

The disciple whom Jesus loved

Part 1

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[00:00:01] I want to read five scriptures at the end of John's Gospel, although the first one is in chapter 13. John chapter 13, verse 21, verse 21.

When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testifying, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me.

Then the disciples looked one on another, doubting of whom he spake.

Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved.

[00:01:05] Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him that he should ask who it should be of whom he spake.

He then, lying on Jesus' breast, said unto him, Lord, who is it?

Jesus answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a sock when I have lifted.

And when he had lifted the sock, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon.

And after the sock, Satan entered into him.

Then said Jesus unto him, Thou knowest too quickly.

Now no man at the table knew for what intent he spake this unto him. For some of them thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, [00:02:05] By those things that we have need of against the feeble, or that he should give something to the poor. He then, having received the sock, went immediately out.

And it was nice.

Chapter 19.

Chapter 19 and verse 16.

Then delivered he him therefore unto them, to be crucified.

And they took Jesus and led him away.

And he, bearing his cross, went forth into a place called the place of a skull, [00:03:02] which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha, where they crucified him.

And two other with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst.

Verse 25.

Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleopas and Mary Magdalene.

When Jesus therefore saw his mother and the disciples standing by whom he loved, he said unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son.

Then saith he to the disciples, Behold thy mother.

And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own.

[00:04:09] Chapter 20.

Verse 1.

The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark under the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre. Then she runneth and cometh to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved. And saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him.

Peter therefore went forth and that other disciple, and came to the sepulchre, so they ran both together.

And the other disciple who did outrun Peter and came first to the sepulchre, [00:05:01] and he stooping down and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying.

Yet went he not in.

Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre and seeth the linen clothes lying. And then acting, it was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself.

Then went it also that other disciple who came first to the sepulchre, and he saw and believed.

For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead.

Deuteronomy 1.

Verse 1.

After these things Jesus showed himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias, [00:06:02] and on this way showed he himself.

There were together Simon Peter and Thomas called Didymus, and Samuel of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples.

Simon Peter said unto them, I go fishing.

They said unto him, we also go with thee. They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately, and that night they caught nothing.

When the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore.

But the disciples knew not that it was Jesus.

Then Jesus said unto them, Children, have ye any means?

They asked him, No. He said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, [00:07:02] and ye shall find that they cast their hook. No, they were not able to draw it from the multitude of the ship. Therefore, that disciple, whom Jesus loved, said unto Peter, Peter, is the Lord.

Verse 19.

It's the Lord speaking to Peter.

I don't know the gist of the conversation, but just to get the connection, verse 19.

This spake he, that is Jesus, signifying by what death he, that is Peter, should glorify God.

And when he had spoken this, he said unto him, Follow me.

Then Peter turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following, [00:08:01] Jesus also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee? Peter seeing him said to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? Jesus said unto him, If I will that he carry till I come, what is that to thee?

Follow thou me.

Then went this saying abroad about thee, among the brethren, that that disciple should not die. Jesus said not unto him he shall not die, but if I will that he carry till I come, what is that to thee?

This is the disciple which testified to these things, and wrote these things, and we know that his testimony is true.

I believe I have read to you, [00:09:01] I'm sorry for the length of it, the five times that John in his Gospel refers to himself in this unique and peculiar but most blessed word as the disciple whom

Jesus loved.

Now I do not think for one moment that when John refers to himself thus he has in any way any thought of bringing himself forward as the disciple that Jesus loved more than any of the others. I don't think he has that in his mind at all.

But I believe this, I believe that John [00:10:03] had a very wonderful sense in his soul about deeply as an individual personally who is loved by Jesus.

I think that's it.

You know that's most blessed.

It's wonderfully simple.

You know I believe it's profound.

You know beloved brethren, I think we must accept that there is something a little bit unique about John. We know that he lived longer than any of the other apostles. And whilst I do not attribute anything definitely to the meaning [00:11:05] of the Lord's words to Peter concerning him, what if I will that I carry to thee come, yet then there must nonetheless be something peculiar about him else the Lord would have not said such a word about him. The fact remains that what he said and what John enjoyed, yea should we say the centre of John's ministry, that of the love of divine persons, is that I believe which will go on and it will never end.

And I believe that there is definite connection in the fact that that disciple perhaps sustained longer here in the testimony, [00:12:05] that of the apostles, longer than the others. I want to simply suggest tonight, very very simply beloved brethren, that if you and I are going to stick to the end, whatever that end might be, whether it be the Lord calling us individually to himself, or whether it be to that glorious wonderful moment when he will come, I believe the thing that will keep us here useful to him will be a moving steadfastly in a way of which he will approve. [00:13:02] I believe there is only one thing that will keep us.

And that is an abiding deepening sense about deeply and dearly we are individually loved by the Lord.

You know, that's probably the thing that filled our souls more than anything when we first trusted the Lord. We know why.

It's probably because he loves us. You know, even the apostle Paul, when he enumerates things that you'll abide, he says the greatest of these is love.

[00:14:03] And this is simply what I have as a bit of a background. And why I just want to direct you to these oh so very well-known scriptures has nothing got trying in what I have to say.

I just want us to see the way in which when John refers to himself in this way, he doesn't always call himself this, you know. In fact, he never calls himself the disciple whom Jesus loved prior to chapter 13.

And I have read of another incident when he doesn't call himself that he just turns himself one of the sons of Zebedee. And there may be reasons why John, at specific moments, refers to himself [00:15:01] as the disciple whom Jesus loved. And I believe there are. Because of those moments, dear brethren, he shines.

He shines.

There is something about his testimony, his character, at those moments that I believe marks him out.

And I believe you know, dear beloved brethren, that the same could apply to you and I.

How wonderful it is to stand out in the testimony.

And I don't think I'm I think I'm talking about that we should push ourselves forward. But you know, have you ever thought of how the Apostle Paul, in speaking to Timothy, says [00:16:01] that thy property might be made manifest to all.

And the Apostle Paul encouraged Timothy to pursue a line of things that if he followed them would make Timothy to be an example not only to the brethren, but an example of the brethren.

And what a wonderful thing it is, dear brethren, to stand out from all the mass, all the mess, of Christendom.

Have something distinctive in the testimony.

And dear beloved brethren, what could be more distinctive in the testimony than the disciple whom Jesus loved.

That's distinctive.

[00:17:04] I want you just to think at the moment at the background of these Scriptures.

Let me just say before then, let me just refer you to two incidences when John speaks of himself.

He doesn't speak a great deal of himself in John's Gospel, literally in chapter 1, and then chapter 13 onwards the few incidents.

But you know, out of those incidents after chapter 13, there are two times when John you'll have to tell me if you don't agree with me, but I think we would all agree that John was that disciple that knew Caiaphas, the high priest, and went into the judgment hall and took Peter there with him.

[00:18:02] I must confess, I've always thought it was John, and yet, when I searched through the Scriptures to try and prove it, I had difficulty doing so.

But nonetheless, I think John was speaking about himself. But you know, in that incident, he doesn't call himself the disciple. Jesus loved him.

There may have been a sad reason.

He took a brother with him into a position where that brother failed.

And you know, when Simon Peter went fishing, John just called himself one of the sons of Leviticus. Perhaps that was a mistake as well. You see, [00:19:01] I'm not suggesting for one moment that John always and all the time moved steadfastly in his testimony with an abiding deep sense of how deeply of how dear he was to Jesus.

Nor there were moments perhaps when something came between his soul and the Lord.

And like all of us, he made mistakes.

It was a searching, aren't they?

I wonder what John thought when he wrote those incidences.

But you know, when he does speak in this way, let me say it again, and he shines.

You think of this first little incident [00:20:02] that we have in chapter 13, and the Lord was going away. Chapter starts like that, doesn't it? Jesus knowing that the hour had come. Hmm. An awful hour, that one. Jesus knowing that the hour had come, that he should depart out of this world and go to the Father.

Yes. That is true. But the cross blew before his soul.

And he goes into an upper room and washes his disciples' feet.

He institutes the supper.

[00:21:01] And you know that a man had got very near to it. So near that as they were reclining at the table, he laid down his head on the Lord's bosom.

Now you know, I don't know whether you've ever realized what this term means.

If you look it up, very easy to do so, you'll find that the definition of the bosom is a position between the shoulders, high up on the chest.

Not the same as the breast. It's lower down.

And you know, when you think of how John uses this expression, he speaks first, you know, [00:22:02] of the only begotten, which is in the bosom of the Father.

Now you think of what that person's of. The intimacy of divine person.

And yet John, he got so near to the Lord that he laid his head on the Lord's bosom.

He got positionally into a place of utter intimacy with the Lord.

Let me ask you a question here, brother. Dear sister, when were you last there? When were you last there? [00:23:03] I'm not necessarily talking about those wonderful transcending moments when perhaps gathered at the breaking of bread, when we can lose sight of everything else, our individuality, and move company-wise, in company with the Lord, into that wonderful sphere where the Spirit of God would give us to enjoy reality in what eternal life is. I'm talking about those individual moments in our own private, individual lives.

Now, when did you last have a few moments of intimacy with the Lord?

[00:24:05] When have you known what it is to lie in that eternal bosom, to feel, to feel the pulsations of that divine, eternal heart, and know the depth and the power of that love that flows from him to you individually? That isn't a position that is just John. That's a position that's open to every saint of God, to you and to me.

But it appears that in the upper room, the disciple that Jesus loved, John, [00:25:01] was the only one that did it. Peter wasn't there.

And there were circumstances arose that made Peter realize that John had a better, nearer place than he had. Have you ever felt that there are certain brethren who walk nearer to the Lord than you do? That have a deeper sense of communion with him than you have? Ah, yes.

Praise and beloved brethren. That bosom would embrace every one of us. I believe there is nothing that brings more delight to the Lord himself than when a saint of God [00:26:01] moves apart from every distraction, whatever it might be, and moves completely out of himself and lays his head on the Lord's bosom. Those are wonderful moments. And I believe it's the sense of those moments that carried John in the testament where perhaps some of the others didn't get.

One of you shall betray me. There was something troubling his soul. There was something delighting his heart. There was a man there that loved him, that had dearly attached himself to him, but there was a man in that gathering [00:27:03] who was going to betray him. And he says, you'll be troubled. There he says, one of you, one of you, my own familiar friend, one of you shall betray me. They were all taken aback by it. They were all taken aback by it. Peter, filled with consternation, searches his own heart. And he begs John to ask his revenge.

I wonder why the Lord just didn't say how great he was, [00:28:02] who did the untold one disciple. And the scriptures don't record that that disciple told Peter, or any of the others, because when Judas went out, none of them knew, perhaps apart from John, the reason for which he went out. No, you see, the Lord just made known that thing to John. You know, dear friend, if you've got something that troubles you, you're very careful, and you don't tell that to anybody, do you? I wonder what it was. Just to realize that that thing that was troubling the Lord so dearly at that moment, there was a man near enough to him [00:29:02] for him to speak to him as though he was. Oh, beloved brethren, how much do we know of the intimate secrets that divine love would make known to us. John knew something of them. I don't know whether you've ever been struck with why John in his writings occasionally takes account of certain things. Notice it says that when Judas went out, he says it was night. And you know, when Peter went into the judgment hall, he warned himself, and John says, for it was cold. If you turn back in chapter 10, where the Lord is confronted [00:30:01] by those awful Pharisees in Solomon's porch, John says, John, for some reason, records that it was winter. Yes. A cold, winter's night. They were the moral conditions of that night the Lord went out into. But John, in

his own words, but John, in the midst of those conditions, found a place on the Lord's porch. Well, as a consequence, I believe of that is when that hour had dawned. [00:31:04] When we come into chapter 9, I believe when Pilate delivers the Lord and they led him away. And the scripture records that he buried his cross. It was his cross. He went forth into a place called Golgotha. It means a skull. How profound. He was there crucified to other women. You know, I I've always wondered why John takes this point, you know, and he mentions here on either side one [00:32:03] Jesus in the midst. I wonder, you know, whether he ever remembers the incident when he came to the Lord with requests, he and his brother desiring that they might see the one on their left and the one on their right in their kingdom. And yet John, he takes account of the fact, I don't think any of the other gospel writers record this. Not quite like the way John does. One on his left and one on his right. Jesus in the midst. No kingdom glory. The ignominy and the shame and the horror of the cross. [00:33:03] John wasn't on the left. John wasn't on the right. No dear brethren, but he stood at the cross. He was found where none other was.

There was four women there. Three of them males. Mara. Bitterness.

Sorrow.

What a scene. John stood there. You notice what it says? No, they're stood. They're stood by the cross of Jesus. That's a fine place to stand in regard to the testimony dear brethren. John stood there. [00:34:03] And you know, there's an intimate, again, there's an intimate conversation takes place. John at the foot of the cross. And the Lord hanging on the cross. And the Lord hanging on the cross. Oh dear brethren, what a place for a conversation to take place. John stood there. You know, there was something that was dear to the Lord at that moment. The Lord had an actual pure and right feelings towards his mother. There were moments when he had to say [00:35:01] because of the testimony and because of the baptism that he was to be baptized with. There were occasions when he had to say woman what have I to do with thee? You know, I always when I read this I always think of a remark that I have always cherished made by F.B. Hall about this little incident concerning the Lord's earthly mother, Mary. You remember that when Mary and Joseph brought in the infant child that there was one there, Simeon, who made a prophetic utterance regarding the child but not only in regarding the child but in regard to Mary the Lord's mother. You remember it. Yea, a sword shall pierce through thine own soul also. [00:36:10] And I believe as Mary stood there I believe that sword was going through her soul. She was one of the sheep and on the cross was a smitten shepherd and at that moment the shepherd thought about the sheep and was concerned for his mother. But there was a disciple standing there that he could commit his concern to. [00:37:03] Woman behold thy son son behold thy mother. And that's another incident when Joseph refers to his own son as a disciple of Jesus' son. I only say one thing about it. Love can be trusted. Oh dear brethren have you and I been near enough to the Lord to have committed to our care and our trust something that the Lord counts as being precious. The Lord doesn't give things to anybody.

[00:38:03] Things that the Lord values he doesn't commit to anybody.

But the Lord committed the care of his mother naturally speaking to the disciple who stood by the cross. I'll leave that one with you. He stood there and he witnessed and his witness was true. You move on to the resurrection the tomb.

I'm not saying very much about this little incident. Mary was found there and the stones rolled away. She runs and tells Peter and John and they run to the sepulchre and John got there first and he didn't

go in. [00:39:02] I'm not going to say anything about that. But I believe the fact that John didn't go in is in keeping with his character and the fact that Peter went in is in keeping with his character. But you know beloved brethren there's something to be cherished. There's a dignity. There's a solemnity. There's a godliness about John that is to be admired. He says he stooped down and he looked in and he saw the linen clothes lying.

I know he went in after Peter and they held that napkin [00:40:02] folded by itself and you know the spirit of God was there and then that they believed. What did they believe? They believed that he was risen from the dead. I wonder who was the tomb beloved brethren. Those linen clothes folded that napkin that was about his head. That head that had been anointed by that woman that loved him. That head that had borne the crown of thorns. That head that had been [00:41:01] bound in submission to the will of God on the cross. That napkin with which they wrapped it I suppose it was Nicodemus and Joseph was laid by itself.

There was nothing untidy about the tomb. There was no sign of a struggle. No. Why? Because death had been vanquished. The Lord of Glory had been there and he had come forth. He who had been the victim was now the victor and that stone rolled away. Witness to the glory [00:42:01] of the Lord is fact. He had left the tomb and John saw it and he believed. Oh beloved brethren there are times in our history when I believe the spirit of God would bring home an increased power and conviction with deepened assurance the reality of the fact that that blessed man is alive. Not only out of the tomb but gloriously adorning the Father's throne. I believe the more deeply the spirit of God forms these things in our souls the more our hearts will know what it is to be near to himself [00:43:03] and to fill out our place in the testimony they went home. And in the next chapter they went fishing. I know that the 21st chapter of John has a dispensational setting with seven disciples there. But anyway they caught nothing. And you know John of that incident does not call himself the disciple who Jesus loved. That night they caught nothing.

Well my good brother brethren you won't catch much in this world for the Lord. If you're not near to him. But you know I love that little verse.

[00:44:01] Think of how scripture runs on.

They went forth and they went into a ship immediately and that night they caught nothing. But when the morning was now come Jesus stood on the shore. When the morning was come Jesus stood on the shore. Oh dear brethren he had entered he had entered into the glory of another day. And as yet they weren't quite with him. He had moved out of the sea out of the sea of death. He had moved in the power of his own life into that sea beyond death as a man.

[00:45:01] Not yet ascended but remember he had already said to Mary in the garden I ascend.

I ascend.

And dear brethren that man will keep ascending until he fills all things.

It's the purpose of God that he will fill all things. He came out of that tomb and he was on the shore for him the glory of an eternal day at dawn.

His disciples weren't with him. God stood there on the other side should have rung a bell in Simon's

heart shouldn't it? He'd heard those words before but he didn't. [00:46:03] I wonder why. The last time he'd done that they took him to his knees Lord depart from me I am a sin full man. And yet it wasn't him who recognized that heavenly man who was on the shore. No. It was that disciple from Jesus' love who turned to Peter and he said it's it's the Lord who died overboard. Oh what a delightful character Peter is. How blessedly we could while away an hour [00:47:02] speaking about Peter who died overboard. Yes he wanted to get near to the Lord he perhaps realized his shortcomings at that moment. But John that dignified companion of Jesus who came to the shore. And you know therein the gospel of John finishes on this mystical note. There's that little intercourse between the Lord and Peter of necessity. And Peter and the Lord had forewarned Peter the fact that he was going to die in a way that would glorify God. Oh beloved brethren if we have to go that way God give us grace [00:48:01] to glorify God when we do so. It's a test. But you know the Lord moves on and he says to Peter follow thou me. Follow thou me Peter and drank. And you know he saw somebody else following that was following without having to be told to follow. You don't read that the Lord told John to follow. The Lord said follow thou me. And when Peter turned around he saw John John was following instinctively. Oh dear beloved brethren what a blessed thing it is when our [00:49:01] instincts tell us where to move and where to go. John knew what it was to be very very intimate with the Lord. He was following. And you know this gospel ends with a remarkable commendation about that disciple. I know he may have written it himself but the word of God is spirit led. And you know this gospel ends with that disciple. The disciple whom Jesus loved. And he gives him a commendation as to his testimony and I believe there is no higher. There is no greater. There is no testimony that can be more profitable to God. [00:50:01] He says this his testimony was true.

True words for their profound beloved brethren. God give us individually to know what it is as regards to our testimony that whatever we say and whatever we do may the spirit of God give it the appellation that his testimony is true.

Oh beloved brethren I believe the secret the secret that John knew is that which is owed to everyone of us who was the disciple whom Jesus loved.