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CHAPTER

19 The Person of Jesus Christ in the Gospel of John

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Abstract

In the Gospel of John, the narrative is determined and driven by two issues: (1) the nature of the person of Jesus Christ and (2) the conflict between faith and unbelief. The Prologue at the start already gives basic answers to these questions. In the first part of the Gospel (John 1:19–12: 50), the miracle stories shape the narrative and theological centre: in the signs, Jesus turns to humanity. In the second part (John 13:1–20: 31), the teaching and suffering of Jesus Christ dominate. The Christological titles are embedded in the whole narrative. Narrative Christology and titular Christology are linked in John, but at the same time, the Christological titles have their own significance because, as storehouses of knowledge and bearers of meaning, they express concisely who and what Jesus Christ is for believers. Finally, theological concerns determine the structure of the Fourth Gospel.

Keywords: [Jesus Christ](#), [Johannine Story](#), [Prologue](#), [Logos](#), [incarnation](#), [miracles](#), [Farewell Discourses](#), [Paraclete](#), [Passion](#), [Crucified Son of God](#)

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Introduction

The person of Jesus Christ is the centre of the Gospel of John, since it was written to elicit faith in Jesus Christ, the Son of God (20:30–31). The Gospel as a whole can be understood as a strategy of faith (Zumstein 2004: 31–45), in which the unity of the Father and the Son form the basis (10:30) and the recognition of the saving activity of God in the sending of the Son (3:16–17) is the goal of the presentation. All hermeneutical perspectives, literary strategies, and the content have the purpose of eliciting faith, strengthening it, and leading it to new insights. This basic conception is unfolded on three levels, which are intertwined with each other in various ways, but which can still be distinguished: 1) the level of the narrative; 2) the level of the conceptual density in the Christological titles; and 3) the level of the theological themes.

The Johannine Story of Jesus Christ

In the Gospel of John, the story is determined by two issues throughout (Culpepper 1983; Stibbe 1994): 1) The issue of the person of Jesus Christ ('Who is this human being?': *tis estin ho anthrōpos*; cf. 5:12). Faith knows about the double origin of Jesus, for he is not only the son of Joseph (6:42) but also the Son of God (1:34; etc.). This insight is presented throughout the Gospel. At the same time, however, John knows that not only faith but also unfaith is a possible reaction to Jesus. For this reason, 2) the conflict between faith and unbelief is the second major issue of the Gospel. Together they shape the narrative structure and drive and configure the action.

p. 312 The Prologue

In the Fourth Gospel Jesus Christ is present from the very beginning and yet comes only gradually into view within the narrative. The Prologue (1:1–18) first presents Jesus as Logos (*logos* = 'word, speech').¹ There he is decisively assigned to the divine sphere because he is pre-existent, already in the beginning with God, and the mediator of creation. John 1:14 represents a further intensification: the pre-existent and divine Logos comes fully into created reality, into the world, and becomes a part of it. In the Logos, Jesus Christ, the eternal and almighty God became really human; he gives himself over to lowliness, corporeality, and thus to transience and suffering. His 'worldliness' is thus a defining element of the Christian view of God. God opens himself to the world, he enters into it, and as the creator of life he shares with human beings life in all its dimensions. The truth of God (1:14, 17) is thus an 'enfleshed' truth, and only as such accessible to humanity.² At the same time the following point also applies: the Logos does not give up his divinity in the incarnation, because especially in the Incarnate One the divine glory, mercy and truth shine through (1:14–17). Jesus was truly human and remained at the same time truly divine. This permanent double structure of the divine and the human proves just as decisive for the entire Johannine story of Jesus Christ as does the conflict between belief and unbelief. The Prologue tells of both, i.e. of the rejection of the Logos and thus of unbelief (1:11, 'He came to his own and his own received him not'), but also of the new status of those who believe (1:12, 'But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God'). The theological themes of the Prologue will all be repeated in the remainder of the Gospel. The evangelist always either directly or indirectly refers to his fundamental text, the Prologue, which can be therefore be referred to as a beginning that is continuously present in the narrative.

The First Main Section of the Gospel (1:19–12:50)

p. 313 In the first main section of the Gospel after the Prologue, the character of Jesus comes gradually into view in 1:19–34. Firstly, the unbelief evident in the behaviour of the delegation from Jerusalem is highlighted (1:19–28); by contrast, the Baptist fulfils his role (cf. 1:6–8) as a witness obligated to the truth of the Christ event. Precisely at the point where the Johannine Jesus first comes explicitly into view, he appears as the Crucified One. The Baptist says, ‘Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world’ (John 1:29b). The narrative resumption of the metaphor of ‘bearing’ in John 19:17 (‘he went out, bearing his own cross’) illustrates the relationship: Jesus carries his cross to ↪ the execution site itself. It is the cross that as the place of the lifegiving death of Jesus gives the entire story of Jesus Christ in John perspective. Thus, already at the beginning the end is present; the listeners or readers know that the way of the pre-existent and incarnate Logos leads to the cross. To be sure, Jesus enters the narrative stage without saying anything, but in 1:38, he asks the decisive question: ‘What do you seek?’. One can understand the entire Gospel as a response to that question. The search for salvation and eternal life has now come to an end. With the call of the disciples, however, faith comes to the fore, because the disciples have found the Messiah, the Son of God and King of Israel (John 1:35–51)

In John 2:1–11 Jesus comes fully to the fore as an independent actor, not coincidentally with a miracle. In John, Jesus’ miracles are called ‘signs’ (*sēmeia*; sing. *sēmeion*), because they point to the person who performs them: Jesus Christ, the Son of God. The miracle stories form a narratological and theological centre of John’s Gospel (Schnelle 2016a). They form a *narratological centre* in the sense that John has integrated seven miracle stories into the first main section of his Gospel. Following Gen. 2:2 (‘on the seventh day God finished his work which he had done’), the number seven is considered the number of fullness and completion. One can speak of a string of signs in the first main section of the Gospel. Together with the discourses of Jesus, the miracles form the narrative basis of the Fourth Gospel, because they clarify both the question of the origin and thus that the identity of Jesus. Each type of miracle in John occurs only once and individual miracles occur throughout Jesus’ public ministry (cf. 2:1–11; 4:46–54; 5:1–9a,b; 6:1–15; 6:16–25; 9:1–41; 11:1–44). At the same time, the Johannine miracles become in their telling successively denser, since the traditional miracle stories are in the course of the Gospel increasingly intertwined with theological issues so that a theological intensification occurs from the relatively short wine miracle at Cana (2:1–11) to the lengthy ‘baroque’ narrative of the resurrection of Lazarus (11:1–44). Within this conception, the miracle stories do two things above all: they strengthen the dramatic element and they make a connection with the Passion Narrative. Miracles form the narrative foundation which in the self-revelations of Jesus will lead to the recognition that he has his source and origin in God, that he is the Word of God, the Son of God, the Son of Man sent from the Father, and the bringer of divine life. The miracle stories also form a *theological centre*: because Jesus turns to human beings especially in his miracles, the notion of the recognizable sign is a prominent element of the incarnation Christology of the Fourth Evangelist. Miracles clarify a central aspect the Johannine understanding of Christ, i.e. the saving nearness of the divine in the Incarnate One who created life as mediator of creation (1:3), who is life (1:4), and gives life. The evangelist does not relativize the signs, but integrates them into his total theological conception as visible actions of the giver of life, Jesus Christ. At the same time, five motifs are particularly important: 1) miracles and the revelation of ‘glory’ (2:11; 11:4, 40); 2) miracles and the unity of the Father and the Son (5:20–36; 6:29, 30); 3) miracles and faith (2:11; 10:40–42); 4) miracles and unbelief (11:45; 12:37); 5) miracles and the Passion (2:4c; 11:53).

p. 314 A surprising narrative move is the placement of the Cleansing of the Temple at the beginning of Jesus’ public ministry (2:13–22; cf. Mark 11:15–19). John thereby places the ↪ ministry of Jesus even more clearly under the perspective of cross and resurrection. The narrative thread of 1:29, 36; 2:1a, 4c is picked up and amplified. A similar narrative method appears in John 1:33; 3:1–12: Jesus is first presented as a bearer of the Spirit (1:33), whereas baptism appears in the conversation with Nicodemus (3:1–12) as the place where

believers through the gift of the spirit share in the heavenly world opened up by Jesus (3:5). There are also distinct structural agreements between the encounter stories in 3:1–12 and 4:1–42: In both cases, people are gradually introduced by Jesus to faith. At the same time, John connects the two stories by the use of antithetical parallelism (man—woman; Jew—Samaritan; member of the Sanhedrin—social outsider).

In John 5, the ever-increasing conflict between Jesus and the Jews begins (cf. 5:16, 18; 7:1, 25, 40ff; 8:44), which culminates in the decision of the Sanhedrin to put Jesus to death (11:53).³ Characteristic for the narrative style are now the discourses of Jesus, in which he has to deal increasingly with objections to his person and his mission. At the same time, it is becoming increasingly clear for the listener or reader of the Gospel that the Father and the Son are one and that only the Son acts with the authority of the Father (5:18–20). Especially in 5:17–47; 6:26–58, 59; 8:12–59; 10:1–39, the discourses serve to dramatize the event; in John 5, 6, and 10 a miracle story provides the starting point (5:1–9; 6:1–15, 16–25; 9:1–41). Literarily, this interlocking of miracle and discourse serves the specified themes and the dramatization; theologically, the idea of inner connectedness and mutual interpretation of sign and word dominate. The deed illustrates the word and the word the deed. In the discourses, the key issue is the legitimacy of the claim of Jesus Christ to be the Son sent by God (5:19, 37, 43; 6:29, 39, 46; 8:42). Only he has seen God (6:46) and he is the bread of life that has come down from heaven (6:35, 38, 48, 51). This claim conflicts with the appeal of the Jews to God (8:41), to Scripture (6:31), and to be the legitimate children of Abraham (8:30–59). They ‘grumble’ (6:41f.) and want to kill Jesus (5:18; 7:1, 19f; 8:37, 40, 59; 10:31, 32, 39), whereby the Pharisees exhibit particularly hostile behaviour (7:32, 45, 47f; 8:13). The allegations of the opponents are several: Jesus breaks the Sabbath and propounds ditheism (5:18); he blasphemes God by making himself God though he is only a human being (John 10:33, 36). Moreover, his earthly lineage as the son of Joseph (6:42), his origin in Galilee (7:27, 52), his illegitimate birth (8:41), and his lack of education (7:15) argue against his claim. According to the opponents, furthermore, he is a Samaritan, has an evil spirit (8:48, 52; 10:20), and seems to be crazy (7:20; 10:20). According to them, he merely testifies to himself (8:13) and pretends to be greater than Abraham (8:53). The almost identical terms in 5:18 and 10:33 (‘You make yourself God’) serve as brackets and clearly express the central point of contention from the perspective of opponents: the illegitimate self-aggrandizement of Jesus. Over against this allegation stands the distinctive Johannine insight of faith: ‘I and the Father are one’ (10:30). The Son does not act on his own authority, but on behalf of his Father’s.

p. 315 **The Second Main Section of the Gospel (13:1–20:31)**

In the second main section of the Gospel Jesus’ teaching and suffering predominate. The Footwashing episode (13:1–20) has a key position in the structure of the Gospel. As a prologue to the Gospel’s second main section and as the main gateway to the Passion, the Footwashing⁴ as a symbolic narrative picks up the previous references to the Passion and directs attention decisively to the approaching fate of Jesus. Furthermore, the central theme of the Farewell Discourses is already present in 13:1–20: the imminent departure to the Father (cf. 13:1, 3), which undergoes an interpretation in the washing of the feet by Jesus for the community external to the text. The Footwashing as the anticipatory illustration of the fate of Jesus should motivate the community to act in the time of Jesus’ absence as Jesus did: from love.

A special theological and literary device of the Fourth Evangelist are the two Farewell Discourses (13:31–14:31; 15:1–16:33).⁵ Within the overall composition of the Gospel the theme of the Farewell Discourses, Jesus’ departure, comes as no surprise, given the use of the central keyword ‘to go away’ (*hupagein*) earlier in the Gospel (3:8; 7:33f; 8:14:21; 13:3; 14:4f., 28; 16:5, 10, 17; further 3:14f; 12:32). The Farewell Discourses treat a multitude of different matters from the perspective of Jesus’ departure to the Father: the future glorification of the Son, the commandment of love, the revelation of the Father to the Son, the tension of not seeing and believing, the abiding presence of Jesus in the Paraclete, the hatred of the world, the threatening persecution, and finally the reunion with Jesus and the joy associated with that. Above all, the question why Jesus had to go away is answered: because otherwise the Paraclete, the Holy Spirit, would not

come (16:7). It is first exclusively God who sends the Paraclete (14:16), but at the end it is the Son, about to die and be glorified, who sends the Paraclete (16:7). In the five Paraclete texts (14:16, 26; 15: 26; 16:7–11, 13–15), as in the Farewell Discourses as a whole, it becomes clear that despite all the threats the future belongs to those who believe, because they are the future of the Father, of the Son, and of the Spirit.

In the Farewell Discourses Jesus has deciphered the present and the future for the disciples and thereby also the text-external community of readers within the horizon of the Paraclete and the Parousia. In John 17, he turns in prayer to the Father. This is the appropriate place for the evangelist and his community to bring to expression on the lips of Jesus fundamental convictions of their faith and their relationship to the world. The Footwashing (especially 13:1–3) and the great prayer of Jesus to the Father (ch. 17) together form an inclusion to the farewell scene, because in both cases the onset of the hour forms the starting point and Jesus' work for his own is the focus. He asks the Father to preserve both the vulnerable internal unity and the threatened external existence of the community.

p. 316 The listener or reader of the Gospel does not encounter the *Passion of Christ* unprepared,⁶ since the numerous prior references to Passion (1:29, 36; 2:1a, 4c; 3:14; 6:51; 7:6; 8:21; 10:11, 15, 17; 11:13; 12:16; 15:13) and the repeated references to the murderous intentions of the Jews (5:18; 7:32; 8:59; 10: 31; 11:46–53) prepare the whole ministry of Jesus for the Passion. In addition, by the placement of the Cleansing of the Temple early in the Gospel (2:14–22), by the reference to Gethsemane (12:27f), and by the Footwashing as an anticipation of the fate of Jesus (13:1–20), the evangelist has created a comprehensive, explicitly theological horizon for understanding the Passion of Jesus as the goal of his work. A peculiar double structure characterizes the Johannine Passion Narrative: On the one hand, Jesus shows himself in control of the event by not evading the arrest (18:1–11), confidently standing up to the high priests (18:12–27) and Pilate (18:28–40; 19:6–16a), and appointing his successor while dying (19:25–27). His legs are not broken (19:33) and he is buried like a true king (19:38–42). On the other hand, Jesus comes into view in the Johannine Passion Narrative as someone who suffers: He is scourged and appears as a figure of scorn (19:1–5). He carries his cross himself (19:16b, 17), suffers agonies (19:28, 29) and while nailed to the cross utters the words 'It is finished' (19:30).

The centre of the Passion Narrative is the trial before Pilate. In dramatic indoor (18:33–38a; 19:1–3, 8–12) and outdoor scenes (18:29–32, 38b–40; 19:4–7, 13–16a), the question of Jesus' true kingship is clarified. The repeated movement of Pilate back and forth forms the organizing principle for the seven scenes. The exterior scenes concern the charge brought against Jesus and the argumentation arising from this, whereas the indoor scenes concern Jesus' kingship. The spatial structure therefore has a symbolic dimension: while 'inside' Jesus appears as a true king, 'outside' the crowd calls for his death. As the revealer, witness, and embodiment of truth (18:36–38), Jesus is King. To his Kingdom belong all who have their origin in the truth. Not coincidentally, the concept of truth lies at the centre of the Johannine Passion Narrative. The trial of Jesus is not about power politics; it is all about the truth. The world denies the revelation of God (cf. Söding 1996). Ironically, the Jews do not recognize their true king (19:12) and Pilate officially tells the whole world the truth about Jesus of Nazareth with the inscription on the cross (19:19). The inscription on the cross is thereby transformed from a charge sheet into a title of honour.

The appearance narratives in John 20 are characterized by a double movement (cf. Koester and Bieringer 2008): There is, firstly, no mistaking an intensification of the presence of the risen Jesus in a new, unlimited corporeality. If the corporeality of the incarnate Jesus was a central theme of the Prologue, the seeing/looking at/beholding/observing (and understanding) of the corporeality of the Jesus who is ascending to the Father and the faith connected to it are in the centre of the last chapter of the Gospel. While Peter and the Beloved Disciple only see the linen cloths in the empty grave (20:1–10), Jesus appears to Mary Magdalene, though she is not allowed to touch him (20:11–18). Jesus shows his wounds to his disciples as proof (20:19–23), and Thomas is even encouraged to touch the wounds in order to experience palpably the identification of the crucified Jesus with the risen Jesus (20:20–24). There is, secondly, an opposite

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tendency evident with respect to the certainty of faith. While the Beloved Disciple believes without seeing, Mary Magdalene first believes when Jesus directly addresses her (20:16). Of the disciples it is said that they 'rejoiced' when they saw the appearance of Jesus (20:20b), and the doubt of Thomas must be overcome through the bodily presence of the risen Jesus. In this contrary movement, the Beloved Disciple ideally embodies the principle which now applies to the text-external audience: 'Blessed are those who do not see and yet believe' (20:29b).

In John 21, the editors of the Gospel speak.⁷ They let Jesus perform another miracle (21:1–14) and especially correct the relationship between the Beloved Disciple and Peter: in John 1–20, the Beloved Disciple always takes precedence over Peter, but now Peter three times receives the task of feeding the lambs / sheep of Jesus' (21:15–17). The Beloved Disciple as the interpreter of the Christ event and guarantor of the Johannine tradition is now also made the author of the whole Gospel, who will eventually be equated by the listeners or readers of the Gospel with one of the sons of Zebedee, John (21:24–25).

Christological Titles

The Christological titles are embedded in the narrative, but are also provided with a tradition-historical and theological significance. Narrative Christology and titular Christology are coupled in John, but at the same time the Christological titles have their own intrinsic meanings. They serve as storehouses of knowledge and carriers of interpretation and as such they bring concisely to expression who and what Jesus Christ is for believers.

Logos

In the Prologue (1:1–18), Jesus Christ, whose name first appears in 1:17, is identified with the *Logos* (*logos* = word/speech/reason). Thus, John first answers the central question of legitimacy for all cultures and religions through descent: the Logos Jesus Christ belongs from the beginning with God; he is with God and divine (1:1f.). The explicit reference to Gen 1:1 (LXX) and the allusions to the Jewish wisdom myth point the addressees to the fundamental importance of Old Testament-Jewish tradition. In addition, the Logos concept deliberately opens up another cultural space: the world of Greco-Roman philosophy and education. As a keyword in ancient Greek education, the term invokes an extensive allusion potential, which with the productive cooperation of the listener or reader influences the process of understanding. In identifying Jesus Christ with the central concept of Greco-Roman culture and education, the Prologue implicitly makes a unique claim: in the Logos Jesus Christ, ancient religious and intellectual history finds its culmination; he is the origin and the goal of all being. The Logos Jesus Christ originates from the original unity with God; he is God's creative power and the source and destination of all being. To be sure, the Logos appears only in 1:1, 14, but the Prologue is a beginning whose theological aims are presupposed in the entire Gospel.

Son of God

The central Christological title is *the Son of God* (*ho huios tou theou*). It is found 38 times in the Gospel. It is particularly suitable for testifying to the special relationship between God and Jesus of Nazareth, and must be understood as the basis for the essential unity of Father and Son (10:30) (see Hahn 1983). The title appears for the first time in its full revelatory–theological meaning in John 1:34 where the Baptist says: ‘And I have seen him and have testified that this is the Son of God’. It is then further developed in the course of the work (cf. especially the confessions of Nathanael in 1:49 and Martha in 11:27). The introduction of the title in 1:34 indicates the careful composition technique of the evangelist: a) None of the titles attributed to the Baptist in 1:20f., 25 can truly grasp the essence of Jesus; b) With the title ‘Son (of God) (*ho huios [tou theou]*)’, John refers to the closing verse of the Gospel (20:31), so that the title ‘Son of God’ encompasses the ministry of Jesus in its entirety, from the calling of the first disciples to the sending of the disciples (20:21). The content of the title includes the revelatory work of the Son, into whose hand the Father gave all things (3:35; 17:2). He alone brings knowledge of the Father (1:18; 6:46) and does the will of the Father (5:19f). His sending aims at the salvation of the world (3:16–17). Anyone who sees the Son and believes in him has eternal life (3:36; 6:40), true freedom (8:32, 36) and beholds the Father at the same time (12:45; 14:9). It is not surprising that the allegation of ditheism is occasioned by this title (5:17–23; 10:33–39; 19:7). The title is about the interpretation of the Father through the Son and the legitimation of the Son by the Father. The Son does nothing by himself, but knows himself to be legitimated completely by the Father’s will. The Son title gives succinct expression to the exclusive authority of Jesus Christ to be the revealer and the sole mediator of salvation.

Jesus Christ

p. 319 The title and name ‘*Jesus Christ*’ (*Iēsous Christos*) appears only in 1:17 and 17:3 (cf. 1 John 1:3; 2:1; 3:23; 4:2; 5:5, 20). In the absolute form, ‘Christ’ ([*ho*] *Christos* = the Messiah or the Anointed One; cf. 1:41; 4:25), which occurs 17 times in the Gospel, the focus is the ↪ Old Testament messianic expectation. The Baptist explicitly rejects the title for himself (1:20, 25; 3:28). The confessional statements in 4:29; 7:26, 41; 10:24 (‘This is the Christ’), 11:27 (Martha says: ‘Yes, Lord, I believe now that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who comes into the world’), and 20:31 give positive indications of the claim connected to this title: Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah promised in the Old Testament. Contentious issues related to this title are explicitly addressed: the origin of the Messiah (4:25; 7:27, 41f.), the working of miracles by the Messiah (7:31), and the eternal existence of the Messiah (12:41). The juxtaposition of ‘Son of God’ and ‘Christ’ in John 11:27 and 20:31 shows most clearly that for John messiahship and divine Sonship belong together; the Son of God is the Messiah, and vice versa.

Son of Man

Fully embedded in the overall conception of Johannine Christology is the title ‘the Son of man’ (*ho huios tou anthrōpou*), which occurs 13 times. The connection to the pre-existence and sending motif is clear in the ‘descending’ and ‘ascending’ of the Son of man (1:51; 3:13f; cf. 6:27, 53 with 6:33, 38, 41f., 50f., 58). John 6:62 explicitly expresses the pre-existence of the Son of man. As the one who descended from heaven and as the one who ascends there again, the Son of man already performs in the present his function as judge (5:27), giver of life (6:27, 52, 62), and Messiah (8:28; 9:35; 12:23, 34; 13: 31f.) (see Burkett 1991). Always assumed is the Father’s substantive priority (6:27), whose action through the Son of man makes the salvation of human beings possible. The Logos who comes from God has even after his incarnation permanent access to the heavenly world, because as presently acting Son of man he provides access to the heavenly world, and thus to God (1:51). The internal intertwining of various motifs is also visible in 3:13f., where the pre-existence and sending are connected with the exaltation and glorification of the Son of man. As the exaltation of the serpent in the wilderness, so also the exaltation of Jesus has a saving function. The Johannine Son of man sayings obtain their particular character when interpreted within the framework of the cross and exaltation theology of John. The ascension of the Son of man is interpreted in a specifically Johannine way as an ‘exaltation’ in 3:14, where the verb ‘to exalt’ (*hupsoun*) is used to describe Jesus’ crucifixion, as is also the case in 8:28 and 12:32. Not Jesus’ exaltation to heaven but already his exaltation on the cross is the saving event.

Lord and Other Predications

p. 320 The title *Lord* (*kurios*) appears 43 times in the Gospel of John, but becomes Christologically significant only in the Easter stories. While, in earlier chapters, the term is used without titular import, in 20:18, 20, 25, ‘Lord’ is used to identify the risen Jesus, culminating in Thomas’ confession of the risen Jesus as ‘My Lord and my God’ (20:28). The ‘seeing of the Lord’ in 20:18, 20, 25 is also found in 1 Cor. 9:1 and shows that ‘Lord’ was also used in the Johannine tradition or circle as a special designation for the resurrected Jesus.

In addition to the Christological titles, which occur in large numbers throughout the Gospel, there are occasionally other *Christological predication*s that highlight Jesus’ dignity and soteriological work in a special way. Firstly, the entire ministry of Jesus is framed by the *royalty* motif: Jesus Christ is ‘the King of Israel / the King of the Jews’ (for *basileus* / *basileia*, cf. 1:49; 12:13, 15; 18:33, 36, 37, 39; 19:3, 12, 14, 15, 19, 21). At the beginning stands the confession of Nathanael of Jesus as the King of Israel (1:49), which will be repeated at his entry into Jerusalem (12:13). At the end of the Gospel the motif of Jesus’ kingship dominates. The phrase ‘the Kingdom of God’ (*basileia tou theou*) in 3:3, 5 is connected to this motif, whose relationship to the trial before Pilate is obvious. Just as Jesus’ kingdom (*basileia*) is not of this world (18:36), people need to be born ‘from above/again’ in order to participate in salvation. Unlike the superficially judging crowd (6:15), the readers of the Gospel know about Jesus Christ’s true kingship, which is legitimate solely through the Father. Secondly, in conversation with the Samaritan woman at the well (4:4–42), Jesus is designated in increasing importance first as a Jew (4:9), then as someone more important than Jacob (4:12), then as a prophet (4:19), then as Messiah (4:25f., 29), and finally as *the Saviour of the world* (*ho sōtēr tou kosmou*) in 4:42. The term ‘Saviour’ (*sōtēr*) comes from the Hellenistic ruler cult and was applied to Jesus in early Christianity (cf. Luke 2:11; Acts 5:31; 13:23; Phil. 3:20; 1 Tim. 4:10; 2 Tim. 1:10; Titus 1:4; 2:13; 3:6; Eph. 5:23; 2 Pet. 1:1, 11; 2:20; 3:2, 18; 1 John 4:14) (see Koester 1990; Labahn 2002). In the New Testament era it also has a political-religious connotation: the Roman Emperor is the benefactor and saviour of the world, who guarantees not only the political unity of the empire but also provides its citizens with prosperity, salvation, and purpose. In contrast, John emphasizes that only Jesus Christ saves, who gives eternal in faith already in the present (3:17; 12:47). Third, in the narrative opening of the Gospel Jesus is twice (1:29, 36) called ‘the Lamb of God’ (*ho amnos tou theou*). It concerns a word of revelation from John the Baptist, which as the first positive designation of Jesus’ dignity has programmatic significance. The Lamb, which serves as an image of

contrast to pervasive notions of power and strength, shows that God's love comes to human beings in weakness and hiddenness. Fourth, in 6:69, Peter declares on behalf of the disciples who remain faithful to Jesus: 'You are the Holy One of God' (*su ei ho hagios tou theou*). This Christological predication occurs only in the Fourth Gospel, which at the same time is a variation of Peter's confession in Mark 8:29, and brings the oneness of the Father and the Son to expression with a particular density. As 'the Holy One of God', Jesus participates in the innermost being of God (cf. 10:30, 36; 14:10; 17:17, 19).

Theological Themes

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Embedded in the narrative and often combined with the Christological titles of dignity, theological themes determine the structure of the fourth Gospel. The particular achievement of John the evangelist lies in the fact that he more comprehensively than any other New Testament writer engages with, and above all defines more precisely, the question of the divinity and humanity of the person of Jesus Christ.

The Pre-Existence and Divinity of Jesus Christ

The question concerning the nature of the person of Jesus Christ is already answered in the Prologue (see Hengel 2008). As the pre-existing Logos he is 'divine' or 'God by nature' (1:1c: *theos*) and the 'only begotten God' (1:18: *monogenēs theos*). The Logos is neither simply identical with God, nor is he a second god alongside the supreme God; rather, the Logos has God's nature. Not coincidentally, the confession of Thomas, 'My Lord and my God' (*ho kurios mou kai ho theos mou*) in 20:28, part of the first ending of the Gospel, corresponds with this. This formulation refers to Psalm 34:23 in the LXX and has a parallel in the salutation demanded by Domitian late in his reign: 'Dominus et Deus noster' (Suetonius, *Domitian* 13.2). If, against this background, attributes used by the Emperor have been transferred by John to the crucified and resurrected Jesus Christ, Thomas' confession contains a clear criticism of the Emperor cult.⁸ A similar political connotation is found in 1 John 5:20, where in the context of the Roman imperial cult and local persecution (1 John 5:21), it is said of the Son of God, Jesus Christ: 'This is the true God (*houtos estin ho alēthinos theos*) and eternal life'.

John's texts all preserve the subtle balance of identity and distinction between the Father and the Son. Jesus Christ is divine, because he fully participates in the being of the Father. In this way John (as Paul before him) represents an exclusive monotheism in binitarian form. The worship of the one God is extended to his Son. At the same time the relationship between God the Father and the divine Logos-Son remains in a peculiar but also proper tension, which can neither be resolved by an ontology of identity nor by a reductionist subordination. Its objective ground lies in the essential unity of Father and Son (10:30). The 'I am' (*egō eimi*) sayings (6:35a, 'I am the Bread of Life'; 8:12, 'I am the Light of the world'; 10:7, 'I am the Door of the Sheep'; 10:11, 'I am the Good Shepherd'; 11:25, 'I am the Resurrection and the Life'; 14:6, 'I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life'; 15:1, 'I am the True Vine') also bring this to expression (see Thyen 1996; Ball 1996; Williams 2000). These sayings must be considered the centre of the self-proclamation of Jesus and keys to the Johannine theology of revelation. In a conscious adoption of the self-identification of the Father in Exod. 3:14 LXX ('I am the Existing One'; cf. Exod. 3:6, 17; Isa. 43:10, 11 LXX; 45:12 LXX), the Son becomes the bearer of revelation. The 'I am' sayings function as summaries of the Johannine theology of revelation,⁹ in which the Son, as the Father did before him, reveals himself as 'I am'.

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For the determination of the relationship between the Father and the Son, two extremes must thus be excluded: 1) For John there is only one God, who reveals himself as the Father of Jesus Christ (1:1b; 17:1). Only the Father is the 'one God' (*heis theos*)! The Father sends and authorizes the Son, who only acts from the authority conferred on him. Therefore, the risen Jesus says to Mary Magdalene: 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God' (20:17). The allegation of the Jews that this is a ditheistic

construction (cf. 5:18; 10:33; 19:7) is unfounded, because the divine Sonship or divinity of the Son does not involve the usurpation of divine dignity, but rather the effectuation of the Father's will. 2) It must also be noted that the concept of subordination, which has been borrowed from developments in the later history of dogma, is not suitable for understanding John's intentions. The Son is much more than an agent of the Father, for he is not only given a mandate and not only shares in the Father's nature, but also is of the Father's nature. Therefore, we must speak of an essential unity of the Father and the Son in John, which is expressed in the unity of will and work. The notion of the unity of the Father and the Son allows John to hold fast to unrestricted monotheism in his story of Jesus Christ, and at the same time to work out the interrelationships which is characteristic of his thinking. John's thinking is not static but expresses itself in dynamic, communicative relations: the Father's love for the Son is the foundation of their unity (cf. 3:35; 10:17; etc.). In the subordination of the Son to the Father both are fully aligned with each other. The interrelationship aims at participation, at the enduring unity within the distinction.

Also attesting to the divinity of Jesus Christ are the sayings pertaining to pre-existence, which concern his heavenly existence prior to his historical manifestation. They express his eternal being before the creation as well as his participation in the eternity of the Father (1:1–3, 30; 6:62; 17:5, 24). No one has ever seen God except for the Logos/the Son (1:18; 3:11, 13, 31, 32; 5:37f.; 6:46). The following claim counts only for Jesus Christ: 'I came from the Father and have come into the world; again, I am leaving the world and going to the Father' (16:28). Jesus comes from 'above' (3:31; 8:14, 23), from heaven (3:13; 6:33, 38, 41f., 46, 50, 62), and goes back to the Father (13:33; 14:2, 28; 16:5). Even Moses (5:45f.), Abraham (8:58), and Isaiah (12:41) testify that Jesus as the pre-existent Son of God has always belonged to God. His existence is not subject to spatial or temporal boundaries. After Jesus did God's will and completed his work on earth (4:34), he returns to the glory of the Father (7:33; 13:1, 3; 14:12; 12:28; 17:5, 11). The pre-existence has the incarnation in view, since God comes to the human world in Jesus Christ and enters into it completely.

The Incarnation and the Humanity of Jesus Christ

p. 323 Already in the Prologue it is said of the pre-existent Logos that he became flesh (*sarx*), i.e. he became a human being (1:14). In John, as elsewhere, 'flesh' is used to designate the creaturely human being of flesh and blood (1:13; 3:6; 6:51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 63; 8:15; 17:2). It signifies 'full humanity' (cf. Bultmann 1968: 40), so that the words 'became flesh' (*sarx* ← *egeneto*) in 1:14a can not be construed merely as 'contact with the earthly' (see Käsemann 1971: 3). Rather, it identifies a change in the Logos; *he is now what he was not before: a true and real human being*. The incarnation expresses the full participation of Jesus Christ in creatureliness, in historical existence, and thus also in the transience of all that is. In this way, God himself is the subject of real human existence. Moreover, the incarnation is not for John a punctiliar event, since John 1:14 already has the entire appearance and ministry of Jesus Christ in view. At the same time, it is also true that the incarnation does not mean the abandonment of the divinity of Jesus, because in the incarnation of the pre-existent Logos his 'glory' (*doxa*) becomes visible (1:14c). In the Fourth Gospel, Jesus' humanity is a predicate of his divinity. Jesus became a human being and yet remained God, i.e. God in the mode of incarnation. He became a human being without qualification, a human being among human beings. At the same time, he is the Son of God, again without qualification.

This double aspect of the divine and the human is particularly evident in the miracle stories (Schnelle 1992: 74–175. With their exceptional dimensions and their explicit verifiability (2:9f; 4:51ff; 5:2, 5; 6:13; 9:9, 20, 25, 39; 11:18, 39, 44), they testify to the presence of the divine in the world. At the same time, the humanity of Jesus is highlighted in the miracles and other central narrative contexts. He celebrates a wedding (2:1–11); he loves his friend Lazarus (11:3); he is angry about the grief of the crowd (11:33f); and he weeps over Lazarus (11:35). Jesus comes from Nazareth in Galilee (1:45f; 4:44; 7:41, 52) and not from Bethlehem (7:42); his parents are well known (1:45; 2:1, 3, 12; 6:42; 19:26), as are his brothers (2:12; 7:1–10). He has a mortal body (2:21) of flesh (6:51) and blood (19:34). He cleans the temple with great passion (2:14–22); he is

exhausted and thirsty from walking (4:6f). In view of his impending fate (12:27; cf. 13:21), Jesus is confused or annoyed, and demands a drink while on the cross (19:28). Pilate allows him to be tortured by his soldiers with scourges and thorns (19:1f), and then, as it were, confirms his humanity officially: 'Behold the man!' (19:5). A member of the execution squad states clearly that Jesus is actually dead (19:33), and finally the body of Jesus is officially released (19:38). At his funeral the expected odour from the corpses is disguised by fragrances (19:39f). The disciples and finally Thomas are finally convinced that the body of the risen Jesus is identical with the earthly and crucified Jesus when they have seen it with their own eyes (20:20, 27).

The incarnation idea arises from the basic theological approach and the logic of Johannine thinking, but at the same time it is also the answer to a Christological controversy. Within the narrative flow of the Gospel, the Eucharistic section (6:51c–58) with its emphasis on the indissoluble unity of the humanity and divinity of Jesus Christ caused a schism among the disciples (6:60–71). This schism reflects a split within the Johannine community, which was sparked by a debate over the soteriological significance of Jesus' earthly existence and with which especially 1 John is concerned. The opponents there being combatted formerly belonged to the community (1 John 2:19) and from the perspective of the letter writer they denied the soteriological identity between the earthly Jesus and the heavenly Christ (1 John 2:22; 4:15; 5:1, 5), in that they disputed the real incarnation (1 John 4:2) and the real death (1 John 5:6) of Jesus and downgraded them to only apparent events (docetism).¹⁰ Apparently only the Father and the heavenly Christ were soteriologically relevant to the opponents, but not the life, suffering, and death of the historical Jesus of Nazareth.

The incarnation in the sense of a *real and permanent* becoming flesh of a god or godlike creature must from a history-of-religions perspective be regarded as a new idea of early Christianity, one that did not previously exist in this form (Schnelle 2016: 65–71). It is found for the first time in Paul and his traditions (cf. Gal. 4:4; Rom. 8:3; 9:5; 2 Cor. 8:9; Phil. 2:7f).¹¹ John obviously took this over and developed it. Neither the concept of the Shekinah from Judaism (cf. Janowski 2014: 3–40), nor the temporary incarnation of Greek gods or heroes provides a real parallel. To be sure, both the notion of God's 'residing among human beings' as well as the descent of divine wisdom or of a single angel demonstrate Yahweh's orientation toward the world and human beings, but there is no real early Jewish incarnation idea which expresses the permanent coming of God or the Messiah 'in the flesh'. Moreover, especially Jews found it unacceptable for human beings, such as the Roman Emperor Caligula, to claim to be gods and to be expected to be worshipped as such (Philo, *Embassy* 118). The temporary incarnation of the Greek gods also did not amount to a real incarnation, and while the heroes indeed serve as ethical role models, they have no soteriological function. Finally, it is unthinkable for both cultural systems, to worship someone who was crucified as the Son of God (cf. 1 Cor. 1:23). Especially this double aspect of the truly human and the permanently divine has no known religious-historical parallel and forms the foundation for this theologically and religiously new form of the incarnation idea.

The Son Sent by the Father

The sending passages are another key element of Johannine Christology (see Meeks 1972; Bühner 1977; Köstenberger 1998). Jesus consistently refers to the Father who sent him (3:16; 5:23, 24, 30, 37; 6:29, 38, 39, 44, 57; 7:16, 18, 28–29, 33; 8:16, 18, 26, 29, 42; 10:36; 12:44, 45, 49; 13:16, 20; 14:24; 15:21; 16:5; 17:3, 8, 18, 21, 23, 25; 20:21). Concerning Jesus, it must be believed that the Father/God sent him (5:36; 11:42; 17:8, 21, 23, 25). The acknowledgment of the sending of Jesus is the content of faith and the goal of the learning process that occurs when the Gospel is heard or read. The sending of the Son has its basis in the love of God and its goal in the salvation of the world (3:17; see also 1 John 4:9f.). Therefore, one can regard the sending as salvation in a nutshell (3:17; 17:3), because through the sending of the Son God gives him to the world as a gift of love (3:16; 6:32) (Moloney 2013).

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This understanding of the sending idea far surpasses what is found in the Old Testament concerning the sending of prophets. The one sent does not merely represent ↪ the one who sent him but is himself like the one who sent him. He not only brings a message but is the message itself. He acts in the place of the one who sent him, and his action has the same validity as that of the one who sent him. Jesus speaks freely and openly as the one sent the word of God (3:34; 12:49, 50; 14:24; cf. 14:10). His teaching is not his own, but from the one who has sent him (7:16); it comes from God (7:17). The same is true of his judgment (5:30; 8:16). Jesus does not only do the works of him who sent him (9:4); he acts in his name (10:25), and not on his own authority (5:19, 30). He also cannot do anything other than what the Father does (5:19). The Father shows him everything he must do (5:20, 36). For this reason, the Father acts in Jesus (14:10). As the sent one, Jesus has no will of his own, but he brings to expression the will of the one who sent him (5:30) and carries it out (4:34; 6:38ff). He obeys his command (8:29; 10:18; 14:31) and completes his work (4:34; 17:4). The 'sending' passages give expression to the claim that in the human Jesus who speaks, teaches, and acts there is someone else who speaks, teaches, and acts—God himself.

From this it is already clear that the Johannine sending Christology must not be isolated, but must be regarded as an organic part of the whole Christology of the Fourth Gospel (otherwise Becker 2004). It presumes the pre-existence and the incarnation of the Son as well as his death on the cross and exaltation, because the sending does not occur in a timeless ascent and descent but is completed on the cross (19:30). The common basis of pre-existence, incarnation, and sending is his being with God and his coming from God. Jesus' claim to revelation is founded in his sending by the Father. The Pharisees regard Jesus' self-revelation as testifying on his own behalf, which lies behind the suspicion of self-aggrandizement and which from their perspective can be questioned (7:14ff.). Jesus answers this objection when he emphasizes the truthfulness of his testimony: 'My teaching is not my own, but of the who sent me' (7:16b). In the background is the Jewish legal principle according to which the testimony of two people must be in agreement in order to be true (Num. 35:30; Deut. 17:6; 19:15). No one else except Jesus can claim this principle, since the relationship between the Father and the Son is demonstrated not by an external but by an internal, full agreement. Not only the Father but also other witnesses support Jesus' claim. In addition to the Baptist (1:6–8; 15:19ff) and Jesus' 'works' (14:11), Scripture especially testifies to Jesus' claim to revelation because Moses (5:45–47) along with and Abraham (8:56) and Isaiah (12:41) wrote about him. Finally, the sending of the Son by the Father is the decisive counterargument of Johannine theology against Jewish accusations of ditheism (5:18; 10:33; 19:7). The divine Sonship of Jesus is not a usurpation of divinity, but a precise decision of the Father's will. The Father thoroughly legitimizes the Son who does nothing on his own.

The Crucified Son of God

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The question whether one can speak of a theology of the cross in John and to what extent it is a determining element of Johannine thought is the focus of recent discussion about ↪ the Fourth Gospel (cf. Kohler 1987; Knöppler 1994; de Boer 1996; Frey 2002).¹² The key issue behind this ongoing debate is whether the Johannine discourse of Jesus' death is neutralized by its placement within a larger pattern of interpretation (dualism; the Christology of the envoy; Jesus' trajectory of self-revelation of coming from the Father and going back to the Father), thereby becoming an unreal event, or whether also in John the cross is thought of in theological/Christologically terms and is to be given a fundamental and lasting significance.

Jesus' death comes first explicitly into view in 1:29, 36 (Jesus as the Lamb of God), but it is already presupposed in 1:11b ('and his own received him not'). This storyline is taken up and reinforced in the Cana narrative with 2:1a ('on the third day') and 2: 4c ('my hour has not yet come'). With the placement of the Cleansing of the Temple early in the ministry of Jesus in 2:14–22, the Fourth Evangelist follows a *theological chronology*: because the Cleansing of the Temple was historically the catalyst for the crucifixion and the cross substantially and compositionally determined the dramaturgy of the Fourth Gospel, the Cleansing of

the Temple had to be placed at the beginning of Jesus' ministry. Also the eucharistic section in 6:51c–58 (with its emphasis on the real death of Jesus as the enabling foundation of the eucharist), the Lazarus story in 11:1–44 (as a anticipatory illustration of Jesus' destiny), the final decision to put Jesus' to death by the Sanhedrin in 11:46–57, and the numerous allusions to the Passion throughout (2:23; 3:14–16; 5:1; 6:4; 7:2, 10; 10:15, 17f.; 11:18, 55ff.; 12:1, 12) direct the readers' or listeners' attention to the cross. With the Footwashing in 13:1–20, the cross advances completely into the centre of the narrative. For John the Footwashing is the anticipation of the way of Jesus to the cross, because in both cases his humiliation dominates: Jesus serves human beings with love.

Finally, the Johannine Passion and Easter Narratives are also theologically aligned. In the trial before Pilate, the nature of Jesus' kingship is the focus of debate (18:28–40). It is not of this world (18:36), yet is also brings him to the cross, as the inscription on the cross officially confirms (19:19). The battered Jesus of Nazareth carries his own cross (19:17; cf. 1:29) and sits naked as the King of the Jews on his throne, which is his cross. From the cross Jesus appoints his community, which like his mother is left in the care of the Beloved Disciple (19:25–27). In the cross, Scripture is fulfilled (19:28), and on the cross, the dying Jesus says, 'It is finished' (19:30; *tetelestai*). The visible reality of the death of Jesus is emphasized with the emergence of water and blood from the wounded side of Jesus (19:34b, 35). In the Thomas pericope (20:24–29), the identification of the pre-existent and incarnate one with the crucified and resurrected one obtains tangible dimensions. The story ends here and at the same time is raised to a new level of understanding: 'Blessed are those who do not see and yet believe' (20:29b).

p. 327 Among the special features of the Johannine narrative technique belongs the new theological connotation given to terms in order to present central themes in compressed form. In connection with cross and resurrection this is especially the case with respect to the 'hour' of Jesus and his 'exaltation and glorification'. With the term 'hour' (*hōra*) ↪ John presents the whole public work of Jesus in the perspective of the cross. The evangelist speaks of the hour of Jesus' glorification (12:23, 27f; 17:1), the hour which testifies to the sending of Jesus by the Father (13:1; 7:30; 8:20), the hour of the acceptance of the Passion (12:27), and the hour that is coming (4:21, 23; 5:25; 16:2, 4, 25). In 2:4; 7:6, 8, 30; 8:20, the term 'not yet' (*oupō*) separates the time before the Passion from the time before the Passion. In this way, John builds up the narrative tension, which is first resolved through the announcement of 'the' hour's arrival in 12:23 ('And Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of man to be glorified"'). With 'glorification', John designates the 'exaltation' of Jesus into the divine realm; it is an act of God, which is performed in the cross and resurrection (3:13f; 8:28; 12:27–33). Because Jesus' suffering in John is overshadowed by the Easter triumph, the crucifixion can be understood as 'exaltation' (*hypsōthēnai*) and 'glorification' (*doxasthēnai*). Not Jesus' exaltation to heaven, but already his exaltation on the cross is the salvific event. As the crucified one, Jesus is thus exalted in two ways: He hangs on the cross and is at the same time is with the Father. Sitting at the right hand of God is sitting on the cross! This is illustrated mainly by 12:27–32, where exaltation and glorification mutually interpret one another. With the editorial comment in 12:33 ('He said this to show by what death he was to die'), the evangelist indicates that his understanding of cross, exaltation, and glorification is semantically closely related. It is not about the death of Jesus in general but about the nature and the manner of that death, that is, about the cross. *The exaltation on the cross is the glorification*. The cross in John is not only a transitional stage in the framework of a dominant sending Christology but the goal of the sending and therefore the place of salvation.

Jesus Christ as Bearer of the Spirit

The participation of Jesus Christ in the heavenly world is also emphasized in the Gospel of John by its notion of the Spirit. Jesus Christ appears as the bearer of the Spirit par excellence. Jesus' baptism (1:29–34) has three special features: 1) John the Baptist merely testifies to the baptism, which—according to the logic of the text—will be performed by God. Only God can 'baptize' the pre-existent and incarnate Logos. 2) This baptism is exclusively a Spirit baptism (cf. Isa. 61:1 LXX), which is qualitatively superior to the water baptism of the Baptist. 3) The remaining of the Spirit on Jesus Christ is emphasized (1:32f.), so that his whole ministry, his actions, and his discourses are to be understood as an event in the power of the Spirit. In 7:39, the exaltation of Jesus is explicitly referred to as the prerequisite for the gift of the Spirit: 'Now this he said about the Spirit, which those who believed in him were to receive; for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified'. Accordingly, the risen Jesus bestows the Spirit on his disciples: '“Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I send you.” And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit.”' (20:21b–22). The promise of the coming of the Paraclete which has been promised in the Farewell Discourses (14:16f, 26; 15:26; 16:7) is fulfilled with the gift of the Spirit by the sending of the disciples for mission!

p. 328 In addition, the notion of the Spirit ties various aspects of Johannine theology together, because 'God is Spirit' (4:24) and believers are born again 'by water and the Spirit' (3:3, 5). The unity of believers with the Father and the Son is unity in love and in the Spirit. Finally, John's pneumatology provides the possibility of keeping together what is usually understood to be separate in both the ancient and modern worlds: heaven and earth, space and time, history and eschaton. God as Spirit, the pneumatically gifted Jesus, and the Paraclete community are united in their common origin 'from above'.¹³

The Unity of Johannine Christology

For John there is only one God, who revealed himself comprehensively and uniquely in Jesus Christ and who is one with him in essence, will, and action. This foundational thought is repeatedly considered anew in John from different perspectives, with narrative strategies, titles of dignity, and theological themes. Here there can be no question of a juxtaposition or even of an opposition of Christological conceptions. Rather, the Johannine Christology is characterized by an overall conception: divinity, pre-existence, and incarnation, sending and exaltation/glorification on the cross meet each other in the notion of love. The love of the Father for the Son before the foundation of the world (17:24, 25) coincide with the sending of the Son and his path to the cross out of love for the world (3:13f, 16; 10:17; 13:1). In the cross as the place of God's love the movement of the Son to the Father meshes with that of the Father to the Son. For John, the exclusive relationship of the one who is sent with the one who sends (17:18, 20), his work as truth in the world, his return to the Father and the realization of this event in word, in the power of the Spirit, and the gifts of the Eucharist form an inner unity.

Suggested Reading

Accessible overviews of Johannine theology and christology are Smith 1995, Thompson 2000, and Schnelle 2009: 659–750. For more depth, see Ashton 1991 (2007) and Loader 2017.

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Notes

- 1 On the Prologue, see now van der Watt, Culpepper, and Schnelle 2016.
- 2 Deliberately unclear on this central issue is Bultmann 1968: 41, who with view to the 'flesh' (*sarx*) comes to the following formulation: 'Revelation is thus present in a peculiar hiddenness.' The 'flesh', however, is not a form of concealment, but one side of a paradoxical state of affairs, which the signs/miracles of Jesus in particular bring to expression.
- 3 See Chapter 8, Adele Reinhartz, 'The Jews of the Fourth Gospel'.
- 4 For the Footwashing, see Culpepper 1991; Hofius 2009.
- 5 For the Farewell Discourses, see Schnelle 1989; Winter 1994; Dettwiler 1995; Kellum 2004; Parsenios 2005.
- 6 For the Passion Narrative, see Lang 1999; Zumstein 2016.
- 7 Whether John 21 originally belonged to the Gospel is debated. Arguing that it did is e.g. Thyen 2005. For arguments

against this view, see Schnelle 2016: 396–8.

8 In the inscriptions from Ephesus the predicate *theos* occurs for numerous emperors; see van Tilborg 1996: 41–7.

9 Ashton (1991: 86) aptly calls the ‘I am’ sayings ‘miniature Gospels’.

10 For Docetism and related ideas, see Schnelle 1992: 63–70; Kinlaw 2005.

11 For the notion of pre-existence, cf. 1 Cor. 8:6; 10:4; Gal. 4:4; Rom. 8:3; 2 Cor. 8:9; Phil. 2:6.

12 See Chapter 20, Jean Zumstein, ‘The Purpose of the Ministry and Death of Jesus in the Gospel of John’.

13 See Chapter 21, Catrin H. Williams, ‘Faith, Eternal Life, and the Spirit in the Gospel of John’.