FAITH & DISCIPLESHIP IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

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THE BELOVED DISCIPLE
THE BELOVED DISCIPLE

- Often accompanies Peter (Jn 13 & 21)
- Familiar to the High Priest (Jn 18:15-16)
- Relationship to Jesus’ mother (19:26-27)
THIS SESSION

- Relationship of Beloved Disciple with:
  - Jesus
  - Peter

- The Identity of the Beloved Disciple
BELOVED DISCIPLE & JESUS

- Love & intimacy

- "In the bosom of Jesus" (13:23)

- Follows Jesus & remains with Him (1:37,39?; 18:15; 21:20,22)
BELOVED DISCIPLE & JESUS

- Perceptive
- Understands Jesus’ instruction (19:27)
- First to recognise the risen Jesus when disciples out fishing (21:7)
BELOVED DISCIPLE: IDEAL EYE-WITNESS

- Loved by Jesus – special position of intimacy
- Perceptive
- Present at key moments of Jesus’ ministry – from start to finish
THE BELOVED DISCIPLE & PETER

- Rivalry?
- Closer to Jesus
- Follows Jesus further
- Remains with Jesus
- Outruns Peter
- More perceptive
BELOVED DISCIPLE: IDEAL EYE-WITNESS

- Intimate with Jesus & privileged position
- Ready to follow & stand by Jesus
- Present at key moments in Jesus’ life
WHO IS “THE BELOVED DISCIPLE”?

- Source of the testimony about Jesus

- Unnamed disciple

- Ancient tradition (2nd cent.) = John, son of Zebedee
JOHN
SON OF ZEBEDEE?

- Synoptics: Inner circle of 4 friends


- Christian Tradition from 2nd cent.
  - St. Irenaeus
  - Ephesus
ANONYMOUS DISCIPLE

- Two Disciples of John the Baptist (1:28, 35-39) – one unnamed disciple.

- After Jesus’ Arrest (18:15-16):
  - Peter & “another disciple”
  - Other disciple “known to the High Priest”
BELOVED DISCIPLE: LAZARUS?

- "See how he loved him!" (11:36)
- "He whom you love..." (11:3)
JOHN 21

- 7 disciples at the Sea of Tiberias
- Beloved Disciple not identified with John
- Jn 21:7, 20
ST. IRENAEUS

- 2nd Cent.: Suspicions around Fourth Gospel

- Irenaeus supported inclusion in the canon.

- Eager to prove apostolic origins

- John = The Beloved Disciple
BUT........

- Language
- Highly Developed Symbolism
- Theological Understanding of Christ
ALSO.....

- Gospel is anonymous by the author’s choice & design

- Is the disciple whom Jesus loved you & me?
  - The “other disciple” as “Every-disciple”?
  - Historical character & Ideal Disciple
UNIVERSAL SYMBOLISM OF BELOVED DISCIPLE

As a model to imitate:

- Relates to Jesus in an ideal manner
- Embodiment of discipleship
- Faith, love & dedication
- Loving relationship with Jesus