PERSPECTIVES ON JOHANNINE DISCIPLESHIP ACCORDING TO THE FAREWELL DISCOURSES

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\[\text{ἐν τούτῳ γνωσόμεθα πάντες διὶ ἡμῶν μαθηταὶ ἐστε, ἐὰν ἀγάπην ἔχετε ἐν ἀλλήλοις. John 13:35}\]

ABSTRACT
A thorough understanding of Johannine discipleship goes hand in hand with perspectives on the Johannine community as well as the narratological function of the Farewell Discourses. To elaborate on these perspectives compels the exegete to obtain relief information on discipleship from extra-textual data. The distinctive character of a Johannine disciple, from the viewpoint of terminology, is determined by belief, knowledge and love, to name but a few.

Within a sociological framework the Johannine community is finding its identity through a view on discipleship, implemented by the 'new' commandment and the Paraclete as manifested in the beloved disciple. The Johannine narrative contributes to this sense of identification by telling the story from a retrospective ideological view of transparency, concentrating on two lines, the Jesus-ministry and the disciple-ministry. The result is identification between reader and discipleship which leads to definite self-definition of discipleship as the appropriation of realised eschatological salvation.

1 INTRODUCTION
The meaning and message of Johannine discipleship as depicted in the Farewell Discourses not only open up useful information concerning Johannine ecclesiology and eschatology but also serve as source of inspiration to contemporary believers. The subject is academically relevant and of current interest because of its applicability to church life. In this respect, Raymond Brown stated in his presidential address to the Society for Biblical Literature in 1977 that μαθητής is the title par excellence in the Fourth Gospel because it is the primary Christian category (quoted by Pazdan 1982:1). And the same can be said about the Farewell Discourses: 'Die Abschiedsreden sind ein Schlüsseltext für die Beurteilung der literarischen Struktur und der theologischen Intention des 4.Evangeliums' (Schnelle 1989:64).

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A study of this kind can be approached from different angles. In turn the conclusions depend heavily on the different perspectives from which the questions are being asked. Therefore, the emphasis will be laid on an analysis of a selection of textual information from 13:31-16:33, compared with extratextual material insofar as it is able to throw light on Johannine discipleship; the function and meaning of discipleship within the Johannine community; a narratological perspective on discipleship in the Farewell Discourses in the broader framework of the Johannine plot and story, as well as within the Johannine eschatological perspective. The issue of the 'beloved disciple' will not be discussed separately.

The purpose of this investigation is to shed new exegetical light on the function of Johannine discipleship within the community, integrated with a narratological approach.

2 THE STATUS QAESTIONIS

The question concerning the essence of Johannine discipleship has captivated exegetes for centuries. To start somewhere, indicating some trends in the research, is challenging. In a general study on discipleship E Bosworth (1900:112-118) found that the magnetism of Jesus' personality was the basis of his relationship to the disciples (cf also Scholtz 1904:956-973).

In the fifties, E Schweizer focused on Johannine discipleship in its post-resurrection development (cf 1955, transl 1970:77-92). Discipleship was extended to those who were guided by the exalted One after Easter. Discipleship is defined as a real sharing in the life and destiny of Jesus and a service of witness (cf also Bornkamm 1956:144). Similarly of interest is the work of Bornkamm who found indications in the farewell discourses of the church's experience as reflected in the distress and hope of the disciples before Jesus' death and resurrection (1956:152).

Kraft also examined discipleship according to the Farewell Discourses (cf 1956:18-32). Peter, for example, understood discipleship as a heroic commitment and could therefore not comprehend the necessity of accepting suffering and death as symbolised by the footwashing. He was unable to be the disciple of a suffering leader (1956:25). According to Kraft, Peter represented Jewish Christianity and the beloved disciple gentile Christianity as reflected in the empty tomb story (1956:26).

For Schultz discipleship means that the μαθητής of the historical Jesus had become the disciple of the exalted Lord, a member of the Christian community (cf 1962:137-141). The typical characteristic of a Johannine disciple was faith in the Messiaship of Jesus and his sonship. For the outsider discipleship became visible in the mutual love of the community. Johannine following Jesus means a withdrawal from the world to experience community with Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit according to the farewell discourses.
Rigaux came with a fresh approach. He suggested that the *Sitz im Leben* of John 17 was the disciples, a group of friends who believed in Jesus and who knew Him. They experienced persecution and wanted to be renewed and strengthened by the Lord’s work (1970:212; cf Pazdan 1982:23). Rigaux took the social context of the Johannine church seriously. The disciples’ relationship with Jesus, based on ‘holiness’, ‘glory’, ‘unity’ and ‘perfection’, to use Rigaux’s concepts, also constituted their everyday life in the *Sitz im Leben Kirche* (1970:213; cf also Hahn 1974:172-190 and Vellanickal 1980:131-147). Culpepper built further on this foundation and refined the Johannine school hypothesis. The community as a fellowship of disciples engaged in learning, obeying, remembering and studying the traditions about Jesus (1975:272). The selfunderstanding of the fellowship of disciples as a unity suggested a new way of interpreting the concept of discipleship in the Johannine writings.

For Schnackenburg the disciples are representatives of the believers whom Jesus gained through his words and works. They were not representing an ideal image of a future community but they pointed out the threats and false attitudes which hinder a genuine faith (1975:235). They were a community of believers. The term μαθητής applied to the Christian readers of the Gospel. Discipleship was not an external following of Jesus but should be seen under the main characteristic, namely the mutual love of one another (cf 1975:236). The shift of emphasis concerning the disciples, from being primarily his first followers to the ultimate designation of all later believers, is best seen in the Farewell Discourses. This was the result of theological reflection and deliberate application. In such a way later believers are included in Johannine discipleship (1975:237).

Jiménez (1971) and Pazdan (1982) have attracted exegetical attraction with major contributions on μαθητής and the Fourth Gospel. Jiménez concentrated on 8:31; 13:35 and 15:1-12 and came to the conclusion that discipleship was not an office or profession but a grace of salvation consisting of the communication of life with Jesus (1971:288; cf Pazdan 1982:39). The primary relationship of the disciples to Jesus is faith and to follow in love (1971:308). Jiménez’s final conclusion was that ideal discipleship rests on a trinitarian formulation (1971:310). Pazdan focused on belief as the basis for discipleship as well as on the mutuality of relationships as the heart of discipleship (1982:87, 156) and came to the conclusion that discipleship stands in a relation to Johannine christology and eschatology.

Much valuable research, although methodologically divergent, has been done so far. But the function of discipleship in the Johannine narrative as well as the social significance of discipleship in the Johannine community still remain in the background. The reason for this could be that the theological focus has been dominantly christological. Further, interest in the Johannine community has determined the ecclesiological investigations. An integrated picture of Johannine
discipleship with a focus on the Farewell Discourses is needed in which the text, Johannine community and Gospel narrative are discounted included.

3 SOME TEXTUAL AND EXTRA-TEXTUAL PERSPECTIVES

The term textual is used in the sense of the text of the Gospel of John with special attention to the Farewell Discourses (13:1-17:26) and more specifically 13:31-14:31 as the demarcated first Farewell Discourse (cf Painter 1981:525-543). The term extra-textual, according to this usage, refers to certain selected socio-historical and cultural aspects from contemporary writings concerning discipleship. The textual and extra-textual glimpses are discussed very briefly, merely for the sake of a broader perspective of thought, against which Johannine discipleship in the Farewell Discourses is to be understood.

3.1 Extra-textual relief

3.1.1 A parallel from the Greek world
Socrates' belief in the immortality of the soul affected his concept of education. Since the soul had experienced many things in this world it had acquired knowledge (μεταθετηκέν) of all things (Plato: Menexenus: 81c; cf Ray 1983:30). Therefore, Socrates saw himself as teacher, assisting people in recollecting what they already had learned rather than imparting information. Socrates as διδάσκαλος worked with men (μαθηταὶ) whose souls were in labour wrestling with unborn ideas although he preferred not to use these titles unlike the Sophists (cf Plato: Apology 33a). As time passed μαθηταὶ became the standard Greek title to show one's association with a particular teacher and school, such as the Pythagoreans, Epicureans, as well as the Platonic Academy (cf Rengstorf 1965:422). The master's teaching must be preserved by the μαθηταὶ.

3.1.2 The Old Testament
Explicit terminology of discipleship is noticeably absent from the Old Testament. Possible comparisons may be found in the relationship between Moses and Joshua as well as between Elijah and Elisha. The relationship between Elisha and the sons of the prophets (2 Kings) may also reflect some kind of 'discipleship'. The sons of the prophets asked Elisha's approval to expand their living quarters (2 Kings 6:1-7). They sought his leadership. Such a relationship may have been either formal or deferential. The absence of 'real discipleship' in the New Testament sense of the word μαθητής is unusual, considering the Old Testament emphasis on teaching within the framework of the religious thought of the Old Testament (cf Rengstorf 1965:427).
3.1.3 The Rabbinic and Synoptic framework

According to Rabbinic tradition, Israel was elected by God to study the pre-existent Torah. The learner of the Torah as well as the oral tradition in the Mishna, Midrash, Halakah and Haggadah was called *talmid* (תلمיד), the equivalent of disciple. Some *talmidim* were beginners and others advanced, capable of making independent decisions. Being a *talmid* was the first step in becoming a rabbi (cf Ray 1983:52). The ideal situation would be for the whole people of Israel to be *talmidim*. Until that ideal was reached the rabbi was indispensable.

Rabbinic 'discipleship' (*talmid*) was dependent on Greek influence (cf Rengstorff 1965:438). It probably came into Judaism from the educative process of the Greek and Hellenistic philosophical schools.

3.1.4 The Synoptic Gospels

Two expressions concerning discipleship are of particular interest according to the Synoptic Gospels: 'disciples of the Pharisees' (cf Mk 2:18; Lk 5:33; Mt 22:16) and 'disciples of John' (the Baptist) (cf Mt 11:2-19; Lk 7:18-35). The 'disciples of the Pharisees' were probably followers of the Pharisaic ideals and practice because the Pharisees were themselves disciples of the Scribes (cf Lane 1974:108). Therefore, it seems best to accept this designation as non-technical. If the technical use of *μαθητὴς* were meant, one would expect a phrase like 'disciples of the Scribes' because only those Pharisees who were also Scribes were teachers (Ray 1983:57). According to Luke, John the Baptist could have been involved in the discipling process because Jesus' own disciples requested Him to instruct them about prayer like the Baptist had instructed his disciples (11:1).

3.2 *Μαθητής* AND RELATED TERMS IN JOHN

3.2.1 *Μαθητής* is the most common word used to refer to a disciple in the Gospel of John. The absence of the title *ἀπόστολος* in a technical sense (only in 13:16 as an idiom) is interesting. John did not include a listing of 'the twelve' as did the Synoptics. And this could be seen as an attempt to elevate discipleship in general to the level of apostleship in order to maintain the independence of the Johannine tradition (cf Ray 1983:61).

*Mαθητής*: Reference is made of the disciples of John (the Baptist) on three occasions (1:35-37; 3:35; 4:1). The use of *μαθηταί* here suggests a parallel ministry between Jesus and John the Baptist that is not found in the Synoptics. And this could be seen as an attempt to elevate discipleship in general to the level of apostleship in order to maintain the independence of the Johannine tradition (cf Ray 1983:61).

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On occasions μαθητής is used to refer to a marginal disciple. In 6:60-66 the 'disciples' became discouraged and disillusioned with the commitment to Jesus and left Him. The most common usage of μαθητής in John is to refer to persons who followed Jesus in general as indication of the success of his ministry (cf 4:1). In 6:3-5 the μαθητής belonged to such a larger group (cf 18:10:131) while the δώδεκα (twelve) were the selected group.

3.2.2 The term διδάκτας (brother) is used almost always of a blood relative in the Gospel of John (cf 1:40,41; 6:8; 11:2,19,21,23,32). But in 20:17 Jesus told Mary to go to his brothers in the meaning of disciples (cf 21:23). Such a spiritualised meaning could be derived from Jewish religious customs where 'brother' was often used to describe a 'co-religionist' or compatriot (cf Von Soden I:144).

3.2.3 In 12:36 the term ἴδιος (son) is used figuratively to denote discipleship in the wider sense. Culpepper argued that in the Johannine writings τέκτων and τεκνίον are used in a technical sense as pupils in a school (1977:301). In 13:33-35 the term τεκτών, particularly in combination with ζητέω as a technical word for the study of Scripture, can be understood in the sense of discipleship.

3.2.4 The title φίλος (friend) is used six times in the Gospel (cf Stählin 1965:147). Our attention focuses particularly on the three occurrences in chapter 15:13-15. The disciples are friends (φίλοι) of Jesus rather than slaves because He had revealed to them what He had heard from his Father. They are friends because Jesus has chosen them (15:13). Their friendship rests on the disciples' obedience to obey his commands (15:14). In such a way love becomes the visible distinctive mark of discipleship, which is called friendship.

3.3 SOME DISTINCTIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF A JOHANNINE DISCIPLE

3.3.1 Πιστεύω
The basis for discipleship is believing in Jesus. Most of the 94 occurrences of πιστεύω in the Gospel of John are used to express a reaction to the person or message of Jesus-acceptance as true or trustworthy. The verb may be followed by ἐξ with the accusative (14:1,12; 16:9; 17:20), διά (14:10; 16:27,30; 17:8,21) a dative with no proposition (14:11), or an absolute (14:11, 29; 16:31)(cf Ray 1983:80; Pazdan 1982:87). The expression πιστεύω ἐξ is peculiar to the Fourth Gospel and indicates the basic relationship between Jesus and the disciple (cf 14:1, 12; 16:9; 17:20). The usage of 'to believe that ...' (διά) emphasises the significance of Jesus (14:10, 16:27,30; 17:8,21). The absolute usage focuses on belief in Jesus' works and words (14:11,29; 16:31). The occurrence of πιστεύω
and the dative emphasises the belief on the basis of witness where the focal point of the witness is Jesus (14:11). Belief is an eschatological commitment, made possible by the coming of Jesus, but made actual by the coming of the Paraclete (14:16). Belief is granted as a gift to the disciples, only after the glorification of Jesus. It is a decision to follow Jesus no matter what the cost. And the reality of such a decision for a disciple is worked out in obedience to Jesus' words and commands by confessing Him openly and in loving each other after the pattern of Jesus' own love (13:35).

3.3.2 \( \text{
\textit{πιστεύω/ειδέναι}} \)

The basic focus in orientation towards Jesus is indicated by the disciples' understanding of Jesus' identity.

The parallel between Jesus and his Father should be projected on the relationship between Jesus and his disciples. As the Father's knowledge of Jesus is to be understood in terms of his commission and authority, Jesus' knowledge of 'his own' means calling them to follow him and giving them eternal life. The response of the disciples is modelled on Jesus' response to the Father. That means to listen and to follow (cf 14:7,9). It is only the believers, 'his own', who share the relationship of knowledge with Jesus. When knowledge (\( \text{
\textit{γινώσκειν}} \): 21 times; \( \text{
\textit{ειδέναι}} \): 8 times in Farewell Discourses) is related to faith it expresses the perception and understanding of faith. The disciples' failure to know and understand Jesus was a reality prior to his glorification (cf 14:4-9; 16:18).

Both believing and knowing as responses to the revelation are ways to receive the gift of eternal life (17:3). Knowledge brings an awareness of the new life situation and is in that sense to the disciple a new self-understanding. Though the power of Jesus' word and the power of the Spirit (14:25), the disciples are creating through their witness and love, as visible demonstrations of their belief and knowledge, the possibility for the world to come to know God in Jesus and to receive eternal life (cf Segovia 1985:87).

3.3.3 \( \text{
\textit{αγαπάω/φιλέω}} \)

This pair of verbs particularly describes the Father-Jesus paradigm for mutual loving, the mutual relationship of Jesus and the disciples, as well as that of the disciples to one another. Let us concentrate on loving as related to the disciples. Discipleship is based on faith actualised by love. Faith and love (\( \text{
\textit{αγαπάω}} \): 22 times; \( \text{
\textit{φιλέω}} \): 3 times in Farewell Discourses) constitute a unity because both signify the meaning of discipleship (Van Boxel 1975:27; cf Pazdan 1982:196).

Jesus loves the disciples inasmuch as the Father loves Him (15:9). The Father's love is active in Jesus. Jesus' love for his own was complete (13:1). He gave his life for them (15:13). Therefore, He commanded his disciples to love one another as He loved them (13:34) and to abide in his love (15:9-10, 12). The
disciples’ love for Jesus can only be fulfilled through faith in his deed of love on their behalf (15:13). The nature of the love by which Jesus’ disciples would be known is traced back to Jesus’ example of love in the washing of the disciples’ feet (13:1-20) and supremely in laying down his life for them. The new commandment is grounded in Jesus’ love (13:34). The disciples’ perpetuation of Jesus’ example of love would be the visible sign by which the world would identify them as belonging to Jesus.

Love for one another is only possible when the disciples abide in Jesus (μένειν: 14 times and obey (τηρεῖν: 12 times in Farewell Discourses) his commandment of love.

John’s use of μένειν focuses on the problem of immanence in Johannine theology; remaining in one another binds together Father, Son and the disciple (cf 14:8-11). The vine imagery in which the abiding theme frequently occurs is an exposition of the meaning of 13:34 — the ‘new’ commandment. The disciple who truly abides in Christ will demonstrate that fact by love (15:12) and obedience (15:10). This means obedience to the εὐτολὴ and λόγος through τηρεῖν (cf 14:15, 21, 23, 24; 15:10, 20; 17:6). Obedience (τηρεῖν) was the criterion for determining the reality of a disciple’s knowledge of and love for Jesus (cf Ray 1983:130). Related to τηρεῖν, concerning discipleship, is John’s use of ἀκολουθεῖν. To follow Jesus was to participate in the salvation He brought (cf 8:12). The expression ἀκολουθεῖν did not only have significance as a physical following of Jesus. In 13:36 Jesus answered that Peter was not capable of following him at that point of time, but the time would come when he could follow (13:37). Peter would be able to follow in the post-resurrection life of the church as a result of what Jesus would accomplish through his death. The passion and resurrection experience is an essential precondition for following Jesus (cf ch 21).

4 WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE JOHANNINE COMMUNITY

Johannine discipleship originated and developed within the social setting of the Johannine community. Bruce Malina states in general:

These brief considerations of language, reading and communication all point to the need of some grasp of social system for interpreting meaning in texts. What would it mean to study the social system implied and expressed in biblical writings? It would mean to ask the questions that form the core of the social sciences of the biblical writings. Sociolinguistics, anthorpology, and the histories informed by the social sciences all ask more or less the same questions: how does human group structure and group behavior determine what and how human beings can perceive, interact and mean?
But, to extract social data from a literary text concerning Johannine discipleship, remains a tentative enterprise taking into consideration the variety of existing interpretative sociological models as well as the scarceness of sociological data (cf Malina 1982:229-242). However, the Farewell Discourses were not written in isolation apart from the concerns and cares of a group of believers (disciples) in the first century. Martyn (1979) and Brown (1979) established from a diachronic perspective an historical line of development to answer the literary compositional questions while Meeks, from a synchronic perspective, concentrated on the language and the social setting (cf 1972:44-72).

Bruce Malina uses the group and grid model of Mary Douglas to analyse the social location of the disciples in the Johannine community (1985:2; cf Bridges 1987:230). According to this model the researcher views Johannine discipleship along two lines, namely, the degree to which persons are embedded in other persons (group), as well as the degree to which persons find their commonly shared values to match their experience (grid) (1985:2).

Therefore, Malina classifies the Johannine community as anti the rites of the community from which it came; viewing the former community as oppressive; a highly individualistic community for whom life is spiritual; a community who believe that love overcomes the lack of unity and misfortune. The Johannine community attempted to establish a unique identity through a sense of discipleship by opposing the cultural codes of the former community. Loyalty to the ‘new’ commandment (13:34) and the Paraclete as manifested in the beloved disciple are clear examples. Such a description does not differ much from the theory that the Johannine community had been expelled from the Jewish synagogue (cf 9:22; 12:42; 16:2) and experienced its hostility (Du Rand 1991:52).

Within such a sociological framework it is understandable that the community’s story, particularly on discipleship, tries to place the events of the Farewell Discourses in a meaningful flow of action. The Johannine community’s story responds in a sense to the plot of romantic tragedy (cf Malina 1986:170). The hero (Jesus) is victor over the world and the disciples identify with the hero (cf 16:33). The Johannine community does not primarily cling to principles (despite the ‘new’ commandment of love) which govern the behaviour of a disciple but to an agent (Jesus) and an act (washing of feet).

The language of the Johannine community functions as a self reflective commentary on Johannine discipleship. It is indicative of a closed system of communication – a fortress mentality against the outside ‘world’ (cf 14:27; 15:18; 16:9, 33). The language stimulates solidarity among the post-resurrection Johannine disciples, like the common destination with their hero (14:1-7); the mutuality in relationships (14:8-11); the emphasis on ζητέω and ἐφροθυμεῖν (13:33-35) and the guiding reel of the Paraclete (14:15). The disciples will have ἐξορθοῦν over against...
The disciples are bound to the authority of Jesus by the beloved disciple and Paraclete. The Paraclete functions as a cohesive force within the community. Discipleship defines both those who are inside and those outside the social boundaries of the community. In the first version of the Farewell Discourses (13:31-14:31) the disciples experience a trauma caused by the crucifixion of Jesus. Therefore, the appearance of the risen one is stressed in 14:18-20 as well as that of the Paraclete to overcome the sorrow and perception of abandonment of the disciples. The crisis is the sense of abandonment by Jesus (cf Painter 1981:533).

Because of inner fragmentation under stress, the Johannine community establishes strong ties with the authoritative figure of the leader and rabbi Jesus to try and teach new values on discipleship. This keeps the community together in spite of varying traditions and personalities, creeping into the community's beliefs and life style. That is why the disciples are expected to abide in what they had heard (14:26) for the sake of self-definition and self-assertion.

5 FROM A NARRATOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

The way in which discipleship functions in the Farewell Discourses in the development of the Johannine narrative is remarkable. The resonance or echo effect (Tannehill 1984:238) which concentrates on the narrative's communicative direction should be identified to focus the narrative perspective on discipleship.

Therefore, 13:1 is correctly identified as the proem of the Farewell Discourses (Kennedy 1984:76-78) concerning discipleship. This verse puts forward five topics as an agenda for what is to come: Jesus' relation to the Father, Jesus' departure, the world, love and Jesus' relation to the disciples. The repetitiveness of the theme of discipleship and the reciprocal relationship between Jesus' relation to the Father and his relation to the disciples are dominant features in the narrative. Jesus' going away and the disciples' remaining behind are told from an ideological perspective by way of transparency. The implication is that the person of Jesus as well as discipleship are viewed through the eyes of the Johannine community from a post-resurrection perspective. To uphold true discipleship, the followers of the Johannine tradition are to understand Jesus' identity and role. Jesus' ὑπὸδείγμα (washing the disciples feet) is symbolically portraying the significance of discipleship.

From an ideological point of view (Uspensky 1973:66; cf Du Rand 1986:158) the narrator of the Johannine Farewell Discourses is challenging the reader concerning the faith acceptance of the origin and destiny of the protagonist Jesus. The two narratological observation angles view the Farewell Discourses from the 'from above' (ἀνωθεν) perspective as well as from the retrospective point of
view. Those who accept Jesus' identity from a 'from above' perspective can grasp his identity. The retrospective viewpoint forms the hermeneutical bridge to recent applications of discipleship.

The events in the Farewell Discourses become secondary because they are only bearing interpreted meaning. The narration of the foot washing functions as an introduction to the retrospective understanding of discipleship. Parallel to Jesus' accomplishment of the mission of his Father runs the mission of the disciples. The disciples were called in 1:35-51; confronted with a choice in 6:60-71 and in chapters 13-17 equipped with the assurance of the Paraclete as the ongoing interpretation of the beloved disciple. The two lines along which the Johannine plot unfolds are the Jesus-ministry and the disciple-ministry.

The designation of Jesus' identity and the decision with regard to the protagonist form the Johannine plot which unfolds as follows: The setting (1:1-51) as Christological inventory, making known who the protagonist is: the Son of God; the development (2: 1-17:26) in which the protagonist is made known through signs and discourses, as well as the reaction of the helpers and the opponents. In the resolution (18:1-21:25), the climax, is the unravelling of the plot, in which the protagonist dies but is risen again in his glory as Son of God. Right through the unfolding of the plot, the disciples or followers, those who accepted the protagonist through belief, are narrated as helpers and beneficiaries.

The Farewell Discourses are therefore narrative commentary on discipleship against the background of Jesus' death and resurrection with an emphasis on the unity motif. The unifying motif among the disciples concentrates on the identity question (13:36; 16:30). From a retrospective view, the readers become involved as the continuation of discipleship. The narrator is creating an interpretative framework of reassuring trust in order to make as meaningful as possible remaining behind as followers in their unity (Du Rand 1986:166; 1990:374). And in order to make remaining behind meaningful, the disciples receive the guidance of the Holy Spirit (cf 14:15-17, 25-26; 15:26-27; 16:4-11, 12-15). To summarise: the narrator concentrates on the retrospective viewpoint and focuses on spiritual leadership in the community: firstly the protagonist Jesus; thereafter, the beloved disciple to be paralleled by the Paraclete. From such an ideological viewpoint the narrator succeeds in creating identification between reader and discipleship which leads to identification and self-definition. The ultimate goal of identification is to be believing disciples.

6 FROM A THEOLOGICAL AND ESCHATOLOGICAL VIEWPOINT

6.1 Within Johannine christology and ecclesiology
From a theological perspective Johannine discipleship derives from christology. The risen Jesus gives identity to the Johannine community (cf Pazdan 1982:337-
In a sense discipleship as a distinctive way of believing is the community's answer to the risen Christ. Jesus' mission is related to discipleship as phenomenon. Jesus is narrated as the model for discipleship. His reciprocal knowing, loving and abiding reflect his relationship to the Father. Jesus' unity with the Father is the source for discipleship. Further, the Johannine narrative of the Farewell Discourses concentrates on Jesus' soteriological function. The disciples experience the dimensions of eternal life through embracing a certain way of living, responding to what Jesus said and did (cf Pazdan 1982:339). Participation in the response to the love command is the basis for relationships in the community. The disciples' witness of fraternal love express the present reality of eternal life.

Johannine discipleship also contributes to a new model of ecclesiology. Discipleship is the self-definition and meaningful function of a community of believers. Discipleship also implies commitment to the community. It constitutes the purpose of the believing community. The community gives the infrastructure to those who believe in Jesus to live as his disciples, to practise fraternal love and to devote themselves to obeying his 'new' command (13:34). The self-definition of the community is derived from the self-definition of discipleship, particularly in the mutual relationships of knowing, loving and abiding with Jesus and the Father. And the function of the community is to foster discipleship as the appropriation of salvation (cf Pazdan 1982:342).

6.2 In the framework of eschatology
Johannine discipleship is the appropriation of eschatological salvation in the sense of eternal life. Participation in the mutual life of Jesus and the Father through knowing, loving and abiding constitutes eschatological salvation. Through specific dimensions of discipleship the believer appropriates eternal life.

Believing is the basis for discipleship. It enables the disciple to apprehend Jesus' identity (14:1) and experiences salvation now (14:10). And as a consequence of believing in him, the disciple is involved in a mutual relationship of knowing Jesus and being known by him (14:7, 17). Knowing Jesus brings as a commitment personal freedom as component of realised eschatological salvation. It also brings about a shared life (14:20), participating in a communion of life with Jesus and the Father. Knowing Jesus and being known by Jesus nourishes and sustains the disciple. They are decisive for the disciples' role in the community.

From mutual knowing flows the love for Jesus and the other disciples (cf 13:34; 14:15,21,23,24,28). Loving is also a mutual relationship, shared by Jesus and the disciples, as well as by the Father and the disciples (cf Paydan 1982:313). The Father's love for Jesus is the model and measure of Jesus' love for his disci-
pies. It becomes the discipleship model within the community. The intensity of Jesus' love is the challenge for discipleship and may even mean to die for one another (cf 15:13). Obedience to Jesus' 'new' command (13:34) is the distinctive quality of eschatological discipleship. It is this fraternal love which constitutes the community of believers and also defines the integrity of discipleship.

From believing has grown mutual knowledge and love, as well as abiding in Jesus. The emphasis lies in an existential experience of union and shared life to demonstrate the heart of discipleship. We do not need to think of mystical absorption but of a reciprocal presence as result of a mutual knowing and loving. The disciples will seek (\( \zeta \nu \tau \epsilon \iota \nu \)) Jesus (with the emphasis on his identity) and experience Him through their obedience of the 'new' command (13:33, 34).

According to Mark, the disciples are chosen as the nucleus of the eschatological people of God (10:29-30; cf Pazdan 1982:322; Kingsbury 1981:51-52) to continue Jesus' ministry of preaching (6:12). And in Matthew the disciples participate in God's eschatological activity by breaking through the present order (11:3-5). To hear the Gospel and be baptised are the modes of participating in salvation (Pazdan 1982:323). Luke identifies the disciples as the true Israel who witness to Jesus and who carry on his ministry of healing and teaching (10:1-16). The community is guided by the Holy Spirit (Kingsbury 1981:126).

Concerning the eschatological dimension of discipleship in the Johannine Gospel, Richter (1975:126-131) and Brown (1979:135-138) indicated a shift in theological orientation from the future to realised eschatology in the concept of discipleship within the development of the community. In that sense one can say that discipleship or the organisation and unity of the community provides the earthly setting for the appropriation of eschatological salvation. To apply this principle to the Johannine community, christology becomes the means of expressing the needs, values and ideals of the community, because Jesus' life and words are correlated with the experiences of the community (cf Aune 1972:76-78; Pazdan 1982:329). Realised eschatology is manifested in the community through an imitatio Christi, based on the present possession of eternal life and experience of judgement as well as the communal possession of the Spirit. In that sense, discipleship as a form of imitatio Christi is indeed the appropriation of realised eschatological salvation.

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