

05. Friendship between Jesus and the Beloved Disciple

1. The Last Supper



I am not assuming that the Beloved Disciple is John, one of the Twelve and brother of James.

So I am limiting my reflections to the 3 scenes where the 'Beloved Disciple' is mentioned.

Scene 1. The Last Supper

‘One of his disciples – the one whom Jesus loved (agapaô)
– was reclining next to him’ (John 13:23).



John 13:1-2



‘Before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved (agapaô) his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.’

Scene 1 : Jesus washes the feet of his disciples (13:3-20)

John 13:3-5



‘During supper Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. Then he poured water into basin and began to wash the disciples’ feet and to wipe them with the towel he had wrapped round his waist.’

Sieger Köder

John 13:14-15

If I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet,
you also ought to wash one another's feet.
For I have set you an example,
that you also should do as I have done to you.

‘Do this in memory of me’ (1 Corinthians 11:24-25 & Luke 22:19)

‘We know love (agapê) by this, that he laid down his life for us –
and we ought to lay down our lives for one another’ (1 John 3:16).



John 13:21-22

‘Jesus was troubled in spirit and declared:
Very truly, I tell you, one of you will betray me.
The disciples looked at one another,
uncertain of whom he was speaking.’

John 13:24-26

Simon Peter motioned to the Beloved Disciple to ask Jesus of whom he was speaking. So while reclining next to Jesus, he asked him, “Lord, who is it?”

Jesus answered, “It is the one to whom I give this piece of bread when I have dipped it in the dish.”

Jesus' Farewell Speech (John 13:33 - 14:31)

Modelled on Moses' Testament in Deuteronomy

John 13:34-35

‘I give you a new commandment, that you love one another.
Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another.
By this everyone will know that you are my disciples,
if you have love for one another.’

Letter from the community of the Beloved Disciple

‘We declare to you what we have seen and heard so that you may have communion with us; and truly our communion is with the Father and with his Son Jesus, the Messiah’ (1 John 1:3).

‘Whoever loves a brother or sister lives in the light’ (1 John 2:9).

‘This is the message you have learned from the beginning, that we should love one another’ (1 John 3:11).

‘We know that we have passed from death to life because we love one another’ (1 John 3:14).

‘This is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. All who obey his commandments abide in him, and he abides in them. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit that he has given us’ (1 John 3:23-24).

‘Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God’ (1 John 4:7).

‘Beloved, since God loved us so much,
we also ought to love one another.
No one has ever seen God; if we love one another,
God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us’ (1 John 4:11-12).

John 14:1-3

Do not let your hearts be troubled.

Believe in God, believe also in me.

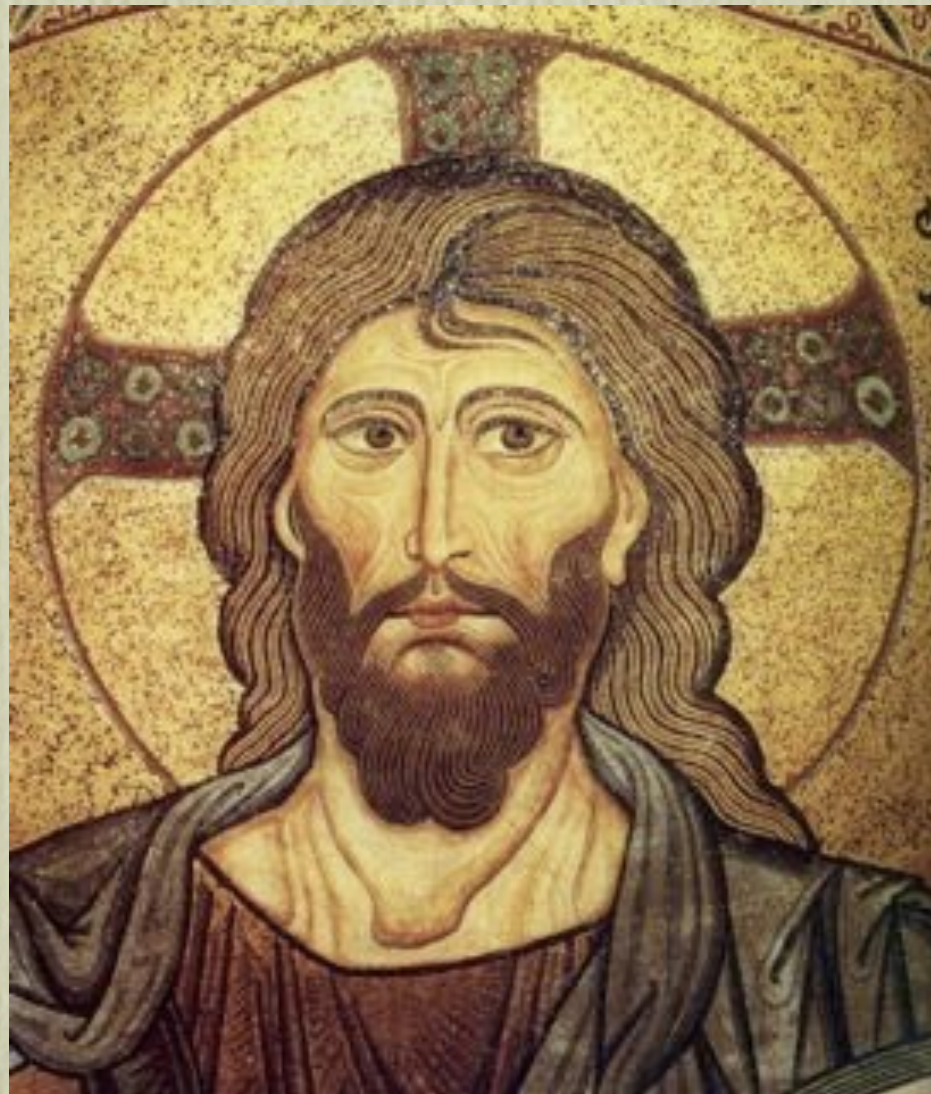
In my Father's house there are many dwelling places.

If it were not so, would I have told you
that I go to prepare a place for you?

And if I go and prepare a place for you,
I will come again and will take you to myself,
so that where I am, there you may be also.

John 14:10

Do you not believe
that I am in the Father and the Father is in me?



‘God is love. If you abide in love you abide in God,
and God abides in you’ (1 John 4:16).

John 14:15-17

‘If you love me, you will keep my commandments.

And I will ask the Father,

and he will give you another Advocate,

to be with you forever.

This is the Spirit of truth,

whom the world cannot receive,

because it neither sees nor knows the Spirit.

You know the Spirit, because the Spirit

abides with you, is in you.’



John 14:18, 23

I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you ...
If you love me you will keep my word,
and my Father will love you, and we will come to you
and make our home in you.



John 14:21

If you love me you will carry out what I command you;
(= what I commend / entrust to you)
and you will be loved by my Father,
and I will love you and reveal myself to you.

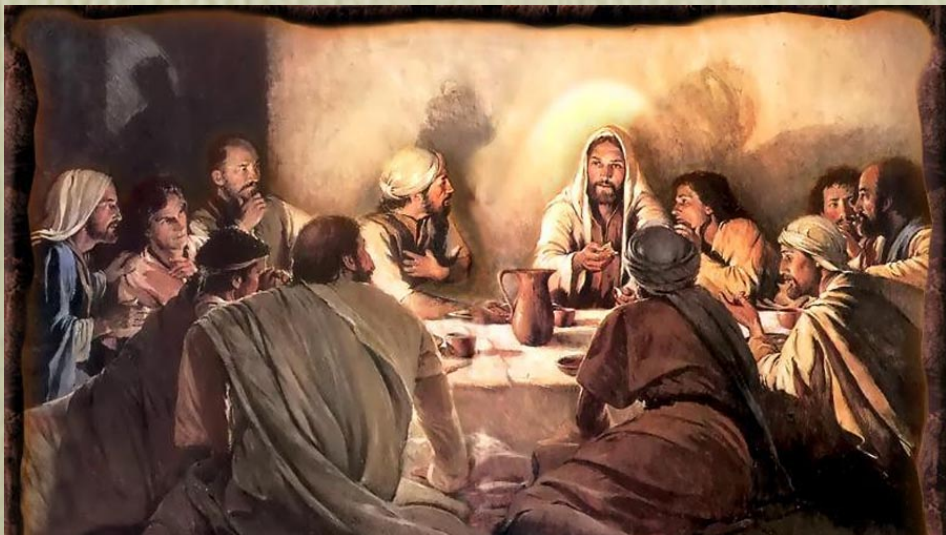


10. ADDITIONS TO THE SUPPER DISCOURSE

John 15:1 - 17:26

As with the supper discourse (13:31 - 14:31), so here, we are meant to imagine Jesus continuing his farewell speech to 'his own' at their final supper together.

At times we are listening to Jesus speaking from the cross and at times from the glory of his risen life.



John 15:5

I am the vine, you are the branches.

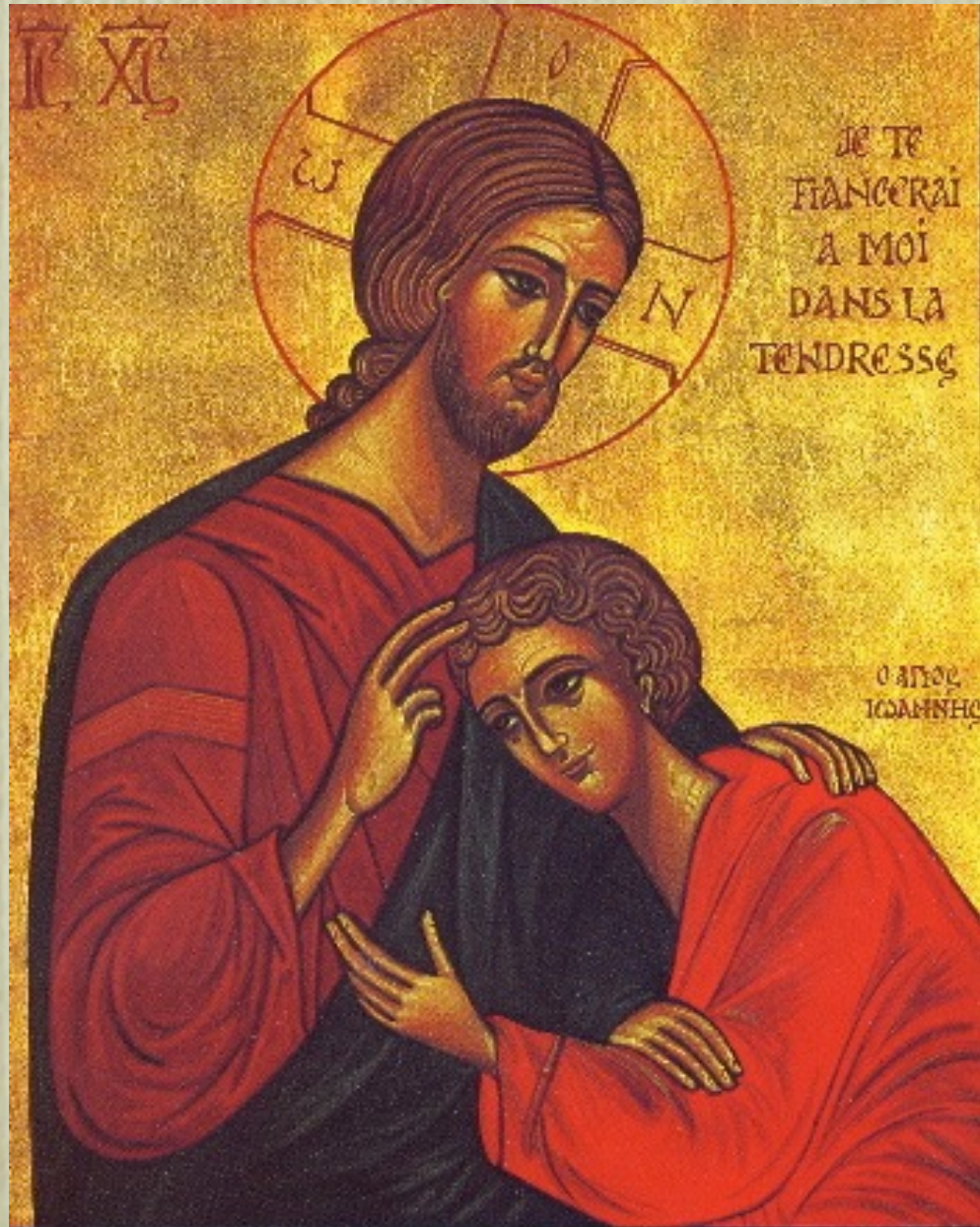
If you abide in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit.

Apart from me you can do nothing.



John 15:9

‘As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love.’



Jesus has already spoken of his love for us (13:1; 13:34; 14:21). Now he tells us that the love which he has for us has its origin in the love which his Father has for him. It is the human expression of the intimate communion which is the very being of God.

With the Beloved Disciple we are being invited to share Jesus' divinity: to be with Jesus **‘in the bosom of the Father’**(1:18).

John 15:10-11

If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love,
just as I have kept my Father's commandments
and abide in his love.

I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you,
and that your joy may be complete.

John 15:12-14

This is my commandment, that you love one another
as I have loved you.

No one has greater love than this,
to lay down one's life for one's friends.

You are my friends (philos)
if you do what I command you.

John 15:15

because the servant does not know what the master is doing.

I am calling you friends (philos),
because I have made known to you
everything that I have heard from my Father.

John 15:17

I have entrusted all this to you
so that you may love (agapaô) one another.

John 16:22

You have pain now; but I will see you again,
and your hearts will rejoice,
and no one will take your joy from you.

John 16:32

The hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered,
each one to his home, and you will leave me alone.
Yet I am not alone because the Father is with me.

Jesus' Prayer John 17:1-26

John 17:6-10

Father, I have made you known
to those whom you gave me from the world.
They were yours, and you gave them to me,
and they have kept your word.

Now they know that everything you have given me is from you;
for the words that you gave to me I have given to them,
and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you;
and they have believed that you sent me ...
All mine are yours, and yours are mine;
and I have been glorified in them.

- For future disciples John 17:20-21



‘I pray not only for these,
but for those also
who will believe in me through their word.
May they all be one.

As you, Father, are in me and I am in you,
may they also be in us,

John 17:26

Father, I made you known to them,
and will continue to make you known,
so that the love with which you have loved me may be in them,
and so that I may be in them.'

Friendship between Jesus and the Beloved Disciple

Scene 2. Calvary



John 19:25-27

Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were

his mother [compare Cana]

and his mother's sister [Salome (Mark 15:40), Zebedee's wife (Matthew 27:56)] ?

Mary the wife of Clopas [Joseph's brother; mother of James & Joseph (Mat 13:55)] ?

and Mary Magdalene.

When Jesus saw his mother
and the disciple whom he loved

standing beside her,

he said to his mother,

‘Woman, here is your son.’

Then he said to the disciple,

‘Here is your mother.’

And from that hour the disciple took her into his own.



John 19:28-30

After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfill the scripture),
“I am thirsty.”

A jar full of sour wine was standing there. So they put a sponge full of the wine on a branch of hyssop and held it to his mouth.

When Jesus had received the wine, he said, “It is finished.” Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.



John 19:34

‘One of the soldiers pierced Jesus’ side with a spear,
and at once blood and water came out.



Moses striking the Rock
(Numbers 20:11)



‘From the Heart of Jesus
pierced on Calvary,
I see a new world coming forth
– a great and life-giving world,
inspired by love and mercy:
a world which the Church
must perpetuate
on the whole earth.’

(Jules Chevalier *‘The Sacred Heart’*
1900)

The statements which the Beloved Disciple makes about Jesus come from what he saw and heard and from the experiences which he continued to have after Jesus' death. When he calls Jesus the 'Saviour of the world', for example, he is expressing something that he has come to realise through experience. After Jesus' death, he found that Samaritans and Jews who had experienced centuries of antipathy were coming together in love and finding meaning in the life of the Christian community. And not only Samaritans and Jews but Greeks and Romans and people from other nations as well. From experience the Beloved Disciple learned that Jesus' relevance was universal. He could say that Jesus is the one who takes away the sins of the world, because he saw it happening.

3. Contact with the Risen Jesus

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, **the one whom Jesus loved**, and said to them, “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.” Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb. The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, and the cloth that had been on Jesus’ head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and **he saw and believed**.

1. Disciples go fishing: ‘Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the **sons** of Zebedee, and **two others** of his disciples’ (John 21:2).
2. Miraculous catch: ‘**The disciple whom Jesus loved** said to Peter: “It is the Lord” (John 21:7).
3. Jesus said to Peter: “Follow me”. Peter turned and saw **the disciple whom Jesus loved** following them; he was the one who had reclined next to Jesus at the supper and had said, “Lord, who is it that is going to betray you?” When Peter saw him, he said to Jesus, “Lord, what about him?” Jesus said to him, “If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you? Follow me!” So the rumour spread in the community that this disciple would not die. Yet Jesus did not say to him that he would not die, but, “If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you?” (John 21:19-23).