

21) When Jesus had said these things, He was troubled in spirit, and testified and said, "most assuredly, I say to you, one of you will betray Me." 22) Then the disciples looked at one another, perplexed about whom He spoke. 23) Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved. 24) Simon Peter therefore motioned to him to ask of whom He spoke. 25) Then, leaning back on Jesus' breast, he said to Him, "Lord, who is it?" 26) Jesus answered, "It is he to whom I shall give a piece of bread when I have dipped it." And having dipped the bread, He gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon.

INTRO: Continuing series of little known or unnamed Passion participants; Ash Wed. owner of Upper Room; detective work again. Set scene back in Upper Room: low table, bean bag chairs, recline on left elbow; before instituting Communion; Jesus troubled; announcement; questioning; Peter motioned to disciple 'leaning in Jesus' breast' 'whom Jesus loved'. I'm curious...

I. IDENTIFYING THE LEANING DISCIPLE

A. Had to be one of 'the twelve'

1. Matthew says The Twelve at Passover (not open communion)
2. v.26 "What you do, do quickly" ergo not communing known impenitent
3. of Twelve, hence his name is in the Gospels
4. not Peter, who asks the leaner to ask Jesus
5. not Judas, to whom Jesus gave dipped bread (10 names left)

B. Also called disciple 'whom Jesus loved'

1. term occurs only in John's gospel; but several times
2. e.g. 19:26 re: to Mary, woman behold thy son...
3. and 20:2 re: one who ran ahead of Peter to tomb (younger, faster?)
4. and 21:20 among 7 who met Jesus for fishing after Resurrection ('sons of Zebedee' named as of these seven)
5. 'loved' disciple may have been invited to Transfiguration, Gethsemane
6. we've eliminated Peter, leaving us James and John, sons of Zebedee

C. Conclusive cross reference is John 21:20-24 (Galilee, morning fishing)

20) Then Peter, turning around, saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following, who also had leaned on His breast at the supper, and said, "Lord, who is the one who betrays You?" 21) Peter, seeing him, said to Jesus, "But Lord, what about this man?" 22) Jesus said to him, "If I will that he remain until I come, what is that to you?" You follow Me." 23) Then the saying

went out among the brethren that this disciple would not die. Yet Jesus did not say to him that he would not die, but "If I will that he remain until I come, what is that to you." 24)

This is the disciple who testifies of these things, and wrote these things, and we know that his testimony is true.

1. nota bene v.24 – this is the disciple who testifies...wrote these things
2. v.23 'would not die' tradition of John's long life, pastorate at Ephesus
3. only one not martyred; although exiled on Patmos

D. So, why didn't John use his own name?

1. totally in character with his nature, personality
2. loving, humble; not self-promoting
3. didn't write his own name if relating something good he'd done (e.g. gate of Caiaphas' palace episode with Peter)
4. even though John was well-known

II. THE LOVE BETWEEN JESUS AND JOHN

A. One of Jesus' inner circle of three (I.B.5 above)

1. Peter was the outspoken dominant one
2. James, son of Zebedee, was killed by Herod at Jerusalem (Acts 12:2)
3. Jesus loves whole world; but maybe closest human affection is John

B. Even Peter goes through John with a question; more likely to answer?

1. when was Peter ever reluctant to speak, ask!
2. why was John closest to Jesus at the Supper?
3. inconclusive that Jesus confided in John more than the rest

C. John chosen by Jesus to care for Mary (John 19:26-27)

1. Jesus had 'brothers and sisters' (Matt. 13:55)
2. who didn't believe in Him (John 7:5)
3. only John's Gospel records "woman behold thy son"
4. of seven words, only one to a disciple
5. great honor, suggesting closeness; maybe also youngest

D. Remained close, even after Ascension

1. 21:23 long life mentioned
2. tradition says only one not martyred (I.C.3 above)

3. granted special glimpse of heaven, per book of Revelation
4. authored five NT books: gospel, 3 epistles, Revelation; all w/love theme

III. LIVING **OUR** LIVES IN LOVE

A. With John as our teacher

1. J.A.O. Preus on tradition of John's last sermons at Ephesus
2. John's emphasis on **agapay** love (phileo, eros)
3. John 3:16 God **so** loved the world that He **gave**...
4. 15:13 Greater love hath no man that He lay down his life...
5. dominant theme of John's epistles, also
6. uses term so much, he's called the disciple of love
7. but only Christ's love is perfect; for everyone; even John
8. maybe John just realized it better than most
9. hence the simple designation for himself

B. Christ **also** first loved us

1. God **is** love (1 John 4:8) (not 'loving' 'lovely') love personified; perfect Giver
2. and each of us is loved no less than John
3. 1 John 3:16 by this we know love, that He laid down His life for us
4. occasion for this text was **first** Supper; taste, smell, feel His love
5. Jesus so loved, He even warned Judas, who was tempted by money
6. as we as any of us tempted by that, or any other sin
7. e.g. 1 John 3:17 'share with the needy'
8. God provides occasions for us to test our love; how's it going
9. maybe prompting a confession of sin?
10. love received and understood is able to love in return

CONCLUSION: Love makes the closest relationships, regardless if the persons are at the same table, or living in different towns, or separated by an ocean and military obligation, or in different **worlds** separated by death. Through the sacrifice of the Son of God on Calvary, we know the love of God for us. John, whom Jesus also loves, shows us the true, two-way meaning of love. Amen.