

Item #80 (More on John's Role in Identifying Jesus)

In Item #1, Chapter 1, I set forth my interpretation of the identity of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel (He is primarily being interpreted as divine) and the role of the author of the Fourth Gospel in establishing this identity (the author of the Fourth Gospel is John the Apostle, but in the Fourth Gospel he does not function as an Apostle but as one designated by Jesus on the cross to have the additional role of identifying Him as divine). In the present Item I wish to point out some indications in the New Testament of how this function of John is honored. My principal argument in favor of this identity depends on interpreting John's ability to understand the contents of the empty tomb in contrast to Peter's inability as theological and not anecdotal, and this ability in turn depends on John's special relation to the Mother of Jesus given to John under the cross by Jesus (see Chapter 3 of Item #1).

In John 18,15 "the other disciple" at the denial by Peter is contrasted with Peter to show that John had nothing to do with Peter's denial even though he was an Apostle under the leadership of Peter.

The other pairings of Peter and John in John's Gospel have been discussed in Item #1, Chapter 3.

Luke is the other New Testament author where Peter and John are paired. In Luke 22,8 Jesus assigns Peter and John to prepare the Passover for Jesus and His disciples. This seems to be a way of saying that the institution of the Eucharist will involve Jesus both as human and divine.

In Acts 3,1 Peter and John are presented together as going up to the Temple to pray. In Acts 3,15 Peter is then presented as alluding to the resurrection from the dead of "the Author of life", alluding to both the humanity of Jesus and His divinity, thus showing that John had succeeded in communicating to him the divinity of Jesus, thus fulfilling his role as indicated in John 20,30-31.

In Acts 8,14 the Apostles are presented as sending both Peter and John to Samaria in order to bring the first non-Jews into the Church. It would seem that these two were selected in order to witness in a public way to the complete identity of Jesus, as both human and divine, as the Samaritans received the Holy Spirit in addition to their baptism. Baptism would seem to be conceived as a reception of the Spirit in an invisible way, while the reception of the Holy Spirit at the hands of Peter and John would seem to represent the reception of the Spirit in a visible way, corresponding to the sacrament of Confirmation. This matches the giving of John to the mother of Jesus as a son by Jesus Himself on the cross: John is sharing in his sonship. (On the cross Jesus as divine "hands on the Spirit" to His Mother, thus making her the Church as the source of the granting of the Spirit.) The incident in Acts 8,14 explains why the pairing of Peter and John occurs in Luke's Gospel and not in Matthew and Mark: Luke is a Gospel written for non-Jews, so it is understandable that the pairing of John and Peter occurs there. The non-Jews have no previous beliefs in a Scripture to build on, as do the Jewish recipients for whom the Gospels of Matthew and Mark were written. Thus the Mother of Jesus is presented as "Daughter of Sion" in John's Gospel at the wedding feast at Cana, the preparation for her being made Church as source of the Spirit by her Son as she stood under the cross. But a knowledge of the Jewish antecedents of the Gospel of John is needed to understand this, a knowledge not shared by non-Jews.

All of the above, of course, is written as what seems to be a plausible explanation of the pairing of Peter and John in the New Testament.