seem to have worked a change in them, for shortly after the ascension we find them associated with the apostles and with Mary (Acts 1:14).

His words to Mary are complemented by similar words to the disciple. These he would remember as a sacred charge. There is a typical Johannine note of time, "From that hour" (NIV, "time"). That he took her
into his own home implies, of course, more than that he provided her with a roof. From that time he took responsibility for her.

4. The Death of Jesus (19:28-30)

28 Later, knowing that all was now completed, and so that the Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, "I am thirsty." 29 A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus' lips. 30 When he had received the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished." With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

28 "Later" signifies a short interval; John passes over other things and moves to the consummation. Jesus knew that the end was at hand. Once again John sees him as in complete command. It is not certain whether we should take "so that the Scripture would be fulfilled" with the preceding ("... all was now completed so that the Scripture should be fulfilled") or with the following ("so that the Scripture should be fulfilled Jesus said, 'I thirst'"). In the latter case the Scripture will perhaps be Psalm 69:21. Either is possible, or, in the Johannine manner, there may be a reference to both.

29 "Wine vinegar" signifies a cheap wine, the kind of drink that would be used by the masses. There was some of it there in a container of some sort. "There was set there" (NIV, "was there") appears to mean that it was provided for use at the crucifixion. It was not some wine that some people just happened to have with them. That there were also a sponge and some hyssop seems to indicate that it had been provided for the crucified, not simply for the soldiers. They now soaked a sponge in the wine, put it on "hyssop," and thus raised it to Jesus' mouth. The sponge was a useful way of conveying liquid to the lips of a crucified man, a cup of any sort being manifestly unsuitable.

30 Jesus drank the vinegar. Matthew and Mark tell us that he refused drugged wine before the crucifixion (Matt. 27:34; Mark 15:23). We should probably conclude that he wished to undergo his sufferings with a clear mind. But now that he is at the point of death he wants to say something that will be heard, so he calls for a drink to moisten his parched
throat. He drinks, then says, "It is finished." Immediately he dies. John does not speak of the tone in which he uttered the word, but elsewhere we read that Jesus uttered a loud cry just before his death (Matt. 27:50; Mark 15:37; Luke 23:46; the first two mention that Jesus was given a drink just before this). It would appear then that the loud cry was, "It is finished." Jesus died with the cry of the Victor on his lips. This is not the moan of the defeated, nor the sigh of patient resignation. It is the triumphant recognition that he has now fully accomplished the work that he came to do. Then he bowed his head, a detail mentioned only by John, and possibly the touch of an eyewitness. It is perhaps worth noting that the same expression is used of going to bed: "the Son of Man has no place to lay his head" (Matt. 8:20; Luke 9:58). There is the thought of a peaceful death, the death of one who trusts his Father. John goes on, "and gave up his spirit." This is not the usual way of referring to death. Indeed, in none of the four Gospels is any usual expression employed to describe the manner of Jesus' end. His relation to death is not the same as that of other people. It may be going too far to say that he "dismissed his spirit," but there does seem to be an element of voluntariness that is not found in the case of others.

5. The Piercing of Jesus' Side (19:31-37)

Now it was the day of Preparation, and the next day was to be a special Sabbath. Because the Jews did not want the bodies left on the crosses during the Sabbath, they asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken down. The soldiers therefore came and broke the legs of the first man who had been crucified with Jesus, and then those of the other. But when they came to Jesus and found that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water. The man who saw it has given testimony, and his testimony is true. He knows that he tells the truth, and he testifies so that you also may believe. These things happened so that the Scripture would be fulfilled: "Not one of his bones will be broken," and, as another Scripture says, "They will look on the one they have pierced."
This incident is peculiar to this Gospel. It indicates that the death of Jesus took place fairly quickly, more quickly than in the case of either of the others crucified with him. John finds scriptural significance in the facts that his bones were not broken and that his side was pierced. Despite the attempts to find an edifying meaning in the latter incident it seems best understood as the touch of an eyewitness who recorded it because it impressed him.

31 "The Preparation" (NIV inserts "day of") had become a technical term for "the Preparation for the Sabbath," that is, Friday (see Additional Note H, pp. 684-95). According to Jewish law the dead body of an executed criminal was not to remain all night "on the tree," but was to be buried that same day, because "You must not desecrate the land the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance" (Deut. 21:23). Thus a body should be removed from a cross on any day before evening. But especially was this the case when a sabbath was approaching, and even more so when that sabbath was "a high day" (NIV, "a special Sabbath"), that is, one of the important feasts (Berkeley, "a specially important day"). The Jews were thus insistent that the legs of the crucified should be broken. The Roman custom was to leave the bodies of the crucified on their crosses as a warning to others. It was therefore necessary to obtain permission before removing a body. The victims of this cruel form of execution would slightly ease the strain on their arms and chests by taking some of their weight on their feet. This helped them to breathe and thus to prolong their lives a little, but when the legs were broken this was no longer possible. There was then a greater constriction of the chest, and death came on more quickly. This was aided also, of course, by the shock attendant on the brutal blows as the legs were broken with a heavy mallet. So the Jews wanted the process of death speeded up and the bodies removed. It is perhaps significant that this is the last action of "the Jews" recorded in this Gospel. "The Jews" did not want their land defiled by the dead, but they were not concerned that they themselves were defiled by their deed.

32-33 It is not said that Pilate gave his approval, but evidently he did for the soldiers came to break the legs of the sufferers. They did actually break the legs of both the men who were crucified with Jesus, which
indicates that they were at this time still alive. But when they came to Jesus they saw that he was already dead. Therefore they did not break his legs. There was no point in it.

But one of the soldiers was not content simply to pass by. Either out of brutality or to make sure that Jesus was really dead he thrust his spear into his side. Immediately blood and water came out (cf. 1 John 5:6). The significance of this is not clear. In view of the following verse it is plain that John wants us to take this as a record of what actually happened. He is not manufacturing an edifying piece of symbolism but describing an event. The author was struck by it, and therefore included it in his Gospel. But this does not exclude the possibility that John saw spiritual significance in what he records. Some scholars appear to deny this, holding that it points to the manner of Jesus' death, namely by a ruptured heart. Or it may be that he has in mind a Jewish belief that the body consists of half water and half blood. The thrust of the spear shows Jesus' body to be a genuine human corpse (in opposition to Docetic teaching that the body was a phantom). Others, however, see a mystical significance or a reference to the sacraments. It is more likely that the explanation should be in terms of John's use of the terms "blood" and "water" elsewhere. Apart from the statement that believers are born "not of bloods" (1:13) John uses the former term only in chapter 6, from which we learn that life comes from appropriating the blood of Christ (6:53-56). Water is used more often, but perhaps the significant references are those to being born "of water and the Spirit" (3:5), to the "living water that is the gift of Christ (4:10, 11, 14), and to the "living water" that would flow from the inner being of the believer, which is explained as referring to the Spirit (7:38-39). There is a consistent reference in the use of both terms to the life that Christ gives. We conclude, then, that John is reminding us that life, real life, comes through Christ's death.

This incident evidently made a profound impression on the mind of the Evangelist. He brings out emphatically that he has good evidence for what he is saying. This evidence is surely the testimony of the Beloved Disciple. He is mentioned in verses 26-27, the last reference to the followers of Jesus before this verse. Moreover, the writer mentions no other disciple as having been present at the scene. The identification is not certain, but it is probable. Be that as it may, there was someone there who saw it and who has borne his testimony, a testimony that is reliable. This
may be understood in more ways than one. The writer may be referring to himself as a witness, which seems to be the meaning in Weymouth's translation: "This statement is the testimony of an eye-witness, and it is true. He knows that he is telling the truth — in order that you may believe." Or the writer may be distinguishing between himself as the author and another man who is the witness. Rieu sees it that way: "This is vouched for by the man who saw it, and his evidence may be relied on. Also, to assure you, the writer knows that he is telling the truth." It is also possible that the writer is calling God to witness, as Moffatt renders: "He who saw it has borne witness (his witness is true; God knows he is telling the truth), that you may believe." When experts differ so widely it is unwise to be dogmatic. I incline to the view that the first suggestion is the correct one, but one cannot be sure. What is plain is that John is placing some emphasis on the fact that this incident may be relied on. He is maintaining that it is recorded "so that you also may believe." The production of faith in the readers is the main purpose for the writing of this Gospel (20:31). John does not explain how faith will result from the narration of the issuing of water and blood from the side of the crucified Savior, but clearly he expected it to do so.

Characteristically John finds a fulfillment of Scripture in these happenings. The purpose of God had to be fulfilled. He refers to two separate things, the fact that Jesus' bones were not broken and the fact that his side was pierced. It is really extraordinary that both these things happened. Jesus escaped the breaking of the legs though this happened to both those crucified with him, and he experienced a hard spear thrust, which appears to have been most unusual but which yet did no bone damage. Most commentators think that the passage John has in mind for the first is Exodus 12:46 or Numbers 9:12, both referring to the Passover (or perhaps Exod. 12:10, LXX). When that sacrifice was instituted the command was given that not one bone of the victim was to be broken. If this is the allusion, John is referring to Jesus as the perfect Passover offering (cf. the death at the time of the killing of the Passover sacrifices, v. 14, and the use of hyssop, v. 29). This is a motif that we have seen elsewhere, and it is the most likely explanation of this passage. Those who do not see the Passover here prefer a reference to Psalm 34:20, which refers in a general way to God's care for his own. It contains the specific assertion that God
"protects all his bones, not one of them will be broken." This is possible, but it does not seem as probable as the Passover allusion.\textsuperscript{108}

\textbf{37} The other Scripture does not seem so difficult. There is agreement that John is referring to Zechariah 12.10\textsuperscript{109} (cf. also Rev. 1:7). It is not the kind of allusion that a modern student would readily discern, but it fits in with the habit of mind of the first century.\textsuperscript{110} And this passage from the prophet certainly strengthens the Evangelist in his conviction that in the events associated with the crucifixion the will of God was done. John was evidently impressed by the fact that, though Jesus' body was pierced, not one bone was broken, and that this corresponded exactly with Scripture.

\textbf{6. The Burial (19:38-42)}

\textit{38 Later, Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for the body of Jesus. Now Joseph was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly because he feared the Jews. With Pilate's permission, he came and took the body.} 39\textit{He was accompanied by Nicodemus, the man who earlier had visited Jesus at night. Nicodemus brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds.} 40\textit{Taking Jesus' body, the two of them wrapped it, with the spices, in strips of linen. This was in accordance with Jewish burial customs.} 41\textit{At the place where Jesus was crucified, there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb, in which no one had ever been laid.} 42\textit{Because it was the Jewish day of Preparation and since the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.}

\textit{a. 39 Greek \textit{a hundred litrai} (about 34 kilograms)}

\textbf{38} Sometime later\textsuperscript{111} Joseph of Arimathea\textsuperscript{112} began to make arrangements for Jesus' burial. John introduces Joseph rather abruptly. We hear of him neither before nor after this incident; the burial of Jesus is the one thing by which he is known. We are told only that he was from Arimathea, and that he was a secret disciple. Neither Mark nor Luke says in so many terms that he was a disciple, though this may be implied when they say that he was "waiting for the kingdom of God" (Mark 15:43; Luke 23:51). Matthew does say that he was a disciple (Matt. 27:57), and also that he was rich. Mark and Luke do not say this, but they tell us that he was a councillor, and Luke
adds that he was "a good and upright man" and that he "had not consented to their decision and action" (Luke 23:50-51). It would not have been easy for a member of the Sanhedrin to profess himself a follower of Jesus, so that John's information has nothing inherently improbable about it. But the death of Jesus apparently affected Joseph in a way different from that of the closer disciples. They all fled, but Joseph now went to Pilate (Mark says that he went in "boldly") and asked permission to take Jesus' body away for burial. It may be that he felt that in Jesus' lifetime he had paid him little honor, and that he was now presented with his last opportunity. The Jews of that day regarded proper burial of their dead as most important. Many went out of their way to see that fellow countrymen received proper burial, and this may have had something to do with Joseph's action. He now came to ask Pilate's permission to remove Jesus' body. The Romans did not normally give such permission in the case of people executed for sedition. That Pilate gave it may be a further indication that he did not think that Jesus was guilty. Joseph took the body away. Clearly Joseph was a rich man, and we may find in his action a fulfillment of Isaiah 53:9.

39 The other Evangelists speak of Joseph's part in the burial, but they do not mention Nicodemus. Indeed, they never mention him at all; it is to John that we owe all our information about him. He is characterized here by his first coming to Jesus by night (see on 3:2). Clearly this fact meant a good deal to John. Nicodemus brought spices, myrrh, and aloes (for this conjunction cf. Ps. 45:8; Prov. 7:17; Song 4:14; aloes are mentioned only here in the New Testament). It was the custom to put spices of this kind in with the sheets round the body in a burial, so Nicodemus was performing a normal courtesy. What is unusual is the amount, "about seventy-five pounds" (34 kilograms), though if Nicodemus wished to cover the body completely the quantity is not excessive. But there is evidence that large quantities were used in royal burials (2 Chron. 16:14), and the probability is that John is reminding us again of Jesus' kingship. The thought may well be in mind that when he spoke with Nicodemus Jesus talked of the kingdom (3:3). The lavish provision may also be meant to show that Nicodemus, like Joseph, was trying in the hour of Jesus' death to make some reparation for his failure to do more in Jesus' life. The amount shows that Nicodemus must have been a wealthy man. It is possible that in this incident we are to see the consequence of Jesus' prediction of the passion in his first interview with Nicodemus. If on that night Jesus had told the Pharisee that he would
one day die for people this may explain why Nicodemus was ready to do what he could at the burial at a time when the disciples had all run away. Whereas the disciples who had openly followed Jesus ran away at the end, the effect of the death of Jesus on these two secret disciples was exactly the opposite. Now, when they had nothing at all to gain by affirming their connection with Jesus, they came right out into the open.

40 These men gave Jesus decent burial according to the Jewish custom. This provided for an embalming, but unlike, for example, the Egyptian practice, there was no mutilation of the body. They first prepared the body by wrapping it in linen cloths. This will mean long, bandage-like strips rather than a shroud or the like. They put the spices between the folds.

41 There was a tomb in a garden (only John mentions the garden) very near to the place of execution. John actually says that it was "in" the place, so it must have been very close indeed. The tomb is described as "new," as one "in which no one had ever been laid." Tombs were commonly hewn out of the solid rock, and closed with heavy stones. The stone at the mouth would run in a groove and finish right over the opening. Such tombs were expensive, and there would be a tendency to use them again and again. Sometimes this would arise because from the beginning the tomb was designed to take more than one body, but on this occasion John tells us that the tomb had never before been used, a detail that Luke also mentions (Luke 23:53). Matthew tells us that it was Joseph's own tomb (Matt. 27:60).

42 There was need for haste, for clearly it would be getting near to sundown when the Sabbath would start. It was necessary therefore to get the burial completed before then. So, because it was Friday (for the term "the Preparation" see the comments on v. 31 and Additional Note H, pp. 684-95), and because this tomb was near, they buried Jesus there.
1. Beasley-Murray cites J. Blinzler for the view that "Mark's past participle,

2. Yet we should remember that there were different kinds of flogging. Sherwin-White lists *fustes, flagella, and verbera* (Roman Society and Roman Law, p. 27). The first was a comparatively light beating, something in the nature of a warning. The third, a severe flogging, was never used by itself, but would accompany, for example, a crucifixion. If there were two beatings of Jesus, the first will have been a fustigatio and the second a *verberatio*.

3. This appears to be the force of τότε ούν; cf. BDF, "Jn uses τότε ούν . . . with a fuller sense = 'now' (in contrast to the preceding time)" (459 [2]).

4. The severity of this form of punishment is seen in certain incidental references. Thus Josephus tells us that a certain Jesus, son of Ananias, was brought before Albinus and "flayed to the bone with scourges" (Bell. 6.304). Eusebius says that certain martyrs at the time of Polycarp "were torn by scourges down to deep-seated veins and arteries, so that the hidden contents of the recesses of their bodies, their entrails and organs, were exposed to sight" (HE 4.15.4). Small wonder that men not infrequently died as a result of this torture (cf. the passages from Cicero cited by Godet). Incidentally, if Jesus' scourging was a severe one (we do not know how many blows he received), this would explain why he died after such a comparatively short time on the cross.

5. στέφανος strictly denotes a wreath of victory rather than a royal crown (διάδημα). It was awarded, for example, to the winners at the Games. The στέφαμνος might also be used at feasts. For the crown of thorns cf. H. St. J. Hart in JThS, n.s. Ill (1952), pp. 66-75. Hart argues that it was a caricature of the "radiate" crown, a crown in which spikes radiate outward. He suggests that such a crown (which might well be made from the palm tree) was a form of crown that pointed to the ruler as divine. If this form of crown was used, then Jesus "was presented as at once θεός and βασιλεύς — he was as it were divus Iesus radiatus. Accordingly he was the object in mockery of proskynesis" (p. 74). This is, of course, not proven, and the traditional idea that the crown was an instrument of torture may be correct. But we do not know for sure. Mr. Hart's suggestion is an interesting one, and widely accepted.

6. John's word is πορφυροΰν (cf. Mark 15:17, πορφύραν). Matthew speaks of a χλαμύδα κοκκίνην (Matt. 27:28). In strictness scarlet was the color formed from the dried bodies of a scale insect that lived on the oak, while purple, a very costly color, came from the shellfish murex. But the ancients do not seem to have distinguished very sharply between colors, at least in their nomenclature. Purple was the color for royalty, but the soldiers would not have had access to a genuine purple cloak. A scarlet cloak, however, would be easy to obtain, and it would give the general idea well enough. See further R. C Trench, *Synonyms of the New Testament* (London, 1880), pp. 185-86.

7. There are three imperfects here, ἤρχοντο, ἔλεγον, and ἐδίδοσαν. They indicate that the soldiers kept doing these things.

8. This appears to be the force of ό Βασιλεύς. Cf. Moulton: "we may represent the *nuance* by . . . 'Hail, you "King"!' In the latter passage we can easily feel the inappropriateness of the βασιλεύ found in Ω, which would admit the royal right, as in Ac 26. Its appearance in Mk 15:18 is merely a note of the writer's imperfect sensibility to the more delicate shades of Greek idiom" (M, I, pp. 70-71). Similarly BDF points out that "Attic used the nominative (with article) with simple substantives only in addressing inferiors, who were, so to speak, thereby addressed in the 3rd person" (147 [3]). This must not be applied rigorously in the New Testament, since God may be addressed with ό θεός or ό Πατήρ. But in the present passage it is likely that there is an element of contempt.

9. For ράπισμα see the note on 18:22.

10. For John's use of ἄνθρωπος of Jesus see on 4:29. J. L. Houlden draws attention to the suggestion of J. Tomin that we should understand the speaker as Jesus (the Greek means no more than "and he says"); grammatically the subject could be "Jesus"), and the meaning as "See what man is like" (ExT, 92 [1980-81], pp. 148-49). Houlden considers this sense "a shade too philosophical"
and sees no compelling reason for taking the words in this way. We should understand the words as Pilate's.


12. Cf. Richardson, "Adam (a Hebrew word meaning 'man') was created by God to be a king over the whole created world; all creation was to be ruled by a son of man (Hebrew, ben adam) (Ps. 8 . . .). In Christ, the Son of Man, God's original intention in the creation is fulfilled. He is the new Adam, the messianic King. Thus, we have in Pilate's words a striking example of Johannine double entendre; whereas Pilate might merely have meant, 'Look, here is the fellow,' his words contain the deepest truth about the person of Christ." Cf. also Pilcher, "Jesus summed up in His own Person the ideal Humanity — and this was how humanity treated Him." F. J. Moloney says, "Seen in the context of the whole Gospel, and of John's use of 'the Son of Man', it seems very probable that the title is implied here" (The Johannine Son of Man [Rome, 1976], p. 207).

13. The repetition of the article before ὑπηρέται separates the two groups and stops us taking them as a uniform whole. Contrast Matt. 16:21; 26:47; 27:3, 12; and Luke 9:22, all of which regard the high priests and elders as forming a kind of unity. John once links the Pharisees and the high priests in this way (7:45), but otherwise he always has the high priests as a separate group. Cf. M, III, p. 182.

14. ἐκραύγασαν denotes a loud shout, "roared" (Dods), "yelled" (Moffatt).

15. The anarthrous Υἱὸν Θεοῦ may be meant to put some stress on the quality.

16. μᾶλλον ἐφοβήθη is somewhat curious. There has been no previous mention of Pilate as being afraid. Thus, the expression makes it seem as though the meaning is "was afraid rather than — ." Perhaps the Jews expected him to be angry or the like, but rather he was afraid. More probably the term is elative, "he was very much afraid."

17. It is also somewhat strange that Pilate should use the emphatic pronoun σύ. Abbott points out that σύ in questions and imperatives "sometimes implies contempt" (2403), but he prefers the explanation that, as in Epictetus, there is a suggestion of incredulity: "he comes back into the Praetorium repeating to himself 'This man son of God!' and then utters his thought aloud to the prisoner, 'How could you possibly be (Son of God)??'" (2404). Another suggestion is that the question was a natural one at the beginning of an inquiry, and that Pilate is beginning his inquiry all over (Luke records that at an early stage Pilate asked whether Jesus were a Galilean, Luke 23:6).

18. Cf. Temple, "With his mind full of stories about gods who married women, and of the offspring of such unions, how can he begin to understand the relation of Jesus, Son of God, to the Father?"

19. He uses the emphatic pronoun ἐμοί and begins his sentence with it: "To me you do not speak?" In view of the almost unlimited power possessed by the Roman prefect in the exercise of his imperium the question is not unnatural.

20. The word is ἐξουσία, "authority." Pilate repeats the word, thus giving it a certain emphasis, and the same word is then taken up by Jesus in the next verse as he brings out the true nature of authority.

21. We would have anticipated av with οὐκ εἶχες. Its omission does not, however, appear to affect the sense.

22. κατ’ ἐμοὶ should probably be translated "over me" (as in NIV, Moffatt, Rieu, etc.) rather than "against me" (KJV). It is the sense, "in respect of," "concerning" (LS, A.II.7). κατό often does have the meaning "against," but it is difficult to believe that Jesus is thinking here exclusively of Pilate's power to crucify. There is also the power to release, and this is not a power "against" Jesus.

23. The verb παραδίδωμι is used characteristically of Judas, who is described as ὁ παραδίδος αὐτόν (18:2, 5). But it is also used of the Jews in their giving up of Jesus to Pilate (18:30, 35). For that matter it can be used of Pilate himself (19:16).

24. Some scholars hold that the comparison is not with Pilate, but with what would otherwise be the case. Thus Bernard cites Wetstein: "Your power and authority are delegated to you from God,
therefore Caiaphas is more guilty than he would be if you were only an irresponsible executioner, for he has used this God-given authority of yours to further his own wicked projects." But this is scarcely a natural interpretation and the more usual view is to be preferred.

25. ἐκ τούτου. See also 6:66 for the same expression and the same ambiguity.

26. Note the imperfect ζητεῖ.

27. See BAGD sub Καίσαρ for examples of the expression as an official title; also Deissmann, IAE, pp. 377-78; Sherwin-White, Roman Society and Roman Law, p. 47.

28. τούτον is probably used with a touch of contempt, "this fellow."

29. Philo tells us that on another occasion when certain Jewish leaders spoke of referring a certain matter to the Emperor Tiberius, Pilate "feared that if they actually sent an embassy they would also expose the rest of his conduct as governor by stating in full the briberies, the insults, the outrages and wanton injuries, the executions without trial constantly repeated, the ceaseless and supremely grievous cruelty" (Leg. ad Gai, 302). We need not doubt that Philo was overplaying his hand, but it is plain enough that Pilate would not relish an imperial scrutiny of his governorship.

30. For ἰδοῦ with the genitive see on 5:25.

31. The verb καθίζω is often transitive, and some scholars take it that way here. This gives the meaning that Pilate sat Jesus on the judgment seat (so, e.g., Weymouth, Moffatt, Goodspeed, Schoenfield, Haenchen, and de la Potterie). This is, however, most unlikely. In the first place it is impossible to imagine the governor doing such a thing (whether with his approval or not, it was the soldiers who carried out the mockery). In the second place, the transitive use is not very common in the New Testament. John uses the verb elsewhere only in 12:14, where it is intransitive (it also occurs in 8:2, again intransitively). And in the third place καθίζω ἐπὶ βήματος is a rather natural expression for taking one's place on the judgment seat (it is used of Pilate himself by Josephus, Bell. 2.172). Barrett discovers a typical Johannine double meaning: "We may suppose then that John meant that Pilate did in fact sit on the βήμα, but that for those with eyes to see behind this human scene appeared the Son of man, to whom all judgement has been committed (5.22), seated upon his throne."

32. This is the only place in the New Testament where βήμα is used of the judgment seat without having the article prefixed, that is, it is "a" judgment seat, not "the" judgment seat. It may well signify that a temporary judgment seat was set up on the Pavement. One would have expected that the normal βήμα would have been inside the Praetorium.

33. Λιθόστρωτον may mean "a stone pavement" or "a mosaic pavement." Γαββαθα, a word that occurs here only, is of uncertain meaning. It has been suggested that it is from קנה בּה, gab baitha', "the hill of the House," i.e., the mound on which the temple was built. It is difficult to grasp the appropriateness of this suggestion. The same is true of other explanations. In our present state of knowledge neither the meaning of the name, nor the situation of the place so named, can be known with certainty. Λιθόστρωτον is not, of course, meant as a translation of the Aramaic term. The two appear to have quite different meanings. They are alternative names for the same spot. Some scholars think the "Pavement" was a portable site for the judgment seat and cite Suetonius, Vit. Div. Jul. 45, in support. Suetonius, however, speaks of the portable "tesselated and mosaic floors" as evidence of unusual luxury, not as the normal state of affairs, and he does not connect them with judgment. W. F. Albright thinks that L. H. Vincent has demonstrated that the place referred to is the courtyard of the Tower of Antonia, where there was a Roman pavement covering at least 2,500 square meters. Since it stood on a rocky height, the name gabbetă, "ridge," was applicable (BNT, pp. 158-59). Robinson, however, rejects this identification (Priority, p. 54).

34. The preposition εἰς before τόπον is curious. It may be due to the influence of the earlier ἢγαν, or it may simply be equivalent to εν.

35. That is, taking the usual sentence division. A. Mahoney, however, argues that the words "at the third hour" should be taken with the preceding words about the casting of lots and not with the following words about the crucifixion (CBQ, XXVIII [1966], pp. 292-99). He thinks that this casting
of lots took place at the time of the scourging, well before the crucifixion. If this be accepted, there is no contradiction with the present passage.

36. Westcott, however, draws attention to Polycarp's martyrdom "at the eighth hour" (Mart. Pol. 21), which he thinks must mean 8 a.m. and not 2 p.m. He also cites the martyrdom of Pionius "at the tenth hour" and maintains that this cannot be 4 p.m. since this kind of thing usually took place in the morning. From these two references he reasons that in Asia Minor people counted from midnight. It is a slender basis on which to erect a theory that involves John in a method of counting the hours at variance with what is established in every other place. W. M. Ramsay further points out that the games were over when Polycarp was tried, and that this is unlikely to have occurred much before midday (Expositor, 4, vii [1893], pp. 221ff.; he also regards Pionius as having died in the afternoon, p. 223). Pliny, commenting on the fact that various people reckon time in various ways, says; “The actual period of a day has been differently kept by different people: the Babylonians count the period between two sunrises, the Athenians that between two sunsets . . . the common people everywhere from dawn to dark, the Roman priests and the authorities who fixed the official day, and also the Egyptians and Hipparchus, the period from midnight to midnight" (Natural History 5.188; Loeb translation). There is a good discussion in HDB, V, pp. 475-79). The critical point is the absence of evidence for dividing this "official day" into hours reckoned from midnight. No passage is cited for this. See also on 1:39.

37. Barrett thinks the difficulty may be a purely transcriptional one. Since the Greek numerals Γ (3) and Φ (6) could easily be confused, he notes a similar possibility with Hebrew characters. He prefers to think, however, that John has altered the time so as to bring the death of Jesus to the time the Passover victims were being killed. Ryle has a good account of the various attempts to solve the problem. C. C. Cowling thinks that in Mark ὥρα can have the meaning "watch," and, since the third watch was from dawn onward, that Mark means essentially what John does (ABR, V, nos. 3-4, pp. 155-60). The argument is ingenious, but falls short of demonstration. W. M. Ramsay's article, "About the Sixth Hour" (Expositor, 4, vii [1893], pp. 216-23) takes the line I have adopted: "The Apostles had no means of avoiding the difficulty as to whether it was the third or the sixth hour when the sun was near mid-heaven, and they cared very little about the point" (p. 218). He illustrates the normal vagueness about time by pointing out that "in Latin idiom, 'in the lapse of an hour' (horae momento) is used where we should now say 'in a second' " (ibid.).

38. The aorist ἐκράυγαν perhaps points to a great shout (rather than a continuing noise, which, however, almost certainly followed), ἐκεῖνοι will set the Jews in emphatic contrast to Pilate.

39. Ἄρον is usually taken to mean "Away with him," but Lightfoot points out that the verb also means "raise." He thinks that there may be a subtle Johannine reference to the exaltation of Jesus. Curiously C. K. Williams translates, "Down with him." But the word has the meaning "up" rather than "down."

40. Cf. Sherwin-White, "the implication that Pilate adopted, or was willing to adopt, the sentence of the Sanhedrin — is entirely within the scope of the procurator's imperium" (Roman Society and Roman Law, p. 47).

41. Grammatically the words refer to the chief priests and the words recall 1:11. Westcott comments, "The Jews received Christ from the hands of the Roman governor for death; they did not receive Him from the teaching of their own prophets for life." Some scholars hold that "they" means the Jews, who then proceeded to crucify Jesus by the hands of the Romans.

42. It may, however, reflect the Aramaic dativus ethicus, "carried him the cross," as Black thinks (AA, p. 76).

43. Some students find further evidence for Jesus' weakened state in the use of the verb φέρουν to describe his progress after Simon took the cross (Mark 15:22). The most natural meaning of this expression is "they carried" (him), though too much should not be placed on this since the verb is often used in the sense "lead," "conduct."
44. Γολγοθά = נולדה. BAGD thinks that this may point to an Aramaic word: nakhtal (cf. 2 Kings 9:35). Our word Calvary is from the Latin calvaria, which also means "skull." The neuter relative δ is rather strange since τόπος is masculine. Perhaps it refers to Κρανίου, a neuter noun. Or the expression Κρανίου τόπου may be regarded as a unity and treated as a neuter place name. There are somewhat similar neuters in Matt. 27:33 and Mark 15:22, referring to this same place and its interpretation. The expressions δ έστιν and τούτον έστιν are often used as explanatory formulas (like the Latin id est) quite irrespective of gender (see BDF, 132 [2]). It may be that a similar force is at work here.

45. The usual explanation is that Jesus was crucified on a hill that was in the shape of a skull. This may be right. But there is no ancient tradition to that effect and we should also bear in mind that, despite frequent references in hymns, sermons, and the like to the hill on which Jesus was crucified, nothing in the Gospels indicates that Jesus was crucified on a hill. Another explanation is that skulls from executed victims lay there. But this would require the plural "skulls," not "skull." Moreover, there was a garden "in" this place (v. 41), which makes it highly improbable that bodies or parts of them were allowed to lie about. Another suggestion, dating from the time of Origen, is that Adam was buried there. But there is no reason for thinking that this tradition is pre-Christian. The plain fact is that we have no evidence at all to determine the point. We do not know why such a curious name was used.

46. The Gospel accounts are the fullest descriptions of crucifixion that have come down to us from ancient times. Crucifixion was a shameful thing, and the writers of antiquity do not dwell on it. There was some variety in crucifixion; a good deal depended on the whims and the sadism of the executioners. Sometimes a single stake was used, or the cross might be in the shape of an X or a Y. There might be a cross beam at the top of a vertical stake (the crux comissa or patibulata) or lower down (the crux immissa or capitlata). The victim was fastened to the cross with either cords or nails, the nails being driven through the wrists or forearms (not the hands, which could not sustain the weight of the body; it would tear free). The cross beam was fixed so that the victim's feet were off the ground, but not necessarily very high off the ground. There was a hornlike projection (the sedile or sedecula), on which the crucified person could rest some of his weight. This was meant not to relieve the sufferer but to prolong the agony. Goguel quotes A. Réville's description: "it represented the acme of the torturer's art: atrocious physical sufferings, length of torment, ignominy, the effect on the crowd gathered to witness the long agony of the crucified. Nothing could be more horrible than the sight of this living body, breathing, seeing, hearing, still able to feel, and yet reduced to the state of a corpse by forced immobility and absolute helplessness. We cannot even say that the crucified person writhed in agony, for it was impossible for him to move. Stripped of his clothing, unable even to brush away the flies that fell upon his wounded flesh, already lacerated by the preliminary scourging, exposed to the insults and curses of people who can always find some sickening pleasure in the sight of the tortures of others, a feeling that is increased and not diminished by the sight of pain — the cross represented miserable humanity reduced to the last degree of impotence, suffering, and degradation. The penalty of crucifixion combined all that the most ardent torturer could desire: torture, the pillory, degradation, and certain death, distilled slowly drop by drop. It was an ideal form of torture" (The Life of Jesus [London, 1958], pp. 535-36). The remains of a man crucified in Jerusalem at roughly the same time as Jesus have been found (see J. H. Charlesworth, ExT, LXXXIV [1972-73], pp. 147-50). The legs were bent, twisted so that the calves were parallel to the cross beam and a single nail was driven through both heels into the upright. The legs had been broken, one simply fractured, the other shattered. It is not certain what actually caused the death of the crucified. Both the circulation and the respiration would have been affected, and this in a body already weakened by the vicious flogging that was the normal preliminary, and now subject to prolonged exposure. One suggestion is that the combination would bring on heart failure. Another possibility is brain damage caused by a reduced supply of blood reaching it. Or the effect on the lungs so reduced the air supply that the victim in effect suffocated in the end. We do not know. The shape of Jesus'
cross has traditionally been held to be the crux *immissa*, and this may well be correct. That Pilate's *τίτλος* over his head proves that this is not, however, correct. With the *crux commissa* the body would sink down low enough for a *τίτλος* to be affixed. See further M, Hengel, *Crucifixion* (London, 1977); J. H. Charlesworth, LXXXIV, pp. 147-50; B. Smalhout, *Zadok Perspectives*, June 1985, pp. 9-10; E. M. Yamauchi, *Evangelical Review of Theology*, 9 (1985), pp. 136-37; J. A. Fitzmyer, *CBQ*, 40 (1978), pp. 493-513.

47. Cf. Morgan: "It may be a challengeable opinion, but I think the Church of God has suffered more than it knows by pictures of the crucifying of Jesus; and sometimes by very honest and well-intentioned sermons, trying to describe the matter on the physical side. I am not denying the tragedy and the pain of it physically, but the physical suffering of Jesus was nothing compared to the deeper fact of that Cross."

48. John calls it a *τίτλος*, which Dods describes thus: "The 'title,' αιτία, was a board whitened with gypsum (σανίς, λεύκωμα) such as were commonly used for public notices." Suetonius speaks of a slave whom Caligula ordered to be punished by having his hands cut off and hung from his neck, "and that he then be led about among the guests, preceded by a placard (titulo) giving the reason for his punishment" (*Calig*. 32).

49. For Ναζωραΐος see on 18:5.

50. The words John uses mean something like "near was the place of the city where Jesus was crucified." According to MiM this way of putting it was "because a closer connection is thus established between the crime committed there and the guilty city of Jerusalem."

51. οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς τῶν Ἰουδαίων. This appears to be the only place where this expression is found (though cf. Acts 25:15). A contrast with "the King of the Jews" may be intended.

52. Turner sees in the present imperative μή γράφε the significance "stop writing, i.e. alter what you have written " (M, III, p. 76). Moule, however, includes this in a list of passages where "the reason for the use of the tense is difficult to detect" (*IBNTG*, p. 21). See further on 2:16.

53. After "Do not write" there is an article, ὁ Βασιλεύς, but this is lacking when the expression is repeated after "he said." Abbott draws attention to the distinction in the classics between βασιλεύς, " 'King' uniquely, the name given to the sovereign of the East, and ὁ βασιλεύς 'the king' of this or that barbarous tribe." He sees accordingly "perhaps an inner evangelistic meaning" in John's usage here (1966a). This, however, is to overlook the New Testament usage whereby a definite predicate noun which precedes the verb regularly lacks the article (see on 1:1). Here Βασιλεύς precedes είμι and is therefore anthropous. The meaning is "The King."

54. This is reflected in the double use of the perfect tense, Ὁ γέγραφα, γέγραφα. The aorist might well have been used in place of the first γέγραφα, so that the substitution of the perfect increases the air of finality.

55. The plural ἰμάτια is used, but this may be a general term for "clothing" (like our "clothes") rather than signifying a plurality of garments. See Mark 5:27, 30 for the interchangeability of the singular and plural of this word. In strictness it denotes the outer garment in distinction from the χιτών, the undergarment. The normal clothing of the time comprised a loin cloth, a χιτών, a ἰμάτιον, a belt, a head covering, and sandals (see Daniel-Rops, *Daily Life in Palestine at the Time of Christ* [London, 1962], pp. 211-18). It is possible that Jesus' ἰμάτιον was divided at the seams. Or the four parts may have been made up by including such items as the belt and head cloth. If so, the one who got the ἰμάτιον got a good deal more than did his fellows. The casting of lots ("what each would get," Mark 15:24) may be concerned with this problem. The soldiers cast lots to determine which article belonged to which soldier. The seamless χιτών remained over when each had something. So, rather than divide it, they cast lots again.

56. Josephus tells us that the high priest's χιτών was of this type, woven in one piece (Ant. 3.161). John may want us to discern a reference to Christ's priestly activity as he offered himself in death. Christian commentators, both ancient and modern, have sometimes seen in the seamless robe a reference to the unity of Christ's followers, gathered together through his death (so, e.g., de la
This unity is real, but it is a trifle fanciful to see it in the seamless robe. M. F. Wiles’s citation of Theodore of Mopsuestia has point: "Christ's seamless robe woven from the top, which suggested to Origen the wholeness of Christ's teaching, to Cyprian the unity of the church, and to Cyril the virgin birth of Christ, receives from Theodore no other comment than that such methods of weaving were common in the time of Christ, although in his day they had died out except for soldiers' uniforms" (The Spiritual Gospel [Cambridge, 1960], p. 25). The term ἁράφος incidentally is found nowhere else in the New Testament, and the same is true of υφάντος.

57. The verb λαγχάνω means "to obtain by lot," as in Acts 1:17. However, it is clear that in the present passage the meaning must be "cast lots."

58. SBk has a long note on the use of Ps. 22 in ancient Jewish writings (Π, pp. 574-80). This is valuable in view of the frequent citation of this Psalm in the passion narratives.

59. He introduces the quotation from Ps. 22 with the purposive conjunction ίνα (for ίνα without a preceding principal verb see on 1:8), and after citing the passage from the Psalm he adds, "So (ούν) this is what the soldiers did." Some scholars think that the whole gambling motif has been introduced in order to find a fulfillment of prophecy. One feels that their zeal to find an Evangelist manipulating the facts to square with a theory outruns their knowledge of the ways of fighting men. Nothing is more natural than a little gambling in such circumstances.

60. μέν ούν is found in John only here and in 20:30. In the New Testament it is usually resumptive, and many writers hold that that is its significance here.

61. The Greek does not use the term "wife" here. It reads Μαρία ἡ τοῦ Κλωπά. This could mean "the wife of" or for that matter "the mother of" or "the sister of" or "the daughter of" Clupas. The expression would perhaps most naturally be taken to mean "the daugher of." Were it not that the woman in question seems to have had grownup sons. A lady of this age would be known by reference to her husband rather than to her father. Godet holds that this lady is identical with "his mother's sister" and that there were three women at the cross. He meets the objection that two sisters are not likely to have had the same name by suggesting that ἀδελφή here may be used in the sense of the rare term γαλόως ("sister-in-law"). This is possible, but scarcely convincing.

62. In the light of Matt. 27:55 and Luke 8:2-3 it is not impossible that these women had provided the very clothes over which the soldiers gambled.

63. It is unlikely that this man is to be identified with Cleopas (Luke 24:18). As NBD points out, the names appear to be distinct, for εο does not contract to ο but to ου. Moreover, there is agreement that Κλεόπας is a contraction of Κλεόπατρος, whereas Κλωπάς is Semitic. Some identify Clupas with Alphaeus (Matt. 10:3, etc.), maintaining that these are variant Greek forms of the same Aramaic name, קלאוס. This, however, is disputed (see Deissmann, BS, p. 315, n. 2), and some roundly deny the possibility. Those who maintain the identity point out that Alphaeus is the father of James the less (Matt. 10:3), and that the Mary mentioned here as Clupas's wife is apparently the mother of James (Mark 15:40). The identification cannot be ruled out as impossible, but in our present state of knowledge it is best not to be dogmatic. According to Eusebius, Hegesippus says that Clupas was the brother of Joseph (HE 3.11.1).

64. Her name is given here as Μαρία (as also in 20:1,11; Ἑκκο, however, reads Μαρίμα in all three places). In 20:16,18 it is Μαρίμα, which corresponds more nearly to the Aramaic form (which would have been used by Jesus in addressing her), ἡ Μαγδαληνή probably means "the woman from Magdala," a town not far from Tiberias on the west side of the Sea of Galilee. We read of this woman in the passion narratives in all four Gospels, both as being present at the crucifixion and as coming to the tomb early on the morning of the resurrection. Apart from this we read of her only that seven demons went out of her (this is not further explained) and that she was one of the women who ministered to Jesus (Luke 8:2-3).

65. Cf. Barclay, "There is something infinitely moving in the fact that Jesus in the agony of the Cross, in the moment when the salvation of the world hung in the balance, thought of the loneliness..."
of His mother in the days when He was taken away. Jesus never forgot the duties that lay to His
hand."

66. The Greek means "Woman"; for γυναι as a form of address see on 2:4. NIV inserts "Dear"
to make it clear that there is no harshness.

67. Roman Catholic exegesis has often taken this to mean that Mary is appointed mother to
John and, more, to the whole church. But this is reading something into the text. Jesus is surely
providing that Mary be cared for, now that his death is approaching, not appointing her to a place
of supremacy over all his followers.

68. This may mean that the Beloved Disciple took Mary away immediately so that she did not
witness the death of her Son. This is supported by the fact that she is not mentioned in the group of
women who were there when Jesus died (Matt. 27:56; Mark 15:40). Against it is the difficulty of
seeing how the beloved disciple could have taken her home and returned in time for the events of vv.
31-37 (most agree that he witnessed them whether or not he is directly mentioned in v. 35). But
"From that hour" need not mean "from that moment." When we consider the way in which "the hour"
is used in this Gospel it is clear that it need mean no more than "from the time of the crucifixion." It
is also urged that if Jesus' mother came to the place of execution it is most unlikely that she would
have left before the end, all the more so in that the other women remained.

69. The expression εις τα ίδια does not necessarily denote one's permanent home. It is used of
all the disciples in 16:32 and they would certainly not all have had homes in Jerusalem.

70. The expression is μετά τουτο ("after this"), for which see on 2:12.

71. The verb τελειωω is used only here in the New Testament in the sense of the fulfillment of
Scripture. It has about it the air of bringing to its end or aim (τελος). It will point to the complete
fulfillment of Scripture in Christ, and probably to the completion of the work of Christ in accordance
with Scripture.

72. De la Potterie argues for this way of taking the words (pp. 137-38, 152-53).

73. J. M. Spurrell argues that the thirst is to be interpreted in terms of being "cut off from the
knowledge and the Spirit of God" (it being a thirst to be understood in terms of the "living water").
He thinks of it accordingly as being akin to the cry: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" of

74. δξος was the Roman posca, a vinegar, well diluted with water.

75. There has been a good deal of argument about this term. Many scholars say that the plant in
question is one well adapted for sprinkling, but that it does not grow stems long enough for the
purpose here mentioned. The implication is that John was not concerned with accuracy, but only with
some symbolical meaning, perhaps in connection with purification, though a better suggestion is that,
since hyssop was used in connection with Passover ceremonies (Exod. 12:22), John may be calling
attention to Jesus as the perfect Passover sacrifice. Some writers have been so impressed by the
difficulty of using hyssop to give drink to a crucified man that in place of ύσσωπφ they conjecture an
original ύσσω (javelin), a reading actually found in the eleventh-century cursive 476. No good reason
has been adduced, however, why this reading, if original, should have been so universally corrupted.
G. D. Kilpatrick remarks that the conjecture has been welcomed by the translators rather than by the
commentators. He rejects it on two main grounds: it does not agree with the nature of John's
vocabulary and the meaning of the term is the pilum, a weapon of the legionaries, but not of the
auxiliaries who were stationed in Palestine (Transactions of the Victoria Institute, LXXXIX [1957],
p. 99). Tasker accepts the conjecture, regarding the widespread reading as due to dittography (GNT,
p. 429). But the conjecture should be rejected. The difficulty appears to be due to the fact that too
many critics are too sure that they know what ύσσωπος was. BAGD, for example, describes it as "a
small bush w. blue flowers and highly aromatic leaves," from which one would never gather that the
experts are not too sure what plant the term denotes. Thus W. E. Shewell-Cooper says, "I find it
difficult to discover what hyssop really is" (Plants and Fruits of the Bible [London, 1962], p. 75).
NBD thinks that the plant meant in the present passage "was probably the Sorghum vulgare, var.
durra... a maize-like grass attaining at least 6 feet in height." In view of all this there seems to be no real reason for doubting that by ὑσσόσωφ John meant a plant with a stem sufficiently long for the purpose indicated. It should be borne in mind, moreover, that a very long rod was not needed since the crucified were not normally raised very high. All that was necessary was that the feet be clear of the ground, so that Jesus' mouth would probably be within reach of a man of average height. Quite a short cane would suffice.

76. It is good to know that it was customary for a drug to be offered to the crucified so that some of their pain was mitigated. We read of the custom in Sank. 43a, "When one is led out to execution, he is given a goblet of wine containing a grain of frankincense, in order to benumb his senses, for it is written, Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto the bitter in soul. And it has also been taught: The noble women in Jerusalem used to donate and bring it" (Soncino edn., pp. 279-80).

77. In the Greek this is one word, τετέλεσται, which is another of John's ambiguous terms. It could mean that Jesus' life was finished (i.e., that he was at the point of death). This is part of the meaning, but it is highly improbable that it is the whole meaning. More important is the truth that Jesus' work was finished. He came to do God's work, and this meant dying on the cross for the world's salvation. This mighty work of redemption has now reached its consummation. It is finished. The same word was used in v. 28 (NIV, "was completed"); the repetition gives emphasis.

78. Anton Baumstark sees in this the central point for John: "In the mind of the great Apostle of Asia Minor, St. John, the Beloved Disciple, who stood under the dying Master's Cross until the final Consummatum est, even the Resurrection could add nothing to the remembrance of that triumphant cry" (Comparative Liturgy [London, 1958], p. 174). A. Corell can say, "Surely it is not an exaggeration to think that τετέλεσται is the key word of the Fourth Gospel, the key to the solution of its theological problem." He proceeds, "The whole of the Fourth Gospel is really the story of the death of Jesus regarded as an eschatological fact" (Consummatum Est [London, 1958], p. 106). So also Marsh: "It cannot be too strongly emphasized that for John the cross is the instrument and point of victory, not the point of defeat which has to be reversed on Easter morning."

79. Matthew and Luke have ποῦ τήν κεφαλὴν κλίνη, while John's expression is κλίνας τήν κεφαλήν. That resting place for his head that he did not have on earth he found on the cross.

80. Beasley-Murray cites a comment of Origen: Jesus "bent the head and took His departure in the act of resting it, as it were, on the lap of the Father, who could cherish it and strengthen it in His bosom."

81. παρέδωκεν τό πνεύμα. De la Potterie points out that this expression is never elsewhere used for dying (p. 163). Bernard points out that the Hebrew of Isa. 53:12, "he poured out his soul unto death," might well be translated παρέδωκεν εἰς θάνατον τήν ψυχήν αὐτοῦ. He thinks that John may well be alluding to this passage. He goes on to maintain that the verb παραδίδοναι "expresses a voluntary act."

82. Another interpretation of this last phrase is that Jesus handed over the Spirit to the believers gathered near the cross (cf. 7:37-39). This seems to me very difficult to get from the text, but Hoskyns, in the light of I John 5:8, finds it "not only possible, but necessary." M. F. Wiles, however, tells us that among the patristic commentators πνεύμα here "is never interpreted of the Holy Spirit" (The Spiritual Gospel [Cambridge, 1960], p. 67). Elsewhere he tells us that the expression used "is almost universally interpreted of the essentially voluntary nature of his death" (p. 62).

83. επί τοῦ σταυροῦ is singular, though "the bodies," τά σώματα, is plural. But the construction is perfectly intelligible.

84. Josephus attests this as the Jewish custom: "the Jews are so careful about funeral rites that even malefactors who have been sentenced to crucifixion are taken down and buried before sunset" (Bell. 4.317).

85. The expression ή ήμερα τοῦ σαββάτου, evidently a translation of the Hebrew נָשְׁפָּה יוֹם סֵבָאָת, is found in a number of places (Luke 13:14, 16: 14:5). Sometimes the plural τῶν σαββάτων replaces
τοῦ σαββάτου with the same meaning (Luke 4:16; Acts 13:14; 16:13). This is the only example of the construction in John and the only place in the New Testament where ἐκεῖνο accompanies τὸ σάββατον.

86. SBk points out that this Sabbath could be called "great" whether it were Nisan 15, since that was the first day of the Passover festival, or Nisan 16, for on that day the Omer sheaf was offered according to the Pharisaic tradition (II, pp. 581-82). The reference thus does not help in deciding the question of whether the Last Supper was a Passover meal or not. It accords with either of the two important theories. I. Abrahams finds no instance before John 19:31 of the use of the term the "great Sabbath" and he mentions an opinion that the later rabbinic use was borrowed from the church (Studies in Pharisaism and the Gospels, Π [Cambridge, 1924], p. 68). This, however, is unlikely, and John's use of the expression seems inexplicable unless the term was already in use among the Jews.

87. It is unusual to find in John the plural verb with a neuter plural subject, and it is difficult to see a reason for it here. All the more is this the case in that we have just had the singular μείνη with the subject τὰ σ OMIT. It is, of course, possible that τὰ σκέλη is accusative, "that they might have their legs broken." This has the further advantage that it avoids an awkward change of subject when we come to the following ἀρθῶσιν. The subject of the verb can scarcely be τὰ σκέλη.

88. Plummer cites Lactantius: "His executioners did not think it necessary to break His bones, as was their prevailing custom. If this is accurate the horror of broken legs was habitually added to that of crucifixion. The apocryphal Gospel of Peter brings out the prolonging of the torture this normally meant by saying (4:14), they "commanded that his legs should not be broken, so that he might die in torments" (E. Hennecke and W. Schneemelcher, New Testament Apocrypha, I [London, 1963], p. 184).

89. This use of ἐπὶ with the accusative to denote motion right up to a person is found only here in John. It occurs more often in the Synoptic Gospels.

90. νύσσω occurs only here in the true text of the New Testament (though it is found in some MSS of Matt. 27:49, and in a different sense in one or two of Acts 12:7). It is perhaps another example of John's love for slight variation that the verb differs from that used in the citation of Scripture that he sees fulfilled in the incident, namely ἐκκεντέω (v. 37).

91. The λόγχη was originally the iron point or spearhead. Then it came to denote a lance, a shaft tipped with an iron point (see GT, LS).

92. This was argued by William Stroud, M.D., in his book, Treatise on the Physical Cause of the Death of Christ (London, 1847), and accepted by Sir Alexander Simpson (Expositor, 8.xi [1916], pp. 74-75). J. Wilkinson rejects this view, as also V. Taylor's theory of embolism, Le Bee's view that asphyxia was the cause, and J. L. Cameron's suggestion that acute dilatation of the stomach was the cause, all on medical grounds. He points out that each of the Evangelists uses an expression that "implies a deliberate act of will in dying" (Matt. 27:50; Mark 15:37; Luke 23:46; John 19:30). He says most doctors know of patients who decided to die and did so "when there was no apparent physical reason for them to die." He concludes that "the view which most satisfactorily explains our Lord's death is that he voluntarily surrendered His life on the Cross before the usual physical causes of death in crucifixion could operate" (ExT, LXXXIII [1971-72], pp. 104-7; the quotations are from p. 107). Dodd refers to a study by Raymond Schmittlein that views traumatic shock as the fundamental cause of death (HTFG, p. 1361; Wilkinson rejects this view, too).

93. SBk gives the evidence (II, pp. 582-83). Cfr. F. C. Burkitt: "According to 1 Joh v 6-8 the living personality has in it three elements, viz., spirit, water, blood. From the 'water' we are begotten, by the 'blood' we are sustained, and the 'spirit' or breath is the immaterial element that enters at birth and leaves at death. The spirit quitted Jesus when He died (Joh xix 30), leaving behind the water and blood of a human body, the existence of which was demonstrated to the onlookers by the spear-thrust of the soldier" (The Gospel History and its Transmission [Edinburgh, 1907], p. 233, n. 1).

94. Thus Westcott says, "The issuing of the blood and water from His side must therefore be regarded as a sign of life in death. . . . Though dead, dead in regard to our mortal life, the Lord yet
lived; and as He hung upon the cross He was shown openly to be the source of a double cleansing and vivifying power, which followed from His death and life." But this is based on a view of the connection between blood and life that appears to be untenable (see my The Apostolic Preaching of the Cross [London and Grand Rapids, 1965], ch. III). Hoskyns has an interesting list of patristic interpretations.

95. E.g., Richardson, "The symbolism is profound: from Christ's self-oblation there flow the healing waters of baptism and the life-giving blood of the Eucharist." W. Marxsen thinks that the words are there of a redactor who "is making it clear that Baptism and the Lord's Supper are based upon the death of Jesus" (Introduction to the New Testament [Philadelphia, 1974], p. 256). One would feel happier about this type of interpretation if it could be demonstrated that the early church did in fact use "water" to mean "baptism" and "blood" to signify "Holy Communion."

96. Cf. Barrett, who says that John "was not concerned to support this or that detail of sacramental practice or terminology, but to emphasize, perhaps against those who controverted it, that the real death of Jesus was the real life of men." Some commentators find a reference to purification in the water, and this is quite possible. Purification is connected with life in the Spirit as a necessary preliminary. Ryle is reminded of the opening of "a fountain ... for sin and for uncleanness" (Zech. 13:1).

97. Cf. W. G. Kümmel, "Since only the Beloved Disciple was mentioned as present at the cross (in addition to the women), it is natural to find him mentioned in the ἑωρακώς and witness of 19:35, though, to be sure, that is not clearly said" (Introduction to the New Testament [London, 1966], p. 166).

98. The perfect, μεμαρτύρηκεν, will signify "he has set it on permanent record."

99. Plummer brings out the force of it: "S. John first says that his evidence is adequate; then he adds that the contents of it are true. Testimony may be sufficient (e.g. of a competent eyewitness) but false: or it may be insufficient (e.g. of a half-witted child) but true. S. John declares that his testimony is both sufficient and true." For the importance of witness in this Gospel see on 1:7, and for ἀληθινός on 1:9. This is one of the places where Kilpatrick reads ἀληθῆς (with 124 א Chrys).

100. Lagrange notes an objection to understanding the writer to be referring to himself on the grounds that he has twice recorded the truth that a man's witness to himself is not valid (5:31; 8:13; he himself, however, thinks that the writer is the witness). This would have more weight if he were in fact bearing witness to himself here. But he is not. It is witness to an observed fact that is meant. Barclay detects a reference to the writer: "he goes out of his way to say that this is an eye-witness account of what actually happened, and that he personally guarantees that it is true." That ἐκείνος is not impossible with reference to the writer is shown by Josephus's use of the pronoun in just this way (Bell. 3.202; cf. also John 9:37). Support for the view that the writer is referring to himself may perhaps be found in the strong emphasis on personal witness in 1 John 1:1-3.

101. The principal advantage of this view (and it is a considerable one) is that it is a very natural way of understanding ἐκείνος. Torrey maintains that ἐκείνος here reflects the Aramaic hahu gabra, "a common Jewish substitute for the pronoun of the first person singular." An objection is the difficulty of seeing how the writer, if not an eyewitness himself, could know that the witness was speaking the truth, as he solemnly assures us is the case. Those who understand the words to refer to a witness other than that of the author often think of that witness as the Beloved Disciple. This, however, is not said.

102. This is sometimes supported by the contention that in this Gospel, apart from dialogue, ἐκείνος is generally emphatic and is often used of God or of Christ. Lagrange finds a reference to Christ, as does Hoskyns, who regards it as "almost necessary" to refer the words to our Lord. This, however, is not borne out by the facts. Dodd has shown that the usage of ἐκείνος in this Gospel supports the view that the reference is to the witness (HTFG, p. 134, n. 1). Bernard reminds us that John uses ἐκείνος not only of the Deity but quite often also of people, such as John the Baptist, (5:35), Moses (5:46), and the blind man (9:10). It requires more than this pronoun to demonstrate a
reference to God or to Christ. Strachan sees a threefold witness: the Evangelist in v. 34, the Beloved Disciple in v. 35, and Christ himself, also in v. 35. This is attractive but hard to discern in the text. Incidentally John rarely uses καὶ ἐκεῖνος as here, preferring κακεῖνος.

103. I.e., assuming we have the text of what he wrote at this point. Blass was most uncertain of this, saying, "In this passage, however, everything is doubtful, so far as criticism is concerned. There is doubt about the whole verse, which is wanting in e and Cod. Fuldensis of the Vulgate, about this particular clause, about the text of this clause, as Nonnus read ἐκείνον οἶδαμεν, etc. . . . The fact that so many theologians have based their theories as to the origin of the 4th Gospel on this verse and the meaning ordinarily attached to it is only explicable on the ground of a complete neglect of textual criticism" (*Grammar of New Testament Greek* [London, 1905], p. 172, n. 2). It may, however, be doubted whether Blass is being fair to the evidence. While the textual variants he notes should be weighed we should not attach to them more than their due weight. After all, there is a limit to the value we attach to the combination e, Cod. Fuldensis, and Nonnus. These can scarcely outweigh the mass of the authorities, especially since they do not all say the same thing. Turner is also hesitant about this verse. He draws attention to variation in John's use of ἐκεῖνος and concludes, "it is inadvisable to build any theories of authorship on the notorious ἐκεῖνος (= he, the eye-witness) in Jn 19.35" (M, III, p. 46).

104. If, as seems likely, the present subjunctive should be read, ἵνα μιστεύητε may be meant to indicate a continuing faith rather than merely an entry into faith. But many MSS read the aorist, so the point should not be pressed.

105. J. Ramsey Michaels connects this verse with the confession of faith of the centurion recorded in Mark 15:39. He suggests a tentative identification of the centurion with the "witness" of this verse (CBQ, XXIX [1967], pp. 102-9). There is much that is speculative here, but Michaels certainly draws attention to the fact that John understands what he records to be for the purpose of establishing faith.

106. Westcott has a very useful Additional Note on the interpretation of this passage among the Fathers. He cites many of them, both Greek and Latin.

107. Note the significance of ἱνα.

108. The correspondence with the Greek is not as close as in the case of the other two passages. For example, the words ὡστοὺς and αὐτῶς are absent from Ps. 34:20, though present in the other two passages. There is poetic parallelism in the Psalm, but not in John or in the Pentateuchal passages. Moreover, the Psalm is concerned with the preservation of the righteous from death; it is concerned with saving his life, not with the condition of the bones in his corpse. The other two passages do refer to the treatment of a dead body. In favor of the reference to the Psalm are the facts that the Pentateuchal passages both give a command and are in the active, whereas the Psalm and John both represent a prediction and are passive. But these considerations do not outweigh the others.

109. The quotation follows the Hebrew text, not LXX, which reads κατωρχήσαντο ("mocked," reflecting the misreading of יִצְחַק for יִשָּׂרֵא ) instead of John's ἐξεκέντησαν. But Theodotion and Aquila agree with John, so we cannot regard it as proved that John is translating direct from the Hebrew. He may have used a translation that on this point is like Theodotion and Aquila, but that has now perished. The most natural understanding of it, however, is that John knew and used the Hebrew. The LXX translators may well have been deterred by the bold anthropomorphism of the original (the piercing of God).

110. Calvin denies that the passage refers to Christ in the literal sense: "Rather he shows that Christ is the God who had complained through Zechariah, that the Jews had pierced His heart (Zech. 12:10). Now God here speaks in a human way, meaning that He is wounded by the sins of His people."

111. μετά ταύτα (see on 2:12). The expression does not appear to denote strict chronological sequence and accordingly does not necessarily place Joseph's approach to Pilate immediately after
the incident with the spear. It may mean that Joseph went to Pilate as soon as Jesus' death appeared imminent, or perhaps had taken place.

112. The location of Arimathea is not known. It may be identical with Ramathaim-Zophim (1 Sam. 1:1), but this does not help, for the site of this place is uncertain. Since Joseph had a tomb near Jerusalem it appears that Arimathea was his birthplace, but that he had now moved to the capital.

113. SBk cites an incident in which the proselyte Onkelos burned more than 80 minas of spices at the funeral of R. Gamaliel the elder. Asked why he did this he drew attention to Jer. 34:5 and went on: "Is not R. Gamaliel better than a hundred kings?" D. R. Sylva argues that the large quantity of spices "signifies a lack of understanding of 'the "lifting up" of the Son of Man'" (NTS, 34 [1988], p. 148), but his argument fails to carry conviction.

114. According to MM, ὀθόνιον in Egypt at any rate, denoted fine linen. They cite as parallels to the present passage papyri where it is used of "fine linen-wrappings for a mummy." It is generally agreed that the term denotes thin strips or bandages whereas σινδών (Matt. 27:59; Mark 15:46; Luke 23:53) refers to a sheet or shroud. F. N. Hepper has a useful article entitled "Flax and Linen in Biblical Times" (Buried History 25 December 1989), pp. 105-16). He points out that linen "was an expensive textile" used by the rich or for special occasions like burials.

115. The double negative οὐδὲπω οὐδὲις puts emphasis on this fact.

116. For causal δτι see on 1:50.
JOHN 20

VI. THE RESURRECTION (20:1-29)

All four Gospels come to their climax in the resurrection narratives, but each does it in its own way. They all agree that when the women came to the tomb early on Sunday it was empty, but after that the accounts are very different. John, for example, has none of the stories that the others have.¹ His account is peculiar to himself throughout. He agrees on the fact of the resurrection, and he speaks of the empty tomb as do the others, but he lacks the stories the others tell, and he tells stories that they do not. It is not easy to arrange the details given by the four Evangelists into a connected narrative. But it is not impossible, and Westcott, for example, has drawn up an approximate timetable of the events on that first Easter Day with everything arranged in sequence. We cannot be sure that his account is correct, but it is certainly possible and it shows that the Gospel accounts can be reconciled. The differences between the Gospels amount to no more than a demonstration that in them we have the spontaneous evidence of witnesses, not the stereotyped repetition of an official story.²

A. THE EMPTY TOMB (20:1-10)

1Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary of Magdala went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance. 2So she came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved, and said, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have put him!" 3So Peter and the other disciple started for the tomb. 4Both were running, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. 5He bent over
and looked in at the strips of linen lying there but did not go in. Then Simon Peter, who was behind him, arrived and went into the tomb. He saw the strips of linen lying there, as well as the burial cloth that had been around Jesus' head. The cloth was folded up by itself, separate from the linen. Finally the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went inside. He saw and believed. (They still did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead.)

Then the disciples went back to their homes.

The Synoptists inform us that on the first Easter morning a number of women came to the tomb with spices. Matthew speaks of Mary Magdalene and "the other Mary" (Matt. 28:1), Mark mentions these two and Salome (Mark 16:1), and Luke the two Marys and Joanna (Luke 24:10). Presumably this means that the burial on the Friday had had to be hurried, and when the Sabbath was over the ladies wished to complete the burial in a seemly manner. John does not speak of any woman as being there other than Mary Magdalene. She is mentioned by the Synoptists, as we have seen, but they do not actually tell us that she saw the risen Lord. It is possible that after the vision of angels mentioned in the Synoptic Gospels she became separated from the others and that the vision of the Lord took place then. It is perhaps surprising that Jesus' first appearance after the resurrection was to Mary who, as far as we know, held no official position. Her only claim was that she was one of those who had served Jesus (Luke 8:2-3).

We should not miss the implication that God's priorities are not ours. We would have expected one or more of the apostles, or, if a woman, then Jesus' mother.

It is worthy of note that all the Evangelists put some emphasis on the empty tomb. Nowadays some scholars suggest that we should not be too confident in our exposition of the resurrection, for we do not really know what took place. We must agree that there is room for some reverent agnosticism. There is much here of which we must say, "We cannot explain this." But that does not mean that we must surrender the great biblical emphases. Specifically the empty tomb witnesses to the fact that the resurrection of Jesus had physical aspects. Alan Richardson says, "If we truly believe that God performed the stupendous act of raising Jesus from the dead, we will not quibble about how he could or could not have done it. The bodily resurrection of the Lord is theologically very important in
shewing that the whole of creation is to be redeemed, the physical no less than the spiritual" (on v. 19).

1 Mary Magdalene came to the tomb very early on the first day of the week, for John tells us that it was "still dark." That it was still dark will perhaps explain why Mary did not see the things Peter and John saw later. However, she does not appear to have paused for long enough to see much, whatever the state of the light. Her early arrival is evidence of a determination to get on with the task at the soonest possible moment. It is not clear why John does not mention any woman other than Mary when all the other Gospels tell us that she was not alone. It may be that he knew that she was the first to see the risen Jesus (cf. Mark 16:9) and that he was not concerned accordingly with the others who did not see Jesus at the same time as did Mary. This is not entirely convincing, but it is difficult to arrive at a better explanation. The Synoptists tell us that the women came with spices to anoint the body. Why this should be done when Nicodemus had brought such a large quantity is not clear. It may be that they were not aware of what Nicodemus had done, but this seems unlikely in the light of the fact that two of them "saw where he was laid" (Mark 15:47). More probably, in view of the lateness of the hour and the nearness of the Sabbath, Nicodemus was not able to use all the spices he had brought to complete the process of burial, and the women came to do this. John proceeds to tell us that Mary saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. The women had been anxious about this, since they knew that they could not roll it away themselves (Mark 16:3).

2 Mary's immediate reaction was to tell the menfolk. She ran off to Simon Peter (who thus appears still to have been recognized as the leading apostle, despite the denials), and to the "the other disciple" (cf. 18:15-16), "the one Jesus loved" (cf. 13:23). She had seen that the tomb was empty and concluded that the body had been stolen (what else?). Apparently the thought of a resurrection did not enter her head. So she told the two men that the body had been taken away. Her "they" is not defined, but it can scarcely mean "people in general." It will refer to the enemies of Jesus, perhaps especially the chief priests, or it may be an impersonal plural equivalent to our passive. She adds, "we don't know where they have put him!" The plural "we" indicates that other women were associated with her in the discovery, though she is the only one John mentions (she uses the
singular in v. 13). It is in any case inherently likely, considering that she went to the tomb "while it was still dark" (v. 1), that others were with her. A woman would scarcely have ventured outside the city alone at such an hour with Jerusalem crowded with visitors for the feast, visitors who might be of uncertain character and who might be bivouacking anywhere! For "the Lord" see on 4:1.

3 The disciples apparently wasted no time talking. They set off to see for themselves. Peter is mentioned first as though he took the initiative and set off. The other then decided to come, too. They were going to the tomb. 15

4 The result was that they were both running. 16 The one who started second reached the tomb first. It is often said that he was younger than Peter, and he may have been. But the text does not say so and we must bear in mind that speed and youth are not synonymous. It is not impossible, moreover, that the Beloved Disciple was more familiar with the area than Peter and took a shortcut to the tomb. We do not know.

5 Apparently the Beloved Disciple was somewhat diffident or hesitant. He seems not to have begun this race to the tomb, but to have followed Peter's initiative. Now, arrived at his destination, he hesitated to go inside the tomb, but contented himself with standing outside and looking in. 17 From this position he could see the "strips of linen." No mention is made of the headcloth; presumably it was not visible from where he stood, though when Peter went into the tomb (v. 6) he would see it immediately.

6-7 It is not said how much later Peter arrived. But when he got there he did not hesitate but went straight into the tomb. He saw the cloths that had been around the body. John specifically mentions that the cloth that had been on Jesus' head was not with the others, but was wrapped up in a place of its own (Berkeley renders "in its particular place," but this seems to go beyond the meaning of the Greek). In recent years this has often been taken to mean that the grave clothes were just as they had been when placed around the body. That is to say, Jesus' body rose through the grave-clothes without disturbing them. This is not inconsistent with the language, but we should bear in mind that John does not say this. That the headcloth 18 was not with the others scarcely supports the view, for had this been the case it would have been right alongside them, with no more than the length of the neck (if that) between them. Moreover, "folded up" does not look like a description of the way it would have appeared if the head had simply passed through it. However, whatever be the truth of this, John is plainly
describing an orderly scene, not one of wild confusion. This means that the body had not been taken by grave robbers. They would never have left the cloths wrapped neatly. They would have taken the body, cloths and all, or would have taken the cloths off and dropped them in a heap. 19

8 Emboldened by Peter, the other disciple also entered the tomb. John repeats that he came there first, and goes on to say, "He saw and believed." Neither verb has an object. We may fairly conjecture that the object of the first is the grave clothes. These are at the moment, the center of attention. There is no real uncertainty here. 21 But what did he believe? That Jesus rose is our natural answer, but immediately John goes on to say that they did not yet know the Scripture that Jesus must rise. He may mean that, on the basis of the evidence before his eyes, the Beloved Disciple believed that a resurrection had taken place, even despite his ignorance at this time of the significance of the Scripture bearing on this point. This will be supported by the meaning attaching to "believe" in verses 25, 27 and 29. Hoskyns is in no doubt about this and goes as far as to say, "The pre-eminence of the faith of the Beloved Disciple is the climax of the narrative. His faith was not derived from ancient prophetic texts; the fact of the empty tomb illuminated the sense of scripture." 22 The Easter faith means more than the conviction that a re-suscitation has taken place; it includes understanding that the divine purpose revealed in Scripture has now taken place. It seems that John had now come to believe that the resurrection had taken place, but that he did not yet appreciate all that that meant. 23 Some readers have felt that the recording of the fact that he was the first to believe shows a certain pride. In view of verse 29 it is more likely to be humility. "He saw and believed" — and therefore did not attain to the blessing promised to those who believed without seeing. The possibility must also be borne in mind that John's meaning is that, though he did not attain to a knowledge of the resurrection, he did attain some sort of faith. Whatever had happened in the tomb had been wonderful. Or he may simply mean that now he believed Mary's story. It had sounded incredible enough, but now that John saw the tomb he recognized the truth of what she had said. He believed her. 24 It is worth noting that John puts some emphasis on the fact of the empty tomb. Not only was it seen to be empty by Mary, but also by Peter and the Beloved Disciple. Michaels adds a comment on the fact that only the Beloved Disciple is said to believe: "The implication is not that
Peter saw but did not believe; it is only that the narrator tells Peter's story as an external observer but the beloved disciple's story as his own."

9 "They still did not understand" appears to mean that eventually they did understand. But at this time they did not know the scripture that spoke of the resurrection. John's habit is to use "the scripture" as a way of referring to a specific passage rather than to the general tenor of scriptural teaching. This raises the question, Which passage is meant? Paul also tells us that Jesus was raised "on the third day according to the Scriptures" (1 Cor. 15:4), but he does not say what passage he has in mind either. It is usual to point to Hosea 6:2 or Jonah 1:17 for "the third day." Neither of these sounds convincing to modern ears, but they may well have sounded differently to first-century people. For the idea of resurrection without specification of the day, attention is drawn to Isaiah 53:10-12 (which speaks of the Servant as alive and active subsequent to his death) and Psalm 16:10. It is clear from the New Testament that the early Christians viewed the resurrection as foretold in the Old Testament. But this passage shows plainly that it was belief in the resurrection that came first. Believers did not manufacture a resurrection to agree with their interpretation of prophecy. They were first convinced that Jesus was risen and in the light of that came to see a fuller meaning in some Old Testament passages. "Must" (NIV, "had to") is important (see on 4:4). Since they came to see the resurrection in inspired prophecy it was no chance happening. The hand of God was in it. It must happen.

10 John rounds off this section of the narrative by telling us that the disciples went home again. They did not figure in the appearance of Jesus to Mary. When they had seen the tomb they went away.

B. THE APPEARANCES (20:11-29)

Each of the four Gospels recounts appearances of Jesus after the resurrection (with the exception of Mark if it really ended originally at 16:8, but resurrection appearances are prophesied in 16:7, and there is good reason for holding that from the beginning that Gospel, like the others, included accounts of appearances of the risen Lord). But the four differ in the appearances they relate. Characteristically John makes his own
selection. There is no question of his having derived these stories from any of the other Gospels.28

1. The Appearance to Mary (20:11-18)

11 But Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus' body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot. 12They asked her, "Woman, why are you crying?" "They have taken my Lord away," she said, "and I don't know where they have put him." 13At this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus. 14 "Woman," he said, "why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for? " Thinking he was the gardener, she said, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him." 15Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means Teacher). 16Jesus said, "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet returned to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am returning to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.' " 17Mary of Magdala went to the disciples with the news: "I have seen the Lord!" And she told them that he had said these things to her.

There is something very moving about this first meeting of the risen Lord with any of his followers. There is, moreover, a wonderful condescension involved, for we have no reason for thinking of Mary as being a particularly important person. Yet it was to her and not to any of the outstanding leaders of the apostolic band that the Lord appeared first. The story is told simply and with conviction.29

11 "But" indicates a contrast to the two who went home. Mary was standing just outside the tomb, and weeping.30 John says nothing about her return to the tomb, nor about whether she got there before the two men left. He simply pictures her as standing at the tomb and weeping. While she continued weeping she stooped down and peeped in. Though she had been at the tomb before, this is the first mention of her looking inside it.
12-13 She sees (John uses the present tense for greater vividness) two angels in white sitting where the body of Jesus had lain, one at the head and the other at the feet. The angels do not play a major part; their one function is to ask Mary why she is crying, after which we hear no more of them. For "Woman" as a form of address see on 2:4. It is obvious that in this context there can be nothing harsh about the term. Mary's reply is much like her words to the disciples in verse 2, though now she uses the singular "I don't know," No other women are associated with her at this moment. The question concerns her personal grief, and her answer relates to this only. The depth of her grief is perhaps due to the emphasis the Jews of the day placed on correct and seemly burial. They regarded with abhorrence any disrespect paid to a corpse. Uncertainty as to what had happened to Jesus' body was worrying Mary and distressing her deeply.

14 No answer of the angels is recorded. Perhaps Mary withdrew abruptly. She may have heard a movement behind her. Or, as many commentators from Chrysostom down have held, the angels may have made some motion at the sight of the Lord behind Mary. We do not know. But she turned right around and saw Jesus standing there. Why she did not recognize him is not said. It is possible that tears were blurring her vision, but tears are not usually a reason for failing to recognize someone well known to us. There seems to have been something different about the risen Jesus so that he was not always recognized. The walk to Emmaus is the outstanding example, but we see the same thing at the miraculous catch of fish (21:4), and Matthew tells us that when the disciples saw Jesus on a mountain in Galilee they worshipped, "but some doubted" (Matt. 28:17). Cf. also Luke 24:37.

15 Jesus repeats the question of the angels, "Woman, why are you crying?" and adds, "Who is it you are looking for?" This might have started Mary along the right track. She was looking for a corpse whereas she should have been seeking a person. Why Mary took him for the gardener is not clear. Perhaps it was the only logical thing. Who else would be in the garden so early, and who else would question her as to what she was doing? What is certain is that she did take him for the gardener and she leaped to the conclusion that he may well have carried away the body she was seeking. So she asks whether this were the case and lets him know that she wants to take the body away. She does not say, "in order to give it decent burial," but that is implied. Interestingly, she says nothing of whose
body she meant, nor even that she did mean a body. Her answer presupposes quite a bit of knowledge of the circumstances. But that is quite understandable, given the depths of her grief. A thoroughly grief-stricken person does not make allowances and go into full explanations. She uses "him" three times: it was he who filled her thoughts to the exclusion of all else. It has often been pointed out that Mary unaided would have found it difficult to "get him." So it would. But grief like Mary's does not perform exact calculations as the weight that can be lifted.

16 With a masterly economy of language John tells how Mary came to know that it was Jesus. The risen Christ utters but one word, her name. Mary turns. Evidently, after turning toward Jesus (v. 14) she had turned back to the tomb. This further act of turning indicates that something in the way the name was spoken caught her attention. When the Good Shepherd calls his sheep they know his voice (10:3-4). Immediately she calls out in Aramaic "Rabboni," which John translates for the benefit of his Greek readers. It indicates plainly enough that Mary had come to recognize Jesus. This seems, however, to have been an unusual form of address. In the older Jewish literature it appears to be used, but seldom with reference to men, and as a mode of address it is mostly used of addressing God in prayer. John may want us to understand Mary's reaction to the presence of the risen Lord as similar to that of Thomas who said, "My Lord and my God" (v. 28). Against this are the facts that "Rabboni" is used by the blind man in Mark 10:51 (where there is no reason to hold that he thought he was addressing God), that the Palestinian Targum may point to a different use, and that John here interprets the word as meaning "Teacher." This last point is probably decisive. We should hold that Mary's understanding of Jesus' person is not complete.

17 This verse presents us with some problems. The first is in the words NIV translates "Do not hold on to me" and which have traditionally been understood as in KJV, "Touch me not." There seems to be no reason why Mary should not touch him, and indeed Matthew tells us that when the women first saw the risen Lord they "came to him, clasped his feet and worshiped him" (Matt. 28:9). Probably we should understand the Greek tense here in the strict sense. The present imperative with a negative means "Stop doing something" rather than "Do not start something." Here it will mean "Stop clinging to me" and not, "Do not begin to touch me." Evidently Mary in her joy at seeing the Lord had laid hold on him, possibly in the
same way and for the same purpose as the ladies of whom Matthew writes. The references to ascending are not completely clear. It is not easy to understand what difference the ascension could make to Mary's clinging to Jesus. Some point out that, whereas we use "the Ascension" as a technical term, this was not done in New Testament days. The point may be conceded, but it does not get us far. Whether "ascend" is used in the technical sense in this verse or not, it clearly refers to a decisive parting as Jesus returns to his Father. Part of the thought appears to be that Jesus was not simply returning to the old life. Mary was reacting as though he were. Since he had not yet ascended he could appear to her, but she must not read into this a simple return to the former state of affairs (such as no doubt happened in the case of Lazarus). But part of the thought also will be concerned with the fact that the ascension was as yet future. Some exegetes maintain that John thought that the ascension took place on the same day as the resurrection and cite this passage as proof. But this is to ignore the subsequent happenings narrated in this very chapter. Verses 26ff., to name no other, show clearly that John thought of Jesus as active here on earth after the day of resurrection. The words we are discussing must be understood in the light of a future ascension. It is as though Jesus were saying, "Stop clinging to me. There is no need for this, for I am not yet at the point of permanent ascension. You will have, opportunity of seeing me." In the message to the "brothers" the verb "I ascend" (NIV, "I am returning") is in the present tense. This may denote future action, but if so it is with the thought either of imminence or certainty. It is the latter that is required here. We should probably accept Lagrange's suggestion that the adversative conjunction appended to "Go" applies also to "ascend." The words will then mean "Stop clinging to Me. I have not yet ascended to my Father, it is true. But I shall certainly do so. Tell this to My brothers."

A further problem is the meaning to be attached to "my brothers" to whom Mary is to deliver a message. In this context we naturally expect a message to be sent to the disciples, and in fact Mary does go to them (v. 18). But they are not normally called Jesus' "brothers" (though cf. 21:23; Matt. 12:50). His brothers are, of course, referred to with this term (2:12; 7:3, 5, 10), but we are expressly told that they did not believe in him (7:5), so it is not easy to understand why he should be sending a message to them. Yet Luke tells us that from the earliest days after the resurrection the
"brothers" of Jesus were found with the disciples (Acts 1:14). Obviously there was a change in them by that time, so it is possible to hold that they are meant in this verse. But on the whole this does seem too soon after the resurrection for a special message to them. After all, they were unbelieving, and a little time seems required for their change of heart. The same problem arises in connection with Matthew 28:10, where the risen Lord gives a message to "my brothers" through the women. All in all it appears that we should understand the term as denoting the disciples. In passing we should not miss the significance of the fact that these important messages were entrusted to women. Among the Jews women were not permitted to bear witness (Mishnah, *Rosh Ha-Shanah* 1:8).

Finally, we should notice that Jesus refers to God as "my Father and your Father" and as "my God and your God." It seems as though he is of set purpose, placing himself in a different relationship to the Father from that which his followers occupy. This has important implications for an understanding of Christ's Person.

If Mary was intended to speak to the brothers of Jesus it does not appear that she carried out the instruction. She told the disciples (whom she evidently understood Jesus to mean) that she had seen the Lord and that he had said certain things to her. There is a change from direct speech, "I have seen the Lord," to indirect speech, "that he had said these things." This has the effect of highlighting the significant words and putting emphasis on Mary's experience.

### 2. The Appearance to the Ten (20:19-23)

19 On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you! " 20 After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord. 21 Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." 22 And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. 23 If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."
Luke mentions an appearance of the Lord to the disciples on the evening of that first Easter Day (Luke 24:36ff.). This comes after those who had walked the Emmaus road with Jesus had returned to Jerusalem and had been told by the assembled disciples that Peter had seen Jesus. John's story resembles Luke's in the greeting and in the fact that Jesus showed his friends his hands and his side (in Luke, his hands and his feet). But Luke says nothing about Jesus breathing on the disciples, or about the Holy Spirit, or about forgiving and retaining sins. John, by contrast, does not speak of the disciples' fear at seeing what they thought was a spirit or of Jesus as eating some broiled fish. Though both Evangelists seem to be referring to the same occasion there is no question of John's setting before us a variant of Luke's story. Here, as elsewhere, he is quite independent.

This incident is introduced with a typical Johannine note of time (see on 1:39). It was evening on that same day, the first day of the week. When he tells us that the doors were "locked" (the Greek means no more than "shut," but NIV seems correct as we see from the following explanation, that this was due to fear of the Jews). The group that met together is called simply "the disciples." This may mean the apostles only (or rather ten of them, for Thomas was not present). But the term is wide enough to include others, and there is no real reason for thinking that apostles only are in mind. Certainly if the occasion is that referred to in Luke 24:33 others were present, for Luke expressly mentions them. It should also be borne in mind that in this very chapter John speaks of "the Twelve" (v. 24), so that presumably he means something different when he says "the disciples." The disciples were afraid (understandably), and they took their precautions. Now Jesus came and stood among them. This appears to mean that he had not come through the door in the normal fashion (else what is the point of mentioning the shut door?). It has been suggested that Jesus came right through the closed door, or that the door opened of its own accord or the like. But since Scripture says nothing of the mode of Jesus' entry into the room, we do well not to attempt to describe it closely. We can scarcely say more than that the risen Jesus was not limited by closed doors. Miraculously he stood among them, but the precise way he did it is not indicated, "Peace be with you" is the usual Hebrew greeting (e.g., 1 Sam. 25:6). It is likely, however, that on this occasion we should see more in the words than a conventional greeting. After their for-saking Jesus at the time of the arrest the disciples may well have expected rebuke or
blame. Instead Jesus pronounces peace on them. For the term "peace" see on 14:27.

20 No reason is given for his showing his hands and side. But these were places where he bore the marks of the wounds (John does not mention wounds in the feet), so that this was a means of convincing them that it was he, the same Jesus they had known, however much he might now be transformed. We should probably understand this in the light of what Luke tells us, that when Jesus appeared among the disciples on the evening of the first Easter Day, "They were startled and frightened, thinking they saw a ghost" (Luke 24:37). It must have been unnerving for them to have Jesus suddenly appear in the middle of them, though the doors remained fast closed. What could this be other than a spirit? Seeing is not always believing; therefore it must have been very hard for them to credit a resurrection. So Jesus immediately took steps to convince them of his identity and to take away their fear. Tenney remarks, "The resurrection body has properties different from the body of flesh; yet it is not ethereal." The following "therefore" (which NIV omits) shows that the sight of the hands and the side was effective. On account of this they rejoiced, convinced now that it was Jesus that they saw. We should certainly see in this the fulfillment of our Lord's prophecy that the disciples would have sorrow while the world rejoiced, but that they would see him again and their sorrow would be turned to joy (16:20-22).

21 Now comes Jesus’ commissioning of his disciples. He repeats the greeting, "Peace be with you," the repetition giving it emphasis. It may not be fanciful to think of this peace thus emphasized as the peace that comes as the result of his death and resurrection (cf. 14:27). After all, he has just shown them his hands and side with their marks of his passion. The thought that the Father has sent the Son is one of the master thoughts of this Gospel; it is repeated over and over. Thus it is not surprising that it comes out once more in this solemn moment. Now, as Jesus has brought to its consummation the task that he came to accomplish, the task that the Father laid upon him, he sends his followers into the world. The charge is given added solemnity from being linked thus to the mission of the Son: their mission proceeds from his. It is only because he has thus accomplished his mission, and indeed precisely because he has accomplished it, that they are sent into the world. The link between his mission and theirs is emphasized.
The thought is very similar to that in the prayer of 17:18, though characteristically there are slight changes in the wording.\textsuperscript{57}

22 Having commissioned them, Jesus bestowed on them the equipment they would need for the discharge of their commission. He breathed\textsuperscript{58} and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit."\textsuperscript{59} It is perhaps significant that there is no "on them" in most MSS\textsuperscript{60} (cf. Schonfield, "he expelled a deep breath"). John is not writing as though there were a series of gifts made to individuals. Rather he speaks of a collective gift made to the group as a whole. "The gift was once for all, not to individuals but to the abiding body" (Westcott). There is possibly a recollection here that the primary meaning of the word we render "spirit" is "breath" or "wind," but the important thing is not this. It is the presence of the Holy Spirit within them. The relation of this gift to that made on the day of Pentecost is obscure. Some scholars maintain that the two are incompatible. They hold that Luke thought that the Spirit was not bestowed until ten days after the ascension, whereas John thought of this gift as taking place on the evening of the day of resurrection. But this may be going too far too fast. The circumstances of the two gifts are completely different. And, whereas that in Acts 2 is followed immediately by some very effective preaching, no sequel to this gift is narrated. It is the teaching of the New Testament that "There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:4), and the problem is probably to be solved along these lines.\textsuperscript{61} It is false alike to the New Testament and to Christian experience to maintain that there is but one gift of the Spirit. Rather the Spirit continually manifests himself in new ways. Subsequent to the gift at Pentecost the Spirit fell on all who heard the word in the house of Cornelius (Acts 10:44), just as "on us at the beginning" (Acts 11:15). On several occasions believers are said to have been "filled with the Holy Spirit" (e.g., Acts 4:8, 31; 9:17; 13:9; cf. Rom. 5:5; 1 Cor. 2:12, etc.), where the aorists indicate new activities of the Spirit, rather than a reference to what had always been the case. John tells of one gift of the Spirit and Luke of another.

23 On the basis of the gift of the Spirit whom the Lord Jesus has given to his church, that church is now given authority to declare that certain sins are forgiven\textsuperscript{62} and certain sins are retained.\textsuperscript{63} This is not to be understood in any mechanical way. It is the result of the indwelling Spirit and takes place only as the Spirit directs.\textsuperscript{64} The verse is sometimes understood as though it
gave the apostles, and through them the individual Christian minister, the power to forgive or to withhold forgiveness of the sins of individuals.65 There are, however, objections to this. In the first place it overlooks the fact that there were almost certainly others than the apostles present. There seems to be no reason for thinking that this group of Christians was anything other than that mentioned in Luke 24:33ff., and that certainly included Cleopas and the friend who walked with him to Emmaus. The gift Christ made was surely made to the church as a whole. We have no reason at all for thinking that those present formed a "ministry." They were rather the representatives of the whole church. Strachan indeed thinks that the words give the authority in question "to any disciple of Christ." This does not seem correct; the words apply to the church as a whole and not to individuals.66 But at least the fact that Strachan can take up this position shows how difficult it is to insist that the words apply only to the ordained ministry. Those who refer the words to the ministry usually concentrate on the power of absolution. They think of the Christian priest as a man with a God-given authority to declare to people that their sins are forgiven. But it ought not to be overlooked that that power to declare sins forgiven is on all fours with the power to declare them retained. I do not think that this verse teaches that any individual Christian ministry has the God-given authority to say to a sinner, "I refuse to forgive your sins. They are retained." But unless this can be said, the words about forgiveness cannot be said. The one goes with the other.67

It should also be borne in mind that, according to the best text, the verbs "are forgiven" and "are not forgiven" are in the perfect tense.68 The meaning is that the Spirit-filled church can pronounce with authority that the sins of such-and-such people have been forgiven or have been retained. If the church is really acting under the leadership of the Spirit it will be found that her pronouncements in this matter do but reveal what has already been determined in heaven.

Further, it should not be overlooked that the words for "whose" (NIV, "anyone") are plural. It is the sins of whatever69 people, not the sins of whatever person, to which this verse refers. Jesus is not speaking of individuals, but of classes. He is saying that the Spirit-filled church has the authority to declare which sins are forgiven and which sins are retained.70 This accords with rabbinical teaching that spoke of certain sins as "bound"
and others as "loosed." This referred to classes, not to individuals, and this is surely what Jesus is saying also. Of course, what applies to classes has its application to individual cases. That cannot be denied and should not be overlooked. But it is not the subject of this gift of Christ.

3. The Appearance to Thomas (20:24-29)

Now Thomas (called Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. When the other disciples told him that they had seen the Lord, he declared, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand in his side, I will not believe it." A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe." Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!" Then Jesus said to him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

This incident, peculiar to this Gospel, is of the utmost importance for an understanding of the way the first Christians came to know that the resurrection had indeed taken place. Some writers almost give the impression that at first there was no thought of a resurrection, but that bit by bit the apostles became familiar with the thought. Eventually they built up more and more circumstantial tales until the whole church was convinced. The church at first had no idea of a resurrection. That is plain enough. But there was no gradual acceptance of the idea with more and more "appearances" being manufactured. The plain fact is that all told we read of five appearances on the one day (to Mary Magdalene, to the women, to the two on the way to Emmaus, to Peter, and to the ten). Then there are five more spread out over forty days, and after that no more with the exception of the appearance to Saul of Tarsus. This is no gradual building up of "appearances" but rather the reverse. They were progressively restricted, not built up. Moreover, as Thomas makes abundantly clear, the appearances
were not at first welcomed. They were resisted as idle talk, and those who had not actually seen Jesus for themselves refused point blank to accept the stories. Only the plainest of evidence could have convinced a skeptic like Thomas. But convinced he was, which shows us that the evidence was incontrovertible.

24 First the scene is set. Thomas is described with some precision as one of the Twelve, and as the one called "Didymus" or "twin" (see on 11:16). He was not with the others when Jesus came. No reason is given, and there is neither praise nor blame for his absence.

25 The others told Thomas that they had seen Jesus, and found their statement met with blank incredulity. Thomas demands both visual and tactile proof before he will believe. Unless he can both see the nailprints and put his finger into them, he will certainly not believe. No skepticism could be more thoroughgoing than this, and it is perhaps worth noting that nobody else in the New Testament makes demands like these before believing. This is often taken as indicating that Thomas was of a more skeptical turn of mind than the others, and, of course, he may have been. But another possibility is that he was so shocked by the tragedy of the crucifixion that he did not find it easy to think of its consequences as being annulled. In support of this is urged his preoccupation with the wounds of Jesus, as these words of his show.

26 "Eight days" according to the inclusive method of counting signifies "a week" (so NIV). This incident, then, is dated on the Sunday evening after the first Easter Day. The disciples were again gathered indoors, this time with Thomas in the number. As before, the doors were locked (the same expression as in v. 19, where see the note). As before, Jesus came among them and gave them the usual greeting. John seems to be at pains to make clear that all was just as it had been on the first occasion.

27 After the greeting Jesus addressed himself to his hard-headed disciple. With some rather unexpected vocabulary he invites Thomas to carry out the tests he himself had nominated, to put his finger into the nailprints and his hand into the side. Jesus concludes by urging Thomas to cease being an unbeliever but become a believer.

28 But Thomas was not such a skeptic as he thought he was. At the sight of Jesus all his doubts vanished and he did not need to apply any of his tests. It is possible that it was the words of Jesus more than anything that brought conviction, for they showed that Jesus was perfectly aware of what
Thomas had laid down as his demands. How did he arrive at this knowledge unless he was there, unseen? Perhaps we should mention that some think that Thomas did actually put his finger into the nailprints and his hand into the spear wound. They hold that if Jesus commanded him he had no choice. But John says nothing of the sort, and it seems very improbable. It is much more likely that Jesus' words reveal the truth of the matter: "Because you have seen me, you have believed" (v. 29). Thomas gave utterance to his newfound faith in the memorable words, "My Lord and my God!" If, as many scholars think, chapter 21 is an appendix and that the original Gospel ended at 20:31, this will be the last statement made by anyone in the Gospel. It is significant that it is an ascription to Jesus of deity, corresponding to "the Word was God" in 1:1. For the term "Lord" see on 4:1. It is an expression that is used by others of the Master, sometimes with more and sometimes with less content. Here we must clearly give the term all that it will hold. "My God" is a rather new form of address. Nobody has previously addressed Jesus like this. It marks a leap of faith. In the moment that he came to see that Jesus was indeed risen from the dead Thomas came to see something of what that implied. Mere men do not rise from the dead in this fashion. The One who was now so obviously alive, although he had died, could be addressed in the language of adoring worship.

Jesus addresses to Thomas a word of approval, but one that goes far beyond Thomas to those who had not required so much before believing. Thomas believed on the basis of sight: he saw Jesus and believed. Some commentators think that Jesus is administering a rebuke to his hard-headed follower. This may be so, but if so it is a very gentle rebuke. We must bear in mind that if it is true that Thomas believed on the basis of what he himself saw, this is also the case with all the others John has so far mentioned. While some may well have believed on the basis of the testimony of Mary Magdalene and others John has not said so. There is possibly significance also in the fact that when Jesus goes on to speak of those who believed without seeing he says they are "blessed" (cf. 13:17), not "more blessed." This does not look like a comparison, with Thomas worse off than the others. But Jesus does pronounce a blessing on those who have believed without seeing. At the time the words were spoken this would not have been a large number, but perhaps not all the first Christians were as skeptical as Thomas. Some had believed Peter and the others (Luke 24:34). These are now said to be blessed. And, of course, the words will
refer as well to all those who in the future would follow in the same way. There is a special blessing for those possessed of a faith that can trust absolutely and that does not need to "see" at every turn.

VII. THE PURPOSE OF THE GOSPEL (20:30-31)

30 Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. 31 But these are written that you may a believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

a. 31 Some manuscripts may continue to

30 In this statement of intention John first makes it clear that in his Gospel he has made a selection. He has not by any means written all that he knows about Jesus. There were many other "signs" (for this term see on 2:11 and Additional Note G, pp. 607-13) that Jesus did. He has written what served his purpose and has omitted much. He speaks of the signs as having been done "in the presence of his disciples"; that is to say, the disciples were witnesses of them. This way of putting it reminds us of a characteristic emphasis throughout this Gospel. Though John does not choose to use the term "witness" in this verse, his choice of words reminds us that adequate "witness" is borne to the things of which he writes.

31 Now John gives us the purpose of his book, the purpose that he has had steadily in mind from the beginning. He uses the perfect tense in the verb "are written," a tense that perhaps indicates that what he has written stands. There is an air of permanence about it as in Pilate's "What I have written, I have written" (19:22). He tells us that the purpose of his writing is that people may believe. This appears to mean that John has an evangelistic aim, and if the aorist subjunctive of the verb be read, this is beyond reasonable doubt. Some, however, accept the present (which seems not improbable) and argue from it that the meaning is "that you may continue to believe." They reason that the Gospel is addressed to believers. It appears that this is reading a good deal into the tense, and it is more probable that there is an evangelistic aim whatever the tense. But we should also
discern a pastoral concern. Through the centuries Christian people have nourished their spiritual lives on this Gospel. It is incredible that a man who could write such a Gospel should be unaware of such a possibility. Faith is fundamental, and John longs to see people believe. He has not tried to write an impartial history; he is avowedly out to secure converts. He is bearing witness to those great events in which God has acted for humanity's salvation. For he is sure that God has acted, and that his action is to be seen in Jesus Christ. John does not think of faith as a vague trust, but as something with content (see further Additional Note E, pp. 296-98). Faith means believing that — . Here he singles out two things in faith's content. The one is that Jesus is the Christ, that is, the Messiah, the long-expected one. The other is that he is the Son of God. We take these two as more or less identical, but the Jews of the day did not. The Messiah was not expected to stand in that very close relationship to the Father of which John speaks. John's conception of messiahship is fuller and richer than that of contemporary Judaism (see the comments on 1:20,41). The combination of terms indicates the very highest view of the Person of Jesus, and one that it must be taken in conjunction with the fact that John has just recorded the confession of Thomas that hails Jesus as "My Lord and my God." There cannot be any doubt but that John conceived of Jesus as the very incarnation of God.

It is only because he has this high dignity that he can be the kind of Savior that John conceives him to be. So John thinks of the faith of which he writes not as an end in itself, but as the means of bringing people life, life in Christ's name. Life is another of John's great themes (see on 1:4; 3:15). He writes of it constantly, and invariably he thinks of real life as something to be had only through Christ. So here life is to be had by believers, and they have it in the "name" of Christ (for "the name" see on 1:12; 14:13). That is to say, the abundant life of which he writes is connected with the very person of Christ. It is his gift.
1. Luke 24:12 mentions Peter's visit to the tomb (though the Beloved Disciple is not included). Some regard that verse as inauthentic on the grounds of its omission by certain Western authorities (notably D) and the possibility of its being derived from the present passage. If this were the case, however, it is difficult to understand why John should not be mentioned, nor the appearance to Mary.

2. A more recent study that also shows that the Gospel accounts need not be understood to contradict one another is that by John Wenham, *Easter Enigma* (Exeter, 1984).

3. It is possible that it was her need that determined our Lord's appearance. Cf. Tasker, "She who owed so much to her Master during His earthly life (see Mk. xvi.9) needed most of all to be reassured at the earliest possible moment that death had not put an end to the benefits she could receive from Him."

4. εἰς is used here in much the sense of πρὸς. It can scarcely be taken to mean "into." Yet later in this chapter the same expression is used where the meaning must be "into" (vv. 6. 8).

5. For προῖ see on 18:27-28.

6. The cardinal number μια is used and not the ordinal. This is not conclusive proof of Semitic influence (see M, I, pp. 95-96), but it certainly agrees with a Semitic background, for such a use is found in both Hebrew and Aramaic.

7. σάββατα, though plural in form, is used with the singular meaning. It can signify either "Sabbath" or "week." The plural form appears to be due to the fact that the Aramaic שַׁבָּת, when transliterated, has the appearance of a Greek neuter plural. This would be helped by the analogy of plurals for festivals such as τὰ ἑορτά. The meaning "week" would derive from the interval between Sabbath and Sabbath.

8. A problem is posed by the fact that according to Mark 16:2 the sun had risen when the women reached the tomb. Several commentators suggest that the women came in groups, all arriving about sunrise. Those who were a little earlier would have arrived in darkness, those a little later when the sun was up. Another view is that John's statement refers to the time of Mary's departure from her home, Mark's to the time of her arrival at the tomb.

9. Matthew of course tells us that the other women saw Jesus (Matt. 28:9). But this may mean that they saw him after becoming separated from Mary Magdalene.

10. "Removed" is the translation of ἠρμένον. The verb has the meaning "lift up," "take up," and is not the word we might have anticipated. When the stone was put in place it was "rolled" (the verb is προκυλίω, Matt. 27:60; Mark 15:46). John may imply violence, all the more so since the preposition following is εξ. This seems to imply that the stone was lifted out of the groove in which it ran (Amplified renders, "lifted out of [the groove across the entrance of] the tomb"). The perfect of this verb is unusual and may be intended to give an air of finality.

11. It is difficult to understand why the preposition πρὸς is repeated. Perhaps the two disciples were not together at first. The easiest supposition is that the two were lodging in different places and that Mary went to Peter first, then with Peter to the lodgings of the other. But it is difficult to get all this out of one preposition.

12. We might have expected the perfect instead of the aorist ἔρχοντο. But the perfect of this verb is very rare, the only example in John being the participle in v. 1. It appears that the aorist was sometimes used in the sense that we associate with the perfect.

13. This is favored by Black, who sees in it an Aramaism (AA, p. 91).


15. The imperfect, ἔρχοντο, pictures the action as in progress, "they were com-ing," or perhaps, "they began to come."

16. NRSV reads "The two were running together," but ὁμοῖος here must be taken in the sense "at the same time" rather than "in company with each other," for Peter evidently started out without the other, and the other passed Peter and arrived first.
17. παραχύπτω signifies "bend over (to see someth. better . . .)" (BAGD); it is used again of Mary in v. 11.

18. σουδάριον is a loanword from the Latin sudarium, a cloth for wiping off sweat (sudor); it denotes a cloth more or less like our handkerchief. Here it apparently signifies a jawband, a cloth that went "round the face and over the head" (Robinson, _Priority_, p. 292) to hold the jaw in position.

19. Long ago Chrysostom remarked: "For neither, if any persons had removed the body, would they before doing so have stripped it; nor if any had stolen it, would they have taken the trouble to remove the napkin, and roll it up, and lay it in a place by itself; but how? they would have taken the body as it was. On this account John tells us by anticipation that it was buried with much myrrh, which glues linen to the body not less firmly than lead ..." (85.4; pp. 320-21). Grave robbing was regarded as a serious offense; Barrett cites an ordinance of Claudius prescribing capital punishment for offenders (The New Testament Background: Selected Documents [London, 1957], p. 15).

20. This is the third different verb for "see" in this chapter, βλέπει is used of Mary in v. 1 and of the Beloved Disciple in v. 5, θεωρεῖ of Peter in v. 6, and now we have εἶδεν. Moffatt has "glanced" in v. 5, "noticed" in v. 6, and "saw" in vv. 1 and 8. But the changes are probably due to John's love of variety (see on 1:32 for words for "see" and on 3:5 for John's variations). It is, however, probable that θεωρεῖ in v. 6 denotes a more prolonged scrutiny than does βλέπει in vv. 1 and 5.

21. Despite Phillips: "saw what had happened." This is an addition to the text and not a translation.

22. Schnackenburg takes the verb as an ingressive aorist meaning "the full faith in the resurrection of Jesus; any kind of diminution, with a view to v. 9, is ruled out." De la Potterie also sees an ingressive aorist, but understands it to signify "he began to believe." He goes on, "This is not yet complete belief in the Resurrection; for that it will be necessary for the mind of the disciple to be opened to the understanding of the Scripture ..." (p. 203).

23. Bultmann says, "The real Easter faith ... consists in understanding the offence of the cross; it is not faith in a palpable demonstration of the Risen Lord within the mundane sphere" (p. 688).

24. G. W. Broomfield strongly urges this explanation: "This interpretation re-moves all difficulties with regard to the story, and it has the great advantage of being the most obvious and natural interpretation of the text as it stands" (John, Peter, and the Fourth Gospel [London, 1934], p. 49).

25. But it probably does not imply that they came to know immediately, as REB appears to mean: "until then they had not understood the scriptures."

26. There is a touch of inevitability about δεῖ. It is not only that he did rise, but that he must rise. Cf. Rieu, "the Scripture where it is ordained that he should die and then come back to life."

27. Some hold that πρὸς αὐτοῦ does not mean "went home," for which εἰς τὰ ἱδία would be required as in 1:11; 19:27. The expression used here is found, however, in just this sense in Josephus, _Ant._ 8.124 (where, incidentally, the meaning is not that they all went to the same place, but each to his own home). Black finds evidence of an Aramaic construction, the use of the _dativus ethicus_. He thinks that the present expression "corre-sponds to Aramaic "a zal leh, as in the example from the Elephantine Papyrus above, 'took him off', 'went him away' " (AA, p. 77). This must be treated with respect, and the Aramaic may not be altogether out of mind. But in view of the passage in Josephus it is difficult to deny the correctness of NIV.

28. It is manifestly impossible to hold that John derived his story from Luke 24:12.

29. Cf. Dodd, "I cannot for long rid myself of the feeling (it can be no more than a feeling) that this _pericopē_ has something indefinably first-hand about it" (_HTFG_, p. 148).

30. The verb κλαίω denotes not a quiet, restrained shedding of tears, but the noisy lamentation typical of Easterners of that day. Cf. _Twentieth Century_ renders it here by "close."

31. πρὸς τῷ μνημεῖῳ. For πρὸς with the dative see on 18:16. The expression denotes close proximity. Indeed, _Twentieth Century_ renders it here by "close."

32. The verb παραχύπτω is that used of the Beloved Disciple in v. 5 (where see note).
33. We read of one angel in Matt. 28:2ff., of "a young man" in Mark 16:5, and of "two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning" in Luke 24:4ff., these latter being apparently angels (Luke 24:23). On the question of whether there was one angel or two Temple comments: "It is not to be presumed that angels are physical objects reflecting rays of light upon the retina of the eye. When men 'see' or 'hear' angels, it is rather to be supposed that an intense interior awareness of a divine message leads to the projection of an image which is then experienced as an occasion of something seen and heard. That divine messengers were sent and divine messages received we need not doubt; that they took physical form so that all who 'saw' anything must 'see' the same thing we need not suppose."

34. On this question Lenski comments, "Indeed, why does she weep? — when we should all have had cause to weep to all eternity if what she wept for had been given her, the dead body of her Lord!"

35. There is an ambiguity caused by the use of ὅτι. If it is recitative the meaning will be simply "They have taken away my Lord. ..." But it may mean "Because ..." as in Cassirer.

36. ἔστραφη εἰς τὰ ὄπισθο.

37. Ryle sees an implied rebuke in this question: "Whom seekest thou? Who is this person that thou are seeking among the dead? Hast thou not forgotten that He whom thou seekest is one who has power to take life again, and who predicted that He would rise?"

38. Of the supposed gardener Mary uses the verb βαστάζω; of the supposed grave robbers (vv. 2, 13) and of herself she uses αἴρω. This is probably not meant to denote difference of meaning, but is another example of the slight variation so typical of this Gospel. Tertullian speaks of a view that the gardener stole the body "that his lettuces might come to no harm from the crowd of visitants" (De Spectaculis, 30; p. 91).

39. The Greek is 'Ραββουνι, as in Mark 10:51. Black points out that this is the form in the Palestinian Pentateuch Targum, whereas the later Targum of Onkelos has the form רַבֹּנִי (AA, p. 21). Thus the form is "Rabbouni" rather than "Rabboni."

40. So SBk, II, p. 25; G. Dalman, The Words of Jesus (Edinburgh, 1902), pp. 324ff. It is often said that the word means much the same as "Rabbi." Etymologically this may be so, though we should not overlook the point made by W. F Albright, that the term is a caritative with a meaning like "my (dear [or] little) master" (BNT, p. 158). But the usage is decisive, "Rabbi" is frequently used as a form of address, but "Rabboni" is not cited in this way (other than in prayer, of address to God). Black, however, points to its use in the old Palestinian Pentateuch Targum; he regards this as a much more reliable guide to first-century Aramaic than the Onkelos Targum that is the basis of much of Dalman's argument), which "shows that it cannot have been uncommon in earlier Palestinian Aramaic for a human lord" (AA, p. 21). He does not, however, cite any example of the term as a form of address to a human lord.

41. See the two previous footnotes.

42. That there is no great significance in the use of ἐχράτησαν in Matt. 28:9 and ἀπετεύχει here is shown by the use of both verbs to describe the same action (Matt. 8:15; Mark 1:31).

43. For this use of the present tense in prohibitions see on 2:16. Of the present passage BDF says, "μὴ μου ἀπετεύχει (which therefore has already happened or has been attempted)" (336 |3|).

44. Bernard favors emending μὴ μου ἀπετεύχει τὸ μὴ πτόου, largely on the grounds that in the other Gospels people who first saw the angels or the risen Lord usually were afraid and had to be reassured (Matt. 28:5, 10; Mark 16:8; Luke 24:5). Rieu renders "Do not be alarmed," accepting the emendation. The grounds for this, however, seem inadequate. It is much better to accept the text given in the MSS and to understand the present tense in the normal fashion.

45. Cf. Chrysostom, "To have said, 'Approach Me not as ye did before, for matters are not in the same state, nor shall I henceforth be with you in the same way,' would have been harsh and high-sounding; but the saying, 'I am not yet ascended to the Father,' though not painful to hear, was the saying of One declaring the same thing" (86.2; p. 324).
46. This may be the point of the perfect tense, ἀναβήβηκα. The only other place where John uses the perfect of this verb is in 3:13, where the reference is also to ascending to heaven.

47. Barrett gives the meaning in these terms: "The resurrection has made possible a new and more intimate spiritual union between Jesus and his disciples; the old physical contacts are no longer appropriate, though touch may yet (v. 27) be appealed to in proof that the glorified Lord is none other than he who was crucified."

48. Cf. Lightfoot, "the disciples must never forget that, whereas His Sonship to the Father is by nature and right, theirs is only by adoption and grace, in and through Him; and therefore He speaks of 'my Father and your Father', not of 'our Father'." Long ago Augustine drew attention to the significance of this point: "He saith not, Our Father: in one sense, therefore, is He mine, in another sense, yours; by nature mine, by grace yours . . . my God, under whom I also am as man; your God, between whom and you I am mediator" (121.3; p. 438). C. F. D. Moule disputes this. He says that the expression must not be taken as proof of a different relationship, "for this need only mean 'your Father who is also mine . . .' " (Worship in the New Testament [London, 1964], p. 77). Again he says, "it can equally well, or more plausibly, be construed in precisely the opposite sense, to stress the identity of approach between Christ and the disciples: 'my Father who is also your Father, my God who is also yours' " (The Phenomenon of the New Testament [London, 1967], p. 51). This caution must be borne in mind; the words are not proof of a different relationship. But, with all respect, it seems that the most natural way of taking the words is to distinguish between Jesus' relationship to God and that of the disciples. If there is no distinction, it would be much more natural to refer to "our Father" or simply "the Father."

49. For μιᾷ see on v. 1.

50. In view of the fact that John uses the plural of θύρα only here and in v. 26 it seems that more than one door was intended. There may have been double doors, or, perhaps more probably, a door at the entrance to the house and a door into the room.

51. This is supported also by the fact that the verb is perfect, κεκλεισμένων. This is the case also in v. 26.

52. The expression is εἰς τὸ μέσον. There will be something of the idea of motion toward. He came "into their midst." But εἰς here will not differ greatly from ἐν. Moule sees this as an example of what he calls the "pregnant" use of εἰς, "apparently combining the ideas of motion and rest." He renders the present passage "he came and stood among them" (IBNTG, p. 68).

53. χαὶ . . . χαί (if this is the true reading; many MSS omit the first χαί), "both his hands and his side" puts a certain emphasis on the completeness of the process. John alone of the Evangelists tells us that Jesus showed the disciples his side.

54. The aorist may point to the sudden joy that came over them as they realized that it was Jesus.

55. Bernard maintains that the words apply to the apostles alone and not to any others who may have been present. But he presents no real evidence that this is the case. He argues that in passages like 13:20 the apostles are in mind and that "Language of this kind is addressed in the Fourth Gospel to the apostles alone." But this is to beg the question. To most readers it seems self-evident that the words of 13:20 are quite general and apply to others than the apostles. The indications are that in this chapter the words are addressed to believers generally (John refers to them as "disciples"). In any case "apostle" is never used of the Twelve in this Gospel.

56. There is a change of verb from ἀπέσταλχεν of the Father's sending of the Son to πέμπω of the Son's sending of the apostles. There is unlikely to be significance in this since John appears to use the verbs without distinction of meaning (see on 3:17). In this passage the improbability of any change of meaning is heightened by the use of καθώς. It is the resemblance that occupies attention, χάγω (see on 1:31) puts a certain stress on the activity of Christ. It is his commission that they bear. The perfect tense in ἀπέσταλχεν may have reference to the fact that his mission on earth is now completed.
In 17:18 the same verb ἀποστέλλω, and the same tense, the aorist, are used of both sendings. Here we have the perfect of ἀποστέλλω for the Father's sending of the Son and the present of πέμπω for the Son's sending of his followers. In ch. 17 both sendings are explicitly "into the world," whereas here the verbs are left quite general.

The verb is ἐνεφύσησεν, used here only in the New Testament. It is the verb used in Gen. 2:7, where God "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living being." There will be the thought that there is now a new creation. The verb is used also in Ezek. 37:9 of the word of the Lord, "Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe into these slain, that they may live." It is not unlikely that both these passages are in mind, the coming of the Spirit bringing both a new creation and life from the dead. Augustine sees in the fact that Christ gave the Spirit by breathing on the apostles evidence that the Spirit is his as well as the Father's.

Since Πνεῦμα Ἁγιος is anarthrous some scholarshave drawn the conclusion that not the Holy Spirit, but a gift of the Spirit is in mind, but this is very unlikely. The absence of the article may do no more than fasten our attention on the quality of the gift as Holy Spirit rather than on the individuality of the Spirit. But there is no good reason to doubt that what is meant here is "the Holy Spirit."

von Soden cites only Tatian's Diatessaron D syriC for these words. They should not be read.

Hoskyns sees in the predictions of 14:16, 26; 16:7, 13 evidence that John thought of a gift of the Spirit that would be given after Jesus' return to the Father. "There is therefore a distinction between the two gifts of the Spirit. The Resurrection scenes in the Fourth Gospel are all preparatory scenes, preparatory for the mission. What the Lord will do invisibly from heaven He here does visibly on earth. The mission is inaugurated, but not actually begun. The disciples still remain in secret, behind closed doors. The actual beginning of the mission lies outside the scope of the Fourth Gospel. There remains, therefore, room for the Pentecostal outpouring. . . ."

The word order is interesting: ἄν τινων ἀφῆτε τὰς ἁμαρτίας. By using ἀφῆτε to separate τινων from τὰς ἁμαρτίας (which must in any case be taken together), a certain emphasis may be imparted to the verb: "of whomsoever you forgive the sins. . . ." But "if" is much more frequent and is favored by Barrett.

The verb χρατέω is an unusual one in such a connection. It signifies "take hold of," "hold," "retain," but in this verse the significance appears to be that of holding sins onto someone else. There does not appear to be a parallel to this. In Matt. 16:19; 18:18 the verb is δέομαι (with λύω in the antithesis). Dodd points out that neither this expression nor ἀφιέναι ἁμαρτίας is found elsewhere in the Fourth Gospel, which makes it unlikely that the saying is either a free creation of the Evangelist or the result of his editing of Matt. 16:19. It is much more likely that the passage is independent and that John is faithfully transmitting the words as he heard them (HTFG, pp. 348-49).

Cf. Filson, "This is no promise of official power which leaders may exercise regardless of whether they are personally true and loyal to Christ; only as Spirit-filled and Spirit-guided men may they thus speak for him with authority, but as Spirit-guided men they need not hesitate to speak and act with assurance."

Thus R. E. Brown can say, "The power to absolve and to hold men's sins is explicitly give to (ten of) the Twelve in 20:23" (Interpretation, XXI [1967], p. 391). Despite Brown's "explicitly" it is very difficult to see this. The passage does not mention the Twelve, and I find no evidence that the gift was given to the Ten as such. John speaks of "the disciples" as being present (20:19, 20). Brown admits that John's use of the term "disciples" sometimes at least is a way of indicating that Jesus "is really speaking to all believers" (loc. cit.). He gives no reason for a different usage here. In his commentary he gives the meaning of the words as "When you forgive men's sins, at that moment God forgives those sins," but he does not face the fact that this puts the initiative into the hands of fallible people (nor does he apply the same logic to the power of retaining sins, nor face the fact that the one power goes with the other).
66. Cf. Barclay, "This sentence does not mean that the power to forgive sins was ever entrusted to any man or to any men; it means that the power to proclaim that forgiveness was so entrusted; and it means that the power to warn that that forgiveness is not open to the impenitent was also entrusted to them. This sentence lays down the duty of the Church to convey forgiveness to the penitent in heart, and to warn the impenitent that they are forfeiting the mercy of God."

67. Cf. Westcott: "It is impossible to contemplate an absolute individual exercise of the power of 'retaining'; so far it is contrary to the scope of the passage to seek in it a direct authority for the absolute individual exercise of the 'remitting.' At the same time the exercise of the power must be placed in the closest connexion with the faculty of spiritual discernment consequent upon the gift of the Holy Spirit."

68. In the case of ἔχονται this can be taken as beyond doubt. No variants are cited and the perfect is universal, ἀφέωνται is read by א D f1 f13 565 al. The late MSS led by W Θ read the present ἀφίενται, while B has ἀφίονται and א* has the future ἀφεθήσεται. It seems tolerably clear that the perfect is the reading here also.

69. A certain ambiguity is posed by the use of ἄρ. It could mean "if" as in NIV, "If you forgive . . ." but equally it may be held to be the "-ever" suffix as in ARV, "whossoever sins . . ." (cf. JB, "those whose sins you forgive"), as in 13:20 ("whoever I send"). But "if" is more frequent and is favored, for example, by Barrett.

70. Cf. MiM: "Nor does there seem to be ground for thinking that we have here a special application by one individual, whether minister or not, to another of the remission (or retention) of sin spoken of. The use of 'any' in the plural number appears to be inconsistent with such a view. It is not a direct address by one person to another that is thought of, — 'I declare that thy sins are thus authoritatively remitted or retained.' It is a proclamation from one collective body to another, — from the Church to the world."

71. Among the rabbis the "binding" and the "loosing" referred primarily to forbidding and permitting. But the terms were also used with respect to excommunication, when they signified "excommunicate" and "receive into communion." It is possible that this latter is what is meant in the present passage. But the terms used here are not the natural ones for that process, which would be rather δέομαι and λύω (as in Matt. 16:19; 18:18).

72. Cf. the classical statement of A. Harnack: "The Easter message tells us of that wonderful event in Joseph of Arimathea's garden, which, however, no eye saw; it tells us of the empty grave into which a few women and disciples looked; of the appearance of the Lord in a transfigured form — so glorified that his own could not immediately recognise him; it soon begins to tell us, too, of what the risen one said and did. The reports become more and more complete, and more and more confident" (What is Christianity?5 [London, 1958], pp. 119f.). But this is not what the Gospels tell us.

73. R. H. Kennett puts a great deal of emphasis on Paul. He regards his conversion as having taken place within five years of the crucifixion and points out that "within a very few years of the time of the crucifixion of Jesus, the evidence for the resurrection of Jesus was in the mind of at least one man of education absolutely irrefutable" (The Interpreter, V 1908-9, p. 267).

74. The imperfect ἔλεγον may imply that they "kept saying to him" (C. B. Williams; so also Phillips).

75. Some scholars have suggested that the detail is unhistorical, urging that nails would not support the weight of a body, so that ropes must have been used. J. A. Bailey, however, cites O. Zöckler as showing that the hardness of nails used in crucifixion was proverbial, and that Xenophon of Ephesus mentions the use of ropes in crucifixions in Egypt as though this was unusual (The Traditions Common to the Gospels of Luke and John [Leiden, 1963], p. 101, n. 3). The word "hand" could be used of the wrist or forearm; the nails would have been driven through this part of the body. J. H. Charlesworth reports on the crucified man mentioned in the note on 19:18: "The lower third of
his right radial bone contains a groove that was probably caused by the friction between a nail and
the bone" (ExT, LXXXIV [1972-73], p. 148).

76. There is a textual problem, whether Thomas speaks of putting his finger into the print,
tύπον, or into the place, τόπον, of the nails. The former has the stronger attestation, but it would be
easy to corrupt an original τύπον into τόπον, which might reasonably be expected. Not much hinges
on the point. *NIV*, "put my finger where the nails were," assumes τόπον.
77. He uses the emphatic double negative, οὐ καὶ οὐ.
78. φέρε is used of both finger and hand and is not the verb we would expect for this kind of
action. Nor do we expect ἴδε for the action of the hands, βάλε was used in v. 25 of putting the finger
into the nailprints and now of putting the hand into the wound in the side.
79. The present imperative is used, μὴ γίνου. For the force of this construction see on 2:16.
80. "But" (*NIV*, "and") is the strong adversative, ἀλλά, "but, on the contrary ..." (see on 1:8).
81. It is common to take Ὅ Κύριος μου καὶ Ὅ Θεός μου as a form of address, the nominative
being used for vocative. Abbott, however, objects that Ὅ Κύριος is not so used, though Ὅ Θεός is. He
cites occurrences of κύριε Ὅ θεός that seem to show that a difficulty was felt in taking Ὅ θεός as a
vocative. If we accept it as a true nominative the meaning will probably be "It is my Lord and my
God." Alternatively we could take the expression as a subject with the rest of the clause omitted, such
as "My Lord and my God (has indeed risen)." Abbott favors the latter (feeling that ἐστιν could
scarcely have been omitted from the former (2049-51). However, it is not to be overlooked that
Thomas's words are introduced by εἶπεν υἱῷ, so that in fact Thomas is addressing Jesus. Nor
should we forget that the words found here are used (in the reverse order) in an address to God in Ps.
34(35):23. We should take the words as a vocative, albeit an unusual one.
82. B. A. Mastin sees this as "the one verse in the New Testament which does unquestionably
describe Christ as God" (NTS, 22 [1975-76], p. 42). We may cavil at his rejection of other passages,
but his endorsement of this one is unequivocal.
83. For causal ὅτι see on 1:50.
84. The words to Thomas could, of course, be a question: "Because you have seen me, have
you believed?" (cf. ARV mg.). But in this solemn moment it is much more likely that Jesus was
stating the truth than that he was asking Thomas a question.
85. This is overlooked by some scholars who appear to think that John was, for example,
incapable of supplementing the Synoptists in matter he shares with them. It must never be assumed
that John has written all he knows on a given topic. In the light of this plain statement our
presumption must always be that John has made a selection, including what he deemed relevant to
his purpose and excluding what he deemed of less importance for that purpose.
86. Karl Heim regards this silence about other signs as significant. One collects everything
possible about a dead prophet. It is all one has of him. But one tells only enough of a living person to
introduce one's hearers to him. For the disciples, and John in particular, Jesus was alive (Jesus the
87. It is important that this not be overlooked. Dodd's brilliant work, The Inter-pretation of the
Fourth Gospel, suffers from its declared purpose. Dodd says, "I shall try to show how the whole
shape of the gospel is determined by the idea expressed in the words, Ὅ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο, with the
context of the term λόγος supplied by the Prologue as a whole" (p. 285). But, with all respect, that is
not what this Gospel is about. We should not overlook the author's express statement. Elsewhere
Dodd in fact recognizes the evan-gelistic purpose (IFG, p. 9).
88. The present is read by p66 (vid) Κ B Θ — a strong combination. Since the aorist might
well be expected in a sentence like this the present has transcriptional prob-ability and is likely to be
correct.
89. Cf. Dodd: "the continuous present could be justified, even as addressed to those who were
not yet Christians, if the writer were thinking not so much of the moment of conversion, as of the
continuing union with Christ, the condition of which is faith, and which means the perpetual
possession of eternal life" (IFG, p. 9). Bultmann denies that the tense has any real significance in this case: "So far as the Evangelist is concerned it is irrelevant whether the possible readers are already 'Christians,' or are not yet such; for to him the faith of 'Christians' is not a conviction that is present once for all, but it must perpetually make sure of itself anew, and therefore must continually hear the word anew" (pp. 698-99). We may certainly agree that faith is an adventure that must be renewed each day, and even that John's words may be used with profit by those who are already Christians. But this does not mean that the words are without meaning for unbelievers. As applied to unbelievers they will mean that John's aim for them is nothing less than a continuing attitude of faith, a constant union with Christ. That is why he wrote.

90. The Qumran scrolls show a great interest in messianism, this being often urged as a point of contact with this Gospel. But there is this decisive difference, that the covenancers looked for a future Messiah or Messiahs, whereas for John the Messiah has already come. That is the point of his whole Gospel.
VIII. EPILOGUE (21:1-25)

There are two opinions about John 21, one that sees it as an integral part of the Gospel from the very first, and the other that regards it as an addition to an already completed work. We can subdivide the second into those who think that, apart from verses 24-25, it was written by the author of chapters 1-20 and those who think of a different author. If it was not part of the original Gospel it must nevertheless be very early, since the manuscript tradition knows nothing of a twenty-chapter Gospel.¹

The principal reasons for thinking of it as a later supplement are, first, that 20:30-31 looks suspiciously like the end of a Gospel, and, second, that chapter 21 is held to contain within it a sufficient indication of how it came to be added. When the Beloved Disciple was growing old and some people thought that Jesus had said he would return before his beloved follower's death, it was necessary to correct the error. Harm could occur to the church if he died and still the Lord had not come. This chapter is held to be the result. Those who see this section as integral to the Gospel point to the fact that there is no break in style. As far as we can see, this last chapter came from the same pen as did the first twenty.² To maintain that the closing words of chapter 20 form the end of the Gospel is to impose a standard of consistency on this writer that he does not always display elsewhere. Our ideas of what is proper are not necessarily his. And it may be relevant to notice that I John 5:13 is not dissimilar to this verse, but it does not end the Epistle. It is further contended that, while chapter 21 does indeed deal with the expected return of the Lord before the death of the Beloved Disciple, yet this is not the main thrust of the chapter. It is more concerned with Peter's reinstatement. Hoskyns makes the important point that "a Christian gospel ends properly, not with the appearance of the risen Lord to His
disciples, and their belief in Him, but with a confident statement that this mission to the world, undertaken at His command and under His authority, will be the means by which many are saved." He points out that the first three Gospels all end this way. John 21 agrees with this, but John 20 does not. Lagrange is of the opinion that 20:30-31 originally stood after 21:23, and that this formed the original conclusion of the Gospel. Subsequently 21:24 was added, and this caused the removal of the words to their present place. This is ingenious, but it has not convinced very many.

There does not seem to be any way to reach a final solution. I must confess to being a little mystified by the certainty of those who regard it as self-evident that this last chapter is a late addition. While I think I see the strength of their arguments I incline the other way. If it is original to the Gospel, then of course there is no question as to authorship. If it is not original, it is more probable that it was a later addition by the same author than that it was written by someone else altogether.

A. THE MIRACULOUS DRAUGHT OF FISH (21:1-14)

1Afterward Jesus appeared again to his disciples by the Sea of Tiberias. It happened this way: 2Simon Peter, Thomas (called Didymus), Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples were together. 3"I'm going out to fish," Simon Peter told them, and they said, "We'll go with you." So they went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing. 4Early in the morning, Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples did not realize that it was Jesus. 5He called out to them, "Friends, haven't you any fish?" "No," they answered. 6He said, "Throw your net on the right side of the boat and you will find some." When they did, they were unable to haul the net in because of the large number of fish. 7Then the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" As soon as Simon Peter heard him say, "It is the Lord," he wrapped his outer garment around him (for he had taken it off) and jumped into the water. 8The other disciples followed in the boat, towing the net full of fish, for they were not far from shore, about a hundred yards. 9When they landed, they saw afire of burning coals there with fish on it, and some bread. 10Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish you have just caught."
Simon Peter climbed aboard and dragged the net ashore. It was full of large fish, 153, but even with so many the net was not torn. **12**Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." None of the disciples dared ask him, "Who are you?" They knew it was the Lord. **13**Jesus came, took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. **14**This was now the third time Jesus appeared to his disciples after he was raised from the dead.

This is the longest account we have of any appearance of the risen Lord in Galilee. The fishing expedition plainly reveals the uncertainty of the disciples, an uncertainty that contrasts sharply with their assured sense of purpose from the day of Pentecost on. It is of interest that Peter has a place of leadership, even despite his fall. And, as happened when Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene, he was not immediately recognized. **1**This verse forms a descriptive heading to the section. "Afterward" is a general time note and does not locate the following events with any exactness (see on 2:12). "Appeared," twice repeated in this verse (NIV renders the second, "happened"), is very much a Johannine word. It points us to the very real existence of Jesus in a sphere beyond this world of time and sense. He and his glory were from time to time "manifested" to people here and now; he showed himself as he is. This incident took place "by the Sea of Tiberias" (see on 6:1).

**2**John proceeds to list those present. For the full name "Simon Peter" see on 1:40, for Thomas on 11:16, for Nathanael on 1:45, and for Cana on 2:1. John does not name "the sons of Zebedee," in keeping with his omission of their names throughout the Gospel. But the expression is precise. For reasons of his own he does not say who the other two were, but his love of precision comes out in the information that there were just two of them.

**3**Peter proposed a fishing trip and evoked apparently a unanimous response. The impression left is that the proposal was completely spontaneous. There is no plan, no settled aim. There may have been economic reasons behind the suggestion. It is possible that the thoughts of the fishermen were beginning to turn to their former occupation, now that they
had lost the presence of Jesus. We do not know, and this incident is not enough to tell us. All that we can say is that this is a possibility and that the general impression left is that of men without a purpose. They went out, though John does not say from where. He has told us only that they were "together" (v. 2), and that the location of the incident was "by the Sea of Tiberias" (v. 1). They embarked in "the" (not "a") boat, but there is no way of knowing what this means. John evidently had the details clear in his mind, but we cannot enter into his knowledge. He proceeds to tell us that that night they caught nothing.

4 Just at dawn Jesus stood on the beach. It is not said that he came there or the like, and the choice of language may be a hint at the kind of thing we see in the earlier passages, where Jesus suddenly appears behind closed doors. John adds the note that the disciples did not recognize the Lord (cf. Mary Magdalene).

5 Jesus hails them. The diminutive "children" (NIV, "Friends") is not common as a form of address, though parallels can be found. Jesus asks whether they have any food. This is apparently directed to discovering whether they had caught any fish, but the word used does not denote fish specifically. However, in this context it is quite clear that "fish" is meant. The question appears to expect a negative reply ("you haven't caught any fish, have you?"), and the answer is a laconic negative. The brevity of the reply is natural in a conversation shouted by disappointed men over a hundred yards of water.

6 The miracle is described with the greatest reserve. First we have Jesus' instruction to cast the net on the right side of the boat. I have been unable to find any evidence that indicates which side of the boat was normally used by fishermen on the Sea of Galilee, so it is difficult to know whether this was unusual or not. Some commentators draw attention to passages in classical authors showing that the right side is the fortunate side, but it is difficult to understand what relevance this has to the New Testament. Obedience to Christ, not luck, is the important thing. Jesus' instruction is clear, and there appears to have been no discussion. The fishermen simply did as he told them. Possibly they thought that a man standing on the shore might detect some indication of fish that was not apparent to them. In any case, after a fruitless night anything would be worth trying. When they cast the net as directed they found themselves...
unable to draw it (Phillips, "they were now not strong enough to pull it in") for the multitude of fish. "Draw" here probably means "draw into the ship," for a little later we read of Peter's drawing it to the land.

7 The miracle gave the Beloved Disciple all the clue that he needed. In what had happened he recognized the touch of the Master, so he could say to Peter, "It is the Lord!" (for "the Lord" see on 4:1). Impulsively Peter threw his coat around him (alternatively, "tucks it into his cincture," Brown) and threw himself into the sea. Presumably he made his way to the shore, though this is not said in so many words. Peter is not said in fact to do anything between throwing himself into the water here and drawing the net to land in verse 11. It is not said that he reached the shore first or what he did when he got there, and Hoskyns, for example, can state that the disciples in the ship reached the land before Peter did. From the point where Peter leaped into the sea the story is told from the viewpoint of someone in the boat. The actions of both disciples are in character, the one being first to recognize the Lord and the other first to take action. The statement that Peter was naked may indicate something of the custom of the time when fishing, though singling Peter out might alternatively be held to mean that the others were not in the same state of undress. It is, however, not at all certain that Peter was wearing nothing whatever, as the English would lead us to expect. Standard lexicons cite passages where the word means "without an outer garment," "dressed in one's underwear." The probability is that here the word means that parts of the body normally covered were exposed, so that Peter was not naked but rather "stripped for work" (RSV, Barclay). This may mean that he wore a loincloth, or perhaps a sleeveless tunic that would not impede his movements.

8 Peter's example of diving into the water was not followed. The rest of the party came ashore more decorously in the little boat. We have another example of John's love of precision in the statement that they were about two hundred cubits (i.e., a hundred yards) from the shore. They dragged the net full of fish to shore.

9 When they reached the land and disembarked they saw a charcoal fire (see on 18:18) with fish set on it, evidently cooking, and bread. The picture is one of a breakfast made ready.

10 Evidently there was not an abundant supply, for Jesus now tells them to supplement it from their recent haul; "Fish" in the previous
verse could mean "a fish" (as ARV mg.). This probably means that there was not enough cooked for a meal for all, and that Jesus is requesting a further supply. Some, however, think that he wanted the disciples to do no more than simply exhibit some of their catch. They prefer to hold that Jesus was supplying the whole meal, perhaps in a miraculous feeding analogous to that in chapter 6. It is true that nothing is said of the disciples actually eating the fish they caught, but it is also true that there is no mention of a miraculous feeding. It is best to hold that the fish were directed to be brought for use in the meal.

11 When the Master spoke, it was Peter who hastened to act. He went up and dragged the net to land. Since the net has already been described as too heavy for the combined strength of the others to haul into the boat, this may mean that Peter organized the hauling of the net to shore rather than that he did it all himself. John goes on to tell us that the fish were big ones and that there were 153 of them. It seems probable that he says this for no more profound reason than that this was the actual number that had been caught. A love for exactness and a readiness to supply numerical detail can be documented elsewhere in this Gospel. Temple says forthrightly, "It is perverse to seek a hidden meaning in the number; it is recorded because it was found to be the number when the count was made." A number of commentators remind us that, since the catch was presumably to be shared among the fishermen, it was necessary to count the fish preparatory to assigning shares. Fishermen, moreover, have always loved to preserve the details of unusual catches. Yet we must bear in mind that there was no absolute necessity for including the number (in the unusual haul in Luke 5 no number is given). The fact that John does record it may mean that he saw significance in it. This leaves us free to consider the suggestions that are offered, yet bearing in mind that John sometimes records numbers where there is probably no inner significance (such as the number of waterpots in ch. 2).

The significance of the number is sometimes said to be that the ancients held that the total number of kinds of fish in existence was 153. The number is thus taken to symbolize the universal appeal of the gospel; it is meant for all people, not some restricted circle. The trouble with this is that the evidence so far adduced fails to carry conviction; there is no good reason for holding that this was in fact the case. Another suggestion arises from the fact that 153 is the sum of the numbers from 1 to 17. That is to say, it is
the sum of 10, the number of the commandments and hence of the Law, and 7 representing the sevenfold gifts of the Spirit. Some point out that 153 dots can be arranged in an equilateral triangle with 17 dots along each side, an interesting geometrical fact, but "it remains to be explained, in a form which will carry conviction, what bearing this has upon the number of fish here taken" (Lightfoot). Such explanations may carry conviction to some, but I must confess to being completely unimpressed. So with other suggestions. If John meant us to discern a mystical meaning he has left us with no guidance. It is much simpler to view the number as a fisherman's record of a fact.  

John goes on to record the detail that the net did not break (as it did in the corresponding stage of the catch in Luke 5). This may point to something added after the resurrection. It was in the power of the risen Lord that the net did not break. "This would signify that the Church's resources, with Christ in its midst, are never overstrained" (Strachan).

12 Jesus now invited the disciples to have breakfast. John mentions no response to this invitation. Instead he tells us that none of them dared to ask who Jesus was. This seems curious. If they knew who Jesus was, why should such a question be raised? One usually does not ask those one knows well who they are. Yet it must be borne in mind that there was something unusual about Jesus' appearance. Earlier Mary Magdalene had not recognized him, and that very morning, just a short time before, none of them knew him and even Peter had to be told who it was. But with this unasked question in their minds it must have been a strange meal.

13 Evidently the disciples found it hard to begin eating. There is no record of their responding to Jesus' invitation in verse 12. Perhaps because they did not respond, Jesus now comes (comes where? He had already called them to come to him, v. 12) and gives them bread, and fish too. This would have the effect of starting the meal, though John does not mention it. Indeed, from this point on he tells of nothing until the meal is over. And he says no more about the disciples, all the rest of this incident being concerned with Peter.

14 He rounds off this opening section of the story by reminding his readers that this was the third occasion on which Jesus was manifested to his disciples after the resurrection. This must refer to meetings with the Twelve, or most of them, for he has already recorded three meetings, one
with Mary Magdalene, one to the disciples without Thomas, and one to them with Thomas. But this is the third occasion on which he appeared to any considerable group of disciples.

B. PETERRESTORED (21:15-19)

15 When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me more than these?" "Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my lambs." 16Again Jesus said, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me?" He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep." 17The third time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my sheep. 18/ tell you the truth, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go." 19Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, "Follow me!"

This passage must be taken in conjunction with Peter's threefold denial of his Lord. Just as he had a short time ago in the presence of the enemy denied all connection with the Lord, so now in the presence of his friends he affirms three times over that he loves his Lord. There can be no doubt but that Peter was under a cloud with his fellow disciples after the denial. This triple affirmation, accompanied as it was by a triple commission from Jesus, must have had the effect of giving an almost "official" sanction to his restoration to his rightful place of leadership. Yet this should not be pressed too hard. Peter is accorded no absolute primacy, and in particular nothing in this passage indicates that his position was in way superior to that of John. Throughout this chapter John is regarded as especially close to his Lord.

15 The meal concluded, Jesus addressed a question to Peter. There is an air of solemnity about John's use of the full name, Simon Peter, and then of his reporting that Jesus used the expanded form, Simon son of John (cf. 1:42). The question is a significant one, and it is accordingly prefixed by a serious form of address. Jesus asks, "Do you truly love me more than
these?" This last term is not defined, and the question might mean, "Do you love me more than these men love me?" or "Do you love me more than you love these men?" or "Do you love me more than you love these things?"

Against the first way of taking the words is the difficulty of thinking that Jesus would invite one of his followers to compare the strength of his love with that of other disciples. Yet we must remember that Peter had explicitly professed a devotion to Jesus that exceeded that of the others in the apostolic band (Matt. 26:33; Mark 14:29; cf. John 13:37; 15:12-13). It may be that Jesus is asking Peter whether, in the light of what has since happened, he still thinks that his love for Christ exceeds that of all the others. Not many have taken the words to signify "Do you love me more than you love these men?" But this is possible. Peter had three times denied Jesus, so that his devotion to him must be held to be suspect. But he had remained with his fellows and had gone fishing with them. Where did his supreme affection lie? With his companions with whom he resorted, or with Jesus whom he denied? In the third case we should take the words to refer to the fishing equipment and all that it stood for. This symbolized an entire way of life. Taken this way, the question challenges Peter as to his whole future. Was this to be spent in the pursuit of fishing and the like? Or did he love Christ more than that? It is perhaps against this interpretation that in his reply Peter drops the comparison. There would be no point in this if it were his fishing that was in mind, but very much if people were involved. Perhaps there is most to be said for the first way of looking at the question. We are sometimes inclined to think that a question about Peter's love was superfluous. But this is not the case. His actions had shown that Peter had not wanted a crucified Lord. But Jesus was crucified. How did Peter's devotion stand in the light of this? Was he ready to love Jesus as he was, and not as Peter wished him to be? That was an important question. Peter must face it and answer it.

His reply is an ungrudging affirmative. "Yes, Lord," is his own assent, and he goes on: "you know that I love you." "You" is emphatic, as the disciple appeals to the sure knowledge possessed by the Master. His own actions have not been such as to reveal his love, and he is not in a position to point to them. But he can and does appeal to Christ's full understanding of the situation. A problem is posed by the use of different words for "love." Peter uses the same verb throughout, but Jesus uses a different verb in his first two questions. In the third, however, Jesus uses Peter's word. Not a
few commentators hold that the change of word is significant. Some maintain that the word Jesus uses in the first two questions denotes a higher kind of love, while Peter's word points to a lower form of love, perhaps no more than a liking. If it is seen in this way, Jesus questions Peter as to whether he has a profound love for him, and Peter, not daring to claim so much, replies that he is fond of Jesus. Then in his third question Jesus descends to Peter's level. Other commentators, however, reverse the meaning of the two words. They see Jesus as inquiring whether Peter has a rather cool affection for him and Peter as replying that he has more than that, he has a warm love. Then in the last question our Lord rises to Peter's word.

The unfortunate thing about these two interpretations is, of course, that they cancel each other out. A priori, one would have thought that a variation in vocabulary like this would be significant. But against it are certain difficulties. First, there is the difficulty just noted, that the precise difference is not easy to discern so that competent commentators take opposite sides. Second, there is John's habit of introducing slight variations in all sorts of places without real difference of meaning (see on 3:5). There is no reason, on the grounds of Johannine usage, for seeing a difference in meaning between the two verbs. This point is rendered all the more significant in that the original conversation would have been in Aramaic, so that the choice of word in Greek would be John's rather than that of the original participants in the conversation. Third, Peter's "Yes, Lord" does not look like a correction. As Bernard asks, "Why should he say 'Yes,' if he means 'No'?'" Peter seems concerned that his love is called in question, not about the precise quality of love that he displays. He is accepting Jesus' word, not declining it. It is simplest to find here a further example of John's love of variation in triple repetitions. Peter and Jesus will be referring to essentially the same thing.

There is a slightly more complicated variation in the triple commission given to Peter. NIV reflects the variation in the Greek where both noun and verb are changed in the second charge, while on the third occasion the verb is that from the first charge and the noun that from the second charge. Some have drawn from this an indication that Peter is charged to do more things than one and to do them both to the lambs and the sheep. But most people take the variation as no more than stylistic. Peter is being
commissioned to tend the flock of Christ. The absence of any good reason for seeing differences of meaning here strengthens the case for seeing none in connection with the words for love.

16 Jesus' question is repeated without the "more than these." Attention is concentrated on the question of love and the comparison drops out. Peter's reply is exactly as before. Again there is the agreement with Jesus' word, again the emphatic "you," and again the appeal to Jesus' own knowledge that Peter does indeed love his Lord. As noted in the previous verse, the commission varies. The verb used here has a somewhat broader meaning. It means "Exercise the office of shepherd" over against simply "Feed." There is doubt whether we should read "sheep" or "lambs" (see n. 00), but either way there is a commission to Peter to engage in pastoral duties.

17 This third time Jesus changes to Peter's word for love, though no attention is drawn to this. Peter was very sad, but it was because he was asked the question three times, not because of a change of meaning. This appears to be further evidence that there is no real difference in meaning between the words for love. Had there been, Peter would have been asked two different questions, not the one question three times over. His sorrow at the threefold question impelled him to a somewhat fuller reply. But, though his reply is fuller, it lacks the "Yes, Lord" of the two previous replies. Peter does not venture on his own affirmative this time, but relies on the Lord's intimate knowledge of all things, and specifically his knowledge of his servant. "Lord, you know all things," he said, a statement with important implications for Christology (cf. 2:25; 16:30). In the context it means at least that Jesus fully understood what went on in people's hearts, and specifically in Peter's heart. Incidentally we have another example of variation in vocabulary in that Peter's word for "know" is different from that in his previous replies. But again, there is no real difference in meaning. Jesus' final commission, as we saw, combines the verb from the first form with the noun from the second form.

There can be little doubt but that the whole scene is meant to show us Peter as completely restored to his position of leadership. Three times he had denied his Lord. Now he has three times affirmed his love for him, and three times he has been commissioned to care for the flock. This must have had the effect of a demonstration that, whatever had been the mistakes of the past, Jesus was restoring Peter to a place of trust. It is further worth
noting that the one thing about which Jesus questioned Peter prior to commissioning him to tend the flock was love. This is the basic qualification for Christian service. Other qualities may be desirable, but love is completely indispensable (cf. 1 Cor. 13:1-3).

18-19 The commission is followed by a prophecy introduced by the solemn "I tell you the truth" (see on 1:51). Jesus refers to Peter's past state rather than his present position, perhaps to contrast his first state with his last. Two things are singled out, the fastening of the belt (NIV, "dressed yourself") and the going where he willed. In youth Peter had done both of these things. In old age he will do neither. He will be restrained, and no longer master of his movements. John proceeds to an explanation of these rather enigmatic words. They refer to the death by which Peter will glorify God (for death as a glorifying of God cf. 12:23, etc.; 15:8 may also be relevant). The words are very general, but there is evidence that the stretching forth of the hands was held in the early church to refer to crucifixion. If this understanding of the expression goes back to the time of Christ, then we have a prophecy of the exact mode of Peter's death. But unless we can be sure of this we cannot be certain of more than that the words point to martyrdom in some form. Against it is the word order, for "carrying" (NIV, "lead") would necessarily precede crucifixion (though the order may be determined not by the sense, but by parallelism with the first part of the verse). This prophecy is followed by a call to Peter to follow Christ. There is possibly significance in the use of the present tense; "keep on following" will be the force of it. Peter had followed Christ, but not continuously in the past. For the future he was to follow steadfastly in the ways of the Lord.

C. THE ROLE OF THE BELOVED DISCIPLE (21:20-23)

20Peter turned and saw that the disciple whom Jesus loved was following them. (This was the one who had leaned back against Jesus at the supper and had said, "Lord, who is going to betray you?") 21 When Peter saw him, he asked, "Lord, what about him?" 22 Jesus answered, "If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you? You must follow me." 23 Because of this, the rumor spread among the brothers that this disciple would not die. But Jesus did not say that
he would not die; he only said, "If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you?"

20 Happy in his own position, Peter now gave thought to his friend. He turned and saw the Beloved Disciple (see on 13:23) following. Quite in the Johannine manner, he is characterized by his question at the Last Supper (13:23ff.; cf. similar ways of describing Nicodemus, 19:39; Judas, 6:71, etc.; Caiaphas, 18:14). In view of the preceding, the term "following" is probably significant. What Peter had been twice urged to do John was already doing. "His obedience is assured; it was Peter's love that had been shown to be uncertain" (Hoskyns). The term may be used here partly in the literal sense, if, as many commentators think, Jesus was withdrawing a little with Peter, and John was behind them. But the important sense of the term throughout the passage is surely "follow as a disciple."

21 Peter, then, saw this man. Doubtless he was emboldened by his restoration to leadership and the prophecy about his martyrdom. All this put him in a very different light. So now he inquired about John's future. His question is a very general one: "But this man, what?"

22 Jesus, however, declines to satisfy Peter's curiosity. It is no business of Peter's what is to happen to the other. Even if Jesus wills that he remains alive until he returns, what is that to Peter? The question is an emphatic way of reminding the impulsive leader of the apostolic band that there are some things that are quite outside his province. It is followed by a repetition of the command of verse 19, "Follow me!"

23 John proceeds to deal with an error that had arisen. A report had gone out among the brothers (this way of designating Christians is common in Acts, but here only in the Gospels, though cf. Matt. 23:8, and see thenote on John 20:17). This report was that the disciple would never die. He would live right through until the day when Jesus would return again. We can see how such an interpretation would arise. But John wants his readers to be clear that it was an interpretation. It was. not what Jesus had said. He did not say, "He will not die." He only asked what it mattered to Peter if in fact this man were to remain alive until the return of Christ. John wants us to be clear on what Jesus said and what he did not say. His "but" is a strong adversative: the two are in sharp contrast. In view of the fact that in this Gospel slight variations when statements are repeated are almost universal, it is noteworthy that here the statement is repeated exactly from
verse 22. The precise words used are significant, and the writer is at pains to be accurate. Some have concluded from this section that John was already dead when it was written. But it is hard to understand how such a conclusion can stand. After John died Christians would not keep saying, "He will not die"! The fact that an explanation is called for shows that the Beloved Disciple was still alive, though possibly quite old.

D. AUTHENTICATION (21:24-25)

The last two verses look like a conclusion written by someone other than the author of the preceding. The conclusion brings in a number of people to authenticate what has been written. They can say, "We know that his testimony is true." Who these people were it is idle to speculate. They have left no indication as to their identity, and we can do no more than speculate that they were people respected in the church who knew the facts of the case. So they tell us now that this disciple "wrote these things," and they certify that his testimony is to be relied on. The strongest objection to this is that verse 23 is a curious if not impossible way to end a Gospel. This leads to the suggestion that the author is here supported by others who can vouch for his testimony and that he then goes on to write verse 25 in his own name (but see 1 Thess. 2:18 for a transition from plural to singular when there is no question about authorship).

24 This is the disciple who testifies to these things and who wrote them down. We know that his testimony is true. 25 Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written.

The concluding words form a testimony to the reliability of the Gospel's author. The first words of this verse make it clear that the witness behind the Gospel is the man just spoken of, the Beloved Disciple. The use of the present tense may be another indication that he was still living. It is not easy to fit it in to the hypothesis that he had died. "And who wrote them down" seems to indicate also that he was the actual author. Some hold that the Beloved Disciple was the witness in the sense that he vouched for the facts
included in the Gospel, but that he was not the man responsible for the actual wording of the Gospel. This conclusion does not arise from such words as those written here. They ascribe authorship to the Beloved Disciple.\(^{66}\) They do not, however, indicate the extent of the authorship, and some readers hold that "these things" means no more than this final chapter. This seems unlikely. The words look like a reference to the witness of 19:35. Again, there seems no reason for a solemn attestation that the Beloved Disciple had written a few paragraphs to be tacked on to the end of someone else's Gospel. It is much more probable that "these things" refers to the whole book. It is a pity that there is no clue as to the identity of the "we." It would a help to know who these people were who speak so confidently about the authorship of the Gospel. All that we can say is that the words (and hence their authors) must be very early, for there is no textual doubt about these concluding verses.\(^{67}\) Barrett regards the plural as very important: "The 'we' is to be taken with full seriousness; there exists an apostolic church whose very existence is a confirmation and affirmation of the apostolic witness."

\(^{25}\) The Gospel closes with a reminder that the author has done no more than make a selection from the mass of material available. He has not written all he knows about Jesus. If all were to be written, he thinks the world itself could not\(^{68}\) contain\(^{69}\) the books to be written.\(^{70}\) With this delightful hyperbole he makes us aware that there is much more about Jesus than we know. It is fitting for us to bring our study of the Gospel to a close with the reminder of the limitations of our knowledge. It is well for us to be appreciative of the knowledge we have and to show a due gratitude to God for what he has revealed. But we should not exaggerate. Our knowledge of the truth is at best partial. The reader who appreciates the significance of these final words is kept humble.
1. Lightfoot does speak of a Syriac MS that lacks this chapter, and Brown refers to "A 5th-or 6th-century Syriac ms . . . that . . . has apparently lost the final folios." On the other hand, there are strong statements like those of Strachan, "There is no trace of any manuscript of the Gospel without this chapter," or Lenski, "No copies of the Fourth Gospel have ever been found from which chapter 21 is omitted, and no trace of such copies has ever been discovered."

2. Thus Plummer lists twenty-five points of vocabulary, grammar, etc., which tell in favor of identity of authorship. So also Howard, FGRCl, pp. 279-80. On the other hand, Moffatt finds several indications of divergence An Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament (Edinburgh, 1927), p. 572. G. W. Bloomfield counters this by pointing out that in every chapter of this Gospel there are divergences from all other chapters, and that chapter 21 contains rather less than the average (John, Peter, and the Fourth Gospel [London, 1934], pp. 147-48; he also discounts some of the evidence adduced by Moffatt). Bultmann in his commentary gives perhaps as good a case against identity of authorship as the linguistics will allow. It is all the more significant accordingly that Barrett, who favors a different author for chapter 21, does not find this convincing. He thinks the differences "not in themselves sufficient to establish the belief that ch. 21 was written by a different author." He is convinced by evidence other than the linguistic.

3. Similarly Temple notes that to end the Gospel at 20:31 "would be in a very real sense misleading. For the work of the Lord, which is at once the ground of faith in Him and the vindication of that faith, was in one sense incomplete. The victory was won; but its fruits had still to be gathered."

4. I am not impressed by the efforts made by some scholars to derive the miraculous catch in Luke 5 from this story or vice versa. Bultmann performs the interesting feat of doing both. In his commentary he maintains that the Johannine story is original: he sees some Easter stories that Mark has "projected back into the 'Life of Jesus'," and adds, "so will the case have been with Lk. 5.1-11" (p. 705). But in his The History of the Synoptic Tradition (Oxford, 1963), he affirms that "The variant in Jn. 21.11-14 seems to me a later version, which in some way derives from Luke" (pp. 217-18). F. Neirynck has a summary of recent discussions (NTS, 36 [1990], pp. 321-36).

5. φανερόω is found 9 times in this Gospel (3 times in Mark including twice in the ending to ch. 16, and not at all in Matthew or Luke) and 9 times in 1 John. It is not by any means exclusively Johannine; it occurs 22 times in the Pauline Epistles. John does not use it outside this chapter for the resurrection appearances, though it is used of them in Mark 16:12, 14.

6. His expression is οἱ τοῦ Ζεβεδαίου. Elsewhere, where the expression is plural, υἱοί is always inserted but Ζεβεδαίου lacks the article, thus: οἱ υἱοὶ Ζεβεδαίου. In the singular, however, υίος is not used, and Ζεβεδαίου regularly has the article, as in Ἰάκωβος ὁ τοῦ Ζεβεδαίου. The present passage must be taken as resembling the usual construction in the singular rather than as one where we should supply some other word than υοί.

7. This appears to be the meaning of Ὑπάγω ἁλιεύειν. Whatever Peter's ultimate intentions, it is pressing the meaning of the present tense too hard to see in it a proposal to resume his former life as a fisherman. The verb ἁλιεύειν is used here only in the New Testament.

8. Loyd, however, draws the lesson that "when the pause comes and the vision begins to be less vivid, we are not to be idle or despondent. We are to go on with the obvious tasks of every day. . . . How wise were these disciples who calmly went back to their fishing!"

9. Turner and Mantey cite Aristotle: "Fishermen, especially, do their fishing before sunrise and after sunset." They add, "This is still the custom of commercial fishermen who fish in the Sea of Galilee." Cf. Luke 5:5.

10. πρῶτος indicates first light. The present γινομένης (with AB al bo) is to be preferred to γενομένης ( K WΘ etc.). It shows that day was in process of arriving rather than that it had already come. Dawn was just breaking.
11. παιδία occurs, for example, in 1 John 2:14, 18. More usual as a form of address is τεκνία (13:33; 1 John 2:1, 12, 23, etc.). MM finds a parallel to παιδία only in modern Greek (the Klepht ballad, where it is used of soldiers). They draw attention to the English use of "Lads" and the Irish of "Boys" (Carson adds the American "Guys"). Parallels are cited from Aristophanes (Clouds 137; Frogs 33), but clearly it is far from common as a form of address. A number of translations have "Friends," which is to forsake the original.

12. The word is προσφάγιον, defined by AS as "Hellenistic for ὤψον ... a relish or dainty (esp. cooked fish), to be eaten with bread." MM cites a papyrus giving a stone cutter's wages as ἄρτον ἐν προσφάγιον, and others to show that the term refers to one of the items in an ordinary meal; they take it as referring to "some staple article of food of the genus fish, rather than a mere 'relish.' " Addressed to a party of fishermen in their boat, there can be no doubt as to what they had in mind.

13. Abbott points out that μή is used thus interrogatively in this Gospel more often than in all the others put together, but whereas they confine it to the words of Jesus John uses it in this way twice only, here and in 6:67 (2235).

14. For οὔ see on 1:21.

15. The expression is εἰς τὰ δεξιά μέρη τοῦ πλοίου, found here only in the New Testament. Robertson classes it among the idiomatic plurals of the New Testament (Robertson, p. 408), which makes it equivalent to our "on the right side." I have not discovered any other example of this phrase applied to a boat. Bernard likewise finds no linguistic parallel. Hendriksen says that it "is simply an idiom," but he cites no other example of its use. μέρη is used a number of times in Hermas of directions. Thus εἰς τὰ δεξιά μέρη and εἰς τὰ ἀριστερά μέρη are used of sitting on the right hand or on the left (Vis. 3.1.9; 3.2.1). He also refers to "the four parts" (or directions, Sim. 9.2.3) and "the outer parts" (the outside of a building, Sim. 9.9.3). J. Schneider speaks of these passages as the only ones in which μέρος is used in this way (TDNT, IV, pp. 595-96). We must regard John's expression as unusual. But the meaning is clear enough.

16. "There is no need to seek symbolical meanings for the right and left side. The difference is not between right and left, but between working with and without Divine guidance" (Plummer).

17. H. V. Morton tells of seeing a fisherman casting a hand net into the Sea of Galilee when a friend on shore cried out that he should fling the net to the left. When he did this he caught fish. Morton says, "It happens very often that the man with the hand-net must rely on the advice of someone on shore, who tells him to cast either to the left or right, because in the clear water he can often see a shoal of fish invisible to the man in the water" (In the Steps of the Master [London, 1935], p. 199). Whether this would be valid for people one hundred yards apart is another matter. But Morton's incident is interesting and may be relevant.

18. Trench maintains that the verb ἑλάχιστῳ used here and in v. 11 means to draw to a certain point (here into the ship, in v. 11 to the shore), whereas σύρω in v. 8 simply means dragging the net after the boat (Synonyms of the New Testament [London, 1880], pp. 73-74).

19. The word is ἐπενδύτης, here only in the New Testament. It denotes an outer garment, without being specific. Barrett draws attention to a Jewish idea that since offering a greeting was a religious act it could not be performed unless one was clothed. Thus greetings were not given in the baths, since all were naked. If the point is relevant, as seems likely, Peter wanted to be sufficiently clad when he reached the shore to give the usual religious greeting.

20. LS, BAGD; Horsley cites a papyrus asking the addressee to "purchase a tunic for Thermouthis: she has nothing to wear (γυμνή ἐστιν)" (New Documents, 2, p. 79).

21. The word is πλοῖον, strictly the diminutive of πλοῖον. But since the latter term seems to be used of the same vessel in vv. 3 and 6, there appears to be no difference in meaning here. We should probably put it down to John's love for variation. There is a somewhat similar situation in ch. 6, where some see a difference in meaning (see on 6:22), as do a few commentators here. They think that the πλοῖον was a large fishing vessel, which drew too much water to come near the shore. So the
disciples left it and came ashore in the dinghy. This is possible, but it does seem to be getting a lot out of a change of word. It is better to take the two words as referring to the one boat.

22. For ἐπώ in measuring distance cf. 11:18; Rev. 14:20.

23. τὸ δίκτυον τῶν ἱχθῶν, literally "the net of the fish." The expression is unusual, but there can be no doubt but that the meaning is "the net full of fish."

24. "Bring" translates ἐνέγκατε, noteworthy as the solitary example of the aorist imperative of this verb in the New Testament (elsewhere the present is invariable, even in contexts where we might expect an aorist). It may be that this is meant to give special urgency to the command.

25. Though, as Bultmann notes, in that case we should have expected that there would have been a ἔν with ὄψαριον (p. 708, n. 8).

26. ἄνεβη, which provokes the question, "went up where?" The verb is, however, used of embarking on a ship and that is probably the meaning here.

27. There is no αὐτός or μόνος or the like, such as would indicate a solo performance.

28. The belief would have to be a widespread one, else the point would be missed. But very little evidence for it can be cited, and none of real weight. Attention is usually called to Jerome's comment on Ezek. 47:9-12: "Those who write on the nature and properties of animals, who have learned ἀλευτικά as well in Latin as in Greek, among whom is Oppianus Cilix, a very learned poet, say that there are one hundred and fifty-three different kinds of fish all of which were caught by the Apostles. . . " This has all the appearance of a comment called forth in the attempt to find an edifying meaning for the number in John rather than an objective statement of a widespread belief. Jerome cites no authority other than Oppian, and no one else appears to have found the statement in this author. W. F. Howard comments, "until some more reliable evidence than Jerome's vague statement is forthcoming, we can hardly make use of this interpretation, and it would be well to leave Oppian's name out of the question" (FGRCI, p. 184. Moreover, Pliny says that the total number of fish in existence is 74 (Natural History 9.43), and he is much nearer the date of the New Testament than is Jerome.

29. Ascending to one view, the numerical values of the letters in the names Σίμων = 76 and ἱχθύς = 77, for a total of 153; Peter is thus a divinely empowered fisherman or the like! Others find a reference to the Trinity, the number being 3 times 50 plus 3. Some missionary minded folk think of 100 as representing the Gentiles, 50 as standing for Israel, and 3 for the Trinity. O. T. Owen argues from gematria that there is a reference to Pisgah (ExT, 100 [1988-89], pp. 52-54). See further J. A. Emerton, JThS, n.s. IX (1958), pp. 86-89 (with the further comment by P. R. Ackroyd, JThS, n.s, X [1959], p. 94) for references to lists of interpretations, a refutation of some previous suggestions, and the author's own view that there is a reference to the passages in Ezek. 47 where the fishermen spread their nets. There seems to be no end to the "meanings" that can be extracted from the number. But that John intended any of them is quite another matter.

30. Robinson remarks, "I confess to being innocent enough to believe that fishermen do actually count their catch, particularly a bumper one . . . and especially when a partnership is involved" (Priority, p. 164)

31. He says, ἀριστήσατε. First-century Jews normally ate two meals a day, and the ἀριστον was the first of them. It would be eaten as a rule before starting the day's work, though on occasion it could be an early lunch. The other meal was the δείπνον (see on 12:2).

32. The construction is unusual since εἰδότες does not agree with anything. But the anacoluthon is quite effective. The meaning of the participle might be "because they knew" or "although they knew."

33. In 6:11 he also gave them bread and fish to eat, but it is not easy to draw a satisfactory conclusion from the fact. Some commentators think that there is a eucharistic reference here on account of the connection with ch. 6. But since the link with the eucharist is far from certain there, it will need more than a mention of bread and fish to see it here. Others draw attention to the use of bread and fish in some early eucharistic representations. But this forms too hazardous a link for us to
connect the kind of food that would naturally be used for a lakeside meal with the sacrament.

Strachan says bluntly, "The meal described in w. 12, 13 is not a Eucharist" (similarly, Bailey).

34. The use of ἡδή is rather curious. Perhaps, as Godet thinks, it "allows us to suppose other subsequent appearances."

35. οὐerver appears to be no more than resumptive (see on 1:21).

36. Although Jesus gave Simon the name Peter there is only one subsequent occasion recorded when he addressed him by it (Luke 22:34). His habit is to call him Simon. The Synoptists usually refer to him as Peter, but John often uses Simon Peter (he has the name Peter 34 times, and it is combined with Simon 17 times). The Received Text here reads Σίμων ᾽Ιωάννου (with A Θ f1 f13, but Σίμων ᾽Ιωάννου is to be preferred with (BDW lat co)).

37. This view is accepted by Westcott, Bultmann, Lenski, Barclay, and others. It is seen also in the translations of Goodspeed, Weymouth, Moffatt, Amplified, GNB, JB, Cassirer, and others.

38. See, for example, BDF, 185(1).

39. This is accepted by C. B. Williams, Rieu, and others.

40. Peter's verb throughout is φιλέω. Jesus uses ἀγαπάω on each of the first two occasions, but φιλέω in his third question.

41. Perhaps the best case for seeing a distinction of meaning is that made by Hendriksen in his special note (II, pp. 494-500), but he fails to notice that it is John's habit to introduce slight variations in repetitions. This makes his argument less cogent. We may well agree that, while the two verbs are of very similar meaning, there is yet a distinction on occasion. But it does not follow that a writer who elsewhere shows himself prone to slight variations, including the use of synonyms, without appreciable difference of meaning (see on 3:5), does intend a difference of meaning in this passage. It is this that does not appear to have been made out. A. Marshall says that he has never met an explanation of the difference between the two terms that satisfies all the requirements. He adds to his note the interesting point that in the formation of compounds φιλ- is always used to express love, never ἀγαπ- (BT, 6 [1955], p. 48). If there were a real difference it would seem necessary for ἀγαπ- to be used on occasion.

42. Among those who see ἀγαπάω as denoting a higher kind of love are Westcott, Lenski, Plummer, and Temple. The last-mentioned affirms that no two words are ever exactly synonymous. He points out that in the list given by Bernard, which is intended to show that the words have much the same meaning, we always have φιλέω or ἀγαπάω alone. When the two occur together a distinction must, he thinks, be intended; but his case is weakened by the fact that he does not refer to John's habit of introducing minor verbal changes. This view is seen also in some translations, e.g., NIV, Cassirer, Twentieth Century, LB. Goodspeed renders ἀγαπάως με; by "Are you devoted to me?" and φιλώ σε by "I love you," while Schonfield reverses the translations. We may take Hendriksen's summary as typical of the views of those who see ἀγαπάω as denoting a superior type of love: "we believe that ἀγαπάω in this story (and generally throughout the Gospels, though with varying degree of distinctness in meaning) indicates love, deep-seated, thorough-going, intelligent and purposeful, a love in which the entire personality (not only the emotions, but also the mind and the will) plays a prominent part, which is based on esteem for the object loved or else on reasons which lie wholly outside of this object; while φιλέω indicates (or at least tends in the direction of) spontaneous natural affection, in which the emotions play a more prominent role than either the intellect or the will."

43. Perhaps the typical representative of this point of view is Trench, who comments on ἀγαπάως με; "At this moment, when all the pulses in the heart of the now penitent Apostle are beating with a passionate affection towards his Lord, this word on that Lord's lips sounds far too cold; to very imperfectly express the warmth of his affection toward Him. The question in any form would have been grievous enough (ver. 17); the language in which it is clothed makes it more grievous still. He therefore in his answer substitutes for the ἀγαπάω of Christ the word of a more personal love, φιλώ σε (ver. 15). And this he does not on the first occasion only, but again upon a second. And now at length he has triumphed; for when his Lord puts the question to him a third time, it is not ἀγαπάως Any
more, but φιλέως” (Synonyms, pp. 42-43). C. B. Williams translates ἀγαπάως με; by "are you really devoted to me?" and φιλέω se by "I tenderly love you." MacGregor takes this kind of distinction as that most likely to be drawn. He understands ἀγαπάω to mean "the esteem existing between benefactor and recipient," and φιλέω as "the personal affection existing between members of the same family." He cites Strachan as one who takes this view (but Strachan in his commentary denies a distinction in this passage while admitting that one may be drawn in classical Greek). It is possible that the Vulgate should be included here with its use of diligo to render ἀγαπάω and amo for φιλέω. MiM refuses to grade the verbs as higher and lower, but nevertheless regards ἀγαπάω as "less expressive of emotions of tenderness, of personal feeling and affection, than that verb used by Peter in his reply." Barclay says, "agapan . . . is a word which maybe has more of the head than the heart in it," while "philein is the word of the warmest and most tender affection" (The Revelation of John, I [Edinburgh, 1960], p. 183). See also Schnackenburg, II, p. 462, n. 40

44. See further my Testaments of Love (Grand Rapids, 1981), especially ch. 6; Expository Reflections on the Gospel of John (Grand Rapids, 1988), ch. 89.

45. This is the position taken up by most modern commentators — e.g., Barrett, Bernard. Many recent translations, such as NRSV, Rieu, Moffatt, REB, GNB, do not distinguish between the two verbs. Moffatt examines the Johannine use of the two terms and decides that there is no significant difference (Love in the New Testament [London, 1932], pp. 46-47). He concludes, "The use of φιλέω and ἀγαπάω in this dialogue is therefore no more than a literary variation, and to read anything recondite into it is to be subtle where simplicity is the mark of the writer's thought and expression." Barrett reminds us that the Beloved Disciple is several times called δυν ἡγάπα and once δυν ἐφίλει (20:2) and proceeds, "it is highly improbable that there were two 'beloved disciples', one loved in a rather better way than the other." Bernard has a thorough analysis of the use of the two verbs and finds no difference. He points out also that the patristic commentators — Syriac, Greek, and Latin alike (except possibly for Ambrose) — do not treat the variation of words here as significant. He also reminds us that the Syriac and Old Latin translations make no distinction (though the Vulgate does). Curiously Marsh argues that here ἀγαπάω is "the strong word for love" and φιλέω "a weaker one." But he does not notice John's habit of variation, nor that many of those who draw a distinction between the two words see φιλέω as the strong word. His case cannot be held to be convincing.

46. Here Jesus says Βόσκε τὰ ἀρνία μου. There are intricate textual problems about the next two verses but we should probably read in v. 16 Ποίμαινε τὰ προβάτια μου, and in v. 17 Βόσκε τὰ προβάτια μου.

47. There are textual variants. Thus for ἀρνία here C* D it read πρόβατα. In v. 16 προβάτια is read by B C pc and should probably be accepted, and πρόβατα by A D W Θ f13.

48. The Vulgate renders both verbs by Pasce.

49. ἐλυπήθη. This word refers to "grief"; it does not mean "was vexed" (Barclay, Schonfield).

50. The text runs, ὅτι εἶπεν αὐτῷ τὸ τρίτον, Φιλείς με; This should surely be taken to mean that the same question had been asked three times, rather than that the verb on the third occasion was Φιλείς. This is supported by the use of δεύτερον in v. 16.

51. Peter has twice said σὺ οἶδας. Now he retains this verb in his πάντα σὺ οἶδας, but then he says, σὺ γινώσκεις ὅτι φιλεῖ σε. For οἶδα and γινώσκω see on 2:24.

52. This latter point is not certain. προβάτια is read by A B C W* pc, but there is also strong support for πρόβατα, namely D W* Θ f1 f 13 pi. Some scholars hold that a threefold variation is intended, but it appears that on this occasion twofold is more probable. The substitution of προβάτα by scribes is intelligible, but that of προβάτια is not so easily explained.

53. The comparative νεώτερος strictly signifies "younger."

54. The singular ἀλλός invites comment. For any form of martyrdom we would expect a plural, for several persecutors would be involved. It may be that Christ himself or God is intended, the point
then being that Peter would fulfill the divine will in his martyrdom. But this may be over-subtle. Perhaps nothing more is meant than a personification of the persecuting authorities.

55. Barrett draws attention to the interpretation of ἐξεπέτασα τὰς χεῖρας μου (Isa. 65:2) as foreshadowing the crucifixion by Barnabas (12:4), Justin (1 Apol. 35), Irenaeus (Demonstration of the Apostolic Preaching, 79), and Cyprian (Test. 2.20). There are similar interpretations of Moses' outstretched hands (Exod. 17:12), and Barrett finds one use of ἐξετίνα with reference to crucifixion in Epictetus (BAGD cites Josephus, Ant. 19.94, but this is dubious, to say the least). Trench cites some passages in Christian writers, the Epictetus passage and also one from Seneca (Notes on the Miracles of Our Lord [London, 1895], p. 503). Haenchen has a series of quotations from classical writers to the same effect. If these references be accepted as demonstrating the point, confirmation will perhaps be seen in the use of ζόννυμι, for the crucified were sometimes fastened to their crosses with ropes. Tertullian tells us that Peter was crucified in Rome under Nero, and he sees in crucifixion the fulfillment of the words about being girded by another (Scorp. 15). Eusebius reports that at his own request Peter was crucified head downward (HE 3.1.2), but most scholars find little reason for accepting this.

56. Cullmann, however, cites W. Bauer that the order is correct, for "the criminal had to carry the cross to the place of execution with arms spread out and chained to it" (Peter: Disciple, Apostle, Martyr [London, 1962], p. 88, n. 87).

57. There is a characteristic Johannine variation. In 13:25 the question was Κύριε, τίς ἔστιν; there was no reference to betrayal, as here. But since the question refers back to Jesus' statement of 13:21, εἰς ἐξ ὑμῶν παραδώσει με, its present form is quite intelligible.

58. Both here and in the repetition of the statement in the next verse ἔως is followed by the indicative, a construction found fairly rarely in the New Testament. It puts some stress on the factuality of the coming. The present tense is curious, but it is reading too much into it to assert that John thought of the coming as a continuous process. Indeed, to take the coming in this way is to render the saying practically meaningless.

59. There is a slight difference in the wording, for this time the pronoun σύ puts emphasis on "you." The present imperative is used both times, which is consonant with a stress on the continuous process involved. In the former place the verb precedes μοι, here it follows. Schonfield brings out some of the difference with "Follow me. . . . You follow me." Similarly, Rieu has "For yourself, follow me" in the second place.

60. We would have anticipated the future tense for the verb "die," but John uses the present, οὐχ ἀποθνήσχει, "does not die."

61. There is an ambiguity here. ὅτι is usually taken to mean "that," giving the sense as NIV. But it could mean "because": "Jesus did not say (this) to him because he would not die." But NIV is to be preferred.

62. "He did not say 'He will not die' BUT (άλλ') 'if I will . . .,' "

63. This is not the case if we omit the words τί πρός σέ with 565 * A W f1 * e syr. But the words should be read; their attestation is strong.

64. This is not completely certain. In the first place the word οἶδα μέν might conceivably be read as οἶδα μέν, corresponding to ἔστιν δέ. This, however, gives an unnatural sequence and should probably be rejected. In the second place, the plural is sometimes used of one person plus his associates as in 3:11; 6:5; 1 John 1:1, etc. In favor of this is the fact that, if added by others, we would expect the attestation to stand right at the end, but it does not do so; v. 25 with its singular οἶμαι follows. However, this does not appear to be decisive and the sense strongly favors a genuine plural, giving the attestation of others than the author of the preceding (though perhaps including him).

65. This is especially the case if the ὅ before γράψας be omitted with Χ* A W f1 pi, or if we read ὅ καί γράψας with Θ f13 33. καί ὅ γράψας is read by B D it syr.
66. "The most natural meaning of these words, and therefore the meaning to be adopted unless very strong reasons are brought against it, is that the disciple himself not only bore witness to but also wrote down ταύτα" (Barrett; he regards as "conceivable but perhaps not probable" the view that γράψας means "caused to be written"). Sometimes curious inferences are drawn from this word. Thus Bernard cites Pilate's writing of the Titulus on the cross and Paul's use of his own "writing" of Romans (Rom. 15:15), though we know that the actual penman was Tertius (Rom. 16:22). He reasons that the verb may mean "dictated," and that here "the Beloved Disciple caused these things to be written. They were put into shape by the writer who took them dawn." On this H. P. V. Nunn comments: "No one supposes that Pilate actually wrote on the board any more than that he nailed it to the cross, but we are told in the immediate context that he identified the words which he caused to be written with his intention in a most emphatic manner. Any scribe who ventured 'to put them into shape' would have got into serious trouble. We do not know that it has ever before been suggested that Tertius did anything more than write down the exact words which St. Paul dictated to him" (The Authorship of the Fourth Gospel [Eton, 1952], p. 8). Robinson remarks, "it has been maintained that 'he wrote it' need mean no more than 'he caused it to be written', as presumably it does with Pilate in 19.22. But the use of γράψειν of a private individual to imply more than the employment of an amanuensis cannot be paralleled, and this would still mean that the beloved disciple wrote the Gospel of John as much as Paul wrote the Epistle to the Romans (15.15, ἔγραψα), even if Tertius (described in 16.22 as ὁ γράψας) actually penned it" (Priority, p. 105).

67. Tasker cites evidence that the verse was originally lacking in Sinaiticus but that the original scribe erased an ornamental colophon and inserted the verse. This is not without its interest, but it cannot be held to outweigh the consensus of the manuscripts.

68. The negative οὐδὲ is noteworthy since it is to be taken with the infinitive χωρῆσαι. It is perhaps more emphatic than μηδ᾽ would have been. BDF takes the negative with οἶμαι (429), but Turner dissents, in my judgment rightly (Μ, III, p. 285).

69. It is not certain whether χωρῆσαι is a true future infinitive, as its form indicates (Μ, I, p. 204, n. 2), or whether it is an example of the use of a present ending on the aorist stem to form an aorist infinitive (Μ, II, p. 216). The future infinitive is rare, but then so is the use of the present ending to form an aorist infinitive. Not much hinges on our verdict, for the meaning is much the same in either case. It should be added that some MSS here read χωρῆσαι.

70. There is an interesting parallel in Philo, De post. Cain. 144: "Were (God) to choose to display His own riches, even the entire earth with the sea turned into dry land would not contain (χωρῆσαι) them." SBk cites a saying of Jochanan b. Zakkai (who died c. A.D. 80): "If all the sky were parchment, and all the trees were writing pens, and all the seas were ink there would not be enough to write down my wisdom which I have learned from my teachers; and yet I have had the pleasure of only as much of the wisdom of the wise as a fly, who plunges into the ocean, takes away" (II, p. 587).
APPENDIX

THE WOMAN TAKEN IN ADULTERY (7:53-8:11)

53Then each went to his own home. 1 But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. 2 At dawn he appeared again in the temple courts, where all the people gathered around him, and he sat down to teach them. 3 The teachers of the law and the Pharisees brought in a woman caught in adultery. They made her stand before the group and said to Jesus, "Teacher, this woman was caught in the act of adultery. 5 In the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?" 6 They were using this question as a trap, in order to have a basis for accusing him. But Jesus bent down and started to write on the ground with his finger. 7 When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, "If any one of you is without sin, let him be the first to throw a stone at her." 8 Again he stooped down and wrote on the ground. 9 At this, those who heard began to go away one at a time, the older ones first, until only Jesus was left, with the woman still standing there. 10 Jesus straightened up and asked her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" 11 "No one, sir," she said. "Then neither do I condemn you," Jesus declared. "Go now and leave your life of sin."

The textual evidence makes it impossible to hold that this section is an authentic part of the Gospel. It is not attested in the oldest manuscripts, and when it does make its appearance it is sometimes found in other positions, either after verse 36, or after verse 44, or at the end of this Gospel, or after Luke 31:38. It seems clear enough that those scribes who felt it too important to be lost were not at all sure where to attach it. And if they could not agree on the right place for it, they could not agree on the true text for it either. The manuscripts that have it do not agree closely. The very large number of variants indicates that the textual history of this pericope is different from that of the fourth Gospel. In addition to the textual difficulty many find stylistic criteria against the story. While the spirit of the narrative is in accordance with that of this Gospel the language is not
Johannine. The passage is too short for this argument to be completely
decisive, but for what it is worth it does tell against Johannine authorship.
There is also the fact that the passage does not fit well into the context,
whereas 8:12 follows naturally after 7:52.

But if we cannot feel that this is part of John's Gospel, we can feel that
the story is true to the character of Jesus. Throughout the history of the
church it has been held that, whoever wrote it, this little story is authentic.4
It rings true. It speaks to our condition. And it can scarcely have been com-
posed in the early church with its sternness about sexual sin. It is thus worth
our while to study it, though not as an authentic part of John's writing. The
story is undoubtedly very ancient. Many authorities agree that it is referred
to by Papias.5 It is mentioned also in the Apostolic Constitutions (2.24). But
it is not mentioned very often in early days. The reason probably is that in a
day when the punishment for sexual sin was very severe among the
Christians this story was thought to be too easily misinterpreted as
countenancing un-chastity. When ecclesiastical discipline was somewhat
relaxed the story was circulated more widely and with a greater measure of
official sanction.

53 This verse shows that the story was originally attached to some
other narrative, but what that was we can only guess.

1 The Synoptic Gospels tell us that the pattern Jesus followed during
the closing days of his life was to teach in Jerusalem during the day, and to
retire outside the city to spend the night. Luke specifically says that he
seem to have been one of Jesus' favorite places. On the occasion mentioned
here he evidently passed the night there. The Mount of Olives is not
mentioned in this Gospel, though it is in each of the other three.

2 "Again" indicates that the narrative from which this story was taken
included a previous visit or visits to the temple. Evidently it also included a
reference to teaching. So on this occasion Jesus went to the temple early in
the morning. "Came" (NIV, "gathered") and "taught" (NIV, "to teach") are
continuous tenses. When Jesus reached the temple courts people kept
coming to him, so he sat down and engaged in teaching them.

3 The group is joined by some religious leaders bringing a woman they
had taken in the act of sin. "Scribes (NIV, "teachers of the law") and
Pharisees" is a conjunction found quite often in the Synoptic Gospels, but
the scribes are never mentioned in John.7 The two terms do not mean the
same people, for scribes were not necessarily Pharisees (though, of course, many of them were). In days when writing was far from universal the scribes were members of a skilled and important profession. Among the Jews the principal study was the law, and as this was the chief interest of the Pharisees, the two groups had much in common. Accordingly it is never strange to find the two acting in conjunction. Yet we should not overlook the other fact that the Synoptic Gospels also link the scribes very often with the high priests, who were Sadducees. In other words, the scribes had their links with the Pharisees, but also with others, notably the official hierarchy.

The woman these people bring had been taken in adultery. This means that the witnesses had seen the very act; compromising circumstances were not enough. If the conditions required by Jewish law were as stringent as J. D. M. Derrett maintains, this can scarcely indicate anything other than a trap deliberately set. All the more is this likely to be the case in that the man was not present. Why not? Since the woman was taken in the very act, there should have been two sinners, not one, before Jesus. But if the whole thing had been engineered, provision would have been made for the man to escape. Moreover, the witnesses ought to have warned the woman in accordance with the maxim, "No penalty without a warning." There is no hint that they did anything of the sort. All the indications are that the accusers had some special vindictiveness toward her. This is shown also in the fact that they brought the woman along publicly (cf. Knox, "made her stand there in full view"). There was no need for this. She might have been kept in custody while the case was referred to Jesus.

They address Jesus with the polite "Teacher," and explain the circumstances. "Teacher" is appropriate in a context where Jesus is to be asked to decide a point of law. "was caught" is again in the perfect tense. The woman's guilt is plain. She was taken "in the act." The word puts some stress on her part of the affair.

They put to Jesus the question of what should be done with the woman, first pointing out that the law of Moses specifically provides for the death penalty in such cases. It is perhaps worth noticing that they slightly manipulate the text of the law. They say "such" are to be stoned, where their word is feminine, "such women," whereas both relevant passages (Lev. 20:10; Deut. 22:22) say that the man as well as the woman is to be put to death. The accusers are also a little more specific than the Old Testament,
for they speak definitely of stoning, whereas the passages cited do not indicate the manner of execution. Stoning is prescribed for the guilty pair when the woman is "a virgin pledged to be married" (Deut. 22:23-24). It seems fairly clear that they were envisaging a lynching. There is no mention of a trial, and it would seem that this group proposed to take the law into their own hands. Their "you" is emphatic. The law, they infer, is plain: now what do you say? The next verse makes it clear that they were not sincere, but the exact nature of the trap is not certain. Most interpreters accept the view that Jesus faced a charge under either Roman law or the law of Moses. If he said "Stone her," he would lay himself open to the charge of counseling action contrary to Roman law, which did not provide for a death penalty in such cases. If he said "Do not stone her," he could be charged with offending against the law of God. The question was a loaded one. Either answer would involve Jesus in difficulties. This may indeed be the dilemma his opponents had in mind, though evidence does not seem to be strong that the Romans would, in fact, have taken strong action in such a case. Another possibility is that a verdict for stoning would have set those who favored leniency against him, while one against stoning would leave him out of favor with the legalists. The objection to this is that verse 6 looks for a definite charge, not a shift in popularity. In any case Jesus' views were clearly well known and the accusers almost certainly felt that they could count on him not to endorse the provision of the law, but to take the lenient view. We need not concern ourselves unduly with looking for the consequences of the alternative answer. Jesus could, of course, have refused to give a decision. There was no compulsion, and he would have been safe. But in that case the woman would certainly have been lynched.

6 Their motives are made clear. They are not really seeking guidance, but "testing" him (NIV paraphrases). The word is often translated "tempt"; it signifies putting to the test with a view to the tested person failing. They wanted a legal basis on which to accuse him. Jesus' reaction was to ignore them. He simply stooped and made marks in the dust. There is no hint of why he wrote or what he wrote. It is not even certain that he wrote, for the verb used can mean "to draw." But in this context the word more naturally signifies "to write." A not unlikely suggestion is that Jesus wrote the words he later spoke. In other words, he wrote his sentence as well as pronounced it. Derrett is of the opinion that he will have written some words from the
law (thus showing on what he would rely if he were to give a decision), and that he will have used unpointed Hebrew. This would have enabled him to suggest all the meanings associated with the various possible pointings. This gives a motive for writing, whereas if the words were spoken then the speaker was committed to one interpretation. Derrett thinks the writing was the opening part of Exodus 23:1b: "Do not help a wicked man by being a malicious witness." This was a reminder that the whole affair was unsavory, and it carried a warning lest innocent men contract guilt by association with evil witnesses. But this is uncertain; we do not know what he wrote.

7 Evidently the accusers felt that Jesus' silence arose from an inability to evade giving them the opening for which they were looking. So they pressed their question ("they persisted in questioning him," BAGD). But Jesus stood up and invited any one among them who was sinless to throw the first stone (normally the witnesses were to initiate a stoning, Deut. 17:7). This answer completely disarmed them. It could not possibly be construed as a rejection of the law; Jesus specifically enjoined that a stone be thrown. But his limitation on who might throw it effectively prevented any harm coming to the guilty woman. The saying "does not deny that she may be stoned, but insists upon the innocency and therefore the competence of whoever stands forth against her as accuser and witness." If, for example, the witnesses were guilty of not giving a warning (as the facts of the case make almost certain), then the woman could not be convicted on their evidence. For anyone to take part in a stoning on the basis of such evidence would be to incur the guilt of "joining with the wicked." The words of Jesus are both an appeal to conscience and a warning to the hearers that their own lives might very well be at stake. If they stoned the woman, they must be very sure of the witnesses.

8-9 Jesus stooped again and resumed his writing. But as the significance of his words sunk in, the men went out. The continuous tense in this last verb gives the thought of something like a procession. They kept on going out. The exodus began with the elders, who would naturally be expected to give a lead and whose greater experience would enable them to grasp more quickly the implications of Jesus' words. They, moreover, would have a certain responsibility to see that justice was done. If the witness was false, or not legally valid, and the woman was killed, the oldest men present would have a major share of the responsibility. So they went out. But the
action was not confined to them. The consciences of all were touched, and all went out. The woman was left alone. "Left" is a strong word, and might be translated "abandoned." When the force of Jesus' words struck home they were no longer interested in her sin, but in their own. They made no attempt to interfere with her, for she was left "still standing there."

10 Jesus addresses the woman. "Woman" is not a harsh form of address. It is used by Jesus on the cross as he addresses his mother (19:26). Now he asks the adulteress where her accusers are, and goes on to inquire whether no one has condemned her. She assures him that this is indeed the case.

11 Jesus' answer brings the incident to a fitting conclusion. He, too, will not condemn her. But that does not mean that he condones her sin; he tells her to sin no more. The form of the command implies a ceasing to continue an action already started: "Stop your sinful habit." And "no more" (NIV paraphrases with "leave your life of sin") points to the thought of no return. She is to make a clean break with sin. Jesus does not refer specifically to adultery (though there cannot be any doubt but that that is primarily in mind). His words are perfectly general. He is calling the woman to amendment of life, the whole of life. It should not be overlooked that he says nothing about forgiveness. The guilty woman had as yet given no sign of repentance or of faith. What Jesus does is to show mercy and to call her to righteousness.

1. There is a convenient summary of the evidence in Hoskyns, pp. 563-64. The most considerable support for it is D, but the evidence against it is overwhelming. It is not found in any of the oldest MSS apart from D; its only attestation is Western or late, and it is omitted even by some of the Western witnesses. It is generally said that it is not referred to by the Fathers other than Western
ones, but Bart D. Ehrman, on the basis of recently discovered MSS, has shown that it was known to Didymus the Blind, a fourth-century Alexandrian (NTS, 34 [1988], pp. 24-44).

2. In this position it may be intended as an appendix to the four Gospels rather than specifically to this Gospel.

3. Note such things as the frequent use of δὲ instead of John's οὖν; πορεύομαι εἶς (v. 53) where John prefers πρός (14:12,28; 16:28, etc., though he uses εἶς in 7:35); ὃρθρου (v. 2) as in Luke 24:1, whereas John uses προῖ (18:28; 20:1); λαός (v. 2) is used often in Matthew and Luke, but only occasionally in John, who prefers ὄχλος; ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν (v. 11) is not found in John, though it is frequent in Luke (Luke 1:38; 5:10, etc.). Stylistically the passage belongs with the Synoptics rather than with John.

4. Tenney speaks of "its ancient character and undoubtedly historic truthfulness." Most scholars would accept this as a fair statement.

5. Eusebius reports Papias as having "expounded another story about a woman who was accused before the Lord of many sins, which the Gospel according to the Hebrews contains" (HE 3.29.17; cited from Loeb edn.). Though Papias speaks of "many sins" and our narrative of but one, it is not impossible that Papias is referring to another version of this story. No other is known of a woman accused before our Lord of sinning.

6. Mark mentions Bethany as the place to which Jesus withdrew (Mark 11:11-12), but, as C. E. B. Cranfield says, Luke "does not contradict this, since Bethany could be regarded as the Mount of Olives" (on Mark 11:11).

7. γραμματεύς is found 22 times in Matthew, 21 times in Mark, and 14 times in Luke, so that John's total omission of the term is striking.

8. For a useful account of the scribes and Pharisees see W. Barclay, The Mind of Jesus (London, 1960), pp. 158ff. He neatly sums up the differences between the two: "It was the scribes who worked out all these rules and regulations; it was the Pharisees who devoted their whole lives to the keeping of them" (p. 161).

9. The perfect, κατελημμένην, indicates "taken with her shame upon her"; it points to her continuing character as an adulteress.

10. Cf. R. Samuel: "In the case of adulterers, they (sc. the witnesses) must have seen them in the posture of adulterers" (B. Mes. 91a; Soncino edn., p. 524).

11. In his very valuable article on this incident in NTS, X (1963-64), pp. 1-26, he stresses that the witnesses must have seen the couple in coitus. "There is absolutely no question of their having seen the couple in a 'compromising situation', for example, coming from a room in which they were alone, or even lying together on the same bed. The actual physical movements of the couple must have been capable of no other explanation, and the witnesses must have seen exactly the same acts at exactly the same time, in the presence of each other, so that their depositions would be identical in every respect" (pp. 4-5). He points out that conditions were so stringent that they could have been met only on rare occasions. Thus provision was made for the ordeal (sotah) when the husband was suspi-cious, but had not the proof required.

12. There is more than one possible motive. A good one is the material one. If a man divorced his wife she would take her property with her. But if she died he would succeed to it.

13. Df takes μοιχευομένη as a middle in accordance with Attic use (101); the active would be used of the man. BAGD, however, reminds us of the use of the accusative of the object τινὰ (γυναῖκα) after the active, which "explains the use of the passive in the case of the woman." It cites a number of examples, including this passage. Cf. also Matt. 5:32. LS cites the passive as classical.

14. The word is υἱόθφωρος. From ϕωρ, "a thief," it properly denotes "caught in the act of stealing," but it comes to be used of other offenses. It leaves no room for doubt.

15. In Jewish understanding a man was guilty of adultery only if he had sexual relations with a betrothed or married woman, but a woman was guilty if she had sexual relations with anyone other than her husband.
Strangulation is the penalty for adultery according to the Mishnah (Sanh. 11:1), though stoning is the method of execution when the woman is betrothed (Sanh 7:4). But there does not seem to be evidences of the use of strangling in Jewish penal procedure before the fall of Jerusalem. See P. Winter, On the Trial of Jesus (Berlin, 1961), pp. 67-74; he notes that Herod had certain people strangled (p. 188, n. 21), but denies that Jewish penal procedure knew this form of execution until the second century. Derrett says, "We know now that the traditional punishment for adultery by a married woman was stoning" (p. 11).

It is possible that there was no properly constituted Jewish court to conduct such a trial. See the evidence in Derrett, p. 9, n. 4. Lynching would then be the only way of securing execution, for the Romans would not order death for such an offense.

Cf. Bernard, "although the Roman authorities were lax on occasion about such acts of violence (as in the case of Stephen, Acts 758), there would have been a good pretext for handing Him over to them to deal with." J. Jeremias similarly argues that the Jews had no right to put anyone to death, so that an answer affirming the death penalty could be construed as usurping the functions of the Roman authorities (ZNTW, 43 [1950-51], pp. 145-50).

There is some evidence that a large number of people did view the death penalty as too severe. The main reasons for thinking this are that the death penalty seems rarely to have been carried out, although the offense was common. I. Abrahams speaks of "the great prevalence of adultery" (Studies in Pharisaism and the Gospels, I [Cambridge, 1917], p. 74); demanding the death penalty would imply a readiness for many executions. He also says that the death penalty for adultery "can never have been frequently enforced" (p. 73). It was apparently much more usual for the husband to divorce his erring wife and receive compensation from the man. The Mishnah tractate Sotah seems to take it for granted that the punishment for adultery would be divorce, and it does not look for the death penalty. For example, it provides that an adulteress is forbidden both to her husband and to her paramour (Sot. 5:1), which indicates that neither party was executed.

ome think that he did not wish to look at the hideous sight of professedly godly men hounding the woman. Cf. Temple: "But the Lord is tortured with the horror of it all. He will not look at them or at her. He stoops down to hide the burning confusion of His face and relieves His agitation by tracing patterns in the dust." Calvin is of the opinion that the gesture is to show that Jesus despises them.

The verb is χατέγραφεν, not found elsewhere in the New Testament. The uncompounded ἐγραφεν, however, is found in v. 8, that points to meaning here of "was writing" rather than "was drawing" (the imperfect tense points to a continuing activity). Godet and others see in the action "a meaning analogous to that of the saying of Jeremiah (xvii.13); 'Those who turn aside from Me shall be written in the earth.'" The gesture would mean that the accusers had "turned aside" from God.

T. W. Manson is of this opinion: "the action of Jesus might be explained from the well-known practice in Roman criminal law, whereby the presiding judge first wrote down the sentence and then read it aloud from the written record.... Jesus by this motion says in effect: 'You are inviting me to usurp the function of the Roman Governor. Very well, I will do so; and I will do it in the approved Roman manner.' He then stoops down and pretends to write down the sentence, after which he reads it out: 'whoevever among you is without sin, let him be the first to cast a stone at her.' . . Jesus defeats the plotters by going through the form of pronouncing sentence in the best Roman style, but wording it so that it cannot be executed" (ZNTW, 44 [1952-53], pp. 255-56). Against this, it is unlikely that Jesus would act in accordance with Roman rather than Jewish law. An ancient opinion is that Jesus wrote the sins of the accusers (cf. Job 13:26).

Now if one reads ἔγραφα instead of ἐγραφα ... the result is impressive. Jesus is then considering joining with Evil in the abstract, associating in an evil matter" (Derrett, p. 20). If Jesus did in fact write this, those who read it might be uncertain whether he was warning others about associating with evil witnesses or with an unsavory deed, or whether he himself was refusing to have...
any contact with a case that involved immorality. This would give a reason for them to press him to speak.

24. Some interpreters have thought that the word means "innocent of that particular sin." ἁναμάρτητος is not found elsewhere in the New Testament, but its use in LXX shows that it is not specific. It can denote innocence of various kinds of sin. It was not their indulgence in one particular sin but their general sinfulness that disqualified them from arrogating to themselves the position of God's agents in punishing the sin of others.


26. Derrett thinks that this time Jesus wrote, "Keep thee far from a false matter," which the readers would complete with the rest of the verse: "and do not put an innocent or honest person to death, for I will not acquit the guilty" (Exod. 23:7; but could it be said that this woman was "innocent or honest"?)? In the apocryphal book of Susanna Daniel used this very text to condemn the false elders (v. 53). It had thus been the means of bringing wicked men to their death, and the text might well arouse memories of the incident.

27. "One at a time" is εἶς καθ' εἶς. BDF explains the curious nominative after καθά as a development from the distributive use of this preposition, "since καθά ἐν καθένα ἔχαστον became fixed as καθῆνα ἔχ. and a corresponding nom. was created." They add, "nor many examples of this vulgarism are found in the NT" (305). GT says that "either κατά is used adverbially, or εἰς as indeclinable" (sub εἰς).

28. The word is κατελέφθη. It is used of Levi's abandoning his position as tax collector to follow Jesus (Luke 5:28), and of a man's dying and leaving his wife (Mark 12:19).

29. CARCELY a translation of ἐν μέσω οὐσα. The meaning may be that the entire accusing party went out and the woman remained "in the middle" of the group Jesus had been teaching (v. 2). Augustine in a telling phrase says. Relied sunt duo, misera et miser-icordia (33.5).

30. μηκέτι ἁμάρτανε.

31. Cf. Hoskyns, "Here then the mercy of God and His truth meet. For only in the mouth of the sinless Jesus can the full condemnation of sin, and the full demand for the righteousness of God, march with the authoritative pronouncement of His mercy and charity."
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