



Believe

JOHN

MESSAGE

STUDY GUIDE

GROUP MATERIAL

SONGS

Examining the text & our hearts:

Bible Reading: John 20:1-10

“On the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark. She saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. ² So she went running to Simon Peter and to the other disciple, the one Jesus loved, & said to them, “They’ve taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don’t know where they’ve put him!” ³ At that, Peter and the other disciple went out, heading for the tomb. [\[1\]](#) The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and got to the tomb first. ⁵ Stooping down, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in. ⁶ Then, following him, Simon Peter also came. He entered the tomb and saw the linen cloths lying there. ⁷ The wrapping that had been on his head was not lying with the linen cloths but was folded up in a separate place by itself. [\[2\]](#) The other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, then also went in, saw, & believed. ⁹ For they did not yet understand the Scripture that he must rise from the dead. ¹⁰ Then the disciples returned to the place where they were staying.” (John 20:1-10 CSB)

SUMMARY:

In the 4th Gospel, Jesus’ first resurrection appearance is to Mary Magdalene; John, the ‘Beloved Disciple’ is the first to believe (without seeing). In stark contrast, Paul and Luke emphasize Peter as the primary resurrection eyewitness, while the Beloved Disciple is conspicuously absent from their accounts. Peter and Paul loomed large in the early church, shaping its direction. Yet, decades later, the 4th Gospel emerged as a counterpoint centered on John, the Beloved Disciple, challenging traditional perspectives.

John’s detailed ‘race to the tomb’ is purposeful, placing the Beloved Disciple on par with Peter, without diminishing the latter. Moreover, it shifts the focus from authoritative apostolic appearances to the believers’ saving faith in Jesus’ resurrection. John also elevates women’s roles, exemplified by

Mary Magdalene. In the 'race to the tomb,' Peter and John are representative figures, symbolizing contrasting paradigms for the church: one rooted in institutional hierarchy, the other in a more egalitarian familial structure.

This narrative has contemporary relevance. Just as the early church faced alternatives, modern congregations must choose between hierarchical rigidity and inclusive egalitarianism. The 'race to the tomb' serves as a poignant metaphor for these options: What kind of church do we aspire to be?

? "For the Johannine community [the cross] couldn't be the end of the story. [Through his denials] Peter failed... and *the Beloved Disciple emerged*..." –Francis Moloney

? The 'Beloved Disciple' is the 'other disciple'

- "Simon Peter & to *the other disciple, the one Jesus loved*" (20:2) This "is the first time that the Beloved Disciple
- [BD] is directly connected with... the anonymous '*other disciple*'/'*another disciple*.'" [E. Klink, *John*, p. 830]
- "John 20:2 uses two titles: 'the other disciple' & 'the one whom Jesus loved' [(BD), for the same disciple]. The first title may have been the way he was evaluated by other Christians; the 2nd title was the way he was known to those who preserved his memory in the Gospel of John." [Arthur E. Zannoni, *Jesus of the Gospels*, 174]

1. NT Accounts of Jesus' Resurrection Appearances

a. Paul Recites the 'Official Authoritative Account' (1 Cor. 15:3-8) 53-54 AD

- "I passed on to you as most important what I... received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, His "encounter with the risen Lord enabled Peter to become *the principal leader* in regathering the disciples & in the formation of *what was to become the Church*. The risen Jesus appeared to Simon & (re)constituted him to be the '*Rock*' on which the new Christian community is established." [M. E. Boring, *Intro. to NT*, p. 402]

a. Apostolic Authority & Resurrection Appearances

- "An appearance to the core disciples was essential to the tradition & of *the essence of their authority*, with Peter as the foundational witness...There's silence...concerning...Mary M." [James Atwell, *Reimagining... the Sources*,]
- "1 Cor. 15...shows that...*appearances were used to defend the authority of the apostles*... Paul defended his authority by arguing... [he] experience[d] ...an appearance of the risen Lord (1 Cor. 9)." [Culpepper, , p. 68]

b. Luke on the Empty Tomb & Appearances (Lk. 24:12, 24, 34) 64-70 AD

a. Peter's solo trip to the Tomb (Lk. 24:12)

- On hearing the women's report "Peter... got up & ran to the tomb. When he stooped to look in, he saw only the linen cloths. So he went away, amazed at what had happened." (Luke 24:12)
- He "leaves wondering... what had happened –which may somewhat lessen Peter's instance of disbelief but still *does not indicate belief*." [Kara Lyons-Pardue, *Gospel Women... Mark*, 95]
- "The older tradition [reflected in Luke 24:12] apparently held that Peter was the only one to enter the tomb ... Peter was in the original form of the story ...The introduction of the Beloved Disciple [BD in Jn. 20] inevitably created a contrast ...[Nevertheless,] the BD is placed in Peter's company and is not set over against him ... [The episode is] building to the climax of Jn. 20:8 [where the BD 'sees & believes']. " [Kevin Quast, *Peter & the BD*, 114-5]

b. Emmaus' Disciples hint Peter wasn't alone (24:24)

- The Emmaus disciples tell Jesus: "*Some of those who were with us went to the tomb* and found it just as the women had said, but they didn't see him." (Luke 24:24) [Note: "Some" implies more than one: Peter plus ?]
- "Luke 24:24... [is] a hint that Peter was not alone... Here... *the shadow of the 'other disciple' is seen*." [George Beasley-Murray, *John*, 368]
- "In [their] empty tomb narratives, *only John* (20:3-10) & *Luke* (24:12) have male disciples visiting the tomb... In the Emmaus [episode], it is told that '*some*' of the male disciples visited the tomb (24:24), so *Luke seems*

aware that Peter was not alone... The 'other disciple' is not mentioned [explicitly] at 24:12 but is *dimly suggested at 24:24* ...a typical Lukan compromise... [Luke's] story of Peter at the tomb...substantiates ...the (Pauline) tradition that Peter was the first to see the risen Lord." [Kari Syreeni, *Becoming John*, 42

c. Luke: Peter the first to see the risen Lord (Lk. 24:34)

- The Emmaus' Disciples "returned to Jerusalem & found the Eleven... who said, "*The Lord has truly been raised & has appeared to Simon [Peter]!*" (Luke 24:34)
- "Luke knew the *tradition* recorded by Paul that *Peter was the first* to see the risen Jesus and therefore [Luke] *wished to keep for Peter this first encounter* (Matson)." [Andrew F. Gregory, *Reception of Luke*, 65]

d. Luke emphasizes Jesus' appearances to eyewitnesses (not belief based on the empty tomb)

- "Peter's running to the tomb (Lk. 24:12) ...link[s] the empty tomb tradition to the appearance tradition... as a further demonstration of the *authority of Peter*. Not only was he *the first to see the risen Lord*; he was the *first apostle to get to [enter] the empty tomb*. Luke still maintains that it was *only the appearances*, not the discovery of the empty tomb, that *brought faith in the resurrection*." [R. Alan Culpepper, *John*, p. 68]

e. Luke omits the BD's belief & Mary Magdalene's Encounter

- a. "Luke omits both the other disciple ['BD'] (Jn. 20:3) and Mary's encounter with Jesus (Jn. 20:14ff). The former omission is explained on the ground that Luke has no interest in... the beloved disciple, & that [Luke] wishes to *emphasize not abstract belief based on an empty tomb but the witness of disciples who have seen the risen Lord.*" [Andrew F. Gregory, *cit.*, p. 65]
- b. "Luke (by contrast with John) has no interest in relaying the 'coming to faith' of the Beloved Disciple... on the basis of the sight of the [burial] linens (Jn. 20:8)." [Peter Carnley, *Resurrection in Retrospect*, p. 150]

c. John, the 'Beloved Disciple,' is Invisible in the Synoptics

- "The contexts where the BD appears in John are "recounted in detail by the Synoptic[s]...however, [they] *never seem to have seen ...this disciple*; for them *he's the invisible man*. [This] instance is no exception; Luke 24:12 tells us Peter 'arose & ran to the tomb... & went home wondering.' Luke gives no indication of the companion disciple who features so prominently in John. Yet Luke 24:24 may give us a key... '*Some of those who were with us went to the tomb & found it just as the women had said.*' ...Luke knows of several disciples going to the tomb ... yet... mentions only Peter because *the others aren't important as witnesses*. The [BD] may have been *invisible to the Synoptic[s]* ...*because he had no great name or rank*, whereas his presence was... memorable to others [with] ...a different criterion of greatness." [Raymond E. Brown, *Risen Christ in Eastertime*, p. 67]

d. Yet, John's Gospel places Peter in his shadow

- "Peter appears, even in John, to have been... [the 'first among equals'] among the disciples...Yet in several incidents the '*beloved disciple*'...*appears to overshadow him.*" [Jackman, *Word Became Flesh*, p. 294]
- "The '*beloved disciple*' appears only in the Gospel of John, almost always in the presence of Peter, & always in a role that places *Peter in the Beloved Disciple's shadow*." [Lamar Williamson, *Preaching ... John*, p. 246]
- "Peter clearly holds a position of authority amongst the disciples. However, *he is overshadowed* in the 2nd half of the [4th] Gospel *by the Beloved Disciple*...In the 4th Gospel there's a '*de-centering*' of Peter in favor of the Beloved Disciple...He's no longer the first disciple." [Cedric EW. Vine, *Audience of Matthew*, pp. 171-2]
- "The Beloved Disciple...discerns the significance of the empty tomb, something not said of Peter (20:8). Again, the *Beloved Disciple overshadows Peter*." [Warren Carter, *John: Storyteller, Interpreter...*, p. 77]
- "Barrett believes that John 20 intends to give the central place to the BD." [O'Collins, *Illuminating the NT*,]

2. John's Account of the Empty Tomb (Jn. 20:3-10) 90-95 AD

- On hearing Mary Magdalene's report: "At that, Peter & the other disciple went out, heading for the tomb. ⁴ The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter & got to the tomb first. ⁵ Stooping down, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in. ⁶ Then, following him, Simon Peter also came. He entered the tomb & saw the linen cloths lying there. ⁷ The wrapping that had been on his head was not lying with the linen cloths but was folded up in a separate place by itself. ⁸ The other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, then also went in, saw, & believed. ⁹ For they did not yet understand the Scripture that he must rise from the dead. ¹⁰ Then the disciples returned to the place where they were staying." (Jn. 20:3-10)

a. A. Peter's solo visit transformed into a 'Race to the Tomb'

- "The 4th Gospel transforms the...race of Peter to the tomb into a situation of *confrontation* with the BD. *Peter's solo visit to the tomb in Lk. 24:12 becomes in John a visit with 2 characters, Peter & the BD...* One theory proposes that the BD appears in... John as... the 'founder' of the Johannine Church ...The BD in Jn. 20:8 'saw & believed', while Peter simply viewed... the empty tomb. This symbolizes the difference between Peter & the BD, & validates ...this disciple for the Johannine Church as its founder." [Robert I. Letellier, *Johannine & Pauline Themes in NT*, 25]
- "*Peter & the BD not only race to the tomb but also race for priority of position. Who will be first? Peter is the first to enter the tomb, which the narrator accents by using his full name, 'Simon Peter,' instead of his shortened name. Prior to his discovery of the garments the narrator calls him 'Peter' twice (20:3-4), but at the moment of discovery he switches to the full name, perhaps to accentuate the discovery's importance. Peter enters & sees all the [tomb's] physical contents...including the head wrappings (20:6-7), whereas the Beloved Disciple saw only the linen wrappings from outside the tomb.*" [James L. Resseguie, *Narrative Criticism of the NT*, 143-4]

b. Key Points about the Beloved Disciple

a. Beloved Disciple 'Wins the Race to the Tomb' (20:4b, 8a)

- "The episode focuses on the distinction between the actions of Peter & the disciple Jesus loved. ...Both run to the tomb, but *twice* the Gospel specifies that *the other disciple outran Peter & arrived first* [20:4b, 8a] ... For the reader the repetition... places emphasis on the earlier arrival of the disciple Jesus loved. 'The point must be taken with the emphasis it is given' (Quast). [There] seems here a preview of the beginning of faith for the BD; the disciple who *arrived first also becomes the first to believe.*" [David Beck, *Discipleship Paradigm*, p. 125]

b. Was Peter simply older & slower?

- "The ancient explanation might still be the best: *the Beloved Disciple was simply younger than Peter*. This is not to deny, however, that some level of conflict or dissonance is in view." [Edward Klink, *John*, p. 830] [Q: But does the BD's relative youth provide a comprehensive explanation for his elaborate interaction/differences with Peter?]

c. The Beloved Disciple sees the garments' significance

- "*The Beloved Disciple is also first, although in another way. He outruns Peter & reaches the tomb first, he sees the linen wrappings first, while Peter... follows the BD (20:6). The BD is thus given priority in understanding the significance of the garments, & the overfull epithet appears to amplify his discovery 'Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, then also went in, saw, & believed' (20:8). Peter is the first to see all the contents of the tomb; the other disciple is the first to believe...* The BD is the ideal disciple who interprets what is seen." [James L. Resseguie, *Op. cit.*, p. 144]

d. Beloved Disciple uniquely Believed based on the Empty Tomb (20:8b)

- The Beloved Disciple "is the *only character in the NT who believes in the resurrection merely because of the physical evidence at the tomb.*" –R. Alan Culpepper
- "In John, the Beloved Disciple ...is also the first disciple to see the empty tomb & *the only one who believes as a result of what he sees there...The Beloved Disciple sees & believes. He is the only character in the NT who believes in the resurrection merely because of the physical evidence at the tomb.* Typically, Easter faith arises in response to an encounter with the risen Christ." [R. Alan Culpepper, *John*, p. 240]

e. Did he only believe Mary's Mistaken Report?

- Some "interpret ...'believed' in 20:8 as implying only that the Beloved Disciple *believed the report of Mary about the emptiness of the tomb* ([&] perhaps her explanation *that someone had taken the body away*) as true: [i.e.,] the Beloved Disciple does not yet exhibit full Christian ...faith... [since] he did not yet understand the Scriptures[20:10]. But *it is hard to take an absolute use of ['believe']*, especially in John's Gospel, *in such a weak form...*['Believe'] in 20:8 is surely taken... in its *more natural Johannine sense of a full response to... Jesus &/or God.*"[Christopher Tuckett, "Seeing & Believing in John 20," in J. Krans (ed.) *Paul, John, & Apocalyptic...*, pp. 177-8]

f. The Beloved Disciple: a model of one who "saw (the empty tomb) & believed" (20:8b)

- John's account ends with the BD "He saw & believed" (20:8). *Seeing & believing* is a common theme in the [end] of John ...& *is the key purpose behind the empty tomb account.*" [Stephen H. Smith, *Sense of Presence*, p. 222]
- "The Beloved Disciple's coming to belief would be exemplary for the reader of John, for he is able to believe without an understanding of the Scriptures & *even without an encounter* with the risen Jesus (see Jn. 20:29)." [Daniel A. Smith, *Revisiting the Empty Tomb*, p. 156]

- In 19:35 “*the BD* has already been presented as a *model of one who sees & believes* for future readers. [So.] this is *how the readers are to understand the BD’s ‘seeing & believing’ in Jn. 20:8*. The BD’s response to the empty tomb corresponds to Jn. 19:35 & makes him an ideal witness.” [Sunny K-H. Wang, *Sense Perception... in John*, p. 206]

g. His “belief” is genuine faith with “massive impact”

- “The BD... ‘saw & believed’; he saw not only the wrappings, but their significance: he ‘believed’! ...In [this] Gospel... ‘*believe when used absolutely, as here, means genuine faith*... That John writes, ‘*he saw, and believed*’ clearly *distinguishes the faith of the Beloved Disciple from the comprehension of Peter*.” [G. Beasley-Murray, *John*, 373]
- “The Gospel itself does not describe exactly ‘what’ the BD believed; however the majority of exegetes maintain that given the context it’s probable that *it was ‘full faith in the resurrection of Jesus’* (Schnackenburg; Brown; BeasleyMurray; Culpepper, etc.) [Anthony E. Sicienski, *Papacy & the Orthodox*, p. 86 #182]
- Some scholars question the Beloved Disciple’s faith; one says “The nature of his ‘belief’ in 20:8 is unclear, & even if it is resurrection faith, he does not testify & it *has no narrative impact*.” (Bennema).
- Response: “*No narrative impact? ...The BD is responsible for writing this Gospel, [so] his own coming to believe that Jesus has risen from the dead [is] part of the witness of the entire book itself (20:30-31). The narrative impact is massive!*” [DA Carson, “*Faith... w/o Evidence Superior?*” IH. Marshall (ed.) *Spirit & Christ in NT*, p. 109]

h. Beloved Disciple— The First to Believe Jesus’ Resurrection (prior to an appearance)

- “The passage brings out John’s emphasis on believing (20:8) & makes *the Beloved Disciple the exemplar of resurrection faith*.” [Edward Adams, *Parallel Lives of Jesus... 4 Gospels*, 186] “The BD, who has already seen what Peter sees by stooping down & looking in then enters. Characteristically, he ‘*saw & believed*’. He is the first to believe Jesus’ resurrection without seeing the risen Jesus, thus modelling the beatitude, ‘*Blessed are those who have not seen [me] & yet have come to believe*’... The BD knows what Peter does not know.” [WM. Swartley, *John*, p.]
- “There’s no doubt an intended connection between...the BD’s belief & Jesus’ words to Thomas in 20:29 [‘*Blessed are those who have not seen & yet believe*’]. Though the Beloved Disciple has *seen the empty tomb, he has not seen the resurrected Jesus* & in this way he is more like the later readers of the Gospel who will believe without seeing the resurrected Jesus... ‘The BD’s response here contrasts with that of Mary Magdalene earlier at the tomb & with that of Thomas later in his demand for physical proof ... The Beloved Disciple *believes on the basis of the empty tomb & without resurrection appearances*’ (Lincoln). The Beloved Disciple emerges as *an exemplar for genuine Johannine faith*.” [Christopher W. Skinner, *John & Thomas*, 130-1]

3. Peter & the Beloved Disciple—Compare & Contrast

- There’s a “*consistent & deliberate contrast between Peter & the Beloved Disciple*, the hero of the Johannine community.” —Raymond Brown

a. The BD: “he believed”; Peter did not (at that time)

- “The point is that [the 2 figures] respond differently to what they see in the tomb. *The BD believed, & nothing in the text shows that Peter believed* [at that time] ... The added... comment that ‘as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that he would rise...’ (20:9) explains Simon Peter’s failure to understand...The Beloved Disciple...needed no such help.” [Arthur E. Zannoni, *cit.*, p. 174]
- “Only one of these 2 disciples is...portrayed [as] coming to believe, the disciple Jesus loved. His is faith without the prerequisite of a visible sign...The *significance of the empty tomb* is not what is seen, but *what is absent*... 20:29[the blessing is on those] ‘not seeing Jesus and yet believing’.” [David R. Beck, *Discipleship Paradigm*, pp. 116-7]
- “The narrator reports only that the Beloved Disciple believes. This does not suggest [establish?] Peter’s failure to believe, but only the narrator’s desire that the *reader know explicitly that the Beloved Disciple responds properly* to the empty tomb... ‘The reader is meant to assume that the Beloved Disciple is the first to believe that Jesus has been raised & that *he demonstrates immediate & exemplary faith* in contrast to Peter ...The Beloved Disciple believes on the basis of the empty tomb & without resurrection appearances’ (Lincoln).” [Christopher Skinner, *cit.*, p. 130]
- “Although [the BD] did not enter [the tomb] until after Peter, when he did ‘*he saw and believed*’ (20:8). This is significant, for that would mean that for the Evangelist *the BD is ‘the first one to have come to resurrection faith*,’ which stands *in stark contrast to ‘the implication of 1 Cor. 15:5 & Luke 24:34 that Peter was the first* of the major companions of Jesus *to have seen the risen Lord*’ (Brown, *et. al.*).” [Anthony E. Sicienski, *Papacy & Orthodox*, p. 86] {“The Gospel itself does not describe exactly ‘what’ the BD ‘believed,’ however the majority of exegetes maintain that given the context it’s probable that it

was *'full faith in the resurrection of Jesus'* (Brown; Schnackenburg; Beasley-Murray; Culpepper, etc.) [Anthony E. Sicienski, *Op. cit.*, 86 #182]

b. The Beloved Disciple elevated alongside Peter, without diminishing him

- "Some regard this as a 'race' reflecting a Johannine-Petrine conflict ... There's not enough... evidence [for] this conclusion. [Yet] there's clearly *a contrast meant to elevate the Beloved Disciple* over Peter... The report of... running to the tomb isn't driven by anti-Petrine polemic, but rather by *a desire to elevate the figure of the Beloved Disciple.*" [Christopher Skinner, *John & Thomas*, p. 130]
- "The *Beloved Disciple* has a unique position alongside that of Peter, and in some respects he stays ahead of him, but *without* in any way *diminishing Peter's special place among the disciples.*" [Herman Ridderbos, *John*, 632]
- The 4th Gospel "may *not be... favoring one figure over the other...* Both figures are depicted positively, primarily *for the benefit of the Beloved Disciple.* The prestige of Peter serves to strengthen that of the Beloved Disciple. Perhaps, *the 'other disciple' is meant to be... 'up-valued.'*" [Kevin Quast, *Peter & the BD*, 114]
- "There's no attempt to denigrate Peter, rather, the emphasis falls on the fact that the Beloved Disciple It's *not* so much *that the importance of Peter is played down*; rather the attempt is to elevate the importance of the Beloved Disciple... The readership identifies *with* the Beloved Disciple but not *against* Peter." [David J Hawkin, "Function of the BD motif..." *Laval théologique et philosophique*, V. 33(2), p. 149]

4. Peter & the Beloved Disciple as Representative Figures

a. Historical, but also Representative Figures

- "The Beloved Disciple was no less a real human being than was Simon Peter, but the 4th Gospel uses each of them in a *paradigmatic*" [Raymond Brown, *Op. cit.*, p. 83]
- The "consistent characterization of Peter in relation to the Beloved Disciple appears to point ... to their function as *representative figures* for readers of John's Gospel... [In that case, they] would be vested with a message transcending their historical significance... It appears... John probably wanted to convey a particular understanding of the relationship between Peter & the Beloved Disciple... [But,] what kind of relationship? ... one of rivalry, differentiated roles, or as essentially unrelated[?] ... The 4th evangelist conceived of the BD, as of Peter, as a historical figure... *In the Passion narrative [Jn. 20:1-11], where both figures function side-by-side, it is difficult to imagine... the BD as an ideal [fictional?] figure alongside Peter, a historical figure. At the same time, John appears to invest these 2 figures also with representative roles.*" [A.J. Kostenberger, *Theology of John*, 492-4]
- "It is now generally agreed that the Beloved Disciple was a real historical person who has representative, paradigmatic, or symbolic significance in John." [R. Alan Culpepper, *Anatomy of the 4th Gospel*, p. 121]

b. Not rivalry, but the BD's equal elevation

- "If the [rival] figures [Peter & the Beloved Disciple] are... understood symbolically difficulties ... are encountered [since] the narrative is constructed... [so] that *each can claim precedence over the other.* However, the symbolism may *not be... favoring one figure over the other...* Both figures are depicted positively, primarily *for the benefit of the Beloved Disciple.* The prestige of Peter serves to strengthen that of the Beloved Disciple... Perhaps, *the 'other disciple' is meant to be... 'up-valued.'*" [Kevin Quast, *Op. cit.*, p. 114]

c. Symbols of John's & Peter's Communities

a. Historical and Representative Figures

- "We may best understand this complex portrayal of Peter in two ways. [1.] First, the author of John is certainly dealing with *traditions about the historical disciples*, & [2.] second, we must take into account the likely complex *relationship between the Johannine community & other... 'Petrine' Christians* of the day. One obvious desire of John is to elevate the authority of the Beloved Disciple over the supposed authority of Peter. No final break is envisioned... The *Johannine Christians identify with the Beloved Disciple*, Lazarus, the blind man [Jn. 9], the Samaritan woman, Martha, Nathaniel – the 'new' characters [in the 4th Gospel]. They obviously reject Nicodemus, Judas, & the unbelieving Jews." [Jeffrey A. Trumbower, *Born from Above... John*, p. 133]

b. The 'Official Account' emphasizes Peter/Paul & neglects John's Community & Women Disciples

- "*How can we explain that Mary Magdalene is missing from the names [in] 1 Cor. 15:5-8?* Bovon believes that the list provided by Paul represents a compromise between the Judeo-Christianity of Jerusalem (represented

by Peter & James) & Hellenistic Christianity (represented by Paul...) This compromise was made *at the expense of other such groups as the Johannine church...* To include Mary Magdalene would detract from *Peter & Paul, whom the early church was emphasizing.* [Gerald O'Collins, *Illuminating the NT*, p.]

c. The 4th Gospel Recognizes another type of Discipleship/Church

- "The *Johannine community secured its own position by placing the Beloved Disciple alongside Simon Peter ...* John 21 is not an attack on the pastoral authority of Peter; it is a *demand for the recognition of another type of discipleship, just as authentic as that of the original apostles.*" [RE. Brown, *Op. cit.*, p. 83]

d. Johannine Church vs. Petrine/Apostolic Church

- "In counterposing their hero [the BD] against the most famous member of the Twelve [Peter], the Johannine community is *symbolically counterposing itself over against the kinds of churches that venerate Peter and the Twelve...* the 'Great Church' ...The Johannine Christians represented by the BD clearly regarded themselves as closer to Jesus & more perceptive than the Christians of the *Apostolic Churches.*" [RE. Brown, *cit.*, pp. 83-84]
- "Johannine Christianity [represents] a degree of *reaction against Petrine ecclesiology [Peter's Church]* which was probably moving in the direction indicated by the Pastorals [Tim., Titus] & Ignatius... John... declin[es]... to refer to the disciples as 'apostles' (neither in John's Gospel nor...Epistles), his surprising neglect [of]... explicit description of Jesus' baptism or the institution of the Lord's Supper ['sacraments']... all confirm that *Johannine Christianity was marking out a distinctive path* within... later 1st-century Christianity." [James Dunn, *Op. cit.*, pp. 763-4]

e. Peter represents the Universal Church; the Beloved Disciple the local church

- "The 4th Gospel ...retains ...the prominence of Peter in early Christianity ... Peter is representative of the [Universal Church] i.e., *Peter represents the whole Church, while the BD is representative of the local Johannine [local church]* ... What's the significance ...in this [episode]? ... *The Johannine [local church] (the BD) has an equal claim to that of the [universal Church]* (Peter). ... *There's no attempt to denigrate Peter*; rather, the emphasis falls on the fact that the BD believed. It's *not* so much that the importance of *Peter is played down*; rather the attempt is to *elevate the importance of the BD*... The readership identifies *with* the BD but not *against* Peter... [This episode is *an effort*] to *legitimize* the theology of *the Johannine community.*" [David J Hawkin, *Op. cit.*, pp. 146, 149]

f. Tensions "between West & East in Earliest Christianity?" —James H. Charlesworth

- "Throughout the Gospel of John, there's a noticeable tension between the Beloved Disciple & Peter... *By the end of the 1st-century... Peter would represent to many 'Christians' the church in Rome. John is ...situated in the East...* Is it conceivable that John reflects some... *rivalry between West & East in earliest Christianity?* ... The Beloved Disciple is contrasted with Peter as a real historical person who is also accorded *powerful symbolic meaning.*" [James H. Charlesworth, *Jesus as Mirrored in John*, p. 65]
- "The *apostle Peter...* by the time [John's] Gospel was written had come into pastoral prominence shepherding the church & *probably giving Rome its initial claim to ecclesiastical authority.* But the [BD] takes precedence over Peter in the 4th Gospel. This may be driven by a *tension between the Johannine churches & the Great Church centered at Rome...*[when] this Gospel was written. ...[It] was likely written after Peter's death, & may have been a means of transferring his ecclesiastical authority to the BD." [Karen H. Jobes, *John Through OT Eyes*, p. 312]

5. John's Gospel Legitimizes an Alternative 'way of doing church'

a. The Alternatives

- "Whereas the Synoptic[s]...emphasize ...formalized sacrament[s]... the leadership of 12 male disciples ... the Johannine rendering emphasizes ...the leadership of the King [Jesus] ...informal ecclesial presentations, the leadership of women & non-members of the Twelve... John's less formal ecclesiology, [&] positive presentation of women in leadership ...may be closer to the ministry of Jesus...than [the] Synoptics." — Paul N. Anderson
- John's "presentation of Jesus offers *an alternative to the presentation of Jesus' will for the church in Mt. 16:17-19.* Confessions in John are made by women, not be members of the Twelve (Nathaniel & Martha) ... images for the church are more fluid & dynamic: sheep & shepherd, vine & branches; the *apostolic commission extends to multiple followers, not to Peter [alone]*, and Peter affirms Jesus' authority rather than having his authority ... affirmed by Jesus. Put sharply, *Peter returns the keys to Jesus, according to Jn. 6:68-69, where they belong all along...* John's presentation of Jesus & his will for the church puts forward a *more primitive ecclesial [church] vision of leadership & organization*, despite being... last among the Gospels." [Paul N. Anderson, "Why...John is Fundamental to Jesus Research," in Charlesworth (ed.) *Jesus Research: ...John in Historical Inquiry*, pp.]

- “Peter, Paul & James... all died in the 60s AD; and in subsequent decades the [apostolic] churches ... solved the teaching gap... by stressing the officials who succeeded the apostles should [teach] what they were taught *without change*. But the 4th Gospel...stresses that the teacher is the Paraclete who remains forever ...& is the guide to all ” [Raymond E. Brown, “*Other Sheep Not of this Fold*,” in HW. Attridge (ed.) *Presidential Voices*, p. 203]

b. The Institutional vs. Family Model of Church

- In John 6... John responds to the Petrine tradition. The references to authority in Matthew and John are particularly telling; ‘It is clear that *in John it is not Jesus who gives authority to Peter* (& those who follow in his wake), but *it is Peter who affirms the sole authority of Jesus*’. Moreover, it is not just Peter who is given authority, ‘All who believe are given the authority (*exousian*) to become children of God’ (1:12) and *all disciples are given the authority to forgive sins* (20:23). *The understanding of the church is... sharply different in the two traditions: ‘[Jesus’ entrusting] the keys to the kingdom of the Heavens to Peter in the archetype of an institutional model of church government, while [entrusting] the mother of Jesus to the Beloved Disciple is the archetype of a familial model.’* The currency of *hierarchy* is power, while the currency of an *egalitarian* community is love.” [R. Alan Culpepper (quoting Paul N. Anderson), *Designs for the Church*, p. 583][1] that he was buried, that he was raised on the 3rd day...⁵ & that *he appeared to Cephas [Peter]*, then to the Twelve⁶ Then he appeared to over 500 brothers & sisters...⁷ Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles.[2] Last of all... he also appeared to me...” (1 Cor. 15:3-8) [Note: Peter is first in the sequence ‘then, ...then’] “Paul’s list noticeably varies from the Gospel accounts— *it lacks an appearance to Mary Magdalene, includes the appearance to Peter* (also referenced in Lk 24:34), and includes two previously unrecorded stories about Jesus appearing to a large crowd & individually to James. {Many scholars argue that Mary was not included in the ‘official’ list of witnesses because she was a woman and, per Jewish society, held no status as a disciple... Luz adds, ‘Appearance to a woman contradicts the *dominant trend in the institution of the church to give the honor of first appearance to Peter and the apostles.*’ Grosheide contends that ‘the appearance to *Peter was more important because Peter was the first apostolic witness.*’}” [Charles E. Neff, *In a Different Form*, p. 18 & #61]