


"A Hard Saying"

The Gospel and Culture

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A Michael Glazier Book
 THE LITURGICAL PRESS
Collegeville, Minnesota

www.litpress.org

2001

CHAPTER 5

WHEN IS JOHN TALKING
ABOUT SACRAMENTS?

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The Melbourne Scripture Seminar of 1981 was devoted to the theme: "The Sacraments: Celebrating and Creating Life." I had been invited to contribute in the area of Johannine scholarship, and the brochures advertising the Seminar stated: "Johannine literature is perhaps regarded as the most explicitly sacramental of the New Testament collection." This is true. If one were to accept the suggestions of all the scholars who have written on this issue in a positive sense one would finish with the following explicit sacramental teaching in the Fourth Gospel?

Matrimony:

The marriage feast at Cana (2:1-11)

Anointing of the Sick:

The anointing at Bethany (12:1-8)

I have retained this title, despite its difficulties, from the original setting of this paper, given at the Melbourne Scripture Seminar, Newman College, University of Melbourne, 24-31 August 1981. It enabled me to raise the issues of the Johannine community and its experience. See below.

For the following list of possibilities see Raymond E. Brown, "The Johannine Sacramentary," in idem, *New Testament Essays* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1967) 75-76. Another good survey of scholarship can be found in Herbert Kloos, *Die Sakramente im Johannesevangelium. Vorkommen und Bedeutung im Lichte der Eucharistie und Bussse im 4. Evangelium*. SBS 46 (Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1970).

Reconciliation:

Lazarus (11:1-44)

"Whose sins you shall forgive shall be forgiven, etc." (20:23)

"He who has bathed does not need to wash, *except for his feet.*" (13:10)³*Baptism:*

The baptism of Jesus (1:32-33; 3:26)

The marriage feast at Cana (2:1-11)

The "cleansing" of the Temple (2:13-25)

The conversation with Nicodemus (3:1-21)

The conversation with the Samaritan woman (4:1-30)

The healing at Bethsaida (5:1-17)

The walking on the water (6:16-21)

The source of living waters (7:38)

The healing of the man born blind (9:1-38)

The Good Shepherd (10:1-18)

The raising of Lazarus (11:1-44)

The foot washing (13:1-20)

The miraculous draught of fishes (21:1-8)

Eucharist:

The marriage feast at Cana (2:1-11)

The "cleansing" of the Temple (2:13-25)

"My food is to do the will of my Father" (4:31-34)

Chapter 6, especially 6:1-15 and 6:51-58.

The foot washing (13:1-20)

The vine and the branches (15:1-11)

The meal of bread and fish (21:9-14)

Baptism and Eucharist:

Blood and water from the pierced side of Jesus (19:34)

Water and blood as witnesses (1 John 5:8).

This list is clearly "maximal." It gathers indiscriminately from the suggestions of scholars, some of them reflecting upon the text from a more systematic perspective or reading it in the light of subsequent patristic and Church thought and practice. For the contemporary biblical critic it probably comes as something of a surprise that certain events have been read as containing explicit teaching on the Christian sacra-

³ The words εἰ μὴ τοὺς πόδας are textually doubtful, and may have been added by a copyist to solve the problem of sinfulness after baptism. For a discussion of this issue, with bibliographical details, see Francis J. Moloney, *The Johannine Son of Man*. BibScRel 14 (2nd ed. Rome: LAS, 1978) 192-93.

ments. One might ask, for example, how the anointing of the feet of Jesus might be linked with the Catholic sacrament of anointing, or how the cleansing of the Temple, where there is no reference to any baptismal symbols or rituals (especially water), however subtle, could refer to the fundamental Christian sacrament of baptism?

These questions could go farther, as contacts between most of the texts cited and the sacraments of the Christian tradition are tenuous at best. A further point should be raised as we begin this study. Scholars who have produced these various claims do not fall into clearly defined confessional groups. It is interesting to note that the defense of many explicit contacts between the Johannine gospel and the Christian sacramental system is not the sole preserve of conservative Catholics. Similarly, we must note that the rejection of sacramental teaching in the Fourth Gospel is not only found in schools of radical Protestant scholarship. I have no intention of discussing the details of this long and unresolved debate, of which Raymond E. Brown remarked: "Perhaps on no other point of Johannine thought is there such division among scholars."⁴ Anyone interested in a fuller discussion should consult the surveys done by Brown in his *New Testament Essays*⁵ and in his commentary on the Fourth Gospel,⁶ and the useful survey contained in Herbert Klos's book.⁷ Thinkers from all schools take up a variety of positions on the issue. A careful reading of this scholarship shows that, as always in approaching New Testament texts, what ultimately determines the answer to the question "when is John talking about sacraments?" is the set of criteria and methods adopted by each scholar in approaching the text. I will limit myself to a few contrasting positions in this debate before setting out on my own discussion. However, there are still some introductory remarks that have to be made. Indeed, the following brief discussion is partly indicative of the "criteria and methods" I adopt in my subsequent reading of the Johannine text.

1. "WHEN IS JOHN TALKING?"

It is not accurate to ask about a single character called "John," nor are we justified in referring to "John talking." The apparently never-ending debate over the author of the gospel we call "of John" is well

⁴ Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John*. 2 vols. AB 29, 29a (New York: Doubleday, 1966-70) 1:cxi.

⁵ Brown, "The Johannine Sacramentary," 51-56.

⁶ Brown, *John* 1:cxi-cxiv.

⁷ Klos, *Die Sakramente im Johannesevangelium*. See n. 2 above.

and widely covered in the many fine introductions to this gospel, including those of the great contemporary commentators now all available in English: Charles Kingsley Barrett, Barnabas Lindars, Rudolf Schnackenburg, and Raymond E. Brown.⁸ I have also discussed this question in my own recent commentary in the *Sacra Pagina* series.⁹ The evidence of the gospel itself, assuming that the link made between the author of the gospel and the Beloved Disciple in the secondary 21:20-24 is correct, points to an original tradition about Jesus with its source in a disciple of Jesus. This tradition deepened and developed in a Christian community that eventually established itself somewhere in Asia Minor (probably Ephesus). The development took place over a long period of time, through many trials and tribulations caused by both external and internal difficulties.

I remain convinced that the community was gathered around an all-important figure who had close contact with the historical Jesus and was most probably an ex-disciple of the Baptist (see 1:35). If this was the case we cannot ask about "John talking." We must look deeper into the life and experience of faith of a particular Christian community. The Gospel of John, like all the other gospels, is not a single person "talking" to us, but a living community of first-century Christians communicating, through their own particular Spirit-filled journey, their dynamic experience of faith that is, especially in the Fourth Gospel, a christological and an ecclesiological journey.¹⁰

⁸ C. K. Barrett, *The Gospel According to St John* (2nd ed. London: S.P.C.K., 1978) 100-34; Barnabas Lindars, *The Gospel of John*. NCB (London: Cliphants, 1972) 28-34; Rudolf Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St. John*, *John* (HTCNT IV/1-3 (New York: Crossroad, 1968-82) 1:75-104; Brown, *John* 1:xxxvii-xcviii). It should be noted that Schnackenburg, who hesitatingly opted for John, the son of Zebedee, in the first German volume of his commentary, reproduced in English, has since shifted to a position akin to the one adopted in this paper. See Rudolf Schnackenburg, "On the Origin of the Fourth Gospel," in Pittsburg Festival on the Gospels 1970, *Jesus and Man's Hope* (Pittsburg: Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, 1970) 233-46. Like Schnackenburg, Brown moved away from the identification of the Beloved Disciple with the son of Zebedee to a position closer to the one espoused here. See Raymond E. Brown, *The Community of the Beloved Disciple. The Life, Loves and Hates of an Individual Church in New Testament Times* (New York: Paulist, 1979) 31-34.

⁹ Francis J. Moloney, *The Gospel of John*. SP 4 (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1998) 6-9.

¹⁰ See on this the contributions of Raymond E. Brown: "'And the Lord Said?' Biblical Reflections on Scripture as the Word of God," *TS* 42 (1981) 3-19; idem, "The Meaning of the Bible," *TD* 28 (1980) 305-20.

2. "ABOUT SACRAMENTS"

This is the point of greatest difficulty in all discussions of sacraments and sacramentality in the Fourth Gospel. Yet despite the fact that our various ecclesial and theological traditions have wide-reaching differences in their understanding of "sacrament," we could all gather around a general definition positing that sacraments are intimately associated with "life" and the communication of the divine life, a participation already "in the triumphant eschatological salvation promised by God through Christ as his Word, and wrought by God through Christ as the incarnate Son and mediator."¹¹ Obviously this notion is never explicitly spelled out in the New Testament, as a sacramental theology took centuries to evolve and is, of course, still unfolding in our pilgrim Church. The word "sacrament" comes to us from the Pauline word *μυστήριον*, picked up by the second-century Fathers in their attempts to forge a theology of the sacraments¹² and translated into the Latin version of the New Testament as *sacramentum*.¹³

It is difficult for us to see the New Testament, and especially the highly symbolic language of the Fourth Gospel, unbundled of our rich tradition of sign and symbol, so closely associated with our sacramental life in the Church. Yet we must be aware from the outset that for the Fourth Gospel all Jesus' activity and preaching, especially the notion of glory and glorification, so important to this gospel (see, for example, 7:39; 8:54; 11:4; 12:23, 28; 13:31-32; 14:13; 15:8; 16:14; 17:1, 4, 5, 10), is the communication of a life-giving power. Sandra Schneiders has written eloquently on this crucial feature of the Fourth Gospel.¹⁴ Tracing "sacrament" in the

¹¹ Burkhard Neunhuser, "Sacraments," *Sacramentum Mundi. An Encyclopedia of Theology*, 6 vols. (New York: Herder & Herder, 1970) 5:378.

¹² For full details see G. W. H. Lampe, ed., *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961) 891-93, especially section F, where reference is made to Cyril, Theodotus, Clement of Alexandria, Dionysius, and Serapion from the early centuries, who used the expression *μυστήριον* in the sense of *sacramentum*; "revelation of divine activity."

¹³ The word *sacramentum* originally meant an oath, especially a soldier's oath of allegiance. This can still be traced in early Christian literature. See, for example, Tertullian, *Ad Martyres* 3. On this see "Sacrament," in Frank L. Cross and Elizabeth A. Livingstone, eds., *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (2nd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1974) 1218-19.

¹⁴ See Sandra M. Schneiders, "History and Symbolism in the Fourth Gospel," in Martinus de Jonge, ed., *L'Evangile de Jean. Sources, rédaction, théologie*. BETH 44 (Gembloux: Duculot, 1977) 371-76; eadem, "Symbolism and the Sacramental Principle in the Fourth Gospel," in Pius-Ramon Tagam, ed., *Significati Sacramenti nel Vangelo di Giovanni*. Studia Anselmiana 66; Sacramentum 3 (Romae:

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Fourth Gospel in this wider sense does not call for a search for criteria: "Ultimately, the sacramental principle in the Fourth Gospel is Jesus, manifesting himself in the Church, who experiences and bears witness in and by her own history to her divine filiation in the Spirit."¹⁵ I hope to return briefly to this issue at the end of my paper, but, as Sandra Schneiders fully appreciates,¹⁶ this argument in no way annuls the validity of our quest. Are there descriptions of events from the story of the life of Jesus, as it is told by the Fourth Evangelist, that clearly indicate the practice and theology of a sacramental life, apart from the evangelist's seeming conviction that the very existence of the Johannine community as the continuing presence of Jesus' sonship in history made the community as such in some way sacramental?¹⁷

As I have already indicated, there are *many* scholars who would reply positively to that question. The departure point for a widespread understanding of sacramental references in the Fourth Gospel is found in the evidence that the early Church had practices that later tradition identified as sacramental. The synoptic tradition and Paul carry words of institution, and even though they can be reduced to two basic traditions they show that these words of Jesus, supposedly uttered on the night before he died, have had a considerable history in the life of various Christian communities before they were eventually inserted into their present contexts in the New Testament literature. The Pauline tradition (1 Cor 11:24; see also Luke 22:19) carries a command that may have come from liturgical practices: "Do this in remembrance of me," yet in other ways this tradition preserves the original setting of a meal.¹⁸ While there is no command to repeat the action, the setting

Editrice Anselmiana, 1977) 221-35; eadem, "The Foot Washing (John 13:1-20): An Experiment in Hermeneutics," *CBQ* 43 (1981) 76-92.

¹⁵ Schneiders, "Symbolism and the Sacramental Principle," 235.

¹⁶ See especially Schneiders, "The Foot Washing (John 13:1-20)," 81-82.

¹⁷ Xavier Léon-Dufour has argued for a deeper appreciation of two levels of understanding for a proper evaluation of the Fourth Gospel. He interprets the cleansing and the sign of the Temple, the dialogue with Nicodemus and John 6 *at the level of Jesus* in a non-sacramental way, and then argues *that the risen Lord present in the Spirit in his community makes the same texts sacramental*. See Xavier Léon-Dufour, "Towards a Symbolic Reading of the Fourth Gospel," *NTS* 27 (1980-81) 439-56. See especially p. 455: "The historical events call forth the mystery which sheds light upon it, but the mystery itself would peter out in pure imagination if it did not ceaselessly find its nourishment in the rich soil of time past."

¹⁸ See further Francis J. Moloney, *A Body Broken for a Broken People. Eucharist in the New Testament*. (Revised ed. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1997) 165-77.

within a meal has not been lost in the eucharistic practice behind the Markan tradition, repeated by Matthew (Mark 14:22-25; Matt 26:26-29).¹⁹ The practice of baptism in the pre-Johannine churches is clearly indicated in the solemn closing words of the Matthean Jesus:

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt 28:19).²⁰

If there is sufficient evidence to show that pre-Johannine Christianity celebrated *at least* Eucharist and baptism in its various forms of early Christian worship, it seems logical that the author of the Fourth Gospel might also show that these sacraments had their basis in the words and works of Jesus.²¹ To affirm this much, it appears to me, is correct. Here I am in general agreement with those scholars who see regular references to the sacraments in John, including the celebrated but contentious claims of Oscar Cullmann. But from this starting point Cullmann's tracing hidden references to the sacramental revelation of the *μυστήριον* of God at every turn as the *key* to an understanding of the gospel as a whole is, in my opinion, carrying a basic truth too far.²²

¹⁹ For a lucid presentation of this case see Joachim Jeremias, "The Words of Institution," in Patrick McGoldrick, ed., *Understanding the Eucharist. Papers of the Maynooth Union Summer School 1968* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1969) 18-28. Still a classic in all these discussions is the same author's *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus* (London: SCM, 1966).

²⁰ There is universal agreement among contemporary scholars that Matt 28:16-20 is central to an understanding of the Matthean vision of his church and its mission. See, for example, Wolfgang Trilling, *Das Wahre Israel. Studien zur Theologie des Matthäus-Evangeliums*. SANT 10 (3rd ed. Munich: Kösel, 1964) 21-51; John P. Meier, *Law and History in Matthew's Gospel. A Redactional Study of Mt. 5,17-48*. AnBib 71 (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1976) 25-40; W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison Jr., *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to Saint Matthew*. 3 vols. ICC (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1988-97) 3:676-91. See p. 687: "The grand denouement, so consonant with the spirit of the whole Gospel because so full of resonances with earlier passages, is, despite its terseness, almost a compendium of Matthean theology."

²¹ On this see Léon-Dufour, "Towards a Symbolic Reading of the Fourth Gospel" (n. 17 above).

²² Oscar Cullmann, *Early Christian Worship*. SBT 10 (London: SCM, 1953). For his theological and exegetical argument for the second element of his position, which does make some very valid points to which we shall eventually return, see pp. 38-59 (especially 47-50). His argument swivels around the important conclusion on p. 56: "The implicit assumption of this Gospel is that the historical events, as here presented, contain in themselves, besides what is immediately

To cite Brown's comment on Cullmann's position: "In fact, he often seems to fall back on the principle that since a passage could have been understood sacramentally, it was intended sacramentally."²³

This position, and the various scholars who follow it (Alf Corell, Bruce Vawter, Paul Newald, Louis Bouyer, David M. Stanley),²⁴ has, as I have mentioned, a solidly-based point of departure: the positive indications of pre-Johannine literature that a variety of forms of sacramental life were part of early Christian worship.²⁵ We should notice, however, that the only *firmly established evidence* we have for this sacramental life relates to baptism and Eucharist.

Of course the pro-sacramentalists have not had it all their own way. The most serious opposition has come from one of the outstanding New Testament scholars of the twentieth century, Rudolf Bultmann. Bultmann's central argument is that the Fourth Gospel was originally written as an anti-sacramental document, and he can immediately point to the complete absence of words of institution and of any command to baptize in this gospel. He has a wide following among fellow German scholars (for example, Eduard Schweizer, Helmut Koester, and Eduard Lohse) and also, in subsequent years, among North American scholars. Only a minority would claim that the Fourth Gospel is "anti-sacramental, but some would suggest that it was non-sacramental. There is an important difference between polemics and absence. For Bultmann it would be foreign to John's theological vision to present a human "cultic place" where one could have some sort of union with Christ. The Fourth Evangelist was only interested in a personal union with Jesus through a commitment based purely on a loss of self (and thus the gaining of authenticity) that comes about in a radical commitment of faith to the fact that God is made known in the scandal of the Word (the *das*) of the proclamation, and not the *was*).²⁶ Even Bultmann,

perceptible, references to further facts of salvation with which these once-for-all key events are bound up."

²³ Brown, "The Johannine Sacramentary," 55.

²⁴ See the references in nn. 4 and 5 above for further discussion and details.

²⁵ See Cullmann, *Early Christian Worship* 7-36 for his analysis of what he calls the "basic characteristics" of that worship. He is over-optimistic, and many scholars would argue against some of his firm historical conclusions because they seem to be based on fragile evidence. For a better assessment see Ferdinand Hahn, *The Worship of the Early Church*. Translated by David E. Green (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1973).

²⁶ See Rudolf Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament*, 2 vols. (London: SCM, 1955) 2:70-92.

however, would admit that there are three places in the gospel where the sacraments of baptism and Eucharist are explicitly mentioned:

John 3:5: "no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit"

John 6:51c-58: There are apparent eucharistic possibilities in almost every verse. The main ones are:

v. 51c: "the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh."

v. 53: "unless you eat (φάγετε) the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you."

v. 54: "Those who eat (τρώειν) my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life."

v. 56: "Those who eat (τρώειν) my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them."

John 19:34: The blood and water flowing from the pierced side of the crucified Christ, especially in light of 1 John 5:7-8: "There are three that testify: the Spirit and the water and the blood, and these three agree."

But for Bultmann not one of these passages belongs to the original gospel as the evangelist originally compiled it. They have all been added by what Bultmann calls an "ecclesiastical redactor."²⁷ In simple terms, he argues that these clearly sacramental passages have been added to an anti-sacramental gospel at a later stage in order to make it conform to the life and practice of the "greater Church."

We must be careful not to ridicule these suggestions. There are internal difficulties and tensions within the Fourth Gospel that need explanation. In John 6 there appears to be a contradiction in the positive use of the word "flesh" in vv. 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, and 56 and the negative use of the word in v. 63: "It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless," to the conservative hand of an ecclesiastical redactor may not, in the

²⁷ There is a commonly used verb available to speak of the human process of eating: εσθίειν and its aorist form φάγετε. The verb τρώειν is normally used in contexts where stress is given to the physical "munching" or "crunching" of food. It is more commonly used of animal feeding than of human. On this see Ceslas Spicq, "ΤΡΩΓΕΙΝ est-il synonyme de ΦΑΓΕΙΝ et de ΕΣΘΙΕΙΝ dans le Nouveau Testament?" *NTS* 26 (1979-80) 414-19.

²⁸ See Bultmann, *Theology* 2:3-14; idem, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, translated by G. R. Beasley-Murray (Oxford: Blackwells, 1971) 138-40; 300; 324-25; 325-28; 677-78. For an explanation of Bultmann's source theory see Moloney, *The Gospel of John* 85-86.

end, provide a satisfactory solution to the literary and theological tensions that abound in this gospel,²⁹ but they do take us back to a point made earlier: this gospel was not written overnight. It had a long history within the life and faith experience of a concrete Christian community. I am prepared to accept that the sacramental passages in 3:5, 6:51c-58, and 19:34 came into the Johannine tradition late rather than early, but I see no need to omit them from an authentic interpretation of the Johannine gospel as we now have it. Raymond E. Brown again summarized my position well when he wrote:

The recognition that some of the explicit Sacramental references belong to the final redaction does not mean any acceptance of the theory that the original Gospel was non-Sacramental or anti-Sacramental. It is a question of seeing different degrees of sacramentality in the work of the evangelist and that of the final redactor.³⁰

The two opposing positions I have just outlined show different methods of approach and different criteria. From Cullmann we must learn that the gospel as a whole is the life story of Jesus, and that there is often a subtle use of that life story *from the past* to root community practice *of the present* in his life. From Bultmann, however, we must also learn that the gospel may reflect a long and perhaps troubled se-

²⁹ Two important recent books on the Fourth Gospel have their starting point in an appreciation of Bultmann's approach to literary and theological tensions in the gospel. In the end each of these scholars parts ways with Bultmann, but this contemporary recognition of his asking the right questions tells of his ongoing significance to New Testament scholarship. See John Ashton, *Understanding the Fourth Gospel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), and Paul N. Anderson, *The Christology of the Fourth Gospel: Its Unity and Disunity in the Light of John 6*. WUNT 2nd ser. 78 (Tübingen: Mohr; Valley Forge, Pa.: Trinity Press International, 1996).

³⁰ And, I would add, the Spirit-filled journey of a community behind all the stages of development! For the citation see Brown, *John* 1:cxii. It is here that I would differ from the suggestions of Léon-Dufour, "Towards a Symbolic Reading." Ignoring all the recent work done on the Johannine community and its journey of faith, he insists, for example, that 3:5 and 6:53-58 would make perfect sense to a Jewish audience as they stand, and that there are no indications in the text itself (e.g., introduction of "water" into 3:5) to show a growing sacramental awareness within the Johannine community. See pp. 449-54. In the light of a more contemporary understanding of the developing theological awareness of the Johannine community I would argue for a growing awareness, reflected in a growing text. In the more than thirty years since Brown wrote his commentary and the almost twenty years since I first wrote this study both of us became less certain that we could distinguish between the evangelist and the redactor!

ries of internal and external conflicts, producing a gospel of extraordinary christological and ecclesiological complexity. I would like, now, to steer a middle course, offering four criteria for the discovery of sacramental teaching in the Fourth Gospel. The first two of these criteria are well-established and widely used. They are somewhat "external" to the material. They attempt to provide some reliable "rule of thumb" by which the exegete may work. In many ways these are rather "negative" criteria, and I suppose there is a danger that some important material will escape them. However, I believe that this is a sounder way to start an investigation, since it is possible that, once we establish a firmly based "minimum," more material might come to light because of its close contacts with that minimum.

The first criterion must be a rigorous search for elements in the text itself indicating that the author is referring to some form of sacramental ritual and symbol. For example, in John 3:5 there is the explicit reference to a "rebirth," the use of the word "water," and the idea of "entering the kingdom of God," expanding on the earlier statement in 3:3 about "seeing the kingdom of God." The same cannot be said, for example, of the curing of the paralytic in John 5:1-8. In fact, the restoration of the man (a positive element in itself) is not effected through water, but independently of it, simply at the word of Jesus: "Stand up, take your mat and walk" (v. 8). The tradition at the pool was that the water would heal (see v. 7). Jesus transcends that tradition and heals by the power of his word. The sequel to the miracle shows no further understanding or life of faith in the cured man; in fact, he appears to be extraordinarily obtuse. This lack of elements within the text itself makes a baptismal understanding of John 5 most unlikely.³¹ This becomes particularly clear when one looks to the curing of the man born blind in John 9, a story in many ways parallel to the cure in 5:1-8. Here the miracle is effected by contact with water at the pool of Siloam, which the evangelist then further explains as meaning "Sent" (v. 7). The cure is followed by a gradual movement to theological sight and light as the series of interrogations of the man leads him through a journey of confessions of faith:³²

- To his friends he says: "The man called Jesus" worked a miracle (9:11).
- To the Pharisees he says: "He is a prophet" (v. 17).

³¹ For a study of John 5, with detailed bibliography, see Moloney, *Son of Man* 68-86.

³² For further detail see *ibid.* 142-59.

- Under further interrogation from the Pharisees he retorts: "If this man were not *from God*" (v. 33).
- Finally, when Jesus seeks him out he is led to the fullness of sight: "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" He answered, "And who is he, *str?* Tell me, so that I may believe in him." Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he." He said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped him" (vv. 35-38).³³

The same explicit internal evidence can be found in the texts we have already mentioned several times: the eucharistic section in John 6 and the blood and water flowing from the pierced side of the crucified Jesus. There may be several others (the footwashing of 13:1-20; Jesus as the source of living water in 7:38) that, when subjected to detailed analysis, provide internal evidence of an original sacramental meaning.³⁴

This leads us to our second criterion, which must be applied in close association with the first: the use of certain passages in the liturgical practice, the literature, and the art of the early post-New Testament Church. The most significant use of this criterion has been by a Protestant scholar, Paul Niewalda, who argued that, given the internal difficulties and the never-ending disputes among scholars, we must accept that when Johannine symbolism is used by the early Church for its sacramental life and reflection we have every right to push that meaning back into the intention of the evangelist himself.³⁵ Care must be taken here. While this is a valid criterion, the argument must run in the other direction. If we find that a passage has the internal qualities of a sacramental message, and then we find that the early Church has clearly used it in this way, we have certainly made more firm the possible suggestions of the text itself. Great service has been done in this investigation by the remarkable commentary of Sir Edwyn Hoskyns, especially in his investigation of the early Church's use of John 9 and

³³ The movement from *κύριος* ("sir") to *Κύριος* ("Lord") in v. 38 indicates a decisive step into a public confession of faith.

³⁴ On this see the method advocated by Rudolf Schnackenburg, "Die Sakramente im Johannesevangelium," in Joseph Coppens et al., eds., *Congressus Biblicus Internationalis Catholicus de Re Biblica*, 2 vols. (Gembloux: Duculot, 1959) 2:235-54. He suggests that we first study the clearly sacramental passages and establish from them possible internal contacts with the more obscure texts. For my pursuit of this evidence in John 13 see Francis J. Moloney, "A Sacramental Interpretation of John 13:1-38," *CBCQ* 53 (1991) 237-56.

³⁵ Paul Niewalda, *Sakramentsymbolik im Johannesevangelium? Eine exegetisch-historische Studie* (Limburg: Lahn, 1958).

13.³⁶ This is an area where more research is needed. It appears to me that it will be of great assistance for a deeper understanding of Johannine sacramentalism if used in close connection with the hints and indications that come to us from our close study of the text itself.

These two criteria or "rules of thumb" could be regarded as an answer to the question: why does John say these things? A careful study of the use of language and the context within which it is used leads us to some firm conclusions about the sacramental or non-sacramental nature of certain Johannine passages. When we can trace these same passages into the sacramental life and liturgy of the early Church we have a further indication that we are dealing with sacramental material. However, it is not enough to look to the words and context, asking: "why does John say these things?" We must go a step farther and ask: "why does John say these things in *this way*?" It strikes me that the most obvious sacramental material in the Fourth Gospel has been framed in a particular way. This needs to be investigated. Then one might further ask what caused the use of a consistent rhetorical pattern when referring to sacramental material. One of the reasons given for the exclusion of the clearly sacramental passages of 3:5, 6:5:1c-5:8, and 19:34 is that the passages are powerfully anti-didactic. In simple terms, this means that the gospel as a whole tends to stress the spiritual character of the faith commitment, and the later redactors have added passages that insist upon the tangible, physical nature of the flesh and blood of Jesus and the concrete reality of the ecclesial community. An over-exaggeration of the "spiritual" message of the Fourth Gospel could lead to a position according to which the story was being read as if Jesus only "appeared" to be human. This would not do, and it had to be combated. This so-called anti-didactic tendency can be identified in all three major sacramental passages. They do read as, and must have sounded, somewhat polemical:

3:5: *No one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit.*

6:53: *Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you.*

9:34: The telling of the flowing water and blood from the side of the pierced Jesus is followed by a powerful insistence from the evangelist: "He who saw this has testified so that you also may believe. His testimony is true, and he knows that he tells the truth" (v. 35).

³⁶ Edwyn C. Hoskyns (ed. Francis N. Davey), *The Fourth Gospel* (2nd ed. London: Faber and Faber, 1947) 363-65; 443-46. It is unfortunate that many contemporary Johannine scholars no longer consult this stimulating commentary, which sometimes reads like the poetry of the text it examines.

Contemporary Johannine scholarship has been highlighted by a growth of interest in the christological experience of this community. Unlike the great commentaries from the first half of this century, which reached their zenith in the work of Bultmann, we can no longer speak of a basic gospel into which anti-docetic elements have been inserted. These elements, lying side by side in this gospel, reflect a long history, and the fascinating studies of that history cannot delay us here.³⁷ However, as an example (and there are points where I would disagree),³⁸ I offer a summary of the contribution of a scholar whose name has appeared frequently in these pages: Raymond E. Brown.³⁹ His speculations are found in a book that makes full use of both the gospel and the epistles to rediscover "the Community of the Beloved Disciple."⁴⁰ This is a fascinating and easy book to read, but careful scholarship and a close contact with contemporary literature is found on every page. The book reads so well, in fact, that one could be tempted to think that scholarship, after a series of hypotheses, had at last found the answer. Brown would be unhappy if we were to fall into this temptation.⁴¹ He argues that four stages of development can be traced: before the gospel, when the gospel was written, when the letters were written, and finally, after the letters. Through these four stages he rediscovers the following experiences of the community of the Beloved Disciple:

1. The original group, beginning within the circle of ex-disciples of John the Baptist, shows a typically early Christian "low" christology. Important at this stage is the figure of the Beloved Disciple, an ex-disciple of the Baptist, a follower of Jesus from the start, but not one of the Twelve. As I mentioned earlier, this is a change from his earlier understanding of the author of the gospel.⁴² This out-

³⁷ For an earlier survey and evaluation of this direction in Johannine studies see Francis J. Moloney, "Revisiting John," *ScrB* 11 (1980) 9–15.

³⁸ *Ibid.* 11–13

³⁹ See my remarks on Raymond E. Brown in the Preface.

⁴⁰ Although he had already made a series of significant contributions to this discussion in scholarly journals his argument is most easily found in his book, *The Community of the Beloved Disciple*. For full details see n. 8 above. This study has been further developed in his large-scale commentary on the Johannine letters: Raymond E. Brown, *The Epistles of John*. AB 30 (New York: Doubleday, 1982) 47–115.

⁴¹ As he remarks: "I warn the reader that my reconstruction claims at most probability; and if sixty percent of my detective work is accepted, I shall be happy indeed" (Brown, *The Community of the Beloved Disciple* 7).

⁴² See above, and especially n. 8.

standing historical personality, the founding father of the community, serves as a link between the historical Jesus and the Johannine community.

2. After the admission of Samaritan and other "anti-Temple" groups, a conflict with "the Jews" begins (see 4:1-42). This leads eventually to the development of a "higher" christology, especially in the use of *Εγώ ειμι* in an absolute sense and the idea of pre-existence. Both of these elements come from the Jewish literary and theological background of the community but were applied only to God and to Torah. The Johannine community applies them to Jesus.
3. As the gospel is written the community takes a final stance against those whom they would regard as nonbelievers: "the world," "the Jews," and those who still adhere to the baptism of John the Baptist. Also included in the community's list of "nonbelievers" were some groups who, in other circles, would have been regarded as believers. Brown calls them "crypto-Christians." They were Jews who believed in Jesus as the Messiah but remained in the synagogue. They were also members of Jewish Christian communities who would not confess the "high" Johannine christology. Finally, these "crypto-Christians," for the Johannine community, also came from what might be termed "the greater Church," the Christians who followed the less charismatic line of James and the Jerusalem party.⁴³

The community, having taken its stance over against those "outside" their ranks, now began to experience serious internal struggles. These divisions grew from possible but conflicting interpretations of the Johannine gospel. A careful study of the letters shows that there were two groups involved, and both seemed to be using the gospel, but in different ways. In the areas of christology, ethics, eschatology, and pneumatology the letters show a historicizing, more conservative approach than the gospel. The author(s) of the letters are moving in the direction of "the greater Church," while the "opponents" are accused of de-historicizing, eliminating all the obligations that ethics, eschatology, and a true life in the Spirit must produce. They are moving in the direction of what was later known as docetic Gnosticism.⁴⁴

⁴³ There is increasing contemporary interest in (and a growing appreciation for) James and the Jerusalem church. For a recent comprehensive study see John Painter, *Just James. The Brother of Jesus in History and Tradition*. Studies in Personalities of the New Testament (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1997).

⁴⁴ See Francis J. Moloney, *James to Jude*. The Peoples' Bible Commentary (Oxford: Bible Reading Fellowship, 1999) 164-67.

synagogue prayers, the "Eighteen Benedictions" (*shemoneh esreh*). As we have no access to the original form of the blessing, it is impossible to be certain about its exact form. According to modern reconstructions from the available sources it ran something like this: "For apostles may there be no hope, and may the Nazarenes and the heretics suddenly perish."⁴⁶ Everyone attending the Synagogue had to pray this prayer loudly, and thus it became a sort of *shibboleth*. Anyone who failed to accept this "blessing" could be identified as a follower of Jesus, the Christ, and was to be turned out of the synagogue. It is difficult to determine the exact date of the decision taken at Jamnia, but the Eighteen Benedictions, their order, and the *Birkat ha-minim* are associated with Rabbi Gamaliel II (*b. Ber.* 28b-29a), thus sometime after 85 seems to be most likely.

There has always been some difficulty in determining how rapidly this practice was implemented by the synagogues of the diaspora. This doubt has led, in the twenty years since this essay was originally written, to increasing scholarly concern regarding the relationship between the events that might have taken place at Jamnia in the mid '80s of the first Christian century and the emerging Johannean community. There are some who doubt that the events credited to Rabbi Gamaliel II ever happened, or that, if they did, they had anything to do with "the Nazarenes."⁴⁷ I am now prepared to accept that there may be no link between the formal introduction of the *Birkat ha-minim* into the Eighteen Benedictions and the emergence of the Fourth Gospel. But the text of the gospel makes it clear that at least for the members of the *Johannean community* a point of no return had been reached. They had to declare themselves for Jesus as the Christ, and in doing so lose all formal contact with Judaism. The experience of the Johannean community may have been a very local experience, but John 9:22, 12:42, and 16:2 make

⁴⁶ The original wording of this "blessing" cannot be exactly determined, as it has understandably come down to us in various corrupted forms. For the reasons (Palestinian and Babylonian), see Str-B 4:211-14. On the question of the expulsion from the synagogue see 293-333. For the history of these benedictions and the conflict the insertion of the benediction against the heretics (*Birkat ha-minim*) caused, see George Foote Moore, *Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era* 2 vols. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1958) 1:289-96. For his reconstruction of the twelfth benediction, which I have followed, see p. 292 n. 8.

⁴⁷ For a good survey of this discussion see Pieter W. van der Horst, "The *Birkat ha-minim* in Recent Research," *ExpTim* 105 (1993-94) 363-68. Most recently see the thorough presentation by Michael Labahn, *Jesus als Lehrendespendent: Untersuchungen zu einer Geschichte der johanneischen Tradition anhand ihrer Wundergeschichte*. BZNW 98 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1999) 30-41.

in this kind of blunt summary the skill of Brown's analysis or, as he himself describes it, his "detective work" is lost. However, I hope I have presented an accurate synthesis of the main lines of his argument, an indication of how contemporary Johannean scholarship has become sensitive to the lives, loves, and experiences of the community itself in an attempt to understand that community's gospel.

While discussing Brown's contribution I mentioned a group called "crypto-Christians," describing some of them as Jews who believed but remained in the Synagogue; Jewish Christians who would not take the step "across the street" into the Johannean community (see 12:42). Here, it appears to me, we are in touch with the reason for the polemical nature of the most obviously sacramental passages. Again I would like to dwell briefly on the situation in the life of the Johannean church that created such a situation.

Along with many contemporary scholars I see the consistent Johannean conflict with "the Jews" as the clearest indication of "when" the gospel was written, and one of the main reasons "why" it was written.⁴⁵ Until quite recent times it has been almost axiomatic to link the emergence of the Fourth Gospel with the formal expulsion of Christians from synagogue practice. Faced with the perseverance of a sect in its midst that confessed that Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ, the synagogue at Jamnia, which became the legal and intellectual center of Rabbinic Judaism after the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 C.E., called upon all faithful Jews to make a public condemnation of the followers of Jesus. To do this they inserted a "benediction" (called the *Birkat ha-minim*, i.e., "the blessing of the heretics") into one of their important

⁴⁵ The following argument, briefly presented here, has been accepted, for example, by C. K. Barrett, *St John* 127-28; Brown, *John* 1:ixxiv-xxv; Hoskyns, *The Fourth Gospel* 360-62; Lindars, *John* 147; Siegfried Schulz, *Das Evangelium nach Johannes*. NTD 4 (Göttingen, Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1972) 144-45. It has been firmly rejected by John A. T. Robinson, *Redating the New Testament* (London, SCM, 1976) 292-98. See, on this discussion, Francis J. Moloney, "The Fourth Gospel's Presentation of Jesus as 'the Christ' and J. A. T. Robinson's Redating," *DRev* 95 (1977) 239-53.

It is clear that this is no simple banning from the Synagogue (see below).⁴⁸ However, local the ban may have been, the members of the Johannine community were expelled from the heritage of Israel.⁴⁹

It is often argued that John 9 reflects the drama of the Jewish-Christian church subsequent to the decision of the Synagogue at Jamnia.⁵⁰ The parents of the man born blind refused to answer the questions of the Jewish authorities about how their son was given his sight "because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue" (9:22). It is important to notice that the Greek behind the innocuous English "be put out of the synagogue" is ἀποσυνάγωγος γένηται. This term is found only in the Fourth Gospel (see also 12:42 and 16:2). When the man himself encounters the Jews, he claims: "If this man were not from God, he could do nothing" (9:33), and he is "driven out" (v. 34: ἐξέβαλον αὐτὸν ἔξω). Once a link is made between this event reported in John 9 and a decisive break between official Judaism and Johannine Christians (however local this breakdown might have been), other passages in the gospel take on a new sense:

12:42: "Nevertheless many, even of the authorities, believed in him.

But because of the Pharisees they did not confess it, for fear that they would be put out of the synagogue (ἀποσυνάγωγοι γένωνται)."

16:2: "They will put you out of the synagogues (ἀποσυναγωγούς ποιήσουσιν ὑμᾶς). Indeed, an hour is coming when those who kill you will think that by doing so they are offering worship to God."

In both of these passages the term ἀποσυνάγωγος, found only in the Fourth Gospel, again appears. Barnabas Lindars has described the

⁴⁸ See Judith M. Lieu, *Image and Reality. The Jews in the World of the Christians in the Second Century* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1996), for a positive assessment of Jewish-Christian relationships in the second century. As the author acknowledges, the book suffers from its being a study of Christian sources. What the Jewish side of the debate looked like remains untold.

⁴⁹ Bultmann, *The Gospel of John* 555, commenting on 16:2, puts it well: "The period we are concerned with is that in which the Christian community is forced to free itself from association with the Synagogues, and thus to abandon the protection of a *religio licita*. It is a period which stretches approximately from Paul to Justin, and one cannot pinpoint it any more exactly than that." The response of the Fourth Gospel to this situation is particularly clear in John 5–10. On this see Francis J. Moloney, *Signs and Shadows. Reading John 5–12* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996).

⁵⁰ See, for example, J. Louis Martyn, *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel* (2nd ed. Nashville: Abingdon, 1979) 24–62; Brown, *John* 1:380; Lindars, *John* 347.

situation well when he claims that John "speaks of discipleship in terms of the conditions with which his readers were familiar."⁵¹ Lindars accepted the link with the *Birkat ha-minim*. But however local the breakdown between the Synagogue and the Johannine Christians may have been, his words suit the situation.⁵²

It appears to me that a third criterion for determining sacramental material in the Johannine gospel should be its polemical tone. The Johannine community wanted to make it clear that to believe in Jesus meant more than to believe that he was the Messiah. The members of the synagogue who had come to believe that Jesus was the Messiah (see 12:42) had to do more than rest within the comfort of their traditional customs and way of life. Belief in the Johannine Jesus called for a crossing of the road from the synagogue through a public insertion of oneself into a new community. The public gestures *par excellence* would have been the reception of baptism as an "entry" into the community (see 3:5) and public participation in the eucharistic celebrations of the Johannine community (see 6:53–54). John W. Miller, in an unpublished Princeton doctoral dissertation, has put it well:

The observance of baptism and eucharist suggest a worshiping community sharing in a cultic life. In view of John's understanding of the unity of the Church as a visible unity and his criticism of secret disciples, it is likely that the sacraments were important as a means by which believers identified themselves with the visible community of the Church.⁵³

What a generation of scholars has taken as anti-docetic because of its polemical tone is not "anti" anything. It is an aggressive affirmation of the communitarian nature of the Johannine church, and the crucial role that baptism and Eucharist played in that community.⁵⁴

⁵¹ Lindars, *John* 347.

⁵² See David Rensberger, *Johannine Faith and Liberating Community* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1988) 26–27.

⁵³ John W. Miller, *The Concept of the Church in the Gospel according to John* (Diss. Princeton, 1976) 103. See also p. 98. Miller's suggestion, which I have developed here, needs more attention in this discussion.

⁵⁴ The *opposite* suggestion has been made by Kikuo Matsunaga, "Is John's Gospel Anti-Sacramental?" *NTS* 27 (1980–81) 516–24. Matsunaga also bases his contribution on the recent suggestions of Brown and Martyn. He argues that the Fourth Evangelist has eliminated certain synoptic passages (the baptism of Jesus and the words of institution) in a spiritualizing process. He did this so that the "dropouts" from the Johannine community would see that, above all, they should have been primarily committed to the high christology developed within the community and the subsequent "Word" of Jesus. It is a question of first things first, but not of anti-sacramentalism.

handled in various ways, through the teaching on the Paraclete (14:16-17, 25, 26; 15:26; 16:7-11, 13-15),⁵⁷ and Jesus' assurance of his continued presence and care throughout the last discourse (especially 13:31-14:31) and in his final prayer (especially 17:9-19). As the gospel comes to a close Jesus' final words address those who, living in the in-between time, will believe without seeing. The gospel was written to generate and support such life-giving belief (20:29-31).⁵⁸

This theme was noticed and discussed in a fine article by Celestin Charlier over forty years ago. I would like to paraphrase the title of his article as my final criterion for tracing sacramental material in the Fourth Gospel: "The presence of the absent one."⁵⁹ It is here that the suggestions of Oscar Cullmann again become important. He too had noticed that a central issue in this gospel was to indicate that what was happening in 14:26; 16:12).⁶⁰ While recognizing the value of this contribution, I would like to pursue it down a slightly different path. As one reads through the discourse of John 6:25-51b one hears again and again the theme spelled out most clearly in 6:40: "This is indeed the will of my Father, that all who see the Son and believe in him may have eternal life," and again in 6:46-48: "Not that anyone has seen the Father except the one who is from God; he has seen the Father. Very truly, I tell you, whoever believes has eternal life." One can sense an understandable reaction from an early Christian community faced with this teaching: "But where is he, that we may see him, and thus come to know the Father and possess eternal life?" The answer is given in 6:51c-58: in the broken bread and the poured wine of

⁵⁷ See Felix Porsch, *Pneuma und Wort. Ein exegetischer Beitrag zur Pneumatologie des Johannesevangeliums*. FTS 16 (Frankfurt: Josef Knecht, 1974). John Painter has taken up the suggestions of Brown and Martyn to show a developing understanding of the Paraclete, evidenced in the development of the farewell discourse's use of the concept. See John Painter, "Glimpses of the Johannine Community in the Farewell Discourses," *AusBR* 28 (1980) 21-38. He has developed his argument further in his "The Farewell Discourses and the History of Johannine Christianity," *NTS* 27 (1980-81) 525-43.

⁵⁸ See Francis J. Moloney, *Glory not Dishonor. Reading John 13-21* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1998) 175-81; idem, *The Gospel of John* 536-45.

⁵⁹ Celestin Charlier, "La présence dans l'absence (In 13,31-14,31)," *BVC* 2 (1953) 61-75. It is interesting to note that the same title has been taken up in a further study of the discourse by Secondo Migliasso, *La presenza dell'Assente. Saggio di analisi letterario-strutturale e di sintassi teologica di Gv. 13,31-14,31* (Rome: Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 1979).

⁶⁰ See Cullmann, *Early Christian Worship* 47-50.

We come now to our final suggestion, and I can only outline another

criterion that could assume major proportions in further discussions of sacramental material in the Fourth Gospel. It was, I believe, the most important reason for the inclusion of such material in the Johannine story. We must again fix attention firmly upon the situation of the Johannine community. Through the complexities of this gospel one can trace a central, consistent christological and ecclesiological message. A God who is love (1 John 4:8, 16) loved the world so much as to send his only Son (3:16-17). This Son, Jesus Christ, has a task (*ἔργον*) to bring to completion (see especially 4:34 and 17:4, along with the many passages in the gospel that use words coming from *τέλος*). That task is to make God known, so that human beings can come to eternal life (17:2-3). Jesus performs this task in many ways, through his discourses (*λόγος* and *ῥῆμα*), through his "signs" (*σημεῖα*), and consummately through the supreme act of love when he is "lifted up" on the cross (see 3:13-14; 8:28; 12:32; 13:1; 15:13; 19:30). Jesus not only "speaks" and "gives signs" of his oneness with a Father who is love (see 10:30, 38). He loves in a consummate fashion.⁶¹ Because this is the case Jesus is the unique revealer of God (see especially 1:18; 3:13; 6:46; 8:38), and thus the Fourth Evangelist demands that believers "look upon" Jesus to see the revelation of the Father. This is promised in the programmatic 1:51: "you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man," and repeated like an antiphon through the whole gospel (see 1:18; 4:45; 5:37; 6:2; 8:38; 57; 9:37; 11:40; 14:7; 9; 15:24; 16:16; 17; 19:22, 35), climaxing in the final words of the scene at the cross: "They will look on the one whom they have pierced" (19:37).⁶²

This is all very well, but for the Johannine community, as the first Christian century drew to a close, Jesus was no longer present! It is clear that the "absence" of the physical revelation of the glory of God in the person of Jesus posed a problem for the community. This is

⁶¹ This is involved in John's continual use of verbs and nouns that go back to the word *τέλος*. Especially significant are 13:1 (*εἰς τέλος*) and 19:30 (*τετέλεσται*). Sandra Schneiders has long insisted that we should look more closely at this feature of the gospel. See especially her article, "Symbolism and the Sacramental Principle in the Fourth Gospel," 221-35. See now my study, "God so loved the world." The Jesus of John's Gospel," in this volume, pp. 167-80.

⁶² This is made clear by the continual significant use of the verb *πάω*. On this see Cor Traets, *Voir Jésus et le Père en Lui selon l'Évangile de Saint Jean*. *Analecta Gregoriana* 159 (Rome: Gregorian University Press, 1967), and Moloney, *Son of Man* 155.

their eucharistic celebrations. The Eucharist, for the Johannine community, was the presence of the absent one.⁶¹

The same technique is used in 19:34. The Passion account has culminated with the exaltation of Jesus as King on his cross (19:17-21). There he has founded his Church (19:25-27) and brought to perfection the task his Father had given him (19:28-30). That is the Johannine understanding of a past event, but how is it to become part of the experience of the Church now? The answer is found in 19:34 as the blood and water, the life-giving sacraments of Eucharist and baptism, are described as flowing down upon the nascent Church from the King lifted up on his throne.⁶² It is in the sacraments of baptism and Eucharist that the Johannine church can find the presence of the absent one.

My reflections have already been lengthy, yet they remain an initial sketch of what could and should be said. I have limited most of my testing of these last two criteria to the universally accepted sacramental passages of 3:5, 6:51c-58, and 19:34. It is better to start with established material, to test the criteria there, and then move into areas that are not quite so clear . . . but that will be a task to be faced on some other occasion.⁶³

⁶¹ On this see Moloney, *Son of Man* 87-107; idem, "John 6 and the Celebration of the Eucharist," *DRev* 93 (1975) 243-51.

⁶² See Edward Malatesta, "Blood and Water from the Pierced Side of Christ," in Tragan, ed., *Segni e Sacramenti nel Vangelo di Giovanni* 164-81. This is a well-documented study with a fine appendix on the patristic use of John 19:34 (see our second criterion) on pp. 179-81.

⁶³ This is a method advocated some years ago by Schnackenburg, "Die Sakramente im Johannesevangelium," 235-54 (see n. 34 above). Since writing the above I have pursued this agenda in a number of Johannine studies. See especially *Belief in the Word. Reading John 1-4* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993); *Signs and Shadows* (1996); *Glory not Dishonor* (1998); *The Gospel of John* (1998).

CHAPTER

JOHN 18:15-27: A JOHANNINE VIEW OF THE CHURCH

The internal logic of John 18:15-27 has long been a problem. Why are the three denials of Peter (John 18:15-18 and 25-27) separated by the report of the Jewish interrogation of Jesus by Annas (18:17-24)? Mark and Matthew both report Peter's arrival at the house of Caiaphas (Mark 14:53-54; Matt 26:57-58) before Jesus' Jewish interrogation by Caiaphas (Mark 14:55-65; Matt 26:59-68). There is no mention of Annas, who was not the high priest,¹ and once they come to the report of Peter's denials all three are told in sequence (Mark 14:66-72; Matt

¹ On the historical problems involved in the author's use of Annas rather than Caiaphas see C. K. Barrett, *The Gospel according to St John* (2nd ed. London: S.P.C.K., 1978) 524-25. For M. W. G. Stibbe, *John as Storyteller. Narrative Criticism and the Fourth Gospel*. SNTSMS 73 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992) 173, the trial before Annas is historical, coming directly from the witness of Lazarus, the Beloved Disciple. Better is Barrett's conclusion: "it is difficult to resist the conclusion that the trial narratives have been rewritten by John in order to bring out what, in his opinion, were the points at issue" (*St John* 525). See also Barnabas Lindars, *The Gospel of John*. NCB (London: Oliphants, 1972) 544-47. However, on the continuing use of ἀρχιερεῖς for former high priests see Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John*. 2 vols. AB 29, 29a (New York: Doubleday, 1966-70) 2:820-21. For an exhaustive overall discussion of the issue see idem, *The Death of the Messiah. From Gethsemane to the Grave. A Commentary on the Passion Narratives in the Four Gospels*. 2 vols. ABRL (New York: Doubleday, 1994) 1:404-11.

