ECHOES OF FRIENDSHIP IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

Echoes of Friendship in the Gospel of John

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For Jo-Anna, my wife and ideal friend

CONTENTS

This monograph is a revision of my doctoral dissertation. Dissertation writing typically involves a number of starts and stops before the researcher has identified a topic that is both viable and of sufficient interest to sustain him or her through to the end. One feature of the history of this project is worth recounting, since the process by which I arrived at the topic speaks to the validity of the methodology employed. My interest in Greco-Roman notions of friendship predated my interest in friendship as a motif in the Gospel of John. Indeed, it was only after I had done extensive research on Greco-Roman friendship in conjunction with another project that I began noticing friendship language in the Fourth Gospel. I did not go looking for such language, but rather, having brought what I now believe to be fairly widespread views of ideal friendship to the reading of the Fourth Gospel, the author's use of such language became apparent. My initial reading was thus analogous to the process by which the authorial audience would have encountered the same text. Their reading was informed by the wealth of background knowledge they brought to the text, including knowledge concerning what constituted an ideal friendship. As in their case, my initial experience of 'reading as authorial audience' was an unconscious rather than a conscious endeavor. The unanticipated discovery of language from the conceptual world of ideal friendship led to a more careful reading of the text, which in turn revealed the pervasive nature of such language.

The dissertation was completed in the Spring of 2001. Since then, there has been a significant amount of work done on the Gospel of John, some of which has addressed the use of friendship language. None, however, has attempted to provide a sustained treatment of the topic that carefully examines how this important motif functions in the Fourth Gospel. I offer this monograph as an attempt to fill that gap. I am grateful to Stan Porter for his enthusiasm in accepting this volume as part of Sheffield Phoenix's New Testament Monographs series, and for his helpful suggestions for how the manuscript could be improved. I am also grateful to David Clines who made the process of moving from manuscript to publication almost painless through the competence and dedication that he brings to the task.

Many other people have contributed to this project through their scholarly guidance, spiritual encouragement, and physical and emotional

Chapter 1

FRIENDSHIP, LITERARY MOTIFS, AND THE AUTHORIAL AUDIENCE

> No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father (Jn 15.13-15).[1]

With these striking words, which appear midway through his 'farewell discourse' in John 13–17, Jesus first highlights the epitome of true friendship and then announces a shift in his relationship with his disciples from a master/servant relationship to a relationship of 'friendship'. This promotion from servants to friends clearly marks a profound elevation in status; but it is not immediately clear what exactly it means to be a 'friend' of Jesus. A number of scholars have maintained that we need not look beyond the Old Testament, or Jewish literature in general, to understand the background, and thus significance, of Jesus' reference to friendship.[2] Many of these have pointed to the examples of Abraham and Moses, who were described as 'friends of God', to whom God revealed himself and his plans.[3] Others, noting that Philo makes an analogous contrast between slaves and friends, simply emphasize that the distinction was current in first-century Judaism.[4]

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1. All Scripture quotations are taken from the New Revised Standard Version unless otherwise noted.

2. Gustav Stählin's claim that 'John is probably clothing an ancient rule of friendship in biblical speech in order to apply it to the relation of Jesus and His disciples' ('φίλος, φίλη, φιλία', *TDNT*, IX, p. 166) has been rejected outright by several scholars. See, e.g., D.A. Carson, *The Gospel according to John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), p. 522; George R. Beasley-Murray, *John* (WBC, 36; Waco, TX: Word Books, 1987), p. 274.

3. See 2 Chron. 20.7; Exod. 33.11; cf. Gen. 18.17; Beasley-Murray, *John*, p. 275; Charles H. Talbert, *Reading John: A Literary and Theological Commentary on the Fourth Gospel and the Johannine Epistles* (Reading the New Testament; New York: Crossroad, 1992), p. 214; Wayne A. Meeks, *The Prophet King: Moses Traditions and the Johannine Christology* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1967), chaps. 3 and 4.

4. Philo wrote: 'It is folly to imagine that the servants of God take precedence of His friends in receiving their portion in the land of virtue' (*Abr.* 45; cf. *Sobr.* 55-56).

While it is true that the notion of friendship with God had clear antecedents in Jewish tradition, a careful analysis of the language associated with ideal[5] friendship in Greco-Roman literature suggests that a broader conceptual background is in view, not only in Jn 15.13-15 but throughout the Fourth Gospel. Indeed, a close reading of the text reveals that although key terms typically associated with the notion of friendship, such as φίλος ('friend'), rarely appear, when read against the conceptual world associated with Greco-Roman notions of friendship[6] it becomes apparent that friendship language is consistently used throughout the Fourth Gospel and, in particular, echoes off the walls of the upper room in the farewell scene. Such language not only serves to make friendship an important motif in the Gospel of John, but also provides a powerful tool in the hand of the author for characterizing Jesus and highlighting the nature of his relationship with both the Father and his followers.[7]

Philo, however, made no attempt to contrast friendship with God and slavery to God; Susan M. Elliott, 'John 15:15—Not Slaves but Friends: Slavery and Friendship Imagery and the Clarification of the Disciples' Relationship to Jesus in the Johannine Farewell Discourse', *Proceedings: Eastern Great Lakes and Midwest Biblical Societies* 13 (1993), p. 32.

5.   The designation 'ideal friendship' is an effort to capture a particular view of friendship in the Greco-Roman world that was frequently described, but not necessarily given a label. If we were to choose a Greek label, we might follow Chrysostom (see his 'Homily II on 1 Thessalonians') and use φιλία γνήσια ('genuine friendship') and γνήσιος φίλος ('genuine friend'). Indeed, I will often use expressions like 'genuine friendship' and 'true friendship' in what follows as synonyms of 'ideal friendship'. The English term 'ideal', however, is intended to capture two important and related features of this notion of friendship. First, it is an ideal to which people aspire, the highest form of friendship. Second, it *remains* an ideal for most, rather than a reality. Although such friendship was a common topic of conversation in the ancient world, it was not a common experience.

6.   J.M. Ford provides a list of the most well known Greco-Roman texts associated with friendship: Plato, *Lysis, Symposium, Phaedrus*; Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics, Eudemian Ethics, Great Ethics* (*Magna Moralia*); Cicero, *On Friendship, The Supreme Good*; Plutarch, *Moralia* ('How to Tell a Flatterer from a Friend', 'On Brotherly Love', 'On Having Many Friends', 'How to Profit by One's Enemies'); Lucian, *Toxaris*; Xenophon, *Memorabilia of Socrates* 2; Isocrates, *Oration* 1 (*To Demonicus*); Seneca, *Moral Essays* 9 ('On Philosophy and Friendship'); Gellius, *Attic Nights* 1; Aspasius, *On the Nichomachean Ethics*; Epictetus, *Discourses*; J. Massyngbaerde Ford, *Redeemer—Friend and Mother: Salvation in Antiquity and in the Gospel of John* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997), p. 232 n. 39.

7.   Such a function is predictable given the semantic domain to which 'friendship' belongs: associations. On semantic domains, see Johannes P. Louw and Eugene A. Nida (eds.), *Lexical Semantics of the Greek New Testament* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1992); Johannes P. Louw and Eugene A. Nida (eds.), *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1989).

Recent Studies on Friendship

In recent years, biblical scholars have become increasingly aware of the importance of understanding the 'social values' that underlie the biblical texts.[8] Such values form a crucial part of the socio-linguistic background upon which any text is constructed—a background that is assumed rather than stated by the biblical authors. Numerous studies have appeared that demonstrate how the value systems of early readers of the New Testament would have shaped their understanding of the text. Most have focused on the implications of a particular social value, such as friendship or honor and shame,[9] while others have attempted to read the biblical text in light of the broad social system of the ancient world.[10] In each case, New Testament scholars have benefited significantly from the work of classical scholars.

Friendship in the Greco-Roman World

A recent volume by D. Konstan and a volume edited by J.T. Fitzgerald have been particularly influential.[11] Konstan's work represents 'the first com-

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8.   See, e.g., David L. Balch, *The New Testament in its Social Environment* (LEC; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1986); John J. Pilch and Bruce J. Malina (eds.), *Handbook of Biblical and Social Values* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1998).

9.   See, e.g., Alan C. Mitchell, ' "Greet the Friends by Name": New Testament Evidence for the Greco-Roman *Topos* of Friendship', in J.T. Fitzgerald (ed.), *Greco-Roman Perspectives on Friendship* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1997), pp. 225-62; Alan C. Mitchell, 'The Social Function of Friendship in Acts 2:44-47 and 4:32-37', *JBL* 111 (1992), pp. 255-72; L. Michael White, 'Morality between Two Worlds: A Paradigm of Friendship in Philippians', in D.L. Balch, E. Ferguson and W.A. Meeks (eds.), *Greeks, Romans, and Christians: Essays in Honor of Abraham J. Malherbe* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1990), pp. 201-15; Jerome H. Neyrey, *Honor and Shame in the Gospel of Matthew* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1998); David A. deSilva, 'Exchanging Favor for Wrath: Apostasy in Hebrews and Patron-Client Relationships', *JBL* 115 (1996), pp. 91-116; David A. deSilva, *Despising Shame: Honor Discourse and Community Maintenance in the Epistle to the Hebrews* (SBLDS, 152; Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1995); Peter Marshall, *Enmity at Corinth: Social Conventions in Paul's Relations with the Corinthians* (WUNT, 2/23; Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1987).

10.   Bruce J. Malina and Richard L. Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science Commentary on the Synoptic Gospels* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992); Bruce J. Malina and Richard L. Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science Commentary on the Gospel of John* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998); Bruce J. Malina and John J. Pilch, *Social-Science Commentary on the Book of Revelation* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000); Jerome H. Neyrey, *2 Peter, Jude: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB, 37C; New York: Doubleday, 1993).

11.   David Konstan, *Friendship in the Classical World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); John T. Fitzgerald (ed.), *Greco-Roman Perspectives on Friendship* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1997). There has been a significant revival of interest in friendship since about 1970, the year that E. Telfer's study of friendship first appeared; see Elizabeth Tefler, 'Friendship', *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, 1971;

prehensive study in English of friendship in the classical world'.[12] He surveys Greco-Roman notions of friendship during the Homeric, classical, Hellenistic, and Roman periods, and concludes with a Chapter that surveys views of friendship during the fourth and fifth centuries, particularly among Christians.

One of Konstan's primary goals in *Friendship in the Classical World* was to refute the common claim that Greco-Roman friendship was not characterized by personal intimacy and affection.[13] Where many have

reprinted in Michael Pakaluk (ed.), *Other Selves: Philosophers on Friendship* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1991), pp. 250-67. For recent studies, see, e.g., A.W.H. Adkins, '"Friendship" and "Self-sufficiency" in Homer and Aristotle', *CQ* 13 (1963), pp. 30-45; Horst H. Hutter, 'Friendship in Theory and Practice: A Study of Greek and Roman Theories of Friendship in Their Social Settings' (PhD dissertation, Stanford University, 1972); Richard P. Saller, 'Patronage and Friendship in Early Imperial Rome: Drawing the Distinction', in Andrew Wallace-Hadrill (ed.), *Patronage in Ancient Society* (New York: Routledge, 1989), pp. 49-87; David Konstan, 'Greek Friendship', *AJP* 117 (1996), pp. 71-94; David Konstan, 'Friendship and the State: The Context of Cicero's *De amicitia*', *Hyp* 2 (1994/95), pp. 1-16; K.D. Alpern, 'Aristotle on the Friendships of Utility and Pleasure', *JHP* 21 (1983), pp. 303-15; D.S. Barrett, 'The Friendship of Achilles and Patroclus', *ClB* 57 (1981), pp. 87-93; Mary Whitlock Blundell, *Helping Friends and Harming Enemies: A Study in Sophocles and Greek Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); Peter A. Brunt, '"Amicitia" in the Late Roman Republic', *PCPS* 11 (1965), pp. 1-20; Eoin Cassidy, 'The Recovery of the Classical Ideal of Friendship in Augustine's Portrayal of *Caritas*', in T. Finan and V. Twomey (eds.), *The Relationship Between Neoplatonism and Christianity* (Dublin: Four Courts, 1992), pp. 127-40; James Haden, 'Friendship in Plato's *Lysis*', *RM* 37 (1983), pp. 327-56; Gabriel Herman, *Ritualized Friendship and the Greek City* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987); Gabriel Herman, 'The "Friends" of the Early Hellenistic Rulers: Servants or Officials?', *Talanta* 12/13 (1980–81), pp. 103-49; Richard A. LaFleur, '*Amicitia* and the Unity of Juvenal's First Book', *ICS* 4 (1979), pp. 158-77; G. Leeses, 'Austere Friends: The Stoics and Friendship', *Apieron* 26 (1993), pp. 57-75; Phillip Mitsis, 'Epicurus on Friendship and Altruism', *OSAP* (1987), pp. 127-53; David K. O'Connor, 'The Invulnerable Pleasures of Epicurean Friendship', *GRBS* 30 (1989), pp. 165-86; J.G.F. Powell, 'Friendship and its Problems in Greek and Roman Thought', in D. Innes, H. Hine and C. Pelling (eds.), *Ethics and Rhetoric: Classical Essays for Donald Russell on his Seventy-Fifth Birthday* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), pp. 31-45; Edwin S. Ramage, 'Juvenal, *Satire* 12: On Friendship True and False', *ICS* 3 (1978), pp. 221-37; John M. Rist, 'Epicurus on Friendship', *CP* 75 (1980), pp. 121-29; Mary Scott, '*Philos*, *Philotês* and *Xenia*', *AcCl* 25 (1982), pp. 1-19; Theodore Tracy, 'Perfect Friendship in Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*', *ICS* 4 (1979), pp. 65-75.

12. Konstan, *Friendship*, p. 23. Konstan notes a recent important work in Italian: Luigi F. Pizzolato, *L'idea di amicizia nel mondo antico classico e cristiano* (Philosophia, 238; Torino: G. Einaudi, 1993). For other broad surveys of friendship in the ancient Mediterranean, see F. Hauck, 'Die Freundschaft bei den Griechen und im Neuen Testament', *Festgabe für Theodor Zahn* (Leipzig: Deichert, 1928), pp. 211-28; Kurt Treu, 'Freundschaft', *RAC* 8 (1972), pp. 418-34.

13. Ronald Syme, for example, has argued that '*amicitia* was a weapon of politics,

maintained that friendship in the Greco-Roman world was primarily a pragmatic social relation that served economic and political functions,[14] Konstan contends that Greco-Roman friendship was centrally 'an intimate relationship predicated on mutual affection and commitment', 'rather than on obligatory reciprocity'.[15] Thus, although it had practical advantages, Greco-Roman friendship, per se, could not be reduced to a set of obligatory transactions.[16] Konstan's strong claim flows out of his linguistically sound observation that one cannot determine what it means to be a friend (φίλος) simply by looking at the various ways in which supposed 'friendship vocabulary' is used. Much of what comes under the label φιλία, typically translated 'friendship', for example, is not friendship, in a Western sense, at all.[17]

The volume edited by J.T. Fitzgerald, *Greco-Roman Perspectives on Friendship*, includes a broad range of studies relating to friendship. Ten of the eleven essays are revised versions of papers presented by members of the Hellenistic Moral Philosophy and Early Christianity Group at the annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature in 1991. Five of the essays deal with friendship in the philosophic tradition, focusing on the works of Aristotle, Cicero, Plutarch, the Neopythagoreans, and Philo of Alexandria; five deal with friendship in a variety of other Greek works, including those of Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Chariton, Lucian, the documentary papyri, and the New Testament; and Fitzgerald adds an overview of the treatment of friendship in Greek literature prior to Aristotle. These studies are particularly helpful for identifying ideas that recur in a variety of Greco-Roman writers over the course of many centuries.[18]

not a sentiment based on congeniality' (*The Roman Revolution* [New York: Oxford University Press, 1960], p. 12). See also *The Roman Revolution*, p. 138; Lily Ross Taylor, *Party Politics in the Age of Caesar* (Berkeley: University of California, 1949), p. 8; N.R.E. Fisher (ed.), *Social Values in Classical Athens* (London: Dent, 1976), p. 5.

14. So Moses I. Finley, *The Ancient Economy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973).

15. Konstan, *Friendship*, pp. 19, 5.

16. Konstan, *Friendship*, p. 13.

17. Konstan, *Friendship*, pp. 8-10. In determining what it means to be a friend (φίλος/*amicus*), Konstan highlights the difference between friends and enemies, friends and relatives, friends and acquaintances, friends and fellow-citizens, and so forth.

18. For a helpful, brief introduction to ancient notions of friendship, see esp. Craig S. Keener, 'Friendship', *DNTB*, pp. 380-88. Much of the same material is repeated in his *The Gospel of John: A Commentary* (2 vols.; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2003), pp. 1004-15.

Friendship in the New Testament

Many recent studies have used Greco-Roman notions of friendship as a lens for reading New Testament texts.[19] The second and third parts of another volume edited by J.T. Fitzgerald are devoted to friendship in the New Testament.[20] Part Two includes four essays on friendship language in Philippians,[21] while Part Three adds four additional essays on friendship in other New Testament writings, including Acts, the Pauline letters, Hebrews, and the Johannine corpus.[22] Numerous other studies on friendship in the New Testament have appeared in recent years. G. Stählin has provided a broad overview of friendship vocabulary in the Greco-Roman world, New Testament, and early Christian literature;[23] L.T. Johnson has considered friendship as a metaphor for discipleship in the book of James[24] and highlighted the way that sharing of possessions is a feature of friendship that is regularly alluded to in the New Testament;[25] K.A. Walsh has examined friendship in Luke–Acts in light of contemporaneous Greek novels;[26] A.C. Mitchell has looked at friendship as a bridge over

19. For an excellent introduction to the relevant literature, see Mitchell, 'Greet the Friends', pp. 225-62.

20. John T. Fitzgerald, *Friendship, Flattery, and Frankness of Speech: Studies on Friendship in the New Testament World* (NovTSup, 82; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1996). Part One provides a helpful introduction to the role of frank speech within a friendship. It includes the following essays: David Konstan, 'Friendship, Frankness and Flattery', pp. 7-19; Clarence E. Glad, 'Frank Speech, Flattery, and Friendship in Philodemus', pp. 21-59; Troels Engberg-Pederson, 'Plutarch to Prince Philopappus on How to Tell a Flatterer from a Friend', pp. 61-79.

21. John Reumann, 'Philippians, Especially Chapter 4, as a "Letter of Friendship": Observations on a Checkered History of Scholarship', pp. 83-106; Ken L. Berry, 'The Function of Friendship Language in Philippians 4:10-20', pp. 107-24; Abraham J. Malherbe, 'Paul's Self-Sufficiency (Philippians 4:11)', pp. 125-39; John T. Fitzgerald, 'Philippians in the Light of Some Ancient Discussions of Friendship', pp. 141-60.

22. David E. Fredrickson, 'Παρρησία in the Pauline Epistles', pp. 163-83; S.C. Winter, 'Παρρησία in Acts', pp. 185-202; Alan C. Mitchell, 'Holding on to Confidence: Παρρησία in Hebrews', pp. 203-26; William Klassen, 'Παρρησία in the Johannine Corpus', pp. 227-54.

23. Stählin, 'φίλος, φίλη, φιλία'.

24. Luke Timothy Johnson, 'Friendship with the World/Friendship with God: A Study of Discipleship in James', in F. Segovia (ed.), *Discipleship in the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), pp. 166-83; see also Johnson's *The Letter of James: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB, 37A; New York: Doubleday, 1995), pp. 243-44, 278-80, 338-39.

25. Luke Timothy Johnson, 'Making Connections: The Material Expression of Friendship in the New Testament', *Int* 58 (2004), pp. 158-71. This volume of *Interpretation* is devoted entirely to the friendship motif in the Bible.

26. Kelly Ann Walsh, 'Come on up, my Friend: A Study of Friendship in the Greek Novels of the Roman Period and Luke–Acts' (M.A. thesis, Queen's University of Kingston, 1999).

status divisions in the Book of Acts, and has provided an overview of the use of friendship *topoi* elsewhere in the New Testament;[27] L.M. White has looked at friendship as a moral paradigm in Philippians;[28] and P. Marshall has argued that the various conflicts within the Corinthian church should be read in light of social conventions.[29] Marshall's work is notable for the fact that he highlights friendship conventions within texts that do not utilize either the term φίλος or φιλία.[30] Finally, Fitzgerald returns to the theme of friendship with a fascinating comparison between how friendship notions are used in Johannine and Pauline literature.[31]

Friendship in the Fourth Gospel
In addition to the above studies examining friendship in other New Testament texts, a number of recent works have focused on friendship in the Fourth Gospel. Two, in particular, have concentrated on the farewell scene of chapters 13–17 and attempted to read the Gospel of John in light of Greco-Roman notions of friendship.[32] A third focuses on the explicit language of

27. Mitchell, 'The Social Function of Friendship'; Mitchell, 'Greet the Friends'. Mitchell specifically argues that Luke has used friendship conventions as a vehicle for questioning the cultural expectation of reciprocity and encouraging 'upper status people in the community to benefit those beneath them' ('Greet the Friends', pp. 239-40). For more on the use of friendship conventions in Acts, see Luke Timothy Johnson, *Sharing Possessions: Mandate and Symbol of Faith* (OBT, 9; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1973), p. 120; Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Literary Function of Possessions in Acts* (SBLDS, 39; Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1977), esp. pp. 1-5; David P. Seccombe, *Possessions and the Poor in Luke–Acts* (SNTU, B.6; Linz: A. Fuchs, 1982), esp. pp. 200-209; David L. Mealand, 'Community of Goods and Utopian Allusions in Acts II-IV', *JTS* 28 (1977), p. 77.

28. 'Morality between Two Worlds'; cf. John T. Fitzgerald, 'Philippians, Epistle to the', *ABD*, V, p. 320; J.L. Jaquette, 'A Not-So-Noble Death: Figured Speech, Friendship and Suicide in Philippians 1:21-26', *Neot* 28 (1994), pp. 177-92; and the essays in n. 21 above.

29. Marshall, *Enmity at Corinth*.

30. Marshall suggests that Paul's refusal to accept financial aid from the Corinthians, which they offered as an act of friendship, led to enmity between them, particularly given Paul's willingness to accept such an overture of friendship from the Philippians. Failure to return a gift for one received (reciprocity) was also tantamount to declaring enmity; Mitchell, 'Greet the Friends', p. 247 n. 80; A.R. Hands, *Charities and Social Aid in Greece and Rome* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1968), p. 26. For additional works that have argued for friendship language in the New Testament, see the section on 'Friendship in the New Testament' in Chapter 2.

31. John Fitzgerald, 'Christian Friendship: John, Paul, and the Philippians', *Int* 61 (2007), pp. 284-96. Perhaps most helpful in this article is Fitzgerald's observation that Paul's language of reconciliation depends heavily on Greco-Roman notions of friendship.

32. Ford, *Redeemer*; Sharon H. Ringe, *Wisdom's Friends: Community and Christology in the Fourth Gospel* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1999).

friendship in the Fourth Gospel and attempts to determine the nature of the friendship relationship between Jesus and his disciples.[33] A fourth looks more broadly at friendship conventions in the Gospel of John.[34] And the fifth attempts to interpret Jesus' statement in Jn 15.15 in light of master-slave and patron-client relationships in the Greco-Roman world.[35]

E. Puthenkandathil. In many ways the most thorough treatment of friendship in the Fourth Gospel, E. Puthenkandathil's published dissertation entitled, *Philos: A Designation for the Jesus-Disciple Relationship: An Exegetico-Theological Investigation of the Term in the Fourth Gospel*, looks at every occurrence of φίλος in the Gospel of John and attempts to determine the significance of the term through an extensive examination of the contexts in which it occurs. Puthenkandathil supplements his contextual analysis with etymological and historical analysis, providing a broad overview of the Jewish background of the term through reference to both canonical and extra-canonical literature.

Although Puthenkandathil shows some awareness of Greco-Roman notions of friendship, he makes almost no attempt to connect such notions to the friendship motif in the Fourth Gospel. Instead, his focus remains at the lexical level, and he virtually ignores questions of how the socio-cultural conceptual world from which the Fourth Gospel emerged may have informed its reading. He concludes that 'the friendship between Jesus and the believer is basically a master-disciple relationship', though he notes that the Johannine understanding of discipleship, which is based on friendship, is different from the traditional Christian understanding of discipleship as διακονία.[36] Furthermore, he argues that the title φίλοι, which Jesus grants to his followers, is based exclusively on the communication of knowledge (15.15). As we will see below, however, the basis for the friendship between Jesus and his followers is far broader.

J. Massyngbaerde Ford. In *Redeemer—Friend and Mother: Salvation in Antiquity and in the Gospel of John*, J.M. Ford attempts to answer two key questions: '(1) Does John see redemption as an act of friendship? and (2) Does he include

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33. Eldho Puthenkandathil, *Philos: A Designation for the Jesus-Disciple Relationship: An Exegetico-Theological Investigation of the Term in the Fourth Gospel* (New York: Peter Lang, 1993).

34. Gail R. O'Day, 'Jesus as Friend in the Gospel of John', *Int* 58 (2004), pp. 144-57.

35. Elliot, 'John 15:15'. The paucity of studies on friendship in the Fourth Gospel prior to the works of Ford, Ringe, and Puthenkandathil is illustrated in the mere two full pages devoted to friendship in the Gospel of John in Mitchell's overview of friendship in the New Testament; 'Greet the Friends', pp. 257-59.

36. Puthenkandathil, *Philos*, pp. 240, 216. For the traditional view, Puthenkandathil cites Lk. 12.37, 43-47; 17.10; Rom. 1.1; 2 Cor. 4.5; Gal. 1.1, 10; Phil. 1.1.

a feminine aspect in his approach to redemption?'[37] Ford capably argues that since redemption is essentially a restoration of friendship with God,[38] Christian redemption should be understood within the broader context of friendship notions found in Jewish, early Christian, and especially Greco-Roman literature. She thus surveys the relevant literature on friendship, seeking to isolate 'the qualities that form the essence of friendship and... to find these within the text of John's Gospel'.[39] Read within this broader context of ancient friendship literature, the incarnation and the redemption of humankind, according to Ford, become 'an act of friendship par excellence on the part of a Triune God'.[40]

Sharon H. Ringe. Where Ford seeks to establish a close link between friendship and redemption, S.H. Ringe argues for a crucial link between wisdom and friendship motifs in the Gospel of John. These two motifs, according to Ringe, are used together in the Fourth Gospel to 'form one crucial thread in a complex textual tapestry'.[41] Ringe maintains that 'the picture of Jesus as at once Wisdom incarnate and the Friend who befriends others and commands them to be friends to one another is developed through a wealth of images and narrative instances'.[42]

Like Ford, Ringe rightly recognizes the importance of situating the friendship motif within the conceptual context of the New Testament world in order to grasp more fully the nuances of its meaning in the Fourth Gospel.[43] She thus provides a brief overview of friendship among Hellenis-

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37. Ford, *Redeemer*, p. 108.

38. Ford, *Redeemer*, p. 1.

39. Ford, *Redeemer*, p. 110. Ford's chapter on 'The *Pathos* of Friendship' provides a particularly helpful overview of Greco-Roman friendship, focusing on the thought of Pythagorus, Plato, Aristotle, Epicurus, the Stoics, Cicero, and Philo; Ford, *Redeemer*, pp. 73-92.

40. Ford, *Redeemer*, p. 124.

41. *Wisdom's Friends*, p. 7. Although Ringe's study is not nearly as thorough as Ford's, she goes beyond Ford in looking for friendship allusions not only in the friendship terminology and obvious relevant narratives, but also in metaphors such as the Good Shepherd. In her view, Jesus' ministry as Good Shepherd is consistent with the approach of Latin American clergy, who place a strong emphasis on a 'ministry of accompaniment' (*una pastoral de acompañamiento*)—ministry in which the principal responsibility of the minister is to show solidarity with suffering communities; *Wisdom's Friends*, p. xii. This observation, though both appropriate and consistent with Greco-Roman notions of friendship, highlights the differences between Ringe's approach and the approach of the present study. Ringe's very worthwhile reading is the product of reading the text through the grid of her own modern ecclesiological concerns rather than through the grid of the ancient audience's worldview.

42. Ringe, *Wisdom's Friends*, p. 2.

43. Ringe, *Wisdom's Friends*, p. 69.

tic philosophers and then examines how Hellenistic (and Jewish) notions of friendship provide insight into John's Gospel. Although her linking of wisdom with friendship and her contention that wisdom is an important motif in John's Gospel are subject to debate,[44] Ringe's claim that 'the language of friendship sounds a persistent beat from the beginning to the end of the narrative'[45] is eminently appropriate.

Gail R. O'Day. Where Ford and Ringe attempt to determine the relationship between the friendship motif and other themes in the Fourth Gospel, G.R. O'Day focuses on identifying the broad use of friendship conventions in the Gospel of John. As such, her very helpful article closely mirrors the approach of the current study,[46] though her analysis is necessarily quite brief. She provides a particularly interesting analysis of the use of παρρησία ('boldness, frankness') in the Fourth Gospel.

Susan M. Elliott. Finally, S.M. Elliott has provided one of the fullest analyses of Jn 15.15 to date. She affirms the need to look to the Greco-Roman conceptual world to understand the significance of the shift in status from slaves to friends, but maintains that 'friends' in Jn 15.15 refers to clients, and that the shift in status involves a shift within the context of the extended household.[47]

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44. Ringe argues that although the word σοφία does not occur in the Fourth Gospel and the author makes no attempt to quote any of the canonical or non-canonical texts associated with Wisdom, the Fourth Gospel clearly links Wisdom as a manifestation of the divine with Jesus as the λόγος incarnate. This connection, she maintains, is most apparent in the Prologue, which Ringe sees as a 'wisdom hymn', but continues throughout the Fourth Gospel. In spite of the limited explicit wisdom vocabulary in the Fourth Gospel, the conceptual world associated with wisdom plays an important role; Ringe, *Wisdom's Friends*, pp. 46-63. See also Michael E. Willett, *Wisdom Christology in the Fourth Gospel* (San Francisco: Mellen Research University Press, 1992); Martin Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus* (JSNTSup, 71; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992); Ben Witherington, III, *John's Wisdom: A Commentary on the Fourth Gospel* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1995); M.-É. Boismard, *Moses or Jesus: An Essay in Johannine Christology* (trans. B.T. Viviano; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), pp. 69-84; Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *Jesus: Miriam's Child, Sophia's Prophet: Critical Issues in Feminist Christology* (New York: Continuum, 1994); Bea Mary Dorsey, 'Wisdom in the Gospels of Thomas and John' (PhD dissertation, Marquette University, 1998).

45. Ringe, *Wisdom's Friends*, p. 65.

46. 'Jesus as Friend'.

47. Elliott, 'John 15:15', p. 35. We will consider Elliott's arguments more fully in Chapter 4.

Summary.[48] While each of the above studies provides helpful insights into the significance of friendship language in the Gospel of John, none adequately addresses the question of how the authorial audience, or original audience, would have understood such language. Puthenkandathil's study identifies friendship language in the Fourth Gospel exclusively on the basis of lexicography. He shows almost no interest in the world outside of the text. The studies by Ford and Ringe, on the other hand, use approaches similar to that used in the present study. Each attempts to determine how friendship was perceived in the ancient world and then uses this information to read the Gospel of John. Neither, however, systematically attempts to identify friendship language throughout the Fourth Gospel and determine the rhetorical function of this literary motif. Consequently, neither fully addresses the question of how the Fourth Gospel's friendship language would have been understood by late first-century and early second-century readers. Instead, both tend to treat Greco-Roman literature on friendship more as background information that reveals where the Fourth Gospel may have gotten some of its ideas, rather than as a source for delineating a particular aspect of a Greco-Roman worldview that can be used as a hermeneutical lens through which the Fourth Gospel is read.

Such an approach is perfectly appropriate given their goals. Ringe's primary concern is to establish a link between wisdom and friendship in the Fourth Gospel and then highlight the implications of these motifs in reading the Fourth Gospel. She accomplishes this goal quite effectively. Ford, on the other hand, is concerned with establishing a link between friendship and redemption and identifying any feminine imagery that is associated with redemption in the Fourth Gospel. Like Ringe, she presents a compelling argument for her thesis. These fairly narrow goals, however, appear to have kept both scholars from exploring the degree to which notions of Greco-Roman friendship pervade the Gospel of John and the broad way in which the conceptual world associated with friendship functions as a literary tool in the Fourth Gospel.

While Elliott's analysis of Jn 15.15 is provocative, it fails to account for the pervasive appeal to the conceptual field of Greco-Roman friendship throughout the Gospel of John. The ubiquitous use of language associated with *ideal* friendship strongly suggests that the relationship envisaged in 15.15 involves far more than an elevation from a slave-master to a patron-client relationship.[49]

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48. To the above studies, of course, can be added the dissertation upon which this study is based: Martin M. Culy, 'Jesus—Friend of God, Friend of his Followers: Echoes of Friendship in the Fourth Gospel' (PhD dissertation, Baylor University, 2002).

49. Elliott's association of the language of mutual indwelling found in 15.1-8 with slavery (with the slave as an extension of the master) rather than friendship is not convincing; 'John 15:15', p. 37.

Finally, O'Day's intriguing analysis offers numerous insights into how friendship conventions are woven into the Gospel of John. Her succinct treatment leaves one wondering just how pervasively broader friendship conventions may have been used in the Fourth Gospel.

An Eclectic Approach

This study differs methodologically from earlier treatments of the Fourth Gospel in a number of important ways. In broad terms, it uses a literary-critical approach that emphasizes audience criticism and the notion of literary motifs. It begins by examining a range of literature that was contemporaneous with the New Testament in an effort to (1) determine how the authorial audience (see below) would have viewed the notion of friendship, and (2) construct a conceptual field of Greco-Roman friendship. It then proceeds to establish friendship as a literary motif in the Gospel of John through a close reading of the text that identifies repeated references to the conceptual field of friendship.

Establishing the presence of a literary motif, however, should never serve as an end in itself. One must also determine how that motif functions. As we will see, the function of the friendship motif in the Fourth Gospel is best understood through reference to the narrative-critical notion of characterization.[50] As a tool of characterization, the friendship motif operates on two interrelated axes in the Gospel of John. It serves, first of all, to help characterize the relationship between Jesus and the Father, and secondly, to characterize the relationship between Jesus and his followers. The latter literary strategy is heavily dependent on the former, with the first half of the Fourth Gospel focusing on Jesus' relationship with the Father, and the second half focusing on his relationship with his followers.[51]

Literary Motifs

Numerous studies have appeared in recent years that focus on a specific motif within a particular biblical text.[52] Few of these, however, have

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50. Such a goal does not imply that simply describing the presence of a motif is not valuable in and of itself. As W. Freedman has noted, 'It is a fairly automatic critical assumption that to demonstrate the existence of an elaborate motif in a given work is to demonstrate something that enhances the value of that work'. Freedman nevertheless goes on to point out that 'it is not enough to show that an author has employed a motif or that one has found its way into his work without at least inquiring why or if its presence is an asset' (William Freedman, 'The Literary Motif: A Definition and Evaluation', *Novel* 4 [1971], p. 123).

51. To help trace the development of the friendship motif in the Fourth Gospel, we will appeal to a variety of narrative conventions that would have helped highlight this motif for the authorial audience.

52. Roger Syrén, *The Forsaken First-Born: A Study of a Recurrent Motif in the Patriarchal*

explicitly defined what is meant by 'motif' or adopted rigorous criteria for identifying a motif.[53] The most thorough theoretical treatment of motifs to date appears to be that of W. Freedman.[54] According to Freedman, a literary motif is a 'recurrent theme, character, or verbal pattern, but it may also be a family or associational cluster of literal or figurative references to a given class of concepts or objects, whether it be animals, machines, circles, music, or whatever'.[55] A motif's function goes well beyond the semantic information that it contributes to specific portions of a text.[56] By their very nature, literary motifs encourage the reader to attempt to determine why the author has built his or her work around a particular idea.

Freedman notes that although motifs superficially tend to appear simply to be something that is described, they, in fact, represent part of the description itself.[57] A motif is 'presented both as an object of description, and, more often, as part of the narrator's imagery and descriptive vocabulary'.[58] In other words, motifs point to something beyond themselves. Rather than being an end in themselves, they serve as a vehicle through which the author communicates notions that are often not readily apparent: 'The motif is a complex of separate parts subtly reiterating in one level what is taking place on another. It thus multiplies levels of meaning and interest'.[59]

Motifs rely heavily on their recurrent nature to produce a cumulative effect on the reader.[60] As references to a particular motif accumulate,

Narratives (JSOTSup, 133; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993); Martin Ravndal Hauge, *Between Sheol and Temple: Motif Structure and Function in the I-Psalms* (JSOTSup, 178; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995); Christopher R. Matthews, 'Articulate Animals: A Multivalent Motif in the Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles', in F. Bovon, A.G. Brock and C.R. Matthews (eds.), *The Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), pp. 205-32. For examples of other works dealing with motifs in the Fourth Gospel, see Mark L. Appold, *The Oneness Motif in the Fourth Gospel: Motif Analysis and Exegetical Probe into the Theology of John* (WUNT, 2/1; Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1976); Poling Joe Sun, '*Menein* in the Johannine Traditions: An Integrated Approach to the Motif of Abiding in the Fourth Gospel, I and II John' (PhD dissertation, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1993); Meeks, *The Prophet King.*

53. Notable exceptions include Dennis J. Horton, 'Death and Resurrection: The Shape and Function of a Literary Motif in the Book of Acts' (PhD dissertation, Baylor University, 1995); and Timothy Dwyer, *The Motif of Wonder in the Gospel of Mark* (JSNTSup, 128; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996).

54. Freedman, 'The Literary Motif'.

55. Freedman, 'The Literary Motif', pp. 127-28.

56. Freedman, 'The Literary Motif', p. 127.

57. Freedman, 'The Literary Motif', pp. 124-25.

58. Freedman, 'The Literary Motif', p. 128.

59. Freedman, 'The Literary Motif', p. 128.

60. Such repetition provides cohesion in the narrative as a whole and makes the text more 'readable'; cf. Edward K. Brown, *Rhythm in the Novel* (The Alexander

mere allusions to that motif lead the reader to interpret the text in light of the motif[61]: 'Like misunderstandings, ironies, metaphors, and symbols, motifs involve the reader more deeply in the work by weaving consistency and continuity while inviting the reader to discern patterns, implications, and levels of meaning which lie below the surface of the literary work'.[62]

It is important to emphasize the 'stealth' character of motifs. Where a theme relates to what a story is about and will tend to be readily apparent through a superficial reading of a text, motifs are woven into the fabric of the text and operate below the surface. Thus, while the Gospel of John is not explicitly a text *about* friendship, it is a text that makes heavy use of the conceptual field of friendship. Similarly, while James's *The Wings of the Dove* and *The Golden Bowl*, or Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* and *Tender is the Night* are not novels *about* money,

> the language of money, finance, and economics is indeed recurrent in these novels... Viewed collectively, this language refers to something outside itself, namely, the economic preoccupation of the society or some of its members. The motif, then, tells the reader something—to establish a convenient separation—about the action of the story (either its total structure or the events), the minds of the characters, the emotional import or the moral or cognitive content of the works. It tells him subtly what the incidents perhaps tell him bluntly.[63]

Given the subtle nature of motifs, how can literary critics reliably identify them? Again, Freedman provides helpful guidance. He notes two key criteria for establishing a motif: frequency and avoidability/unlikelihood. First, 'members of the family of references [that is, features of a motif] should occur often enough to indicate that purposiveness rather than merely coincidence or necessity is at least occasionally responsible for their presence'.[64] Second, contexts in which putative references to a motif occur should not consistently demand references to features of the motif. Critics must ask, 'Could the writer have avoided the use of language that

Lectures, 1949–50; Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1950), p. 115; Susan R. Suleiman, 'Redundancy and the "Readable" Text', *Poetics Today* 1 (1980), pp. 119-42; Freedman, 'The Literary Motif', p. 124. This cumulative effect, in turn, inevitably suffuses, at least to some extent, every occurrence of the motif; Freedman, 'The Literary Motif', p. 127.

   61. See also R. Alan Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A Study in Literary Design* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983), p. 199.

   62. Culpepper, *Anatomy*, p. 184. As with a leitwort, by following repetitions of a leitmotif 'one is able to decipher or grasp a meaning of the text, or at any rate, the meaning will be revealed more strikingly' (Martin Buber, quoted in Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative* [New York: Basic Books, 1981], p. 93).

   63. Freedman, 'The Literary Motif', p. 124.

   64. Freedman, 'The Literary Motif', p. 126.

is associated with the motif in this context? How likely or expected is the appearance of such language in this context?'

   Freedman's criteria for identifying a motif will serve as methodological safeguards for the following discussion of friendship as a literary motif in the Fourth Gospel. Such explicit criteria will help insure that the proposed analysis arises naturally from the text rather than being imposed upon it. Ultimately, the objective of this study is to determine the relative likelihood of the intended audience being affected by this motif, whether they consciously recognized it or not. To answer this question, this study relies heavily upon the methodological approach known as audience criticism. More specifically, it builds on the distinctions between various types of audiences posited by P.J. Rabinowitz.[65]

Audience Criticism

Rabinowitz distinguishes between the 'actual audience' (the flesh-and-blood people who read or listen to a text), 'the authorial audience' (the audience for whom the author thought he was writing, who possessed the background knowledge presumed by the text), the 'narrative audience' (to whom the narrator communicates and who has a particular understanding of reality—such as the ability of animals to speak—that would not be consistent in all ways with the actual or authorial audience),[66] and the 'ideal narrative audience' (who embraces the perspective of the narrator even when neither the narrative nor authorial audience do). The goal of this study will be to determine how the *authorial audience*, the hypothetical audience for whom the text was designed, would have understood the friendship language in the Gospel of John.[67]

   65. Peter J. Rabinowitz, 'Truth in Fiction: A Reexamination of Audiences', *Critical Inquiry* 4 (1977), pp. 121-41; Peter J. Rabinowitz, *Before Reading: Narrative Conventions and the Politics of Interpretation* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987).

   66. The narrative audience, then, is a feature of *fictional* texts.

   67. Recent studies that have used a similar approach include Charles H. Talbert and Perry L. Stepp, 'Succession in Mediterranean Antiquity, Part 1: The Lukan Milieu' and 'Succession in Mediterranean Antiquity, Part 2: Luke–Acts', in *SBL Seminar Papers, 1998, Part One* (SBLSP, 37; Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1998), pp. 148-68, 169-79; Stanley Dwight Harstine, 'The Functions of Moses as a Character in the Fourth Gospel and the Responses of Three Ancient Mediterranean Audiences' (PhD dissertation, Baylor University, 1999); Mary Ann Tolbert, *Sowing the Gospel: Mark's World in Literary-Historical Perspective* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989); Warren Carter, 'The Crowds in Matthew's Gospel', *CBQ* 55 (1993), pp. 54-67; Warren Carter, 'Recalling the Lord's Prayer: The Authorial Audience and Matthew's Prayer as Familiar Liturgical Experience', *CBQ* 57 (1995), pp. 514-30; Warren Carter, 'Matthew 4:18-22 and Matthean Discipleship: An Audience-Oriented Perspective', *CBQ* 59 (1997), pp. 58-75; Warren Carter and John Paul Heil, *Matthew's Parables: Audience Oriented Perspectives* (Washington: The Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1998).

Reading as Authorial Audience. With the profusion of labels used to refer to various types of 'readers' and 'audiences' (actual reader, implied reader, ideal reader, mock reader, historical reader, model reader, competent reader, informed reader, narratee, authorial audience, narrative audience, and so forth), it becomes necessary not only to chose a particular label with care but also to define explicitly what one means by that label.[68] It is particularly important to distinguish the notion of authorial audience from W. Iser's popular notion of 'implied reader'.[69]

The 'implied reader' represents an idealized hypothetical reader 'who engages in those activities that seem to be called for by the strategies a particular text has adopted'.[70] The characteristics of the implied reader must be extracted from the text itself, which is viewed as a closed, autonomous object. In contrast, the authorial audience represents a broader category that is derived through careful analysis of both the text itself *and* the context in which the text was produced.[71]

Reading as authorial audience recognizes that the meaning assigned to a text by the intended readers results from an interaction between what they bring to the text and what is contained in the text itself. Where a close reading of the text can give us an idea of the character of the implied readers, particularly through reference to what the narrator includes or omits, to determine how certain culturally-bound features of the text

68. S.R. Suleiman notes that 'audience-oriented criticism is not one field but many, not a single widely trodden path but a multiplicity of crisscrossing, often divergent tracks that cover a vast area of the critical landscape'. She notes six major varieties of audience-oriented criticism; Susan R. Suleiman, 'Introduction: Varieties of Audience-Oriented Criticism', in S.R. Suleiman and I. Crosman (eds.), *The Reader in the Text: Essays on Audience and Interpretation* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980), p. 6.

69. Wolfgang Iser, *The Implied Reader: Patterns in Communication in Prose Fiction from Bunyan to Beckett* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974).

70. Peter J. Rabinowitz, 'Whirl without End: Audience Oriented Criticism', in G. Douglas Atkins (ed.), *Contemporary Literary Theory* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1989), p. 84.

71. Cf. Rabinowitz, 'Whirl without End', p. 85. Reading as authorial audience mitigates the circularity involved in reading a text as implied reader. Although both 'authorial audience' and 'implied reader' are interpretive constructs, the modern reader must depend exclusively upon the text to construct the implied reader, before rereading the text in light of the construct. Reading as authorial audience, on the other hand, depends on the blending of information from outside the text with information within the text; cf. Suleiman, 'Introduction', p. 11. S. Mailloux notes that 'in reader-response criticism, the description of reading is always an interpretive construct based on assumptions about who a reader is and what he or she does while reading' (Steven Mailloux, *Interpretive Conventions: The Reader in the Study of American Fiction* [Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1982], p. 202).

would have been understood ultimately requires modern readers to establish a picture of what first- and second-century Mediterranean readers brought to the text so that the text may be read 'in the historical moment of its appearance'.[72] In a sense, then, the authorial audience represents the convergence of the implied reader and the actual historical readers[73] and may be thought of as 'contextualized implied readers'.[74]

To read as authorial audience, modern readers must attempt to answer the following question: If the literary work fell into the hands of an audience that closely matched the author's target audience, in terms of the knowledge they brought to the text, how would they have understood that work?[75] As the text imposes certain limitations on potential meaning,[76] so knowledge brought to the text further constrains the reader's interpreta-

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72. Hans Robert Jauss, 'Literary History as a Challenge to Literary Theory', *New Literary History* 2 (1970), p. 14. Rabinowitz's approach thus builds on that of H.R. Jauss and other practitioners of *Rezeptionsgeschichte* who attempt to determine the *Erwartungshorizont* ('horizon of expectations')—the set of cultural, ethical, and literary expectations that would have been current at the time the work appeared: 'the reader of a new work has to perceive it not only within the narrow horizon of his literary expectations but also within the wider horizon of his experience of life'. Moreover, 'the historical relevance of literature is not based on an organization of literary works which is established *post factum* but on the reader's past experience of the "literary data" ' (Jauss, 'Literary History', pp. 14, 9). This emphasis on features beyond the text itself that are used to construct meaning is consistent with reader-response criticism in general; see, e.g., Jane P. Tompkins, 'The Reader in History: The Changing Shape of Literary Response', in *Reader-Response Criticism: From Formalism to Post-Structuralism* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980), p. 201.

73. W.C. Booth states that 'the authorial audience is a constructed "person" who is in a sense extracted from the flesh-and-blood person' (Wayne C. Booth, 'Where is the Authorial Audience in Biblical Narrative—and in Other "Authoritative" Texts?' *Narrative* 4 [October 1996], p. 249 n. 1). Similarly, Carter points out that 'though the authorial audience remains the author's construct, it is, in part, an approximation of the actual audience addressed by the author' ('The Crowds in Matthew's Gospel', p. 56).

74. Rabinowitz, 'Whirl without End', p. 85. The authorial audience is an informed audience that brings to the text a wealth of knowledge not shared by Iser's implied readers or Rabinowitz's narrative audience. See also Peter J. Rabinowitz and Michael W. Smith, *Authorizing Readers: Resistance and Respect in the Teaching of Literature* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1998), pp. 7-9; Norman R. Petersen, 'The Reader in the Gospel', *Neot* 18 (1984), pp. 39-41.

75. Iser recognizes that 'the manner in which the reader experiences the text will reflect his own disposition', and readers' actualization of a text will vary from one age and context to another (*The Implied Reader*, pp. 281, xii). Booth points out that 'no story will ever work as story unless the flesh-and-blood listener will join an authorial audience that shares with the implied author at least a fair number of basic assumptions about life and its realities' ('Where is the Authorial Audience?', p. 236).

76. So Iser, *The Implied Reader*, p. 282.

tion of the text.[77] 'A literary work, even if it seems new, does not appear as something absolutely new in an informational vacuum, but predisposes its readers to a very definite type of reception by textual strategies, overt and covert signals, familiar characteristics or implicit allusions'.[78]

   This study highlights the value of attempting to read the text within a particular historical context and experience the text in light of the dispositions of the authorial audience and the constraints imposed by the text itself.[79] Reading a text in this manner involves trying to adopt the perspectives of the authorial audience so that one may become a member of the author's and original audience's conceptual community.[80] To realize this goal, modern readers must gain an understanding of the values of the authorial audience and the presuppositions upon which the text was built. They must bridge the cultural and temporal chasm that separates them from the authorial audience by making a conscious effort to set aside their own perspectives so that the perspectives of the authorial audience can become the grid through which they encounter the text.[81] They must reconstruct the conceptual world that was used both in the creation and original reception of the text.[82] Authorial reading, then, does

   77. According to Iser, the implied reader 'incorporates both the prestructuring of the potential meaning by the text, and the reader's actualization of this potential through the reading process' (*The Implied Reader*, p. xii).

   78. Jauss, 'Literary History', p. 12.

   79. Thus, while Iser is correct in asserting that 'one text is potentially capable of several different realizations, and no reading can ever exhaust the full potential, for each individual reader will fill in gaps in his own way', I am interested in how a particular group of readers would have understood the text; Iser, *The Implied Reader*, p. 280; cf. Walker Gibson, 'Authors, Speakers, Readers, and Mock Readers', in J.P. Tompkins (ed.), *Reader-Response Criticism: From Formalism to Post-Structuralism* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980), p. 5.

   80. Indeed, such an approach requires modern readers to become part of the conversation between the original writer and target audience. The text is viewed as a form of communication that includes an addresser, an addressee, and a message that relies upon both a 'contact code' and context; cf. Roman Jakobson, 'Closing Statement: Linguistics and Poetics', in T.A. Sebeok (ed.), *Style in Language* (Cambridge, MA: The Technology Press of Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1960), p. 353. This approach is thus inherently rhetorical in nature: 'any criticism that conceives of the text as a message to be decoded, and that seeks to study the means whereby authors attempt to communicate certain intended meanings or to produce certain intended effects, is both rhetorical and audience-oriented' (Suleiman, 'Introduction', p. 10).

   81. As Booth points out, 'the more remote the culture in which a story is told, the more likely it is that a listener will fail in the effort to exercise the skills as *authorial audience*, skills that the original authors may well have assumed' ('Where is the Authorial Audience?', p. 237).

   82. Cf. Jauss, 'Literary History', pp. 18-19.

not entail a completely disinterested approach to the text, but rather involves exchanging one set of beliefs and prejudices for another.[83]

Authorial Reading and Authorial Intent. Unlike many reader-oriented approaches, particularly poststructuralist approaches, Rabinowitz's approach does not completely jettison the notion of 'authorial intent'. Instead, Rabinowitz points out that 'whatever we feel about the status of authorial intention, it appears that until fairly recently, most people read texts at least *as if* they were trying to extract the author's meaning'.[84] Moreover, while authorial reading is but one of many ways of reading a text, Rabinowitz notes good reasons for affording it privileged status. Authorial reading is not only consistent with the way most people read[85]—whether the reader is a casual reader or an academic reader—but it also provides the foundation for many other types of reading.[86]

In response to those who would appeal to the 'Intentional Fallacy', Rabinowitz proposes that we address authorial intention not as a matter of individual psychology, but rather as a matter of social convention.[87] Such an approach shifts concern away from what the author was thinking as he or she took pen in hand and focuses on how members of a particular community communicate with one another. Thus, while reading as authorial audience recognizes that 'the convergence of text and reader brings the literary work into existence',[88] it affords the authorial audience a privileged status as readers.[89]

83. Cf. Wayne C. Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1961), p. 138.

84. *Before Reading*, p. 194. Iser also recognizes that authors make use of narrative conventions to guide the reader toward a particular reading of the text. Identifying the author's intent can also be correlated with identifying the approximate interpretation that would have been conventionally agreed upon by the intended readers; *The Implied Reader*, p. xiv; cf. Mailloux, *Interpretive Conventions*, pp. 144-58.

85. Note Louise Rosenblatt's concession: 'I am even ready to say that in most readings we seek the belief that a process of communication is going on, that one is participating in something that reflects the author's intention' ('The Quest for "The Poem Itself"', in *Contexts for Criticism* [ed. D. Kennedy; Mountain View, CA: Mayfield, 1987], p. 154).

86. See Rabinowitz, *Before Reading*, pp. 30-31.

87. Rabinowitz, *Before Reading*, p. 22; cf. Barbara Foley, *Telling the Truth: The Theory and Practice of Documentary Fiction* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1986), p. 43.

88. Iser, *The Implied Reader*, p. 275.

89. R.B. Hays makes an extremely important point in regard to the debate over authorial intent: 'Often overlooked in the discussion of authorial intention is the fact that W.K. Wimsatt, Jr. and Monroe C. Beardsley, in their landmark essay, "The Intentional Fallacy", *The Verbal Icon: Studies in the Meaning of Poetry* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1954), did not exclude in principle the possibility of gaining

In Rabinowitz's approach, each text carries with it an implicit invitation from the author to the authorial audience to read the text through a certain paradigm.[90] The reading of the text is thus constrained by the communal nature of the reading process, which dictates a particular set of presuppositions that are shared by the author and intended readers.[91] In a very real sense, then, determining how an authorial audience would have read a text involves much the same process as isolating authorial intent.[92] They represent two sides of the same coin, since to communicate successfully an author must work within certain conventional boundaries that he or she shares with the authorial audience. Indeed, 'since the structure of a work is designed with the authorial audience in mind, actual readers must come to share its characteristics as they read if they are to experience the text as the author wished'.[93]

Attempting to read a text as those for whom the text was designed would have read it does not imply that all literary 'design' is conscious.[94] In the Gospel of John, for example, the choice to use friendship language was almost certainly an unconscious one. There is no need to maintain that the author of the Fourth Gospel *intended* his audience to understand

information about the author's intention in all texts. Indeed, they asserted that "practical messages"—as distinguished from "poetry"—"are successful if and only if we correctly infer the intention" (5). Their primary point was that "the design or intention of the author is neither available nor desirable *as a standard for judging the success of a work of literary art*" (3, emphasis mine). This is a proposal about aesthetics, not a skeptical stricture on historical knowledge' (Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989], p. 201 n. 90).

90. Rabinowitz notes that 'while the specific rules may vary with genre, cultural context, and author, the authorial audience is expected to share them, whatever they are, with the author *before* picking up the text' (*Before Reading*, p. 56).

91. Cf. Rabinowitz, *Before Reading*, p. 23. Each group also licenses a set of *interpretive* conventions that help set the boundaries for constructing meaning; Mailloux, *Interpretive Conventions*, p. 149. Working within these parameters allows modern readers to approximate the 'social or *public* meaning of the discourse in its original moment' (Charles H. Cosgrove, 'The Justification of the Other: An Interpretation of Rom 1:18–4:25', *SBL Seminar Papers, 1992* [SBLSP, 31; Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1992], p. 613 [emphasis in original]); cf. J. Louis Martyn, *The Gospel of John in Christian History: Essays for Interpreters* (New York: Paulist Press, 1978), pp. 105-106 n. 169.

92. Booth notes that 'even the greatest of literature is radically dependent on the concurrence of beliefs of authors and readers' (*The Rhetoric of Fiction*, p. 140); cf. Jauss, 'Literary History', pp. 15-16.

93. Rabinowitz, *Before Reading*, p. 25; cf. Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, pp. 138-41.

94. Cf. Rabinowitz, *Before Reading*, p. 21. Freedman noted that literary critics of the past half century or so have attempted 'to discover clusters or families of related words or phrases that, by virtue of their frequency and particular use, tell us something about the author's intentions, *conscious or otherwise*' ('The Literary Motif', p. 123 [emphasis mine]).

the friendship language in a particular fashion. More likely, the conceptual field of friendship simply served the author as an available (intuitive) tool for meeting one of his literary goals: the characterization of Jesus.[95] In explicating the relationship between Jesus and the Father and between Jesus and his followers, the author likely unconsciously utilized the language of friendship as a literary tool for guiding the reader toward a particular reading of the text. Consequently, the author's use of existing conventions to communicate with a specific, though hypothetical audience led to the creation of a particular text whose meaning was prestructured by the knowledge shared by the author and authorial audience, including knowledge of narrative conventions.[96]

Echoes of 'Echoes'? Biblical scholars familiar with the work of R.B. Hays may be tempted to see an intertextual link or 'echo' between the present study's title and Hays's influential *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*. While both use a literary approach that attempts to understand the biblical text more fully through reference to links outside of the text, the present study differs from that of Hays in one important aspect. Hays attempts to locate allusions to or echoes of specific Old Testament passages within the writings of Paul. He is thus primarily concerned with how one text can inform the reading of another. This approach is quite common in literary treatments of the biblical text and fits well with audience-critical readings: 'the philological question of how the text is 'properly' to be understood, that is according to its intention and its time, can best be answered if the text is considered in contrast to the background of the works which the author could expect his contemporary public to know either explicitly or implicitly'.[97]

In contrast, in reading the Gospel of John in light of Greco-Roman notions of friendship we are concerned with how the *conceptual world* associated with a particular topic might have shaped the reading of a text. Where Hays' approach is intertextual in a narrow sense,[98] i.e., it depends on the relation of one text to earlier texts, the present approach

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95. This study does not attempt to provide a thorough analysis of the characterization of Jesus in the Gospel of John. Instead, it focuses on one tool of characterization and asks how that tool contributes to the overall message of the Fourth Gospel. On the characterization of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel, see J.A. du Rand, 'Characterization of Jesus as Depicted in the Narrative of the Fourth Gospel', *Neot* 19 (1985), pp. 18-36.

96. Iser notes that even the reading of fiction requires the reader to respond to signals sent out by the text; *Prospecting: From Reader Response to Literary Anthropology* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), p. 4.

97. Jauss, 'Literary History', p. 19.

98. *Echoes of Scripture*, p. 15.

is intertextual in a broader sense, i.e., it recognizes that no text operates in a vacuum; each text crucially depends on conceptual material that is brought to the text, whether that material comes from a written text or from some other source.[99] As J. Culler has noted, intertextuality in this sense is 'less a name for a work's relation to prior texts than a designation of its participation in the discursive space of a culture'.[100] A reading that draws on this broader notion of intertextuality 'seeks to explore the inter-textual space by taking inventory of the cultural codes within which the text operates and of which it is a manifestation'.[101]

The Authorial Audience and the Johannine Community. Finally, any discussion of audience with respect to the Fourth Gospel must consider the long-standing debate regarding a 'Johannine community'. Although the Gospel of John neither identifies the writer nor the readers, most modern schol-ars have attempted to read the Fourth Gospel in light of a particular com-munity. Indeed, reconstructing the social location of the text has been a central pursuit of modern Johannine studies.

   In recent decades, in particular, biblical scholars have taken for granted the view that the Gospels were directed toward specific commu-nities.[102] Raymond Brown's commentary on the Gospel of John, in partic-ular, helped shift scholarly attention away from reconstructing written sources to seeking to identify how the history of a particular community led to the evolution of the text.[103] Brown's work was followed by J. Louis

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   99. The broad principle of intertextuality thus suggests that no communication is ever truly 'original'. Rather, each communicative act relies, to a lesser or greater extent, on what has been said before, whether the communicator is aware of his or her dependency on earlier 'texts' or not; cf. Robert-Alain de Beaugrande and Wolf-gang Ulrich Dressler, *Introduction to Text Linguistics* (London and New York: Longman, 1981), p. 204. See also Julia Kristeva, *Semiotiké* (Paris: Seuil, 1969); Roland Barthes, 'Theory of the Text', in R. Young (ed.), *Untying the Text: A Post-Structuralist Reader* (Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981), pp. 31-47; Jonathan Culler, 'Presupposition and Intertextuality', in *The Pursuit of Signs: Semiotics, Literature, Deconstruction* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1981), pp. 100-18.
   100. Culler, 'Presupposition and Intertextuality', p. 103.
   101. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture*, p. 15.
   102. For an interesting analysis of how this consensus evolved and a brief overview of some of the methodological weaknesses of this view, see Richard Bauckham, 'For Whom were Gospels Written?', in *The Gospels for All Christians: Rethinking the Gospel Audiences* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), pp. 13-26; and Richard Bauckham, 'The Audience of the Fourth Gospel', in R.T. Fortna and T. Thatcher (eds.), *Jesus in Johannine Tradition* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 2001), pp. 101-14.
   103. Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel according to John: Introduction, Translation, and Notes* (2 vols.; AB, 29, 29A; New York: Doubleday, 1966, 1970). See also Brown's *The Community of the Beloved Disciple* (New York: Paulist Press, 1979).

Martyn, who posited three distinct periods in the history of the Johannine community that were said to be evident in three literary strata of the Gospel.[104] The works of Brown and Martyn not only shifted scholarly attention from the world behind the text to the world contemporaneous with the text, but also established the expression, 'Johannine community', as part of the jargon of the academy.[105]

Given the approach taken in this study, however, questions relating to the existence of a Johannine community or the potential for multiple audiences for the Fourth Gospel are irrelevant for two reasons.[106] First, this study will set forth a reading of the text in its final form, seeking to understand specific features of the text's *present* shape and arrangement.[107] Such an endeavor is synchronic in nature and does not depend

104. J. Louis Martyn, *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel* (rev. ed.; Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1979); Martyn, *The Gospel of John*, pp. 90-121.

105. Gail R. O'Day, 'Toward a Narrative-Critical Study of John', in JD. Kingsbury (ed.), *Gospel Interpretation: Narrative-Critical & Social-Scientific Approaches* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity, 1997), p. 183.

106. Richard Bauckham has recently offered compelling arguments that 'an evangelist writing a Gospel expected his work to circulate widely among the churches, had no particular Christian audience in view, but envisaged as his audience any church (or any church in which Greek was understood) to which his work might find its way' ('For Whom were Gospels Written?', p. 11); cf. Graham N. Stanton, *A Gospel for the New People: Studies in Matthew* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1992), pp. 2-3, 51. Such a starting point may further help to shift scholarly attention away from putative communities to which the evangelists belonged, and encourage modern readers to interpret the Gospels within the broader context of the early Christian movement of the late first century, bringing 'to the interpretation of the Gospels everything we know about that movement and its political, social, economic, religious, and ideological contexts' (Bauckham, 'For Whom were Gospels Written?', p. 46).

107. R.A. Culpepper was perhaps the most influential individual in shifting scholarly attention toward the literary features of the final form of the Fourth Gospel. Although he was not the first to apply techniques related to the study of novels to biblical texts, by 1983 no one else had offered such a thorough analysis using modern narratological techniques; Frank Kermode, foreword to *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel* by R. Alan Culpepper, pp. v-vi. Since Culpepper's work appeared, 'literary studies of the Fourth Gospel have essentially bracketed out the social-historical questions upon which Brown and Martyn concentrated and have focused instead on the story-world created by the text' (O'Day, 'Toward a Narrative-Critical Study of John', p. 184). Culpepper's work has been followed by numerous studies using a similar approach, including Elizabeth Danna, 'Which Side of the Line? A Study of the Characterisation of Non-Jewish Characters in the Gospel of John' (PhD dissertation, University of Durham, 1997); Paul D. Duke, *Irony in the Fourth Gospel* (Atlanta, GA: John Knox Press, 1985); Peter F. Ellis, *The Genius of John: A Composition-Critical Commentary on the Fourth Gospel* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1984); Larry Darnell George, 'The Narrative Unity of the Fourth Gospel's Resurrection: A Literary-Rhetorical Reading of John 20-21' (PhD dissertation, Vanderbilt University, 1997); Philip B. Harner, *Relation Analysis of the Fourth*

upon how the text may have come into being or what historical events the text may have been responding to. Second, this study is concerned with the broader question of how the Gospel of John would have been understood once it began circulating in the first- and second-century Mediterranean world. The proposed reading, therefore, does not depend on isolating a specific *actual* audience or audiences, but rather seeks to understand how the authorial audience (which would have been contemporary with the putative Johannine community) would have understood the text given the background information that they brought to the text. Thus, while this study will use the text of the Fourth Gospel to draw some inferences regarding the authorial audience, it will not use it to attempt to infer a particular historical situation.

Gospel: A Study in Reader-Response Criticism (Lewiston, NY: Mellen, 1993); Harstine, 'The Functions of Moses as a Character in the Fourth Gospel'; Anthony Dennis Hopkins, 'A Narratological Approach to the Development of Faith in the Gospel of John' (PhD dissertation, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1992); Leslie Glenn Hughes, Jr., 'A Literary Analysis of the Role of the Jewish Leadership in the Fourth Gospel (John, Pharisees, Rulers, Chief Priests)' (PhD dissertation, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, 1994); Craig R. Koester, *Symbolism in the Fourth Gospel: Meaning, Mystery, Community* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995); George Mlakuzhyil, *The Christocentric Literary Structure of the Fourth Gospel* (AnBib, 117; Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1987); Victoria J. Nimmo, '"Where Are You from?" (John 19:9): Johannine Characterization and the Significance of Origin' (PhD Dissertation: University of Chicago, 1998); Johannes Nissen and Sigfred Pedersen (eds.), *New Readings in John: Literary and Theological Perspectives: Essays from the Scandinavian Conference on the Fourth Gospel in Århus 1997* (JSNTSup, 182; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999); Gail R. O'Day, *Revelation in the Fourth Gospel: Narrative Mode and Theological Claim* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986); O'Day, 'Toward a Narrative-Critical Study of John'; Norman R. Petersen, *The Gospel of John and the Sociology of Light: Language and Characterization in the Fourth Gospel* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity, 1993); Herman Servotte, *According to John: A Literary Reading of the Fourth Gospel* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1994); Jeffrey Lloyd Staley, *The Print's First Kiss: A Rhetorical Investigation of the Implied Reader in the Fourth Gospel* (SBLDS, 82; Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1988); Staley, *Reading With a Passion: Rhetoric, Autobiography, and the American West in the Gospel of John* (New York: Continuum, 1995); Staley, 'Stumbling in the Dark, Reaching for the Light: Reading Character in John 5 and 9', *Semeia* 53 (1991), pp. 55-80; Mark W.G. Stibbe, *John as Storyteller: Narrative Criticism and the Fourth Gospel* (SNTSMS, 73; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Mark W.G. Stibbe (ed.), *The Gospel of John as Literature: An Anthology of Twentieth-Century Perspectives* (NTTS, 17; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1993); Talbert, *Reading John*; Michael Theobald, *Im Anfang war das Wort: Textlinguistische Studie zum Johannesprolog* (Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1983); D.F. Tolmie, *Jesus' Farewell to the Disciples: John 13:1–17:26 in Narratological Perspective* (Biblical Interpretation Series, 12; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1995); Derek Tovey, *Narrative Art and Act in the Fourth Gospel* (JSNTSup, 151; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997); Armand Barus, 'John 2:12-25: A Narrative Reading', in F. Lozada, Jr. and T. Thatcher (eds.), *New Currents through John: A Global Perspective* (SBLRBS, 54; Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006), pp. 123-40.

The Friendship Motif and Authorial Reading

Although others have sought to read the Gospel of John in light of Greco-Roman notions of friendship, none has asked how friendship conventions shape the act of reading as authorial audience. In order to interpret any literary work, a reader must make certain choices regarding what key or keys will be used to 'unlock' the work. As Rabinowitz notes, 'an actual reader's interpretation of a specific text is at least in part a product of the assumptions with which he or she approaches it'.[108] Consequently, the way in which modern readers, with a distinctive set of presuppositions and background knowledge, read an ancient text will often drastically differ from how the intended audience, with a very different set of presuppositions and background knowledge, would have read the same text.

The present study suggests that crucial features of the complex key that the authorial audience would have used to interpret the Gospel of John relate to their socio-cultural perspectives of reality. To understand the text as the authorial audience would have understood it requires a familiarity with the social norms against which the text was intended to be read.[109] 'The context of situation [that is, the immediate environment in which a text is actually functioning] and the wider context of culture make up the non-verbal environment of a text'.[110] S. Suleiman notes that rhetorical approaches to audience-oriented criticism presume that 'the transmission and reception of any message depend on the presence of one or more shared codes of communication between sender and receiver. Reading consists, therefore, of a process of decoding what has by various means been encoded in the text'.[111] Written texts tend to be directed toward a specific audience that is historically and sociologically bound. Thus writers must craft their work in dialogue with the audience's milieu if that work is to be successful.[112] In what follows, we will consider how ideal personal friendship—a single code or 'social norm' that makes up part of the set of communication codes shared by the original writer and readers—would have shaped the authorial audience's reading of the Fourth Gospel.[113]

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108. *Before Reading*, p. 174.

109. Rabinowitz rightly notes that it is 'just as important to know the *literary* norms that serve as a text's background' (*Before Reading*, p. 69).

110. M.A.K. Halliday and Ruqaiya Hasan, *Language, Context, and Text: Aspects of Language in a Social-Semiotic Perspective* (London: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 47.

111. Suleiman, 'Introduction', p. 8.

112. Cf. Jauss, 'Literary History', pp. 15-16.

113. I in no way intend to suggest that this is the *only* way to read the Fourth

Friendship as a Tool of Characterization

All writers make use of information that they share with their anticipated readers to craft a text, and they expect their audience to read the text in light of this background information. Whether they challenge their audience's deeply seated opinions or seek to reinforce them, they must interact with what the audience brings to the text at some level. Modern writers of murder mysteries, for example, assume that their readers have already formed certain ethical stances toward 'criminal' behavior. They need not explicitly inform the reader that certain ways of behaving are wrong and subject to punitive measures within society. Furthermore, if a writer wants to characterize a particular individual within a murder mystery as a criminal, he or she need not come out and say, 'Stanley Harding was a criminal of the basest sort'. Instead, a mystery writer can indirectly paint someone as a criminal through the dialogue placed in the individual's mouth and the actions attributed to that individual.

Some features of an audience's worldview naturally lend themselves to specific aspects of literary design. The ethical standards of an ethnolinguistic group provide a natural tool by which writers can characterize main characters in murder mysteries and other narratives. Similarly, friendship, and the conceptual field associated with it, is linked to the semantic domain of associations and thus naturally serves as a tool for characterization.[114]

Gospel. Nor do I wish to imply that all early readers would have brought the same presuppositions to the reading of the Fourth Gospel. Koester is almost certainly correct in arguing that the original readers of the Fourth Gospel came from a variety of backgrounds; Craig R. Koester, 'The Spectrum of Johannine Readers', in F.F. Segovia (ed.), *"What is John?" Readers and Readings of the Fourth Gospel* (SBL SymS, 3; Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1996), pp. 5-19. Based upon the available literary evidence, however, it is likely that although the original readers would not have been completely homogeneous, the notion of friendship highlighted in this study would have been part of the popular culture of the day.

114. Characterization refers to the 'techniques by which an author fashions a convincing portrait of a person within a more or less unified piece of writing' (Culpepper, *Anatomy*, p. 105). See also W.J. Harvey, *Character and the Novel* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1965); Robert Scholes and Robert Kellogg, *The Nature of Narrative* (London: Oxford University Press, 1966), pp. 160-206; Thomas Docherty, *Reading (Absent) Character: Towards a Theory of Characterization in Fiction* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983); Elizabeth Struthers Malbon and Adele Berlin (eds.), 'Characterization in Biblical Literature', *Semeia* 63 (1993); David B. Gowler, *Host, Guest, Enemy and Friend: Portraits of the Pharisees in Luke and Acts* (New York: Peter Lang, 1991), pp. 29-75; David R. Beck, *The Discipleship Paradigm: Readers and Anonymous Characters in the Fourth Gospel* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1997), pp. 2-16. For a helpful series of essays on characterization in ancient Greek literature, see Christopher Pelling (ed.), *Characterization and Individuality in Greek Literature* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990).

In a broad sense, characters are developed through what the narrator says about them, the characters' actions and words, and the way that other characters respond to them. What is said about the character when he or she is introduced is often particularly significant.[115] Since a reading audience brings to the text a particular picture of what it means to be a 'friend', writers can use this picture as a tool or springboard for fleshing out their characters. To the degree that two individuals interact in a manner that is consistent with the audience's notion of friendship, for example, those two individuals will be viewed as friends, regardless of whether or not the writer has explicitly identified them as such. As we will see, the notion of ideal friendship, as understood by the authorial audience, would have served as a potent tool for characterizing the relationship between Jesus and other characters in the Fourth Gospel, particularly Jesus and the Father and Jesus and his followers.[116]

Narrative Conventions
In examining the broad notion of characterization, it is also important to consider how certain narrative conventions that the reader would have brought to the text might shed light on the overall function of the friendship motif in the Gospel of John.[117] One of Rabinowitz's most important contributions is found in his emphasis on the fact that readers do not merely rely on the texts they encounter to create their responses, nor even on a combination of the text and the background factual knowledge that they possess. Instead, they are also crucially dependent on various narrative conventions, or rules, that they bring to the text.[118] Their abil-

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115. Culpepper, *Anatomy*, p. 106.

116. For another example of an audience-critical approach that focuses on the narratological notion of characterization, see John A. Darr, *Herod the Fox: Audience Criticism and Lukan Characterization* (JSNTSup, 163; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998). The limited number of groups of characters that appear in the Fourth Gospel (the disciples, the Jews, the Pharisees, the crowd, and minor characters) tend to fall into one of two larger groups: those who are 'friends' of Jesus and those who are not. On the legitimacy of viewing the people described in the Gospels as 'characters', see Culpepper, *Anatomy*, pp. 105-106. For other recent works related to characterization in John's Gospel, see Beck, *The Discipleship Paradigm*; Danna, 'Which Side of the Line?'

117. It is helpful to maintain a distinction between *narrative* and *story*. The narrative is 'the text (the signifier, the discourse, the "how") which conveys the *story* (the signified, the content, or the "what")' (Culpepper, *Anatomy*, p. 53). Narratives 'arrange actions and events in a particular sequential order' and include a high frequency of 'conceptual relations for cause, reason, purpose, enablement, and time proximity' (de Beaugrande and Dressler, *Text Linguistics*, p. 184). The sequence and duration of events within the narrative will often not match the sequence or duration of events in the story; Culpepper, *Anatomy*, p. 54.

118. Using the analogy of a classroom lecture, Halliday and Hasan note that the

ity to understand a text tends to be heavily dependent upon whether they know and accept a range of conventions that are assumed by the text.[119] These narrative conventions, along with knowledge of social notions such as friendship, make up a part of the larger set of interpretive conventions that readers utilize when they encounter a text. Such conventions represent a set of shared ways of making sense of reality.[120]

Rabinowitz posits four types of narrative conventions for reading nineteenth- and twentieth-century novels: rules of notice, rules of signification, rules of configuration, and rules of coherence. 'These rules govern operations or activities that...[are] necessary for the reader to perform if he or she is to end up with the expected meaning'.[121] Rabinowitz's rules of notice are implicit rules that the reader brings to a text that give priority to certain kinds of details, such as titles, first and last sentences, epigraphs, and so on.[122] Rules of signification provide the means of determining the significance of the details that the rules of notice have brought to the reader's attention.[123] Such rules have been a favorite topic of discussion among literary critics, who have typically focused on how to read figurative language in a text or 'how and when to read textual features metaphorically'.[124] Rules of configuration deal with literary features that tend to occur together and form patterns, evoking a sense of expectation on the part of the reader.[125] Such rules

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notion of intertextuality 'includes not only the more obviously experiential features that make up the context of a lesson but also other aspects of the meaning: types of logical sequencing that are recognized as valid, even interpersonal features such as whether a question is intended to be answered or is being used as a step in the development of an argument' (*Language, Context, and Text*, p. 47).

119. Cf. Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, p. 141; Rabinowitz, 'Truth', p. 126.

120. Mailloux, *Interpretive Conventions*, p. 149.

121. Rabinowitz, *Before Reading*, p. 43. Such rules reflect the common concern expressed by W. Iser and other critics that literary analysis must not be limited to texts alone, but also must consider the ways in which readers respond to, or make sense of, texts; Iser, *The Implied Reader*, p. 274.

122. See *Before Reading*, pp. 47-75.

123. Rabinowitz, *Before Reading*, pp. 76-109.

124. Rabinowitz, *Before Reading*, p. 78. Rabinowitz posits four new rules of signification: rules of source (which deal with the reader's ability to distinguish between author, narrator, and character), rules of morality (which deal with readers' tendency to judge characters by their appearance or to assume that certain moral qualities are linked to other moral qualities), rules of truth and realism (by which events in a text may be viewed as both true [by the narrative audience] and untrue [by the authorial audience] at the same time), and rules of causation (by which readers use their understanding of causation in the real world to identify causal relationships within a text); Rabinowitz, *Before Reading*, pp. 78-109.

125. Authors can then bring resolution by completing the pattern or create surprise

prepare the authorial audience, while they are reading, for 'the shape of things to come'.[126] In the Fourth Gospel a rule of configuration immediately draws readers' attention to the relationship between humankind and God and the relationship between Jesus and God through the structure of the Prologue, which creates a sense of expectation and alerts readers to watch for tools that the author will employ to characterize these relationships. Finally, rules of coherence help readers to make sense of texts as unified wholes.[127] They allow readers to perceive an overall structure after the text has been read in its entirety. Such structure in turn permits the reader to bring some unity to the meanings, evaluations, and interpretations that arose during the course of reading.[128] Where rules of configuration allow the reader to answer the question, 'How will this narrative likely work out?' rules of coherence allow the reader to answer the question, 'Given the way the narrative worked out, how can I account for these particular elements?'[129] Such questions are natural components of the reading process. Readers seem to be compelled to attempt to group together the different aspects of a text to form a unified whole. 'While expectations may be continually modified, and images continually expanded, the reader will still strive, even if unconsciously, to fit everything together in a consistent pattern'.[130]

or irritation by altering the pattern or leaving it incomplete; Rabinowitz, *Before Reading*, p. 111.

126. Rabinowitz, *Before Reading*, p. 116. Such rules are both predicative and probabilistic. They allow readers to infer from certain statements that a particular event will occur later in the story. While such rules do not allow people to draw such inferences in real life, they are nevertheless applicable to non-fiction, which represents an author's peculiar shaping of true events into a coherent and compelling narrative. This shaping by the author helps explain why the speech characteristics of Jesus and the narrator in the Fourth Gospel are indistinguishable, leading Culpepper to conclude that the narrator's phraseological point of view has been imposed on Jesus: 'when Jesus, the literary character, speaks, he speaks the language of the author and his narrator' (*Anatomy*, p. 41). Some have argued that this practice of preserving the *ipsissimus spiritus* at the expense of the *ipsissima verba* is consistent with Greco-Roman rather than Jewish practice; C. Milo Connick, 'The Dramatic Character of the Fourth Gospel', *JBL* 67 (1948), p. 168.

127. Rabinowitz, *Before Reading*, pp. 43-45, 141-69. Rabinowitz thus treats coherence as an activity of readers rather than a property of the text. Such an approach, however, does not imply that textual coherence cannot be linked to authorial intent. Authors typically design their work with the knowledge that rules of coherence will be applied by the reader. Indeed, apparent gaps in coherence often represent a key means by which authors guide readers to the meaning they intend; cf. *Before Reading*, p. 147.

128. Rabinowitz, *Before Reading*, pp. 110-11.

129. Rabinowitz, *Before Reading*, p. 112.

130. Iser, *The Implied Reader*, p. 283.

Summary

In summary, attempting to read the text as authorial audience compels modern readers to address two key questions: (1) How did ancient readers' prior knowledge of the world (social, political, historical, etc.) shape their reading of the text? and (2) What knowledge of literary/narrative conventions did the authorial audience bring to the reading of the text? This study focuses on a single aspect of the authorial audience's socio-cultural presuppositions (the conceptual field of friendship) and examines how such presuppositions might have interacted with a particular literary tool (characterization) and various narrative conventions to shape the authorial audience's reading of the Gospel of John.

Literary Approaches to Non-Literary Texts

The approach taken in this study raises an important potential question: Is it appropriate to take an approach designed for literary texts and apply it to the Gospel of John? Although the approach will be literary in nature, it will not treat the Gospel of John as a literary text in a strict sense. Literary texts differ from expository texts in that they do not present an object that exists independently of the text.[131] Texts that describe an object that exists with equal determinacy outside of the text are expositions of the object and are concerned with the factual rather than the fictional.[132] The presentation of reality in literary texts is not subject to the same validation as in expository texts. It is precisely this characteristic of literary texts that results in a wealth of indeterminacy that forces the reader to take a more active role in the 'construction of meaning' and fuels a great deal of literary-critical work today. Scholars like W. Iser are crucially concerned with the *process* of reading that allows readers to make sense out of such indeterminate texts.

This study will assume that the biblical texts fit better within the category of 'expository texts'. Such texts are concerned with objects outside of the text rather than some created world. While they are therefore not subject to the same indeterminacy as literary texts, however, they *are* subject to literary conventions consistent with their genre. Thus, while not all texts are literary texts, all texts have literary design. It is this structural affinity with literary texts, and the fact that literary and expository texts both build upon fundamental features of written communication, that validates the application of certain insights that arise

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131. A literary text is 'a text whose world stands in a principled *alternativity* relationship to the accepted version of the "real world" ' (de Beaugrande and Dressler, *Text Linguistics*, p. 185).

132. Iser, *Prospecting*, p. 6.

from the study of other literary genres or from texts that are temporally distant from the text in question. Consequently, in spite of the fact that the Gospel of John does not belong to the same genre as modern novels,[133] there are many features of Rabinowitz's literary model that tend to apply to narratives in general, as well as to modern novels in particular.[134]

Given the fact that Rabinowitz's model is designed for nineteenth- and twentieth-century novels, it is not surprising that there are also numerous points at which application of his model to the reading of the Fourth Gospel is irrelevant. Most of Rabinowitz's rules of signification, for example, are only relevant for certain types of fiction. Similarly, the common notion that the production of meaning stems from an interaction between text and reader, while true in general terms, does not apply to non-fiction in the same way that it applies to fiction. In discussing the reading process as it relates to novels, Iser notes that novels represent a specific genre 'in which reader involvement coincides with meaning production'.[135] Such dependency upon the reader is related to the indeterminate nature of

133. Although G. Stanton has argued that 'in reading or interpreting any writing, whether ancient or modern, the first step must always be to determine what kind or genre of writing it is' (Graham N. Stanton, *The Gospels and Jesus* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989], p. 14), this study will largely ignore the question of the genre to which the Fourth Gospel belongs. Indeed, the function of friendship language in the Gospel of John operates, for the most part, independent of genre. The focus of this study will be on how such language is used to characterize a particular character and his relationship with other characters within the text. Such characterization is not a feature that is distinct to 'gospels', whatever genre they represent, but rather is characteristic of all narrative texts. For our purposes, it is sufficient to say that the Fourth Gospel represents a biography-like narrative that attempts to portray its protagonist in a positive light. For a discussion of the issues involved in determining the genre of the Gospels, see Norman R. Petersen, 'Can One Speak of a Gospel Genre?' *Neot* 28 (1994), pp. 137-58; Robert Guelich, 'The Gospel Genre', in P. Stuhlmacher (ed.), *The Gospel and the Gospels* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), pp. 173-208; Charles H. Talbert, *What is a Gospel? The Genre of the Canonical Gospels* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977); Richard Burridge, *What are the Gospels?* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Philip L. Shuler, *A Genre for the Gospels: The Biographical Character of Matthew* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982); Robert H. Gundry, 'Recent Investigation into the Literary Genre "Gospel"', in R.N. Longenecker and M.C. Tenney (eds.), *New Dimensions in New Testament Study* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1974), pp. 97-114; see also the comments on the relationship between characterization and genre in Fred W. Burnett, 'Characterization and Reader Construction of Characters in the Gospels', *Semeia* 63 (1993), pp. 8-9; and characterization in narratives in general in Gowler, *Host, Guest, Enemy and Friend*, pp. 84-85.

134. As novels exist to reveal the protagonist, the Gospels exist to reveal Jesus; cf. Harvey, *Character and the Novel*, p. 56.

135. Iser, *The Implied Reader*, p. xi.

novels. There is no reason, however, to suppose that Rabinowitz, Iser, or other literary critics who deal with fiction would make the same claims about non-fiction works such as the Fourth Gospel.

It should also be noted that since we are dealing with only a portion of the Gospel of John—primarily passages with friendship language—it is not surprising that many of Rabinowitz's narrative conventions will not come into play in the following analysis. This does not imply, however, that they are irrelevant for analysis of the Fourth Gospel or for gospel studies as a whole. For example, while Rabinowitz's rule of morality (a rule of significance), which links physical appearance to character, does not shed light on the passages examined in this study, it was clearly relevant not only for Greco-Roman literature in general but also likely would have been used by ancient readers of certain New Testament texts.[136] Similarly, many of Rabinowitz's other narrative conventions could profitably be applied to the Fourth Gospel in a systematic fashion.[137]

Overview of This Study

Although earlier studies have recognized friendship language in the Fourth Gospel, how that language would have shaped the initial reception of the text remains an open question. The present study attempts to demonstrate how conventional notions associated with friendship would have provided the author of the Gospel of John with a powerful literary tool that he utilized both to make some audacious claims about Jesus' relationship with the Father and to put forward the equally audacious notion that the same quality of relationship was being extended to Jesus' followers.

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136. See, e.g., Mikeal C. Parsons, '"Short in Stature": Luke's Physical Description of Zacchaeus', *NTS* 47 (2001), pp. 50-57; Parsons, *Body and Character in Luke and Acts: The Subversion of Physiognomy in Early Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2006). For Greco-Roman treatments of physiognomy, see Richard Förster (ed.), *Scriptores Physiognomonic Graeci et Latini* (2 vols.; Lipsius: Teubner, 1893); Elizabeth C. Evans, 'Physiognomics in the Ancient World', *TAPA* 59 (1969), pp. 5-101. Porphyry, in his *Life of Pythagoras* (13), noted that Pythagoras would not enter into a friendship before he had judged the potential friend's character by his features (φυσιογνωμονῆσαι).

137. In addition to the significance of these conventions for Jn 1.1 (see Chapter 3), for example, a rule of configuration would create a sense of expectation on the part of readers who are told in 1.11 that the Divine *Logos* was not welcomed by his own people. Such an unexpected statement would leave readers who were unfamiliar with the story wondering how such rejection was possible and what form it would take. Rabinowitz notes that strong dissonance between major characters in novels, especially when such dissonance is introduced at the beginning of the narrative, tends to have significant consequences for the plot of the story; *Before Reading*, p. 134.

The study begins (Chapter 2) with a careful examination of Greco-Roman (pagan), Jewish, and early Christian literature roughly contemporaneous with the New Testament in an effort to isolate the conceptual field of friendship that the authorial audience would have brought to the reading of the Fourth Gospel. The survey of Greco-Roman literature focuses, in particular, on key notions associated with ideal friendship in the Greco-Roman world: unity, mutuality, and equality. The treatment of Jewish and Christian literature that follows demonstrates that Jewish and Christian writers throughout the Hellenistic period freely made use of Greco-Roman notions of friendship.

The subsequent two Chapters present a close reading of the Gospel of John that highlights how the conceptual field of Greco-Roman ideal friendship has been used to characterize Jesus' relationship with the Father and his followers. Chapter 3 begins with an analysis of the Prologue that reveals two implicit questions concerning the character of Jesus: (1) Who is this *Logos* who was with God before the creation of the universe and is himself God? and (2) How will this exalted *Logos* made flesh relate to those who 'receive him'? A careful reading of the text reveals that the first question is answered, in part, through the use of friendship language that emphasizes the unity, mutuality, and equality that exists between Jesus and the Father. Chapter 4 then demonstrates how the writer addresses the second question by once again turning to the conceptual field of Greco-Roman friendship, this time to characterize Jesus' relationship with his followers. The use of such language effectively forges a link between the nature of the relationship that Jesus shares with the Father and the nature of the relationship that he offers to his followers.

The concluding Chapter summarizes the findings of this study and briefly evaluates the plausibility of the proposed reading. As we will see, when the Gospel of John is read through the eyes of the authorial audience, the friendship motif becomes not only readily apparent but also serves as a powerful tool for making profound claims concerning Jesus' relationship with the Father and the relationship of radical intimacy that he offers to his followers.

Chapter 2

Friendship in the Ancient Mediterranean World

In recent decades, scholars have increasingly come to appreciate the profound way in which readers' presuppositions determine how they interpret a text. It is now widely recognized that what one brings to a text will, in large part, determine what one gets out of it. Every reader's worldview, with all its component parts, provides a distinctive grid through which that individual interprets reality. This Chapter attempts to uncover one feature of a first century interpretive grid: ancient Mediterranean perspectives on friendship. To accomplish this goal, we must go beyond typical examinations of key friendship terminology and seek to construct a conceptual field for Greco-Roman ideal friendship.

Methodological Considerations

F. Danker has taken a similar approach in his analysis of benefactors in the Greco-Roman world.[1] Danker attempts to flesh out the 'semantic field' of benefactors by identifying terms, phrases, formulations, and themes associated with benefactors. While the approach in this Chapter is roughly analogous to Danker's, the notion 'conceptual field' will be used rather than 'semantic field', since the former explicitly affirms the importance of looking beyond lexical entries when studying a conventional socio-cultural phenomenon like friendship.[2] A semantic field, on the other hand, is generally understood as a lexical field (a set of lexemes or words) that is applied to a particular content domain.[3] While some linguists allow for phrases (even non-lexicalized phrases) within a semantic field, the broader

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1. Frederick W. Danker, *Benefactor: Epigraphic Study of a Graeco-Roman and New Testament Semantic Field* (St. Louis: Clayton, 1982).

2. For early uses of the notion of 'semantic field', see J. Trier, *Der deutche Wortschatz im Sinnbezirk des Verstandes* (Heidelberg: Winter, 1931); Walter Porzig, *Das Wunder der Sprache: Probleme, Methoden und Ergebnisse der Sprachwissenschaft* (Bern: Francke, 1950).

3. Eva Feder Kittay and Adrienne Lehrer, 'Introduction', in *Frames, Fields, and Contrasts: New Essays in Semantic and Lexical Organization* (Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1992), p. 3.

concepts that are included in the discussion below make the notion of semantic field inappropriate for the present study.[4]

Conceptual fields are theoretically consistent with a variety of other notions that linguists have posited for understanding how information is stored.[5] Some of the most common analogous notions include 'frames', 'scripts', and 'schemata'. The notion of frames comes from the 'frame theory' of M.L. Minksy.[6] Minsky maintained that knowledge of the world is stored in our memory in the form of data structures, or 'frames'—'global patterns that contain commonsense knowledge about some central concept'.[7] These 'structured repositories of conventional language' allow readers to fit what they encounter into a framework, or stereotyped data structure, that has been established by what they already know about a particular topic.[8]

The notion of scripts has much in common with Minsky's frames. Where frames are essentially stable sets of facts about the world, scripts are more programmatic in that they incorporate event sequences associated with a particular situation.[9] The Gospel of John, like all other narratives, may be viewed as 'a socially symbolic act [that] assumes certain cultural norms'.[10] These norms, or cultural scripts, help dictate reader expectations and provide writers with starting points for characterization and other narrative goals.[11]

Finally, the notion of schemata refers to higher level complex knowledge structures that can be conventional or habitual in nature. Schemata

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4. On some of the other distinctions between semantic fields and conceptual fields, see Lawrence W. Barsalou, 'Frames, Concepts, and Conceptual Fields', in A. Lehrer and E.F. Kittay (eds.), *Frames, Fields, and Contrasts: New Essays in Semantic and Lexical Organization* (Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1992), pp. 21-74.

5. The diversity of terminology employed by linguists does not imply a diversity of understanding. Instead, the different terms represent various metaphors for understanding how knowledge is organized, stored, and activated in the interpretive process; Gillian Brown and George Yule, *Discourse Analysis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), p. 238.

6. M.L. Minsky, 'A Framework for Representing Knowledge', in P.H. Winston (ed.), *The Psychology of Computer Vision* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1977), pp. 211-77. The notion of 'frame' is borrowed from computer science.

7. Robert-Alain de Beaugrande and Wolfgang Ulrich Dressler, *Introduction to Text Linguistics* (London and New York: Longman, 1981), p. 90.

8. Brown and Yule, *Discourse Analysis*, pp. 241, 238-39.

9. Brown and Yule, *Discourse Analysis*, p. 243. For more on scripts, see esp., R.C. Schank and R.P. Abelson, *Scripts, Plans, Goals, and Understanding: An Inquiry into Human Knowledge Structures* (Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1977).

10. David B. Gowler, *Host, Guest, Enemy and Friend: Portraits of the Pharisees in Luke and Acts* (New York: Peter Lang, 1991), pp. 73-74.

11. For more on frames and semantic fields, see Charles J. Fillmore, 'Semantic Fields and Semantic Frames', *Quaderni di Semantica* 6 (1985), pp. 222-54.

serve as 'ideational scaffolding' that allows readers to organize and inter-pret texts.[12] Like frames, schemata help readers use what they have encountered in earlier texts, along with other knowledge of the world, to interpret new texts.

 Whether we use notions like 'frames', 'scripts', 'schemata', 'seman-tic field', 'conceptual field', or some other label,[13] the important point to emphasize is that the linguistic theory that stands behind each of these concepts indicates that knowledge about topics like friendship would have been stored in memory as 'a single, easily accessible unit, rather than as a scattered collection of individual facts which have to be assem-bled from different parts of memory each time' the topic is mentioned or alluded to.[14] A preference for 'conceptual field' is consistent with the goals of this study. We are not interested in *how* semantic information is stored, but rather in determining *what* semantic information is associated with the notion of friendship in the Greco-Roman world. Such information is derived not simply from a few words that belong to a particular seman-tic field, but rather, it is found in a range of words, phrases, clauses, and even larger units that make up a conceptual field. This broad set of infor-mation that is expressed in the constituents of a conceptual field provides building blocks for developing literary motifs. This Chapter will examine features of Greco-Roman, Jewish, and Christian notions of friendship,[15] attempting to isolate the conventional *topoi* that comprise the conceptual field of friendship from literature roughly contemporary with the Fourth Gospel.

The Implied Readers of the Fourth Gospel

Why look at literature from three different traditions (Greco-Roman, Jew-ish, and Christian)? This question itself arises from another important question: How do we determine what type of literature would most likely reflect the conceptual world of the readers of the Gospel of John? Liter-ary critics have noted that a careful reading of a text will typically reveal

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 12. Brown and Yule, *Discourse Analysis*, p. 247; citing T.A. van Dijk and R.C. Anderson.

 13. It would also be appropriate to speak of the friendship language in the Fourth Gospel as an 'associational cluster'. Freedman borrows this language from Kenneth Burke; William Freedman, 'The Literary Motif: A Definition and Evaluation', *Novel* 4 (1971), p. 124.

 14. Brown and Yule, *Discourse Analysis*, p. 236.

 15. I have borrowed the notion of 'profile' from Danker; *Benefactor*, pp. 317-66. This approach recognizes that speakers or writers convey not only propositional meaning when they produce a text but also social meaning; Brown and Yule, *Dis-course Analysis*, p. 226.

a great deal about the knowledge that the writer expected his or her readers to bring to the text. Or, in technical language, it will help us to build a portrait of the 'implied readers'.

The text of the Fourth Gospel provides many clues that reveal important characteristics of the implied readers, and thus of the authorial audience as well.[16] At a very basic level, the use of Koine Greek implies that the intended readers were familiar with that language. Citations from and allusions to the Old Testament indicate that the readers were familiar with the Jewish Scriptures. Culpepper provides a helpful overview of more specific characteristics of the implied readers of the Fourth Gospel.[17] He notes that the readers to whom the Gospel was addressed were expected to be familiar with most of the characters in the story. They apparently knew John the Baptist and were aware that he had been arrested (3.24). They knew Simon Peter (1.40) and were aware of Judas's betrayal of Jesus before it was recounted (6.64). They were likewise familiar with most of the other disciples and required no explanation for any of the major Jewish groups who play an important role in the Gospel of John. They were familiar with Mary and Martha, but unfamiliar with their brother Lazarus (11.1). Other characters that were unfamiliar to the readers and thus required special introductions include the Beloved Disciple (13.23; 21.24), Nicodemus (3.1), Joseph of Arimathea (19.38), Caiaphas (11.49), and Annas (18.13).

While the narrator assumes that readers have a general knowledge of the geographical setting of the story, the readers are thought to be unfamiliar with most of the specific locations to which the Gospel refers, particularly those in Galilee. They are expected to know Greek but not Hebrew. The narrator thus translates even common terms, such as 'Rabbi' (1.38), 'Messiah' (1.41), and 'Rabboni' (20.16). Moreover, while the readers are expected to have extensive knowledge of the Old Testament (12.38; 13.18; 15.25; 17.12; 19.24, 36), including knowledge of important figures

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16. Although the focus of this study is on the authorial audience rather than the implied reader, the characteristics of the implied reader form a subset of the characteristics of the authorial audience (see above, pp. 16-17). The latter is comprised of characteristics derived from *both* the text itself and from the milieu to which the text was addressed. The authorial audience thus represents 'contextualized implied readers' (Peter J. Rabinowitz, 'Whirl without End: Audience Oriented Criticism', in G.D. Atkins (ed.), *Contemporary Literary Theory* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1989), p. 85.

17. R. Alan Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A Study in Literary Design* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983), pp. 211-27; see also René Kieffer, 'The Implied Reader in John's Gospel', in *New Readings in John: Literary and Theological Perspectives. Essays from the Scandinavian Conference on the Fourth Gospel in Århus 1997* (JSNTSup, 182; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), pp. 47-65.

such as Abraham (8.33), Moses (3.14), and Elijah (1.21), they lack knowledge of key Jewish festivals (7.2; 10.22) and practices (4.9; 18.28). Culpepper also maintains that the implied readers were already familiar with many of the key events in the Fourth Gospel, including the death and resurrection of Jesus, the imprisonment of John the Baptist, the anointing of Jesus by Mary, the presence of the Spirit, the synagogue ban on followers of Jesus, early Christians' fear of the Jews, and probably the betrayal of Jesus.[18]

These features of the Gospel of John paint a picture of a group of implied readers who were not Jewish but who did have significant knowledge of the Old Testament and Judaism in general. Such knowledge suggests that in attempting to determine the conceptual world related to friendship that the authorial audience would have brought to the reading of the Fourth Gospel, an examination of Jewish sources is appropriate. Since the authorial audience lived in the ancient Mediterranean world and their primary language was Greek, they presumably would have had extensive knowledge of the culture in which they lived. Indeed, all things being equal one would expect that Greco-Roman literature would be most indicative of the conceptual world of such an audience.[19] Finally, an examination of Christian literature will help demonstrate the degree of continuity between Christian thinking and Greco-Roman and Jewish traditions relating to friendship.

Greco-Roman Views of Friendship

Φιλία ('friendship') was a popular topic in the ancient Mediterranean world.[20] In Greco-Roman society there was no better or nobler possession

18. Culpepper, *Anatomy*, p. 223.

19. Similarly, as a Christian living in North America, I draw on distinctively North American language far more extensively than on distinctively Christian language, even when communicating in a religious context.

20. The popularity of friendship as a topic of conversation as well as a literary subject is suggested by the fact that Horace (*Sat.* 2.6.75) lists friendship as an appropriate subject for after-dinner discussion. The first systematic analysis and most extensive Greek treatment of friendship is found in two of the works of Aristotle: *Nicomachean Ethics* and *Eudemian Ethics*, with two of the ten books of the former being devoted to the topic of friendship. Discussions of friendship can also be found, for example, in Euripides, Thucydides, Plato, Xenophon, the New Comedy playwrights, Epicurus, Lucretius, Panaetius, Seneca, Epictetus and other Stoics, Secundus the Silent Philosopher, Catullus, Horace, Juvenal, and the Roman poets; for references, see John T. Fitzgerald, 'Introduction', in *Greco-Roman Perspectives on Friendship* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1997), pp. 7-10. At least seven philosophical treatises on friendship are no longer extant, including works by Simmias of Thebes, Speusippus, Xenocrates, Theophrastus, Clearchus, Cleanthes, and Chrysippus; J.G.F. Powell, 'Friendship

than φιλία. Aristotle wrote, 'For no one would choose to live without friends, but possessing all other good things' (*Eth. nic.* 8.1.1).[21] The intimacy that accompanied genuine friendship was viewed as an essential component in a satisfying life: 'When friendship attends us, it brings pleasure and delight to our prosperity no less than it takes away the pains and the feeling of helplessness from adversity' (Plutarch, *Adul. amic.* [*Mor.*] 49F). In this section, we will examine the prevailing Greco-Roman views of φιλία,[22] focusing on the latter part of the Roman republican era and the early part of the imperial period (ca. 100 BCE–200 CE).[23]

and its Problems in Greek and Roman Thought', in D. Innes, H. Hine and C. Pelling (eds.), *Ethics and Rhetoric: Classical Essays for Donald Russell on his Seventy-Fifth Birthday* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), p. 31. Some have suggested that philosophical treatments of friendship never went far beyond the work of Plato; Powell, 'Friendship and its Problems', p. 45.

21. Cf. Lucian, *Tox.* 62. According to Diodorus Siculus (10.8.1), the Pythagoreans held that 'the goodwill of friends is the greatest good to be found in life'. All Greco-Roman quotations are from the Loeb Classical Library editions unless otherwise noted.

22. Earlier studies have often been hampered by the fact that they presuppose that anything that comes under the label of φιλία represents 'friendship'. In actuality, anything that comes under the label of φιλία represents φιλία, and may or may not correspond to the English concept of 'friendship'. Φιλία, like almost all other lexemes, has a range of meaning. The notion of 'friendship' is part of that range, or one sense of the term φιλία, but φιλία does not always denote 'friendship'. In this study, I am concerned with identifying what it means to be a 'friend'. Consequently, a thorough treatment of the semantic nuances of all 'friendship vocabulary' is irrelevant; particularly given the fact that such vocabulary is not always used to refer to friendship.

Konstan has argued that it is the different ranges of meaning shared by the cognate terms φίλος and φιλία that has led to the prevailing view that φίλος has a range of meaning as broad as φιλία and that there are thus many kinds of 'friends'; David Konstan, *Friendship in the Classical World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 9. While Konstan's observations are, in general, linguistically sound, they may overstate the case. In general terms, in attempting to outline key components of friendship in the Greco-Roman world—that is, asking what it means to be a friend or φίλος—terms like φιλία and φιλέω are relevant only when they are used to address that issue. In texts contemporaneous with the New Testament, however, φίλος/*amicus* appears to be used nearly as broadly as φιλία/*amicitia*. At the very least, Cicero, for example, is concerned with distinguishing between true friends and pragmatic friends. Moreover, while φιλία/*amicitia* tends to be used in a broader sense than φίλος/*amicus* to include a range of affectionate relationships, a given individual who related within the bounds of φιλία/*amicitia* could be called a φίλος/*amicus*. In this Chapter, I will provide a brief overview of φιλία/*amicitia* in Greco-Roman literature before focusing more narrowly on 'friendship' and what it meant to be a genuine 'friend'.

23. This narrow focus will help to establish the Greco-Roman view of friendship

The Broad Notion of Greco-Roman Φιλία

Φιλία in the Greco-Roman world went far beyond simple interpersonal relations to include a wide range of relationships, both public and private. Φιλία was thus a very elastic notion that covered 'largely utilitarian relations of self-interest and advancement as well as those bonds which spring from family ties or social relations of true affection and mutuality of character'.[24] In the Roman period, in particular, friendship language came to be used of political and economic patronage as well as of personal relations. L.M. White has noted that during this period 'the semantic fields for social conventions of patronage, hospitality, and letters of recommendation, as well as consensual contracts and commercial exchange, had begun to intersect and converge in practical application'.[25] Thus, both the Latin term *amicitia* and the Greek term φιλία represented notions that were considerably broader than the modern Western notion of 'friendship'.[26]

at the time the Fourth Gospel was first in circulation. I will make little attempt to distinguish between Greek and Roman ideas. As Konstan has noted, even the earliest Roman treatises reflect 'a complex interaction between cultures' (*Friendship*, p. 122). Indeed, very little in the Roman literature dealing with friendship can be viewed as original. More often than not, Roman writers simply took Greek thought and applied it to Roman society. Consequently, some have described Cicero and other Roman writers as primarily transmitters of learned and popular ideas from Greek to Roman civilization rather than contributors of extensive original thoughts; cf. Carolinne White, *Christian Friendship in the Fourth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 32. I should also note that while the following analysis does not imply that conceptions of friendship during this period were completely uniform, the widespread evidence used to corroborate the features of friendship emphasized in this study suggests that such a view of friendship was quite common.

24. Benjamin Fiore, 'The Theory and Practice of Friendship in Cicero', in J.T. Fitzgerald (ed.), *Greco-Roman Perspectives on Friendship* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1997), p. 73.

25. L. Michael White, 'Morality between Two Worlds: A Paradigm of Friendship in Philippians', in D.L. Balch, E. Ferguson and W.A. Meeks (eds.), *Greeks, Romans, and Christians: Essays in Honor of Abraham J. Malherbe* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1990), p. 211. The term *amicus* had become something of a catch-all word by the late republican period; Ronald Mayer, 'Friendship in the Satirists', in S.H. Braund (ed.), *Satire and Society in Ancient Rome* (Exeter: University of Exeter, 1989), p. 17; cf. Abraham J. Malherbe, *Paul and the Thessalonians: The Philosophical Tradition of Pastoral Care* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), pp. 69-72; Carolyn Osiek and David L. Balch, *Families in the New Testament World: Households and House Churches* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1997), p. 50; Erich Green, *The Hellenistic World and the Coming of Rome*, I (2 vols.; Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), pp. 9, 58-59; Richard P. Saller, *Personal Patronage under the Early Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), pp. 1-40; Matthias Gelzer, *The Roman Nobility* (trans. Robin Seager; Oxford: Blackwell, 1969), pp. 62-122; Gabriel Herman, *Ritualized Friendship and the Greek City* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 1-35.

26. It is worth noting that 'traditionally, the concept of *amicitia* did not emphasize

Reciprocity in Greco-Roman Friendship

In general terms, Greco-Roman φιλία[27] encompassed a broad range of relationships involving reciprocity. Such reciprocity found expression in such things as hospitality, gift giving, loyalty, honor, and political support.[28] Indeed, the common feature in all Greco-Roman 'friendships', whether personal, political, or business, was the reciprocal duty to pay honor and service to one's friends.[29] According to L. Pearson, 'the whole ancient theory of friendship is based on the assumption that favours will be returned: a man who helps his friend usually does so with the expectation that some return for his favour will be made'.[30] Each friendship also carried with it an implicit obligation to show appropriate honor and gratitude to one's benefactor. Friends were expected both to extend aid in times of need and respond to aid given with public acknowledgment.[31]

In any relationship, then, if the association involved any type of mutual advantage, some sort of φιλία was said to exist.[32] Given such a schema, 'friends' did not have to be status-equals. In a friendship between a poor person and a wealthy person, the wealthy person provided material assistance to the poor person while the poor person gave social and political allegiance, that is, honor, to the wealthy person.[33] Beneficent acts on the part of the wealthy were thus not motivated simply by concern for one's fellow human beings. Rather, material assistance was given with the expectation that any gift given gave rise to a counter-gift.[34] This exchange

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sentiment...as the Greek concept did' (Stanley K. Stowers, *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity* [Philadelphia: Westminster, 1986], pp. 29-30).

27. When not distinguishing between Greek and Latin authors I will, for convenience, use the Greek label φιλία rather than φιλία/*amicitia*.

28. Cf. Fronto, *Caes.* 1.3.4; Peter Garnsey and Richard Saller, *The Roman Empire: Economy, Society and Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), p. 154; David L. Balch, *The New Testament in its Social Environment* (LEC; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1986), pp. 63-64; Herman, *Ritualized Friendship*.

29. Fiore, 'Theory and Practice', p. 73. In most early Greek writers the emphasis falls on the obligations of friendship, such as returning a favor, rather than on the virtue of conferring a favor on someone; Lionel Pearson, *Popular Ethics in Ancient Greece* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1962), p. 136.

30. Pearson, *Popular Ethics*, p. 136.

31. Cicero, *Fam.* 12.26.1.

32. A. Dihle argues that friendship's ultimate value lies in the assistance it provides for individuals to advance in virtue; Albrecht Dihle, 'Ethik', *RAC* 6 (1966), pp. 658-59.

33. A.R. Hands, *Charities and Social Aid in Greece and Rome* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1968), p. 35; cf. Aristotle, *Eth. nic.* 8.14.2.

34. Cf. Hands, *Charities*, p. 36. This *quid pro quo* mentality is apparent in a number of inscriptions. The following example (quoted in Hands, *Charities*, p. 206) dates to ca. 160 CE: 'I wish to confer my gracious gift...on the stated conditions, which are to be

of goods and services, which characterized Greco-Roman relationships, made φιλία a vital strand in the fabric of Greco-Roman society.[35]

Types of Greco-Roman Friendship

During the late republican and early imperial periods, no writer devoted more effort to defining *genuine* friendship than Cicero. Cicero reveals the resiliency of Greco-Roman notions of friendship that had been established much earlier. Like Plutarch and other contemporary writers, Cicero shows strong familiarity with both Stoic and Epicurean views of φιλία/*amicitia*.[36] In preparing his work on *amicitia*, he appears to have drawn heavily on a treatise on φιλία by Theophrastus (pupil and successor of Aristotle)[37] and was also clearly indebted to the treatise 'On Moral Duties' by the Stoic Panaetius.[38]

published on three marble stones; of these one should be set up in the market before my house, one should be erected in the temple of the Caesars, close by the gates, and one in the gymnasium, so that to citizens and non-citizens alike at Gytheion my philanthropic and kindly act may be evident and well known'.

35. White, 'Morality', p. 212.

36. Indeed, the majority of available evidence relating to Epicurean views of friendship comes from Cicero. Although a number of Epicurean maxims on friendship remain extant, apparently no treatises on the subject were produced.

37. According to Aulus Gellius, Cicero used, but freely deviated from, Theophrastus' work; *Noct. Att.* 1.3.10-13.

38. John Ferguson, *Moral Values in the Ancient World* (London: Methuen, 1958), pp. 65, 67; St. George Stock, 'Friendship (Greek and Roman)', *ERE*, VI, p. 137. Stock notes Cicero's clear dependence on Xenophon in one passage (cf. *Amic.* 62 with Xenophon, *Mem.* 2.3.1, 2, 4; cf. also *Amic.* 28 and *Nat. d.* 1.121); Stock, 'Friendship (Greek and Roman)', p. 137 n. 2, 3. In a sense, Cicero represents a mediating position between the rival Stoic and Epicurean schools. Like the Stoics, he maintained that friendship was a natural outgrowth of human nature (cf. *Amic.* 5.19-20). He did not, however, follow the Stoic view that virtue—a necessary component of genuine friendship—was the property of sages alone. In this sense, his thinking was more akin to the Epicureans. He emphatically rejected, however, the Epicurean link between friendship and utility; Horst H. Hutter, 'Friendship in Theory and Practice: A Study of Greek and Roman Theories of Friendship in Their Social Settings' (PhD dissertation, Stanford University, 1972), pp. 246, 261-62. Many have maintained that Epicureans sought out friendships as an easy and readily available source of pleasure, and tended to have viewed friendship primarily as an opportunity for the mutual exchange of favors rather than as a relationship in which mutual affection is enjoyed; Powell, 'Friendship and its Problems', pp. 38-39. More recently, some scholars have argued for an altruistic component to Epicurean friendship; see, e.g., Phillip Mitsis, 'Epicurus on Friendship and Altruism', *OSAP* (1987), pp. 127-53; Greg E. Sterling, 'The Bond of Humanity: Friendship in Philo of Alexandria', in J.T. Fitzgerald (ed.), *Greco-Roman Perspectives on Friendship* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1997), pp. 208-209.

In Cicero's mind, *amicitia* was the most valuable gift, with the exception of wisdom, that the gods had granted to humankind (*Amic.* 6.20). He provided his fullest treatment of *amicitia* in *De amicitia*, a treatise written in the last year of his life. According to Cicero (*Fam.* 3.10.9), there were two types of *amicitia*: public (*popularis*) and private (*domestica*).[39] The latter he extolled, while the former he viewed as necessary, if not desirable.

Cicero's desire to distinguish between these two types of friendship was a natural reaction to the state of Roman politics at the time: 'In the crisis leading up to and following Caesar's assassination, Cicero seems to have been especially preoccupied with the relationship between friendship and political allegiance'.[40] Cicero lived in a society where having the right friends was often a matter of life and death. Indeed, it was the formation of a political alliance ('friendship') between Octavius, Antony, and Lepidus that was to lead to Cicero's own death.[41]

Public Friendships. In the Greco-Roman world a number of public relationships fell under the rubric of φιλία/amicitia. Foremost among these were political 'friendships' and the broader patron-client relationships.

Political Relationships

The language of φιλία/amicitia was commonly used to describe the relationship between a politician or political candidate and his supporters.[42] Some past scholars argued that this was the primary use of the term *amicitia*, and that Roman 'friendship' did not require a component of personal intimacy.[43] Recent studies, however, have challenged this view, with some arguing that Roman 'friendship' *always* involved some level of intimacy.[44]

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39. Thus, the contention that '*amicus* means in the everyday language of [Cicero's] time no more than political follower' is unfounded. This quote represents P.A. Brunt's summary of the view expressed by Wilhelm Kroll's *Die Kultur der ciceronischen Zeit*; Peter A. Brunt, *The Fall of the Roman Republic and Related Essays* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), pp. 352-53.

40. Konstan, *Friendship*, p. 131; cf. Brunt, *The Fall of the Roman Republic*, p. 381.

41. See Plutarch, *Cic.* 7.46.1-6.

42. An example of differences between the Greek φιλία and Roman *amicitia* is found in their views of political 'friendship'. For Aristotle, φιλία was the foundation of the political order. Cicero, on the other hand, argued that concord was the foundation, with *amicitia* being only an ancillary component; Hutter, 'Friendship', p. 334.

43. See, e.g., Lily Ross Taylor, *Party Politics in the Age of Caesar* (Berkeley: University of California, 1949), p. 8; Ronald Syme, *The Roman Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1939), p. 138.

44. See Konstan, *Friendship*; cf. Brunt, *Fall of the Roman Republic*, p. 381. Konstan's argument from etymology that the notion of *amicitia* includes love (*amare*) does not reflect sound linguistic principles. Furthermore, the fact that 'friends of Rome', i.e., countries with political ties to Rome, periodically revolted seems to rule out

Regardless of whether the latter conclusion can be maintained, it is clear that Cicero and his compatriots distinguished between intimate friends and friends who functioned primarily to help them achieve their political goals—between political friends and true friends.[45] The former, which had utilitarian value, could not bring the personal satisfaction of an intimate friend:

> For my grand and showy friendships bring some public *éclat*, but private satisfaction they have none. And so, when my house has been crowded with the morning *levée* and I have gone down to the forum amid a throng of friends, I cannot find in the whole company a single man with whom I can jest freely or whisper familiarly (*Att.* 1.18).

Cicero recognized that 'true friendships are very hard to find among those whose time is spent in office or in business of a public kind. For where can you find a man so high-minded as to prefer his friend's advancement to his own?' (*Amic.* 17.64). Political office brought an inevitable conflict of interest between loyalty to friends and personal ambition, and many found their friendships threatened when they sought to use their friends to pursue advancement in public life.[46] According to Sallust, 'the struggle for office forced many men to deceit, to bear one thing in the heart, another on the tongue; to value friendship and enmity not by desert but by profit; to show a respectable face rather than a respectable character' (*Cato* 10.5).[47] Thus, overall, in the Greco-Roman world, 'the ability to form enduring friendships more in accord with the dominant ideas on the subject of friendship seems to have been dependent on non-involvement in politics'.[48]

Konstan's view that *amicitia* always denoted a relationship where there was genuine affection.

45. Diodurus Siculus (12.20.3) notes that Zaleucus the Pythagorean viewed φιλία as an important factor in maintaining socio-political stability: 'They should consider no one of their fellow citizens as an enemy with whom there can be no reconciliation, but that the quarrel be entered into with the thought that they will again come to agreement and friendship; and that he who acts otherwise, should be considered by his fellow citizens to be savage and untamed of soul'.

46. Cf. *Amic.* 10.34; 21.77. Cicero is careful to distinguish between political relationships and true friendships. The former, while similar to *amicitia* is really a form of concord (*concordia*). Political relationships stand or fall not on virtue, but on a common commitment to a particular goal; *Off.* 1.16.50-17.58; Hutter, 'Friendship', pp. 265-66.

47. Quoted in Hutter, 'Friendship', p. 309.

48. Hutter, 'Friendship', pp. 253-54. In his highly pessimistic treatment of friendship, the Stoic philosopher Epictetus drew an apt analogy, 'Did you never see dogs fawning on one another and playing with one another, so that you say, "Nothing could be more friendly"? But to see what their friendship amounts to, throw a piece

The role of φιλία/*amicitia* in the arena of politics is made eminently clear in the *Commentariolum Petitionis*, a political handbook apparently written by Cicero's brother Quintus. The *Commentariolum* points out that a candidate for office must both secure new 'friends' and call in favors from established 'friendships' in order to be successful.[49] It urges the candidate to make it clear to existing 'friends' and potential 'friends' that 'there will never be another chance for those who owe you a debt to thank you or for the well-disposed to put you under obligation to themselves'.[50]

Aspirants to political office are encouraged to view 'anybody who shows you some goodwill, or cultivates your society, or calls upon you regularly'[51] as a 'friend'. In order to gain new friends it is necessary for the potential friend to be convinced that 'you value him highly, that you are sincere, that it is a good investment for him, that the result will not be a vote-catching friendship but a solid and permanent one'.[52] While the author recognizes that such a calculated approach to *amicitia* would normally be in poor taste, the demands of politics justified such an approach for even virtuous candidates.

There were also a number of more specific ways in which φιλία/*amicitia* played a significant role in the political process. The number of a candidate's friends was viewed as a reflection of the quality of that candidate. This was especially true if the friends of the candidate represented a broad spectrum of social ranks. Thus, even φιλία/*amicitia* with members of lower social groups was looked upon favorably in the sense that one's social position depended in part upon the number of clients that gathered around him.[53] Not only did diverse friendships provide the appearance of a person with broad appeal, but it also helped insure that the candidate would have connections that would allow him access to a wide range of important services. A friendship with a magistrate would help maintain the candidate's legal rights. Friendships with influential persons would help secure the support of the masses. Friendships with famous figures

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of meat between them and you will find out' (*Disc.* 2.22.0). For him, 'it is a general rule...that every living thing is to nothing so devoted as to its own interest' (*Disc.* 2.22.15). Apparently, in his experience friends were easily discarded: 'How do you know but that, when you have lost your utility, as that of some utensil, he will throw you away like a broken plate?' (*Disc.* 2.22.31-32).

49. Fiore, 'Theory and Practice', p. 72.

50. *Comm. Pet.* 4; quoted in Fiore, 'Theory and Practice', p. 72.

51. *Comm. Pet.* 16; quoted Fiore, 'Theory and Practice', p. 72.

52. *Comm. Pet.* 25-26; quoted in Fiore, 'Theory and Practice', p. 72. Thus, gaining political 'friends' may have entailed convincing them that you were a genuine personal friend.

53. Edward N. O'Neil, 'Plutarch on Friendship', in J.T. Fitzgerald (ed.), *Greco-Roman Perspectives on Friendship* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1997), p. 108 n. 13.

would bolster the candidate's own reputation. Finally, friends in diverse places were crucial for securing support outside of Rome.[54]

   At times, problems arose when loyalty to friends conflicted with loyalty to the state. Aulus Gellius provides insight into how some were able to superficially remain loyal to both when conflicts arose. He tells the story of a judge, Chilon of Sparta, who had the unfortunate task of judging a friend whom he knew to be guilty. Since Chilon wanted to help his friend and was one of three judges who were to decide the case, he himself voted for his friend's condemnation but convinced the other two judges to acquit him. In so doing, he superficially did his civic duty, while also remaining loyal to his friend![55] Theophrastus felt less compelled to attempt to be both a good citizen and a good friend. For him, committing a crime for a friend could be justified since 'a small and slight disgrace or bad repute is to be endured, if by this a great advantage can be gained for a friend'.[56] In contrast, Cicero's stronger sense of patriotism is evident in his contention that judges must do their duty regardless of friendship (*Off.* 3.10.42-44). Moreover, although political disagreements may lead to the dissolution of a friendship, loyalty to friends should never be used as a pretext for rebellion against the state:

> But an upright man will never for a friend's sake do anything in violation of his country's interests or his oath or his sacred honor... Well then, when we are weighing what seems to be expedient in friendship against what is morally right, let apparent expediency be disregarded and moral rectitude prevail; and when in friendship requests are submitted that are not morally right, let conscience and scrupulous regard for the right take precedence of the obligations of friendship. In this way we shall arrive at a proper choice between conflicting duties (*Off.* 3.10.43, 46).[57]

   For Cicero, doing something wrong because of loyalty to a friend provided no justification whatsoever (*Amic.* 11.38). While the complex politi-

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54. See *Comm. Pet.* 18, 29, 31, 32; Fiore, 'Theory and Practice', pp. 70-71; see also Cicero, *Planc.* 18.45.

55. *Noct. Att.* 1.3; cf. also Dionysius of Halicarnassus (a Greek) who portrays a Roman (Gnaeus Marcius Coriolanus) as placing loyalty to friends over loyalty to country; *Ant. rom.* 8.34.1-3; see Konstan, *Friendship*, p. 134.

56. See William W. Fortenbaugh *et al.* (ed. and trans.), *Theophrastus of Eresus: Sources for his Life, Writings, Thought and Influence*, II (2 vols; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1992), p. 361, frg. 536. For more on a person's duty to do favors for his or her friends, see the comments of Cleobulus of Lindus, one of the Seven Sages, in Diogenes Laertius 1.91-92.

57. See also *Amic.* 11.36-37; cf. *Sull.* 6; *Fam.* 11.27-28. Some late Christian writers recognized the danger of allowing friendship to exert undue influence upon the selection of office-holders: 'A dignity and burden of office should not be imposed on those whom we prefer as friends, but rather on those whom we believe better suited to sustain such dignities and burdens' (Aelred of Rievaulx, *Spiritual Friendship*, III [trans. Mary Eugenia Laker; Washington, DC: Cistercian, 1964], pp. 116-17).

cal system during the late republican era made conflict between loyalty to the state and loyalty to friends inevitable, in cases of such conflict Cicero believed that the former must take precedence over the latter. He did recognize, however, that there could be times when one would need to do something unpalatable for the sake of friendship:

> if by some chance the wishes of a friend are not altogether honourable and require to be forwarded in matters which involve his life and reputation, we should turn aside from the straight path, provided, however, utter disgrace does not follow, for there are limits to the indulgence which can be allowed to friendship (*Amic.* 17.61).[58]

Patron-Client Relationships

Although the political arena naturally encouraged the development of public friendships, not all such friendships had an explicitly political component. Many public relationships fit within the broader system of patronage.[59] At least from the time of Aristotle the language of φιλία was not limited to relationships between equals. It could also apply to unequal relationships in which some sort of mutual benefaction existed. In Roman society, formal associations between individuals of unequal rank fell under the rubric of patron-client relationships.[60] Such relationships were 'governed by an etiquette that is commonly described in the language of patronage, according to which a powerful benefactor (*patronus*) lent protection and support to his dependents or *clientes*, who are supposed to have owed him the more humble services of obeisance and allegiance in return'.[61] While loyalty from clients would include political allegiance, many patrons received little political benefit from the relationship with their clients. Benefits came more in the form of the public honors associated with their beneficent acts.

Some scholars have attempted to view all unequal relationships in the Greco-Roman world as patron-client relationships even where the

58. Elsewhere he states: 'Therefore let this law be ratified in friendship that we neither ask for any dishonorable thing nor do anything dishonorable for one who asks' (Cicero, *Amic.* 40; cf. *Amic.* 44). For a discussion of possible sources of Cicero's potentially contradictory statements; see Sterling, 'The Bond of Humanity', p. 214.

59. Patronage may be defined as 'an asymmetrical personal relationship involving expectations of reciprocal exchange' (Konstan, *Friendship*, p. 136); see also S.N. Eisenstadt and L. Roniger, *Patrons, Clients and Friends: Impersonal Relations and the Structure of Trust in Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984). Some would argue that the institution of *clientela* was distinct from φιλία/*amicitia* and carried a different set of rules and conventions; Géza Alföldy, *The Social History of Rome* (trans. D. Braund and F. Pollock; Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988), 101. Both, however, were clearly governed by the reciprocity ethic.

60. O'Neil, 'Plutarch on Friendship', p. 108.

61. Konstan, *Friendship*, p. 136.

language of φιλία/*amicitia* was used to describe the relationship.[62] Advocates of this position argue that while patronage involved 'friendship' between non-equals, true friendship existed only between equals.[63] This position has recently been challenged. D. Konstan, in particular, has argued that since not all relationships between those of unequal social rank were described in terms of *amicitia*, those that were included a level of mutual fondness and commitment.[64] Others have taken a more nuanced approach and argued that although the overlap between the semantic fields of *amicitia* and *clientela* must be recognized, clear *levels* of friendships existed in ancient Rome.[65] Thus, while some friends were clients, not all clients were friends.[66]

Private/Ideal Friendship. For many Greco-Roman writers, appeal to the characteristics of public friendship served primarily as a foil for introducing the superior nature of private friendship. Indeed, at the heart of virtually all Greco-Roman treatments of friendship stood the desire to determine what constituted an ideal friendship[67]—friendship that was, by nature, private. Lists of traditional pairs of friends, mostly from the world of Greek mythology (especially Achilles and Patroclus, Orestes and Pylades, and Theseus and Perithoüs), formed an important part of Greco-Roman treatises on friendship. The frequency with which these lists and

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62. Barbara K. Gold, *Literary Patronage in Greece and Rome* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1987), p. 134; cf. Richard P. Saller, 'Patronage and Friendship in Early Imperial Rome: Drawing the Distinction', in A. Wallace-Hadrill (ed.), *Patronage in Ancient Society* (New York: Routledge, 1989), p. 57.

63. Cf. Fiore, 'Theory and Practice', p. 66. I will return to the role of equality in true friendship below.

64. Konstan, *Friendship*, p. 137.

65. Saller, 'Patronage and Friendship', p. 61. Saller notes that the term *amici* was divided into three types in order to recognize the relative social standings of the two parties; 'Patronage and Friendship', pp. 57-58 (reference to degrees of 'friendship' are found as early as the time of the Gracchi; Mayer, 'Friendship', p. 17). There were *amici superiores*, *amici pares*, and *amici inferiores*. Interaction between the various types of friends was strictly governed by social conventions. Consequently, young senators (*amici inferiores*) would often behave like a *cliens* when interacting with a senior senator (*amici superiores*).

66. Cf. Cicero, *Att.* 1.18; Konstan, *Friendship*, p. 21.

67. Greco-Roman writers often used the myth of the Golden Age 'to comment on the deplorable state of society and to suggest how communities might better organize themselves' (Alan C. Mitchell, ' "Greet the Friends by Name": New Testament Evidence for the Greco-Roman *Topos* of Friendship', in J.T. Fitzgerald [ed.], *Greco-Roman Perspectives on Friendship* [Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1997], p. 240 n. 62); cf. H.C. Haldry, *The Unity of Mankind in Greek Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963), pp. 77, 162. Thus, 'ideal' friendship generally referred to a standard of perfection that did not typify relationships in the ancient Mediterranean world.

accompanying stories appear makes it clear that stories of ideal friend-
ship were widespread for much of the Greco-Roman period.[68] Although
appeal to these 'friends of old' (παλαιοὶ φίλοι) tended to imply that such
friendship was so rare as to be nearly impossible,[69] accounts of friendships
of this nature continued to appear into the common era.[70]

Most authors agreed that there were several key components of ideal
friendship.[71] Foremost among these were unity, mutuality, and equality.[72]

Unity

Greco-Roman writers show virtually unanimous agreement in contend-
ing that ideal friendship required shared interests. According to Sallust,
'agreement in likes and dislikes—this, and this only, is what constitutes

68. For texts roughly contemporary with the Gospel of John, see, e.g., Plutarch,
Amic. mult. [*Mor.*] 93E; Lucian, *Tox.* 10; Cicero, *Amic.* 4.15; *Fin.* 1.20.65; Libanius, *Pro-
gymn.* 3.

69. Dio of Prusa (*Or.* 74.23, 'On Faithfulness') cited the three or four famous friend-
ships that were well known in the Greco-Roman world as proof of how rare such rela-
tionships were.

70. Notable examples include Lucian's Agathocles and Deinias (*Tox.* 12-18) and
Demetrius and Antiphilus (*Tox.* 27-34), and Chariton's Chaereas and Polycharmus
(*Chaer.*). The latter relationship is notable for Polycharmus's exceptional loyalty to
Chaereas through thick and thin. His actions are consistent with Lucian's descrip-
tion of a friend as one who 'obligates himself to share his friend's every blow of
fortune' (*Tox.* 6); see also Ronald F. Hock, 'An Extraordinary Friend in Chariton's *Cal-
lirhoe*: The Importance of Friendship in the Greek Romances', in J.T. Fitzgerald (ed.),
Greco-Roman Perspectives on Friendship (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1997), pp. 145-62.

71. There has been considerable debate in recent years over the question of
whether Aristotle's account of friendship allows for altruism or is strictly egocen-
tric. Those opting for the former include John M. Cooper, 'Aristotle on the Forms
of Friendship', *RM* 30 (1970), pp. 619-48; Lawrence Blum, *Friendship, Altruism, and
Morality* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1980); and Gilbert Meilander, *Friend-
ship* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981). Those preferring the latter
include Julia Anna, 'Plato and Aristotle on Friendship and Altruism', *Mind* 86 (1977),
pp. 532-54. Recently, David K. O'Connor has suggested that much of the discussion
on this topic is wrongheaded and stems from a tendency to impose modern notions
of friendship upon Aristotle. Where intimacy is at the core of ideal friendship in the
modern West, ideal friendship for Aristotle centered upon partnership, i.e., working
together for common goals; 'Two Ideals of Friendship', *HPQ* 7 (1990), pp. 109-122.

72. Expressions relating to each of these three areas have been attributed to
Pythagoras: 'A friend is another I' (φίλος ἐστὶν ἄλλος ἐγώ); 'Friends have everything
in common (κοινὰ τὰ τῶν φίλων); and 'Friendship is equality' (φιλότης ἰσότης);
Johan C. Thom, ' "Harmonious Equality": The *Topos* of Friendship in Neopythagorean
Writings', in J.T. Fitzgerald (ed.), *Greco-Roman Perspectives on Friendship* (Atlanta, GA:
Scholars Press, 1997), p. 77. There are other characteristics of friendship, such as loy-
alty, that would be worthy of further study. On loyalty, see Keener, *Gospel of John*, II,
pp. 1009-1010.

true friendship'.[73] This same sentiment was expressed more vividly by Cicero:

> Nothing, moreover, is more conducive to love and intimacy than compatibility of character in good men; for when two people have the same ideals and the same tastes, it is a natural consequence that each loves the other as himself; and the result is, as Pythagoras requires of ideal friendship, that several are united by the ties of enduring intimacy (*Off.* 1.17.56).[74]

Elsewhere Cicero stated that friendship 'is nothing else than accord in all things, human and divine, conjoined with mutual goodwill and affection' (*Amic.* 6.20). Such a relationship is built upon mutual confidence and leads to unity in views and feelings.[75] The depth of this unity was often expressed in terms of sharing 'one soul' (ψυχὴ μία).[76] Indeed, by Aristotle's time the expression, 'Friends have one soul between them', was already proverbial (*Eth. nic.* 9.8.2). Diogenes Laertius represented Aristotle as saying that friends are 'a single soul dwelling in two bodies' (5.20). Similarly, Zeno, when asked how a friend could be described, responded, 'Another I' (Diogenes Laertius 7.23).[77] Cicero maintained that 'the effect of friendship is to make, as it were, one soul out of many' (*Amic.* 25.92). Horace described Virgil as 'half my soul' (*Carm.* 1.3.8), while Ovid spoke of Severus as the 'great part of my soul' (*Ep. Pont.* 1.8.2). Finally, the importance of unity is underscored in Plutarch's *De amicorum multitudine*: 'in our friendship's consonance and harmony there must be no element unlike,

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73. Sallust, *The War with Catiline* (trans. J.C. Rolfe; New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1931), p. 35; cf. Seneca, *Ep.* 48.2. The Stoics emphasized that friendship included harmony of opinion; Stobaeus, *Ecl.* 2.601.

74. J. Ferguson may well be correct in seeking to explain the influence of Pythagoras's maxims on later teaching on friendship: 'There is no doubt that the Pythagorean Order attained lasting significance by providing an organizational model for later philosophical schools. The Academy, the Lyceum, the Stoic school, and the Epicurean Garden followed the Pythagorean experiment in basing their internal structure on the maxims of friendship. The members of these schools were known as *philoi*, or "friends" ' (*Moral Values*, p. 55); cf. Rosemary Rader, *Breaking Boundaries: Male/Female Friendship in Early Christian Communities* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 25.

75. Cicero, *Amic.* 18.65; 20.74; 21.80; *Off.* 1.51, 56.

76. See Cicero, *Amic.* 21.81; 25.92; *Off.* 1.17.56; Plutarch, *Adul. amic.* [*Mor.*] 65A, B; *Amic. mult.* [*Mor.*] 93E, 96F; Iamblichus, *Vit. Pyth.* 168.

77. The expression, 'A friend is another I', which also suggests equality, was apparently coined by Pythagoras and was frequently quoted; Aristotle, *Eth. nic.* 9.4.5; *Mag. mor.* 2.15; Cicero, *Off.* 1.56; Plutarch, *Vit. poes. Hom.* 151; Antonius Diogenes in Porphyry, *Vit. Pyth.* 33; Iamblichus, *Nic. arithm.* 35.6; Synesius, *Ep.* 100.17; Eustathius, *Il.* 4.54.22; Thom, 'Harmonious Equality', pp. 77, 90 n. 42; see also A. Delatte, *La vie de Pythagore de Diogène Laërce* (Mémoires de l'Académie rotale de Belgique, Classe des Lettres et des Sciences morales et Politiques 2/17/2; Brussels: Lamertin, 1922), p. 168.

uneven, or unequal, but all must be alike to engender agreement in words, counsels, opinions, and feelings, and it must be as if one soul were apportioned among two or more bodies' (*Mor.* 96F). Each of these descriptions emphasizes the degree of unity that was enjoyed by ideal friends in the Greco-Roman world.[78]

The above data demonstrate that the notion of absolute unity was a part of the conceptual field of ideal friendship prior to the time of Aristotle and persisted throughout the Hellenistic period. The frequency of allusions to unity as an indicator of intense relational intimacy strongly suggests that this notion would have been familiar to those living in the Greco-Roman world during the first and second centuries of the common era—the period during which the Gospel of John first circulated.

Mutuality

Unity in relations naturally led to mutuality in resources. By Aristotle's time a second expression was already proverbial: 'Friends have all things in common' (*Eth. nic.* 9.8.2).[79] Later, Seneca wrote, 'he that has much in common with a fellow-man will have all things in common with a friend' (*Ep.* 48.3). This sentiment was echoed in the *Pythagorean Sayings*, where readers are exhorted to 'yield everything to one's friend except one's freedom'.[80]

True friends did not view their possessions as their own private property. Rather, friends shared everything.[81] Ideal friendship was thus evident

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78. In such a relationship, friends are willing to overlook the faults of one another; Horace, *Sat.* 1.3.69, 139-40.

79. Cf. Plato, *Critias* 110C; *Phaedr.* 279C; *Menex.* 71E; *Pol.* 449C; *Leg.* 5.739C; *Lys.* 207C; Euripedes, *Orest.* 735; Plutarch, *Conj. praec.* 143A; Lucian, *Merc. cond.* 19-20. According to Diogenes Laertius (8.10), relying on Timaeus of Tauromenium, Pythagoras coined this saying; cf. Iamblichus, *Vit. Pyth.* 32. Elsewhere, Timaeus apparently noted that Pythagoreans 'had to consider nothing their own' (Delatte, *La vie de Pythagore*, p. 196). Ironically, the Cynics used their self-declared unique status as 'friends of God' to lay claim to whatever they wanted, regardless of who it belonged to: '[The Cynic Diogenes] maintained that all things are the property of the wise, and employed such arguments... All things belong to the gods. The gods are friends to the wise, and friends share all property in common; therefore all things are the property of the wise' (Diogenes Laertius 6.72; cf. 6.37; pseudo-Crates 7, 26, 27).

80. *Pythagorean Sayings* 97; cited in Thom, 'Harmonious Equality', p. 87. For the text, see Henry Chadwick, *The Sentences of Sextus: A Contribution to the History of Early Christian Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959), pp. 84-94. The *Sentences of Sextus* represent a Christianized reworking of a Pythagorean text; Thom, 'Harmonious Equality', p. 86.

81. Cicero, *Off.* 1.51; Martial 2.43; Plutarch, *Adul. amic.* [*Mor.*] 65A; cf. Diogenes Laertius 6.37, 72; Plato, *Lys.* 207C; Aristotle, *Eth. nic.* 8.9.1; *Eth. eud.* 7.2.33-38. The sharing of possessions did not preclude private ownership. Instead, this friendship convention

in the mutual love and kindly affection that friends tangibly demonstrated for one another.[82] Such extreme mutuality served as a ready tool for characterizing the relationship between individuals as genuine friendship. Diodorus Siculus recounted the practice of Pythagoras: 'Whenever any of the companions of Pythagoras lost their fortune, the rest would divide their own possessions with them as brothers' (10.3.5). Among the Pythagoreans, one need not know a fellow Pythagorean personally in order to share goods with him. When Cleinias of Terntum learned that Prorus of Cyrene, a fellow Pythagorean, had lost his fortune, he 'went over from Italy to Cyrene with sufficient funds and restored Prorus his fortune, although he had never seen the man before' (Diodorus Siculus 10.4.1).[83]

This emphasis on mutuality within ideal friendships persisted well into the common era. Heliodorus, for example, used friendship conventions in the mouth of Nausikles to characterize the nature of his friendship with Chariklei, Kalasiris, and Knemon:

> My friends—and may the gods bear witness to the truth of what I am going to say—it would be much to my liking if you were to decide to stay and live here in my house forevermore, sharing my possessions and all that I hold most dear. You see, I have come to think of you not as guests staying awhile in my home but as true friends, who reciprocate my feelings, and thus nothing you may ask of me shall I consider the slightest imposition (*An Ethiopian Story* 6.6).[84]

Seneca argued that mutuality in friendship also went beyond the sharing of possessions to include the sharing of life's experiences, whether good or bad:

> I am not your friend unless whatever is at issue concerning you is my concern also... There is no such thing as good or bad fortune for the individual; we live in common. And no one can live happily who...transforms everything into a question of his own utility; you must live for your neighbor, if you would live for yourself (*Ep.* 48.2).[85]

emphasized the importance of using one's resources to benefit one's friends and to care for their needs; see Cicero, *Off.* 1.51; Aristotle, *Pol.* 2.2.4-5; cf. Seneca, *Ben.* 7.4.7; 7.12.3-5. Mitchell notes that 'authors like Aristotle, Cicero, Seneca, and Plutarch [actually] appealed to the maxim κοινὰ τὰ φίλων to uphold conventional status divisions within society' ('Greet the Friends by Name', pp. 245-46); see also W. Den Boer, *Private Morality in Greece and Rome* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1979), pp. 62-92.

82. Plutarch, *Adul. amic.* [*Mor.*] 51B; Lucian, *Tox.* 62; cf. Aristotle, *Eth. nic.* 8.

83. For a similar story, see Iamblichus, *Vit. Pyth.* 237-38.

84. B.P. Reardon (ed.), *Collected Ancient Greek Novels* (trans. J.R. Morgan; Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), p. 477; cf. Hock, 'An Extraordinary Friend', p. 146.

85. Cf. Cicero, *Amic.* 25.92; Clitarchus, *Sent.* 90. Lucian defines a friend as one who 'obligates himself to share his friend's every blow of fortune' (*Tox.* 6). Similar

This same type of sharing was attributed to Pythagoras: 'He loved his friends very much... When they were in health, he did not cease spending time with them; when their bodies were ill, he used to care for them; when their souls were ailing, he used to encourage them' (Porphyry, *Vit. Pyth.* 33).[86] Such sharing of bad fortune included a willingness to die with or for a friend.[87] This attitude is clearly reflected in Chariton's *Callirhoe*,[88] where Polycharmus attempts to quickly dispense with Mithridates' questions so that he can be crucified with his friend Chaereas. He even begs Mithridates to order the executioner not to separate their crosses.[89]

Finally, sharing of possessions included transparency within the relationship. The importance of frank speech between friends was a common theme in Greco-Roman discussions of friendship, and frank advice was viewed as one of the most important characteristics of an ideal friend.[90] A genuine friend would be willing to suggest a course of action that involved sacrifice or hardship when it was the best course to take.[91]

Cicero emphasized the importance of maintaining an open relationship (*Amic.* 18.65),[92] and viewed such a relationship as something to be prized: 'What sweeter than to have one with whom you are bold to speak as with yourself?' (*Amic.* 22). Plutarch viewed frankness (παρρησία) as both the foundation of friendship and the surest mark of a genuine friend (*Adul.*

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sentiments are attributed to Socrates ('one must share one's burden with one's friends' [Xenophon, *Mem.* 2.7.1]) and Menander ('Accept all burdens among friends as common' [534]; and 'accept the misfortunes of your friends as your own' [370]).

86. Cf. Iamblichus, *Vit. Pyth.* 102, 232.

87. See, e.g., Seneca, *Ep.* 6.2; 9.10; Plutarch, *Amic. mult.* [*Mor.*] 93E; Epictetus, *Disc.* 2.7.3; Lucian, *Tox.* 10, 36, 58-60; Chariton, *Chaer.* 4.2.14; 7.1.7; Achilles Tatius 3.22.1; 7.14.4; Plato, *Symp.* 179B, 208D. Keener, notes that 'courageous, heroic, and honorable death was an ancient Mediterranean virtue' (*Gospel of John*, II, p. 1005).

88. Hock, 'An Extraordinary Friend', p. 145.

89. *Chaer.* 4.2.14; 4.3.5; cf. 7.1.7-8. For more on sharing misfortune, see Achilles Tatius, *Leuc. Clit.* 3.22; Diogenes Laertius 1.70, 98.

90. O'Neil, 'Plutarch on Friendship', p. 116; Pearson, *Popular Ethics*, p. 151. The theme of frankness or candor among friends became particularly popular in the Hellenistic and Roman periods, when political tension led some apparent 'friends' toward evasiveness and dissimulation rather than frankness. During these periods, the notion of frankness (παρρησία) went from being viewed as a political right to being viewed as a moral virtue; see Konstan, *Friendship*, pp. 15, 21, 103-105. Epictetus warned against rashly disclosing private matters to casual acquaintances; *Disc.* 4.14.11, 15.

91. Pearson, *Popular Ethics*, p. 151. 'Diogenes said: "Other dogs bite their enemies, I [bite] my friends—so that I may save them" ' (Stobaeus 3.13.44; quoted in Konstan, *Friendship*, p. 151).

92. Philo pointed to God's willingness to share his plans with Moses as a sign of his friendship; *Her.* 21.

amic. [*Mor.*] 55E-62B). For him, παρρησία was 'the voice of φιλία' (*Adul. amic.* [*Mor.*] 51C). Through frank interaction friends helped one another to live a virtuous life: 'To put it in a few words, the flatterer thinks he ought to do anything to be agreeable, while the friend, by doing always what he ought to do, is often times agreeable and often disagreeable, not from any desire to be disagreeable, and yet not attempting to avoid even this if it be better' (*Adul. amic.* [*Mor.*] 55A). Similarly, 'Just as steel is made compact by cooling, and takes on a temper as the result of having first been relaxed and softened by heat, so when our friends have become mollified and warmed by our commendations we should give them an application of frankness like a tempering bath' (*Adul. amic.* [*Mor.*] 73C-D). Seneca, likewise, argued that a person should speak as boldly to a friend as he would speak to himself: 'Speak as boldly with him as with yourself... Why need I keep back any words in the presence of my friend? Why should I not regard myself as alone when in his company?' (*Ep.* 3.3).[93]

In spite of the importance that was attached to frankness in ideal friendships, frankness was a right and responsibility that had to be exercised with care: 'We must be very careful about the use of frank speech toward a friend before a large company' (Plutarch, *Adul. amic.* [*Mor.*] 70E).[94] Too much frankness could cause problems in a friendship (Plutarch, *Adul. amic.* [*Mor.*] 66A, 66E),[95] and frank criticism had to be offered in an appropriate manner: 'advice [must] be free from harshness, and...reproof [must] be free from insult' (Cicero, *Amic.* 24.89).

Cicero contrasted such honest well-intentioned criticism with the flattery that was so prevalent in his day:

> it is characteristic of true friendship both to give and to receive advice and, on the one hand, to give it with all freedom of speech, but without harshness, and on the other hand, to receive it patiently, but without resentment, so nothing is to be considered a greater bane of friendship than fawning, cajolery, or flattery (*Amic.* 25.91).[96]

The extent of this problem led Plutarch to devote an entire treatise to the subject: 'How to Tell a Flatterer from a Friend'.[97] In contrast to the

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93. Cf. Philodemus, 'On Frank Criticism', frg. 40, 41, 49. For the text, see Philodemus, in D. Konstan, D. Clay, C.E. Glad, J.C. Thom and J. Ware (eds.), *On Frank Criticism* (SBLTT; Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1998), pp. 55, 61.

94. Cf. Seneca, *De moribus*, frg. 13.

95. The Epicureans held that only a wise person was able to apply frankness in an appropriate manner; Philodemus, 'On Frankness', cols. IV, VIII.

96. 'Flattery may be defined as a pretense of friendship, having some of the characteristics of real friendship, for the purpose of gaining advantages that normally are the result of friendship' (Hutter, 'Friendship', p. 286).

97. Discussion on friendship may be found throughout Plutarch's writings. Two of his works, however, treat the matter in some depth: 'How to Tell a Flatterer from a

true friend, who offered candid criticism for the good of his friend, the flatterer (κόλακες in Greek, *adulators* or *assentatores* in Latin) would say 'everything with a view to pleasure and nothing with a view to truth' (Cicero, *Amic.* 25.91). The selfish motivation of the flatterer was vividly portrayed by Juvenal, who noted that such a person was 'ready at any moment, by night or by day, to take his expression from another man's face, to throw up his hands and applaud if his friend gives a good belch or piddles straight, or if his golden basin makes a gurgle when turned upside down' (*Sat.* 3.104-108).[98]

   Seneca strongly denied that the crowds of people who made a point of greeting aristocrats in the streets were 'friends' (*Ben.* 6.34). Indeed, the general consensus was that to have many friends was to have many flatterers.[99] According to Cicero, 'a great many people do many things that seem to be inspired more by a spirit of ostentation than by heart-felt kindness; for such people are not really generous but are rather influenced by a sort of ambition to make a show of being open-handed' (*Off.* 1.14.44). In a society where public friendships could bring substantial advantage, those seeking genuine friendships had to take great care in distinguishing friends from flatterers (Cicero, *Amic.* 25.95; 26.99).[100] The Roman poet Martial highlighted the need to examine the nature of one's friendships critically: 'Do you think this fellow whom your table and your dinner made your friend is a heart of faithful friendship? He loves your boar and mullet and sow's udder and oysters, not you. If I dined as well, he would be a friend of mine' (9.14). Apparently, Cicero enjoyed the type of friendship with his lifelong friend Atticus that included the idealized frankness: 'Know that what I miss most now is a man with whom I can communicate all the things that cause me any anxiety, a man who loves me, who is wise,

Friend' (Πῶς ἄν τις διακρίνειε τὸν κόλακα τοῦ φίλου) and 'On Having Many Friends' (Περὶ πολυφιλίας). For other treatments of flattery, see, e.g., Theophrastus, Περὶ κολακείας; Philodemus, Περὶ κολακείας.

   98. Cf. the character Kybele in book 8 of Heliodorus's *An Ethiopian Story*, who uses feigned friendship to win favor with her mistress Arsake. Aristotle appears to think that flattery helped compensate for inequality within relationships; *Eth. nic.* 8.8.1; *Eth. eud.* 7.4.7.

   99. O'Neil, 'Plutarch on Friendship', p. 110. According to Plutarch, the 'craving for numerous friends' was like the craving for 'licentious women' (*Amic. mult.* [*Mor.*] 93C). Seneca, nevertheless, maintained the Stoic view that having many friends (*polyphilia*) was a good thing, though he noted if one has too many friends he will not be able to share his life with them; see Fiore, 'Theory and Practice', p. 61.

   100. One of the worst kinds of flatterers was the legacy hunter who sought to ingratiate himself to the aged and childless wealthy in the hope of securing a share of their estate; see Seneca, *Ben.* 4.20.3; Pliny, *Ep.* 2.20; Garnsey and Saller, *The Roman Empire*, p. 155. The Romans tended to view Greeks as highly skilled in the art of flattery; see, e.g., Juvenal, *Sat.* 3.86-93, 100-108.

with whom I can speak without pretending, without dissimulating, without concealing anything' (*Att.* 1.18).[101]

The sharing of all things in common, then, including one's frank opinions, was, like unity, a distinguishing mark of ideal friendship. One had to take care, however, not to be deceived by flowery praise that masked motives that were inconsistent with such friendship.

Equality

Finally, ideal Greco-Roman friendship generally occurred only between those who were social equals. Greco-Roman writers agreed that 'friendship is equality'.[102] Such equality was a necessary component in a harmonious relationship.[103] Aristotle argued that friendship could not be maintained where a wide gap in status existed.[104] True friendship required the reciprocity that was only possible in a relationship between peers.

In the Roman period, however, precise social equality was not as strict a prerequisite for friendship.[105] Cicero argued that where some degree of inequality existed within a relationship 'the superior should put himself on a level with his inferior...[and] the latter ought not to grieve that he is surpassed by the former in intellect, fortune, or position' (*Amic.* 20.71). Cicero also prescribed steps that could be taken to bridge the social distance between the individuals. Such bridging required unilateral action on the part of the person with the higher status: 'those who are superior should [both] lower themselves...[and] lift up their inferiors' (*Amic.* 20.72).

101. Pliny described one of his genuine friendships in a letter: 'I have given you this account, because I commune with you upon all my joys and sorrows as freely as with myself; and because I thought it would be unkind to defraud so tender a friend of the pleasure I myself was experiencing' (*Ep.* 5.1); cf. Augustine, *Div. quaest. LXXXIII* 71.6.

102. This proverb, which has also been attributed to Pythagoras (Diogenes Laertius 8.10), was well known by Aristotle's time, and frequently quoted in later centuries. See, e.g., *Eth. nic.* 8.5.5; 8.8.5; 8.11.5; 8.13.1; 9.8.2; Cicero, *Amic.* 4.15; 6.20; Plutarch, *Adul. amic.* [*Mor.*] 51C; *Amic. mult.* [*Mor.*] 96D-F; Timaeus of Tauromenium in Diogenes Laertius 8.10; Dio Chrysostom, *Avar.* 9-10; Iamblichus, *Vit. Pyth.* 162; see also A. Delatte, *La vie de Pythagore*, 168. The ideal of equality within a friendship was particularly emphasized during the classical period. Indeed, many of the values that came to be associated with friendship may have been conditioned during the period of the city-states (fifth and fourth centuries BCE), when the struggle to establish and broaden democracy was fostering both political and social changes; Konstan, *Friendship*, pp. 20-21.

103. Diogenes Laertius 8.33.

104. *Eth. nic.* 8.7.5.

105. Whether or not it remained prerequisite for what I have called ideal friendship remains an open question.

Within extant Greco-Roman literature, friendship is normally discussed within the context of the aristocracy, with few references to the topic of friendship among the lower classes or between classes.[106] Cicero, for example, did not go against the view that friendships were limited by class boundaries.[107] Instead, he confined his discussion to the social inequality that may exist within the confines of the *cursus honorum*.

In contrast, in a letter to Lucilius on the topic of masters and slaves, Seneca seems to imply that friendships could be established across social boundaries. In a discussion about whether slaves should be allowed to share meals with their masters he told Lucilius: 'You need not, my dear Lucilius, hunt for friends only in the forum or in the Senate-house; if you are careful and attentive, you will find them at home also' (*Ep.* 47.16). He went on to maintain that 'he is doubly a fool who values a man from his clothes or from his rank, which indeed is only a robe that clothes us' (*Ep.* 47.16). While such statements do not necessarily imply that Seneca thought that slave/master relationships could develop into a true, 'one soul' type of friendship, he does appear to indicate some movement away from the Aristotelian view, which limited true friendships to particular social ranks.[108] A similar sentiment is expressed by Pliny, who notes that at dinner parties 'my practice is to serve everyone the same thing. I invite persons to dinner, not social review, and those to whom I have given equality at the couch and at the table, I give equality in everything else' (Pliny, *Ep.* 2.6.3).[109] This shift would have made the ideal friendship between Jesus and his followers set forth in the Gospel of John somewhat easier for the authorial audience to swallow.

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106. O'Neil, 'Plutarch on Friendship', p. 107 n. 8.

107. More precisely, he did not attempt to address the question of whether friendships could exist between members of the upper and lower classes.

108. Cf. Konstan, *Friendship*, p. 148. In spite of Aristotle's widespread influence, friendships that crossed social boundaries could be viewed favorably. Some of the most highly esteemed friendships were not between social equals, but rather appear to have originated in a patron-client or ruler-adviser relationship; Gustav Stählin, 'φίλος, φίλη, φιλία', *TDNT*, IX, p. 153; O'Neil, 'Plutarch on Friendship', p. 107.

109. Also writing on the topic of dinner parties, Juvenal described such occasions in the following words: 'Here is Liberty Hall! One cup serves for everybody; no one has a bed to himself, nor a table apart from the rest' (*Sat.* 8.177-178). The frequency with which such statements of equality appear in texts dealing with dinner parties suggest that Seneca's statements noted above may need to be interpreted in light of *idealistic* social practices relating to a dinner party, or *convivium*. One's willingness to relax normal social conventions at dinner parties—so that those who were superior in status, including the emperor (see Pliny, *Pan.* 49.4-6), dined with those of lower status—was viewed as a noble act. For more on the relationship between the *convivium* and equality, see John D'Arms, 'The Roman *Convivium* and Equality', in O. Murray (ed.), *Sympotica: A Symposium on the Symposion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), pp. 308-20.

Given the emphasis on equality within a friendship, friendship between a human being and the gods was, for many, unthinkable.[110] In Greco-Roman thinking 'like was known by like'.[111] Thus, in addressing the question of whether or not friendship could exist between gods and mortals, Philodemus naturally concluded that such a relationship must be something other than friendship.[112]

Not all Greco-Roman writers, however, were quite so pessimistic. The Stoics viewed themselves as 'friends of the gods'.[113] Pythagoreans viewed friendship with the gods as not just a part of life but as the ultimate goal of a pious life.[114] E. Peterson has argued that the notion of 'friend of God' probably originated in the teaching of Socrates, who held that the truly wise were 'friends of the gods'.[115]

Reciprocity and Genuine Friendship

As noted above, reciprocity was a central component of Greco-Roman friendship. Goods and services that were given required reciprocation. What role, though, did reciprocity play in an ideal friendship? In his early rhetorical treatise, *De inventione* (c. 84 BCE), Cicero noted that people are attracted to friendship both because of its intrinsic value and also because of the advantages that it brings. Even in this early work, however, he was careful to define friendship in terms of mutual affection: 'friendship is a desire to do good to someone simply for the benefit of the person whom one loves, with a requital of feeling on his part' (*Inv.* 2.55.166).

Some have seen a contradiction between Cicero's *De amicitia*, which portrays an idealistic view of friendship, and his own practice in political life, which reveals a more pragmatic approach—one that appears to be more consistent with the Aristotelian notion of friendship for advantage.[116] Cicero, however, did not deny the necessity of political

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110. Aristotle, *Eth. nic.* 8.7.4.

111. Plato, *Prot.* 337d; *Tim.* 45C; Plotinus, *Enn.* 4.5.7, 23-62; 1.6.9.30-45; cf. Philo, *Mut.* 2-6.

112. *D.* 1.17-18.

113. See, e.g., Epictetus, *Disc.* 2.17.29; 4.3.9.

114. See, e.g., Sextus, *Sent.* 86b; Iamblichus, *Vit. Pyth.* 69; Apollonius of Tyana, *Ep.* 52.

115. Erik Peterson, 'Der Gottesfreund: Beiträge zur Geschichte eines religiösen Terminus', *ZKG* 42 (1923), pp. 161-202. Xenophon argued that virtue makes men friends of the gods; *Mem.* 2.1.33; cf. *Symp.* 4.46. J. Moltmann has noted that the epitaphs of exceptional individuals in Greece and Egypt were often given the title 'friend of the gods' (Jürgen Moltmann, 'Open Friendship: Aristotelian and Christian Concepts of Friendship', in L.S. Rouner [ed.], *The Changing Face of Friendship* [Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1994], p. 36). For more on friendship with God in pre-Christian Greco-Roman literature, see Peterson, 'Der Gottesfreund', pp. 161-72.

116. Cicero took steps to improve his relations with Caesar after Caesar reconciled

relationships. Moreover, he readily acknowledged the reciprocal nature of *amicitia* and the necessity of *amici* in Roman society: 'For we cannot do everything by ourselves; each has his part to play, in which he can be more useful than others. That is why friendships are formed—that the common interest may be furthered by mutual services' (*Rosc. Amer.* 38.111).[117] And, 'Who is there, who has there ever been, so rich in material wealth as to be independent of the good offices of many friends?' (*Planc.* 33.81).[118]

Although reciprocity was a crucial component of *amicitia*, it played a different role in different kinds of friendships. For Cicero, one way of distinguishing between true friendship and utilitarian friendship lay in the area of reciprocity. While both types of *amicitia* led to a beneficial outcome, one was motivated by virtue, while the other was motivated by the anticipated benefit. In true friendship, reciprocity was the result not the motivation. Thus, although reciprocity was an important social function of friendship, this fact did not lead Cicero to conclude that friendship should be defined in terms of utilitarian motives.[119] Instead, in true friendships mutual advantage came as a natural outgrowth of the fact that true friends share their possessions (Cicero, *Amic.* 16.56–17.61).

Cicero, then, was able both to denounce friendship of advantage, while at the same time viewing advantage as one of the most valuable byproducts of *amicitia*. When friendships were based on mutual advantage they were by nature temporal, since they were linked to the exchange of wealth. In contrast, friendships based on virtue were not only eternal, but also had greater utility since true friends sought to go beyond one another in doing good (*Amic.* 9.32).[120]

Seneca similarly argued that the wise man (the Epicurean ideal) did not have friends in order to derive benefit from them, but rather for the help

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with Cicero's friend Pompey at Luca. The same change, apparently motivated by advantage, is apparent in Cicero's relationship with Clodius's family; Fiore, 'Theory and Practice', p. 62 n. 7. This pragmatic approach is consistent with the guidelines laid out in the *Commentariolum Petitionis*.

117. Cf. *Amic.* 6.22; 7.23; 9.31.

118. In Cicero's view, it was better to invest wealth in friendship than to try to use it to amass more wealth (*Amic.* 15.55). In this area, Cicero reflects Xenophon (*Mem.* 2.4.1) and Aristotle, who notes that the value of wealth lies 'in its use as a means of securing friendships, rather than in its being possessed' (*Rhet.* 1361 A28; cf. *Eth. nic.* 4.1.20); Hands, *Charities*, p. 34. Such a view is also echoed in the writings of Martial: 'What's given to friends is outside fortune's grasp: Your gifts will prove the only wealth to last' (5.42.7-8).

119. Konstan, *Friendship*, p. 130.

120. Later, the grammarian Donatus (fourth century), who taught Jerome, also noted that friends love forever (*Eun.* 148).

that he could give to them (*Ep.* 9).[121] Indeed, reciprocity in friendship was to go well beyond an exchange of possessions to include the sharing of life's experiences, whether good or bad:

> I am not your friend unless whatever is at issue concerning you is my concern also... There is no such thing as good or bad fortune for the individual; we live in common. And no one can live happily who...transforms everything into a question of his own utility; you must live for your neighbor, if you would live for yourself (*Ep.* 48.2).[122]

Clearly, then, while reciprocity was a central component of Roman friendship, not all giving was motivated by self-interest. Seneca (following Aristotle) argued that friendship was not a matter of a person having 'someone to sit by him when he is ill, to help when he is in prison or in want, but that he may have someone by whose sick-bed he himself may sit, someone a prisoner in hostile hands whom he himself may set free' (*Lucil.* 9.8). Although he admitted that everyone served his own advantage when serving another, Seneca also argued that this advantage did not stem from any reciprocal benefit but rather that the reward of all the virtues was inherent in the virtues themselves (*Ben.* 28.2).[123]

Reciprocity, then, though it may be an advantage of ideal friendship, was not to be a motivation for such friendship. Gaius Laelius provided a personal testimony of how this worked in a description of his friendship with Scipio Africanus:

> Although many and great advantages did ensue from our friendship, still the beginnings of our love did not spring from the hope of gain. For as men of our class are generous and liberal, not for the purpose of demanding repayment—for we do not put our favours out at interest, but are by nature given to acts of kindness—so we believe that friendship is desirable, not because we are influenced by hope of gain, but because its entire profit is in the love itself (Cicero, *Amic.* 9.31).

121. Cf. Neera Kapur Badhwar, 'Introduction: The Nature and Significance of Friendship', in *Friendship: A Philosophical Reader* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993), pp. 3-4.

122. Diodorus Siculus (10.4.3-6) tells the story of the Pythagoreans, Phintias and Damon. Phintias, who had been condemned to death by Dionysius of Syracuse for plotting against him, asked Dionysius if he could leave prison to settle his affairs if his friend Damon was held to guarantee his return. Dionysius was astounded that any friend would be willing to do such a thing, and even more astounded when Phintias returned in time for his scheduled execution. Such an act of loyalty among friends moved Dionysius to forego punishment and instead ask to join in the friendship of Phintias and Damon.

123. Hands is careful to note that while these idealistic views of Seneca may not have found their way into common practice, they nevertheless indicate that Romans had the capacity for genuine charity; *Charities*, pp. 44-45.

For Cicero, mutual affection rather than reciprocity provided the foundation for a true friendship. Such affection, however, was not simply envisaged as feelings of goodwill toward one another exclusive of beneficent actions. Although reciprocity did not provide the motivation for personal friendship, it was certainly the expected fruit of mutual affection. In fact, no duty was so inviolable as the duty to return gratitude. To fail in this duty was to commit the most heinous violation of humanity.[124]

Summary. Greco-Roman writers used the language of φιλία/*amicitia* to describe a wide range of relationships. Whether the relationship involved patronage, political ties, or simple personal affection, all were types of φιλία/*amicitia.* These writers, however, were nevertheless careful to distinguish between friendship based on utility or pleasure and genuine friendship, which was motivated and maintained by virtue. While the former did not go far beyond the affection that people naturally feel for others,[125] the latter led to an intimacy that is more satisfying than anything else this life has to offer.

While genuine friendship brought mutual advantage, and thus maintained the reciprocity that characterized all Greco-Roman relationships, advantage was viewed as the fruit of a genuine friendship rather than the motivation for it. True friends naturally treated one another better than they would treat themselves. Where there was some degree of inequality, superior friends sought to better the lot of inferior friends whenever possible (Cicero, *Amic.* 19.69-70). Such friends shared both interests and possessions to the extent that they could be described as two people who shared 'one soul'.

Given these criteria it is not surprising that true friends were exceedingly rare (Cicero, *Amic.* 17.64). Few achieved the intimacy, harmony, and loyalty that was required to establish a genuine friendship:

> the possession of a multitude of friends will necessarily have, as its underlying basis, a soul that is very impressionable, versatile, pliant, and readily changeable. But friendship seeks for a fixed and steadfast character which does not shift about, but continues in one place and in one intimacy. For this reason a steadfast friend is something rare and hard to find (Plutarch, *Amic. mult.* [*Mor.*] 97B).

Apparently, Cicero himself had experienced the pleasure of at least one true friendship. He described his friend Atticus in terms of ideal friendship:

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124. Cicero, *Planc.* 33.81; Fiore, 'Theory and Practice', pp. 66-67.
125. Hutter, 'Friendship', p. 264.

> In the real glory which consists of uprightness, industry and piety, there is no one I place above you, not even myself, and as regards affection to myself, after my brother and my immediate connections I give you the palm. For I have seen time after time, and have had thorough experience of your sorrow and your joy in my changing fortunes. I have often had the pleasure of your congratulations in times of triumph and the comfort of your consolation in hours of despondency. Nay at this very moment your absence makes me feel the lack not only of your advice, which you excel in giving, but of the interchange of speech, which I enjoy most with you (*Att.* 1.17).

Greco-Roman writers, then, particularly those who were roughly contemporaneous with the New Testament, recognized a distinction between relationships formed for personal advantage and those driven by virtue. While the former could be called φιλία/*amicitia*, it was only the latter (ideal friendship) that was characterized by the unity, mutuality, and equality that led to deep intimacy. In such friendships the needs of one's friend were put above one's own needs and desires. People were not to care for their friends as they would care for themselves. Instead, they must care for their friends *more* than they care for themselves (Cicero, *Amic.* 16.56–17.61).

Jewish Views of Friendship

Although discussions of friendship are not as common in Jewish literature as in Greco-Roman literature, certain traditions, particularly within the Wisdom literature, highlight important features of friendship. This section will provide a brief overview of such traditions, focusing in particular on two Hellenistic Jewish writers who were contemporaneous with the Gospel of John, reflect knowledge of Greco-Roman notions of friendship, and make use of the conceptual field of friendship as a literary tool.

Canonical and Apocryphal Texts

In the LXX, the term φίλος is used to describe a range of relationships. It is used of intimate personal friends (Deut. 13.6), of a family friend (Prov. 27.10), of a 'best man' or 'friend of the bridegroom' (1 Macc. 9.39), of a client or political supporter (Est. 6.13), and of a king's advisor (1 Chron. 27.33).[126] The canonical Old Testament includes a number of texts in which intimate friendships are highlighted and language similar to Greco-Roman friendship language is utilized. A good example is the description of the relationship between David and Jonathan in both the Hebrew Bible and LXX.[127] Jonathan is said to have loved David 'as his own soul' (1 Sam.

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126. Stählin, 'φίλος, φίλη, φιλία', p. 154.
127. Tull describes this as 'the Bible's lengthiest and most complex narrative

18.1, 3) and 'as his own life' (1 Sam. 20.17). Jonathan's friendship with David transcended his relationship with his own father, leading him to act in the best interests of his friend when Saul was threatening David's life. Their relationship included the sharing of knowledge (1 Sam. 19.1-7). After Jonathan's death, David lamented and expressed his love for his lost friend in these words: 'I am distressed for you, my brother Jonathan; greatly beloved were you to me; your love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women' (2 Sam. 1.26).[128]

The command to 'love your neighbor as yourself' in Lev. 19.18 is also reminiscent of the 'one soul' type of relationship extolled by Greco-Roman writers. Similarly, Deut. 13.7 speaks of one's 'most intimate friend' using language that would have been familiar to a Greco-Roman audience: רֵעֲךָ אֲשֶׁר כְּנַפְשְׁךָ; ὁ φίλος ὁ ἴσος τῆς ψυχῆς σου (lit. 'a friend who is your soul'; 'a friend who is the same as your soul').

In spite of such descriptions of friendship, the Old Testament has little to say about friendship between God and humanity. Abraham is described as one whom God loves (2 Chron. 20.7; Isa. 41.8), and God's revelation to Abraham may be viewed as an expression of their friendship.[129] Similarly, Moses appears to have shared an even more intimate relationship with God and enjoyed frequent unprecedented revelations (Exod. 3.1-22; 33.11; Num. 12.8; Deut. 34.10).[130] The relationship between God and Israel, on the other hand, tends to be described in terms of a covenant that outlined mutual responsibilities. This covenantal relationship does not belong within the boundaries of ideal Greco-Roman friendship.[131]

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reflection on friendship' (Patricia K. Tull, 'Jonathan's Gift of Friendship', *Int* 58 [2004], p. 130). She goes on (pp. 130-43) to provide a helpful treatment of the ambiguity inherent in the narrator's account of David's friendship toward Jonathan.

128. The absolute devotion of Ruth to Naomi, though not expressed using friendship conventions, certainly mirrors (though it is not dependent on) Greco-Roman ideals associated with genuine friendship: 'But Ruth said, "Do not press me to leave you or to turn back from following you! Where you go, I will go; where you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God my God. Where you die, I will die—there will I be buried. May the LORD do thus and so to me, and more as well, if even death parts me from you!" ' (Ruth 1.16-17).

129. Eldho Puthenkandathil, *Philos: A Designation for the Jesus-Disciple Relationship: An Exegetico-Theological Investigation of the Term in the Fourth Gospel* (New York: Peter Lang, 1993), p. 17; cf. Jörg Augenstein, *Das Liebesgebot im Johannesevangelium und in den Johannesbriefen* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1993), pp. 76-78.

130. For a thorough treatment of the friendship between Moses and God, see Jacqueline E. Lapsley, 'Friends with God? Moses and the Possibility of Covenantal Friendship', *Int* 58 (2004), pp. 117-29.

131. Contra Thomas Barrosse, *Christianity: Mystery of Love* (Notre Dame: Fides, 1964), p. 11. It is true that friendship language was frequently used in ancient near eastern treaties and that this language bore striking similarities to language associated

The most extensive treatment of friendship in Jewish (or Christian) literature is found in the Wisdom of Ben Sira (Ecclesiasticus), the earliest (early second century BCE) of the deuterocanonical/apocryphal books of the Old Testament.[132] Ben Sira provides practical guidance for making friends, being a faithful friend, and dealing with threats to friendships,[133] concentrating his teaching in 6.5-17; 22.19-26; and 37.1-6 (cf. 7.18; 11.29–12.18). He views faithful friends as an invaluable treasure (6.14-15)[134] that should not to be easily abandoned or betrayed (7.18; 9.10; 27.17a). A similar emphasis on loyalty is found in Proverbs, where friends are said to love at all times (17.17)[135] and it is noted that 'a true friend sticks closer than one's nearest kin' (18.24). Loyalty toward friends is also enjoined: 'Do not forsake your friend or the friend of your parent' (Prov. 27.10).

Both Ben Sira's willingness to reflect and affirm Greco-Roman notions of friendship and his desire to reinterpret such notions in order to make them more consistent with Jewish piety are readily apparent. 'Ben Sira shares the Greek appreciation for friendship, but seeks to offer teaching in harmony with Israel's faith. He is not afraid to use any valid insight, whether from the biblical tradition or from other literature'.[136] As in the

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with Greco-Roman friendship. Vassals were to love their lord as they loved themselves. Lords were to be friends to their vassals, take them to their heart, and love them as themselves. The two partners in the covenant or treaty were to embrace one another's friends and oppose one another's enemies; see Dennis J. McCarthy, *Treaty and Covenant: A Study in Form in the Ancient Oriental Documents and in the Old Testament* (AnBib 21A; Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1981), pp. 43, 46. Such language was likely used to highlight the strong bonds that were supposed to result from vassal treaties. These bonds, however, were more consistent with a political or patron-client relationship than with genuine friendship. Thus, while the conceptual field related to ancient near eastern vassal treaties may bear obvious parallels with the conceptual field of Greco-Roman ideal friendship, the associations to which they refer are distinct.

132. Jeremy Corley, 'Caution, Fidelity, and the Fear of God: Ben Sira's Teaching on Friendship in Sir 6:5-17', *EstBib* 54 (1996), p. 313; Alexander A. Di Lella, 'Wisdom of Ben-Sira', *ABD*, VI, p. 931. For more on the theme of friendship in Ben Sira, see Friedrich V. Reiterer (ed.), *Freundschaft bei Ben Sira: Beiträge des Symposions zu Ben Sira Salzburg 1995* (BZAW, 245; Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1996); Jeremy Corley, 'Ben Sira's Teaching on Friendship' (PhD dissertation, Catholic University of America, 1996). On the relationship between the fear of God and friendship in Ben Sira, see also William H. Irwin, 'Fear of God, the Analogy of Friendship, and Ben Sira's Theodicy', *Bib* 76 (1995), pp. 551-59.

133. Daniel J. Harrington, 'Sage Advice About Friendship', *TBT* 32 (1994), p. 80.

134. Similar sentiments are found in Theognis 77-78 ('a faithful man is to be reckoned against gold and silver') and in Xenophon, *Mem.* 2.4.1 ('Of all possessions the most precious is a good and sincere friend').

135. Cf. Cicero, *Amic.* 9.32.

136. Corley, 'Caution, Fidelity, and the Fear of God', p. 326.

Greco-Roman tradition, Ben Sira noted that friends are an important ingredient in a happy life: 'A faithful friend is an elixir of life' (Sir. 6.16 RSV).[137] Like Greco-Roman writers, he also emphasized the need for caution in choosing friends (6.5-13).[138] Friends were only to be chosen after careful testing (6.7), for apparent friends could easily turn out to be enemies (6.8-10).[139] Ben Sira warned that 'every friend will say, "I too am a friend"; but some friends are friends only in name' (37.1 RSV). Consequently, he urged his readers to 'be on guard toward your friends' (6.13 RSV).[140]

In contrast to Greco-Roman writers, Ben Sira drew a firm link between piety and the possibility of genuine friendships. Finding true friends was directly dependent upon fearing God (6.16), since only a God-fearer could act as a friend ought to act and those who fear God associate with others who do the same (6.17).[141]

137. Cf. Plutarch, *Adul. amic.* [*Mor.*] 49F.

138. Cf. Jack T. Sanders, 'Ben Sira's Ethics of Caution', *HUCA* 50 (1979), pp. 73-106. See, e.g., Clitarchus, *Sent.* 88; cited in Thom, 'Harmonious Equality', p. 87. For the text of Clitarchus, see Chadwick, *The Sentences of Sextus*, pp. 76-83. The need for such caution was often expressed in Greco-Roman texts using the idiom, 'Do not give the right hand to everyone' (Plutarch, *Lib. ed.* 12E; cf. Plutarch, *Amic. mult.* 96A; Diogenes Laertius 8.17; Iamblichus, *Protr.* 21).

139. Corley notes that Ben Sira's statements here loosely reflect Aristotle's distinction between friendships of pleasure or utility and friendships based on virtue (*Eth. nic.* 8.3.1-8.4.6); 'Caution, Fidelity, and the Fear of God', p. 318. The Pythagoreans suggested a different three-fold division of friendships. According to Hippodamus, 'some friendships, based on knowledge, are with the gods; others, based on mutual support, are with humans; still others, based on pleasure, are with animals' (Thom, 'Harmonious Equality', p. 83). For the text, see Holger Thesleff, *The Pythagorean Texts of the Hellenistic Period* (Acta academiae aboensis, Ser. A; Humaniora, 30/1; Åbo: Åbo Akademi, 1965), 97.14-15; Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* 2.19.101.1. A similar division is found in Iamblichus (*Vit. Pyth.* 69) where friendship between humans and gods is based on piety, friendship between human beings is based on justice and wisdom, and friendship between humans and animals is based on justice.

140. In Greco-Roman literature, this same need for caution is illustrated in the actions of Chaereas in Achilles Tatius's *Leucippe and Clitophon*; Hock, 'An Extraordinary Friend', p. 146. Chaereas only pretended to be Clitophon's friend and 'savior' (cf. 4.15) in order to gain an opportunity to steal Leucippe for himself. J.T. Sanders has also noted the similarity between Sir. 6.5-17 and the poetry of the sixth century BCE poet Theognis (697–98); Jack T. Sanders, *Ben Sira and Demotic Wisdom* (SBLMS, 28; Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1983), p. 70. For the text cited, see Edmonds, *Elegy and Iambus*, 1.315. A possible link between Sir. 6.9 and Theognis 73–74 ('Share not thy device wholly with all thy friends; few among many, for sure, have a mind that may be trusted') has also been noted; Corley, 'Caution, Fidelity, and the Fear of God', p. 317. For the text, see Edmonds, *Elegy and Iambus*, 1.237. The Jewish sages also reiterated the common Greco-Roman theme of the importance of frank speech among friends: 'Well meant are the wounds a friend inflicts' (Prov. 27.6).

141. Irwin, 'Fear of God', p. 553.

Philo and Josephus

Similarities between Jewish texts and Greco-Roman thinking on friendship become more striking in the period during which the New Testament texts were written. This section will focus on the use of friendship language in Philo and Josephus. These two authors are particularly important for the present study since they, like the author of the Gospel of John, were first-century writers attempting to make Jewish—or in the case of the Gospel of John, Christian—notions comprehensible to a broader Greco-Roman audience.

Philo. Philo had a great deal to say about friendship, and like Ben Sira, showed an affinity for Greco-Roman notions.[142] 'Among Jewish writers indebted to Hellenistic philosophy, Philo of Alexandria has the most extensive comments on friendship'.[143] Although Philo only referred to friendship in passing, his frequent references provide significant insights into his understanding of this social phenomenon.[144]

Philo reiterated the need to be aware of the fact that present enemies may be future friends and thus should be treated accordingly (and vice versa; *Virt.* 152).[145] He thus argued, like Ben Sira (6.5-13) and Greco-Roman authors, that one must be cautious in choosing friends.[146] Although Philo regularly confirmed that friends act on behalf of one another (*Det.* 37, 165; *Agr.* 88; *Her.* 203; *Somn.* 1.110; *Spec.* 1.97; *Virt.* 173), on the common question of whether or not a person could compromise his morals to benefit

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142. Sterling argues that Philo knew and used, in particular, the Stoic notion of friendship; 'The Bond of Humanity', 221. Ford has noted the important role that Philo played in bringing Greco-Roman notions of friendship to both Judaism and Christianity. The latter stemmed from the strong influence that Philo exerted on early Christian writers; J. Massyngbaerde Ford, *Redeemer—Friend and Mother: Salvation in Antiquity and in the Gospel of John* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997), p. 90.

143. Sterling, 'The Bond of Humanity', p. 203. Other texts or authors in this category include *Let. Arist.* (225, 228, 231); Pseudo-Phocylides (91-94, 195-97, 219); and 4 Maccabees (2.9-14; 8.5; 12.5; 13.19–14.1; 14.13–15.23); Sterling, 'The Bond of Humanity', p. 204 n. 6.

144. Sterling, 'The Bond of Humanity', p. 205. Sterling argues that Philo reveals a 'coherent theory of friendship' that is 'heavily indebted to Stoicism' ('The Bond of Humanity', p. 205).

145. Cf. *Flacc.* 62. For the conceptual world from which he drew, see Aristotle, *Rhet.* 2.13.4; Demosthenes, *Aristocr.* 122; cf. Cicero, *Amic.* 59; Diogenes Laertius 1.87; 8.23.

146. See, e.g., Plutarch, *Lib. ed.* 12E; cf. Plutarch, *Amic. mult.* 96A; Diogenes Laertius 8.17; Iamblichus, *Protr.* 21. Aristotle advised that one should only form a limited number of friendships; *Eth. nic.* 8.3.8; 8.6.2-3; 9.10.1-6; *Eth. eud.* 7.2.45-48. Cf. Socrates's statements in Xenophon (*Mem.* 2.4). For Greco-Roman discussions on the number of friends one should have, see Anacharsis the Scythian, one of the Seven Sages, in Diogenes Laertius (1.105); Aristotle, *Eth. eud.* 7.2.48.

a friend, Philo was unequivocal. When confronted with pressure from a friend to act in this manner, the proper response is for the person to 'turn his back upon his supposed comradeship, and reproaching himself that there should ever have been the tie of friendship between him and such a person, rush away from him as from a savage and maddened beast' (*Dec.* 89-90).[147]

In order to emphasize the quality of relationships that Abraham gave up in order to follow God, Philo noted that Abraham was willing to separate from his 'dearest friends who form, as it were, a single whole with himself' (*Spec.* 1.68). Here, the Greco-Roman notion of two friends forming 'one soul' has been extended to include an entire group forming a 'single whole'. A reference to the same *topos* is found in Philo's comments on Deut. 13.7, where he also makes reference to equality and places Greco-Roman notions of friendship in the writings of Moses: 'In the works of Moses a friend is so near that he does not differ from a person's own soul. For he says: "the friend, the equal of your soul" ' (*Her.* 83).[148]

Philo's comment that meals are something that 'humans have devised as the signs of genuine friendship' (*Ios.* 210) reflects the common link between meals and friendship in Greco-Roman literature (Cicero, *Amic.* 67; Plutarch, *Amic. mult.* 94a; *Frat. amor.* 482B; Aristotle, *Eth. nic.* 8.3.8). Similarly, his references to friendship with God tend to follow common Greco-Roman thinking (*Fug.* 58; *Contempl.* 90). In this case, however, Philo adds a number of distinctively Jewish innovations.[149] He describes the wise as God's friends (*Leg.* 3.1; *Her.* 21), but then goes on to note specific examples of God's friends: Abraham and Moses (*Abr.* 235; *Mos.* 1.156).

In at least six places, Philo 'affirms that the worship of the one God is the basis for φιλία' (*Mos.* 2.171; *Spec.* 1.52, 317; 3.155; *Virt.* 35, 179).[150] Introducing a notion that becomes important in the Gospel of John, he argues that friendship with God naturally leads to friendship within the community of faith:

> So therefore, all these who did not at first acknowledge their duty to reverence the Founder and Father of all, yet afterwards embraced the creed of one instead of a multiplicity of sovereigns, must be held to be our dearest

147. Aristotle noted that friends 'neither ask for what is morally worthless nor supply such things' (*Eth. nic.* 8.8.5; cf. Cicero, *Off.* 3.10.42-44; *Amic.* 11.36-37).

148. Cf. also *Det.* 33; *Virt.* 103. For similar sentiments in Greco-Roman texts, see Diogenes Laertius 7.23; Cicero, *Off.* 1.56; Plutarch, *Vit. poes. Hom.* 151; Antonius Diogenes in Porphyry, *Vit. Pyth.* 33; Iamblichus, *Nic. arithm.* 35.6; Synesius, *Ep.* 100.17; Eustathius, *Il.* 4.54.22; Aristotle, *Eth. nic.* 9.4.5; *Mag. mor.* 2.15.

149. For a more detailed analysis of Philo's view of friendship with God, see H. Neumark, 'Die Verwendung griechischer und jüdischer Motive in den Gedanken Philons über die Stellung Gottes zu seinen Freunden' (PhD dissertation, Würzburg, 1937).

150. Sterling, 'The Bond of Humanity', p. 218.

> friends and closest kinsmen. They have shown godliness of heart which
> above all leads up to friendship and affinity (*Virt.* 179).[151]

The superiority of such friendship to kinship is highlighted in Philo's
comments on Exod. 32.27: 'Let each slay relatives and friends with the
conviction that among good men only piety constitutes friendship and
kinship' (*Mos.* 2.171).[152] Here, Philo blatantly recasts Moses' command
using the Greco-Roman conceptual field of friendship.[153] For Philo, how-
ever, the monotheistic piety that characterized Judaism was not to serve
as an excuse for Jewish nationalism or separatism. Rather, the Jews were
to be a vehicle through which the nations came to also enjoy friendship
with God: 'This is what the most sacred prophet wishes to create through
the entirety of his legislation: oneness of mind, partnership, unanimity,
blending of feelings from which families, cities, nations, countries, and
the entire human race may progress to the supreme state of happiness'
(*Virt.* 119).[154]

One of the most interesting features of Philo's treatment of friend-
ship for the purposes of this study is his application of the Greco-Roman
friendship convention of mutuality to human-divine relationships. Philo
not only uses the Greco-Roman maxim, 'friends have all things in com-
mon', in his descriptions of the Essenes and Therapeutae (*Prob.* 85-87;
Hypoth. 8.11.4-13; *Contempl.* 13-17) but also uses it in his descriptions of
God's friendship with Abraham and Moses (*Abr.* 235; *Mos.* 1.147-62).[155]
As we will see in Chapter 4, the author of the Gospel of John makes an

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151. Here, Philo also reflects the 'new creation' motif in 2 Cor. 5.17. Elsewhere, he
couches proper treatment of immigrants in the language of friendship: 'him who
loves the incomer as himself' (*Virt.* 84).

152. Cf. *Leg.* 3.182; *Spec.* 1.317; *Virt.* 179; *Prob.* 79.

153. Another example of this phenomenon is found in Philo's account of Deut.
20.10-13, where he inserts a reference to φιλία; *Virt.* 109; Sterling, 'The Bond of
Humanity', p. 212.

154. K.G. Evans notes that the expression, 'friend to all', was particularly prev-
alent in Jewish epitaphs; Katherine G. Evans, 'Friendship in Greek Documentary
Papyri and Inscriptions: A Survey', in J.T. Fitzgerald (ed.), *Greco-Roman Perspectives on
Friendship* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1997), p. 191. The universalism that appears
in these (Egyptian) epitaphs is found also in Philo, who draws on notions from the
Middle Stoa in formulating his vision of the unity of the human race; Sterling, 'The
Bond of Humanity', esp. pp. 220-22. Unfortunately, the papyri and inscriptions are
of limited value for understanding friendship in the ancient Mediterranean world.
Although friendship terminology frequently appears, such references lack suffi-
cient context to clarify the nature of the relationships being described; Sterling,
'The Bond of Humanity', p. 182.

155. This may be the basis for claiming that only friends of God share in the divine
attributes; *Somn.* 2.219, 297; *Leg.* 3.204.

analogous, but more far reaching claim for the relationship between Jesus and his followers.[156]

Philo also frequently shows familiarity with the Greco-Roman distinction between friends, who are frank, and flatterers. He describes flattery as 'friendship diseased' (*Leg.* 3.182),[157] and clearly associates frankness with friendship: 'frankness of speech is akin to friendship' (*Her.* 21).[158]

Philo's familiarity with the Greco-Roman conceptual field of friendship and the prevalence of this conceptual field in the literature of the first century CE is made clear in his comments on Abraham's feeling of affection for Isaac, which Philo states was 'higher even than the chaste forms of love and also the *much talked of* ties of friendship'.[159] Sterling has noted that in the Greek translations of the Hebrew Bible the term φιλία occurs only in Proverbs, making a reference to Jewish texts here highly unlikely.[160]

Through Philo's writings we have seen not only a clear reflection of Greco-Roman notions of friendship, but also a willingness to restate Jewish traditions using such notions. The Greco-Roman conceptual field of friendship is utilized, in particular, in Philo's version of the Abraham (*Spec.* 1.68; *Abr.* 235) and Moses traditions (*Her.* 83; *Mos.* 1.147-62; 2.171; *Virt.* 109).

Josephus. Like Philo, Josephus frequently uses friendship language[161]—most often to refer to political alliances between either cities/countries or individuals: 'Now when Adados, king of Damascus and Syria, heard that David was warring with Adrazaros, *whose friend he was*, he went to his aid' (*A.J.* 7.100); 'Vespasian, having heard them, reprimanded the Tyrians for insulting one who was at once a king and *a friend to the Romans*' (*Vita*

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156. Philo's comment (*Prob.* 44) that friendship with God brought perfect happiness through the 'rights of friendship', suggests that for him, the motivation for friendship with God may have had more to do with gaining a powerful benefactor than with enjoying an intimate relationship with God (cf. *Plant.* 90).

157. See also *Plant.* 104-105; *Leg.* 2.10; *Agr.* 164; *Conf.* 48; *Migr.* 111-112.

158. See also *Migr.* 115-117; *Fug.* 6; *Ios.* 74; *Spec.* 2.19; *Flacc.* 43.

159. *Abr.* 194-195 (τὰς φιλίας, ὅσαι δι' ὀνόματος γεγόνασι; emphasis mine).

160. Sterling, 'The Bond of Humanity', p. 203. Moreover, the limited nature of friendship language in apocryphal works does not provide an adequate background for Philo's statement. Sterling points out ('The Bond of Humanity', p. 203 n. 5) that 'Φίλος appears 159 times in the LXX; 62t. as a translation of a Hebrew original, 6t. as an addition to the biblical text, and 91t. in the apocryphal/deutero-canonical works where it is most frequent in Sir (47t.) and 1 Macc (35t.). It renders a number of Hebrew words for companion: רע (33t....), אהב (8t....), מרע (4t....), אלוף (2t....), and the Aramaic הדבר... The word also renders nouns denoting royal offices...and various verbal forms'.

161. He uses φίλος and φιλία more than 500 times.

408).[162] The political relationships that Josephus describes as φιλία tend to be strictly utilitarian in nature. Friends remained friends only as long as it was expedient. Thus, when Octavian defeated Herod's 'friend' Antony, Herod was quick to offer his 'friendship' to Octavian.

It is interesting to note that Herod's proposal of friendship depends heavily on his ability to convince Octavian that he had the capacity to be a genuine friend. To accomplish this goal, he had to first admit that he had been loyal to Antony—'he told Caesar that he had had the greatest friendship for Antony and had done everything in his power to bring control of affairs into his hands' (*A.J.* 15.189)—and then portray this loyalty as a natural and appropriate result of genuine friendship rather than an expression of animosity toward Octavian:

> [Josephus:] For when a friend acknowledges himself to be another's friend and knows that friend to be his benefactor, he ought to share his danger by risking every bit of his soul and body and substance....[Herod:] 'If now in your anger at Antony you also condemn my zeal (in his cause), I will not deny that I have acted in this way to him. But if you disregard the outward appearance and examine how I behave toward my benefactors and what sort of friend I am, you can find out about me from what you learn concerning my past actions' (*A.J.* 15.190, 193).[163]

Such public friendships are by far the most common types of friendship we encounter in the writings of Josephus. Where he wants to refer to personal friendships he tends to use phrases like 'intimate friend' (φίλος καὶ συνήθης)[164] or 'old intimate friend' (φίλος παλαιὸς καὶ συνήθης).[165] In at least one passage, Josephus seems to suggest that one can be a personal friend to one person, while offering political friendship (loyalty) to another:

> As soon as Absalom and Achitophel, his advisor, arrived at Jerusalem with all the people, David's friend (φίλος) came to them and did obeisance to him... And when Absalom asked him just why he, who was one of his father's best friends (φίλος ἐν τοῖς μάλιστα τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ γεγενημένος)...had gone over to himself...he made a skilful and prudent reply, saying... 'Now, my lord... I shall show the same faithfulness and loyalty to you, if I am accounted a friend, as you know I gave to your father' (*A.J.* 7.211-212).[166]

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162. The Loeb edition appropriately renders ʽΡωμαίοις φίλον, 'an ally of the Romans'. For additional examples of political friendships in Josephus, see *A.J.* 7.117; 8.50; 11.186; 13.102; 14.146.

163. Here we find the common Greco-Roman *topos* of friends sharing one another's misfortune.

164. Lit. 'friend and intimate companion' (see, e.g., *Vita* 204).

165. Lit. 'old friend and intimate companion' (see, e.g., *Vita* 192).

166. The LXX uses the terms ἀρχιεταῖρος and ἑταῖρος, rather than φίλος, to describe Hushai's relationship to David.

As in the case of Herod's speech to Octavian noted above, in the present text David's advisor must convince the enemy (Absalom) of his friend (David) that he is transferring his loyalty. Like Herod, he argues that since he was a faithful friend to the listener's enemy, he can be counted on to show the same devotion to the listener. In contrast to Herod, however, in this case the speech is a sham and David's advisor only feigns friendship before Absalom in order to further the goals of David.

Based on his own writings, Josephus appears to have embraced a very utilitarian view of friendship at the expense of its more idealistic aspects. A hint of his view of friendship may be found in *A.J.* 6.58-59 where he records the account of Saul's meeting with Abner after being anointed king by Samuel:

> But when he entered his house and his kinsman Abenar—for he was of all his relatives the one whom he loved the best—questioned him concerning his journey and the events thereof, Saul concealed from him nothing of all the rest, how he had visited Samuel the prophet and how he had told him that the asses were safe. But concerning the kingdom and all relating thereto, deeming that the recital thereof would excite jealousy and distrust, he held his peace; nay, even to one who seemed most loyal of friends and whom he loved more affectionately than all those of his blood, he judged it neither safe nor prudent to disclose this secret—reflecting, I ween, on what human nature in truth is, and how no one, be he friend (φίλων) or kinsman, shows unwavering loyalty or preserves his affection when brilliant distinctions are bestowed by God, but all men straightaway regard these eminences with malice and envy (*A.J.* 6.58-59).

In this passage, Josephus has significantly expanded the biblical account (1 Sam. 10.14-16) by adding friendship language and including an extended description of Saul's actions and motivations. His portrayal of friendship is strikingly pessimistic. Where a complete openness would be expected between friends in Greco-Roman culture, Josephus argues for the prudence of dissimulation.

Other features of the Greco-Roman conceptual field of friendship frequently appear in Josephus's works. He uses the language of mutuality in his version of a letter from King Areus of the Lacedemonians to the High Priest Onias: 'We also shall do this, and shall consider what is yours as our own, and what is ours we shall also share with you' (*A.J.* 12.227-229). Similarly, he notes that the Essenes held 'their possessions in common' (*A.J.* 18.20).[167] He uses common language of friendship in his account of David and Jonathan, especially language associated with friends being open or frank with one another. In *A.J.* 6.206-207, Jonathan 'told him [David] of his

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167. Elsewhere, he speaks of friendship in terms of sharing mutual interests; *C. Ap.* 1.17.

father's secret plan and intent' because he loved him. He 'counselled' him and promised that after questioning his father further he would inform him of what was in his father's mind (6.207). Jonathan's initial dismissal of David's concerns was also expressed using the conceptual field of ideal friendship. Jonathan argued that if his father had been planning to kill David 'he would have told him of it and taken him into his counsel, since in all else he acted in concert with him' (6.224). Finally, David's concerns and his trust in Jonathan to take care of him are also expressed in friendship language. David believed that Saul had hid his intentions from Jonathan because he was aware of their friendship (6.225). He was certain that Jonathan would not only inform him of his father's state of mind but also grant him any favor or do anything for him in light of their friendship and his love for Jonathan (6.226).

Josephus's account of the downfall of Silas also makes extensive use of the conceptual field of friendship. Silas, one of King Agrippa's generals, had been faithful to the king in all his misfortunes and had willingly shared in all his dangers, often being subjected to the most hazardous dangers for him. His faithful display of the absolute devotion of an ideal friend led him to view the king as his friend. He thus 'was full of self-confidence, for he assumed that there could be no solid friendship without equal standing. Accordingly, he never deferred to the king, but spoke frankly in all his conversations' (*A.J.* 19.318).[168]

Similarly, in recounting his efforts to escape Vespasian's siege of Josapata and save his own skin, Josephus comments that the inhabitants begged him 'to stay and share their fortune' (*B.J.* 3.202)—the duty of a true friend in the Greco-Roman world (Seneca, *Ep.* 48.2; Cicero, *Amic.* 25.92; Clitarchus, *Sent.* 90; Lucian, *Tox.* 6; Xenophon, *Mem.* 2.7.1-14; Menander, 370, 534). Josephus, however, shows no compunction about deserting his friends.

Josephus's version of 1 Sam. 10.14-16 further illustrates one the most interesting aspects of his use of friendship language. A comparison of Old Testament texts with Josephus's version of the same stories reveals that Josephus often adds friendship language to the biblical account, as was suggested by some of the texts cited above. Such a discovery, also noted in Philo, is to be expected given the difference between Josephus's audience and the original audiences of the Old Testament texts. In order to make his account more understandable, Josephus regularly inserted appropriate social tags to identify the relationships between various characters in his narrative more clearly.

Josephus's addition of friendship language occurs most frequently in his descriptions of political alliances:

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168. Silas's 'liberty of speech' and presumptuousness eventually landed him in prison.

At that time King Merodach-baladan son of Baladan of Babylon sent envoys with letters and a present to Hezekiah, for he had heard that Hezekiah had been sick. Hezekiah welcomed them; he showed them all his treasure house... (2 Kgs 20.12-13).

Now it happened at this time...the king of Babylon, whose name was Baladas, sent envoys bearing gifts to Hezekiah *and invited him to become his ally and friend.* Thereupon he gladly received the envoys and feasted them; he also showed them his treasures (*A.J.* 10.30-31).

But Sihon would not allow Israel to pass through his territory. Sihon gathered all his people together, and went out against Israel to the wilderness; he came to Jahaz, and fought against Israel. Israel put him to the sword, and took possession of his land...and King Og of Bashan came out against them, he and all his people, to battle at Edrei (Num. 21.23-24, 33).

Sihon refused [to let Israel pass through his territory], armed his troops, and was fully prepared to stop the Hebrews...[but the Hebrews] destroyed them all...[and] took possession of their land... Such was the position of affairs when there came to attack the Israelites Og, the king of Galadene...to the support of *his friend Sihon* (*A.J.* 4.86, 92, 94-96).

King Hiram of Tyre sent messengers to David, along with cedar trees, and carpenters and masons who built David a house (2 Sam. 5.11).

Eirómos also, the king of Tyre, wrote to him, proposing *friendship* and alliance, and sent him gifts of cedar wood and skilled men as carpenters and builders to construct a palace in Jerusalem (*A.J.* 7.66).

In each of these passages, Josephus includes friendship language where none is present in the Old Testament account (including the LXX). While such language does not necessarily add any new semantic information to the texts (the relationships are already implicit), it does make the nature of the various relationships more obvious to Josephus's audience.

Quite often, Josephus also appears to add friendship language as a literary device that adds flavor to the narrative and characterizes someone in the narrative. In his account of the murder of Abner, Josephus describes Joab's scheme to kill Abner as feigned friendship:

When Joab came out from David's presence, he sent messengers after Abner, and they brought him back from the cistern of Sirah; but David did not know about it. And when Abner returned to Hebron, Joab took him aside into the midst of the gate to speak with him privately, and there he smote him in the belly, so that he died, for the blood of Asahel his brother (2 Sam. 3.26-27).

Hardly had David sent Abenner away, when Joab...sent men in pursuit of him, to whom he gave orders...in David's name... When Abenner heard this...he turned back [and]... Joab met him at the gate and greeted him *with the greatest show of goodwill and friendship*...then, having drawn him apart from his attendants, as if to speak with him privately...[he] drew his sword and struck him under the flank. So Abenner died through this treachery of Joab (*A.J.* 7.31-36).

In this text, Josephus plays upon the revulsion that a Greco-Roman audience would feel toward a person who used pretended friendship as part of a treacherous plan. The result is that Joab's actions are portrayed in a more ignoble manner than in the Old Testament narrative and the emphasis is placed on 'this treachery of Joab'.[169]

In his account of the story of Esther, Josephus adds references to friendship at several points. He states that Mordecai was rewarded for foiling a plot against the king, by being made 'a very close friend of the king' (*A.J.* 11.207-208//Est. 2.21-23)—presumably a reference to coming officially under the patronage of the king. Later, in his account of the scene in which the king asks Haman for advice on how to reward a faithful servant, Josephus expands the biblical account by having the king describe Haman as his 'only loyal friend', and 'close friend' (φίλος ἀναγκαῖος) who gives him good advice (*A.J.* 11.252-56//Est. 6.1-11). The biblical account is already dripping with irony as Haman comes to court in order to have Mordecai put to death, but instead leaves to deliver the king's rich reward to his archenemy. The fact that Haman is the king's 'only loyal friend' but is going to have his plans turned upside down adds to the irony.

These texts illustrate Josephus's tendency to use language from the Greco-Roman conceptual world of friendship to craft his accounts. More specifically, he frequently uses such language as a tool for characterizing relationships within the narrative.

Friendship with God in Jewish Texts
Finally, given the present study's interest in the question of whether humankind can enjoy a relationship with God that fits under the label of 'friendship', this final sub-section will summarize Jewish teachings on the subject. The tradition that Abraham (2 Chron. 20.7; Isa. 41.8; *Jub.* 19.9; *Apoc. Ab.* 9.6-7; 10.6; *T. Ab.* 13.6; Philo, *Sobr.* 46)[170] and Moses (Exod. 33.11; *Jub.* 30.20; Philo, *Mos.* 1.156) were God's friends is fairly common in Jewish literature.[171] The unusual relationship that these men enjoyed with God was linked to the unique access to God that they were afforded. While this tradition of friendship with God certainly differs from Cynic notions of the wise being 'friends of God', the common Greco-Roman notion of

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169. At several points, Josephus portrays people who are either killed by their 'friends' or kill their 'friends', though no friendship language occurs in the biblical accounts: 1 Kgs 15.27//*A.J.* 8.288; 2 Kgs 15.10//*A.J.* 9.186-187; 2 Kgs 15.30//*A.J.* 9.258.

170. Cf. Jas. 2.23.

171. See also B.W. Anderson, 'Abraham: The Friend of God', *Int.* 42 (1988), p. 363. Keener suggests that Moses' status as a friend of God 'is probably the primary background for the "friends of God" image in Jn 15.15, especially because in Jn 1.14-18 the disciples are compared with a new Moses to whom God revealed his glory in Jesus' ('Friendship', p. 385).

sharing intimate knowledge with one's friends is clearly reflected in Philo's assessment of Abraham's relationship with God: 'Shall I hide (anything) from Abraham, my friend?' (*Sobr.* 56).[172]

Jewish sages would have agreed that only the wise can be 'friends of God': '[Wisdom] is an unfailing treasure for men; those who get it obtain friendship with God' (Wis. 7.14), for 'in every generation she passes into holy souls and makes them friends of God, and prophets' (Wis. 7.27). Their definition of 'wise', however, differed from the later Stoic formulations. In Jewish literature, the sages' wisdom is consistently grounded in the 'fear of the Lord' (see Prov. 1.7, 29; 2.5; 3.7; 8.13; 9.10; 10.27; 14.2, 26, 27; 15.16, 33; 16.6; 19.23; 22.4; 23.17; 24.21; 31.30).

Friendship with God is also granted to those who uphold the Torah, though it is unclear whether the same type of friendship that Abraham and Moses enjoyed is in view: 'Rabbi Meir said: He that occupies himself in the study of the Law for its own sake merits many things... He is called friend, beloved [of God]...' ('*Abot* 6.1).[173] Similarly, according to Jub. 19.9-10, a righteous person, who keeps God's laws, will have his or her name 'inscribed on the heavenly tablets as the friend of God'.

Within Jewish literature, then, friendship with God is not only attested in the case of Moses and Abraham but is also attainable for others through living in the fear of God and seeking wisdom. The nature of this friendship, however, is not clearly defined and there is little indication that the type of intimacy that characterized Greco-Roman ideal friendship was perceived as available to even the pious Jewish follower of God.

Summary[174]

Friendship language of any sort in the Hebrew Bible is extremely limited, though not unprecedented. Unfortunately, no treatment of what con-

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172. It is quite possible that there was a LXX version current in the first century that is reflected in Philo's quotation of, or allusion to Gen. 18.17: μὴ ἐπικαλύψω ἐγὼ ἀπὸ Ἀβραὰμ τοῦ φίλου μου.

173. Herbert Darby, *The Mishnah: Translated from the Hebrew with Introduction and Brief Explanatory Notes* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1933).

174. The few rabbinic texts dealing with friendship, which appear to be relatively late, tend to be very pragmatic. A number of texts emphasize the necessity of friends returning greetings: 'If his friend greets him and he does not return the greeting he is called a robber' (*Ber.* 6b; cf. *Ber.* 32b-33a). Such greetings, however, were proscribed prior to the recitation of morning prayers (*Soncino Zohar*, *Shemoth*, 2.226b). Other texts provide guidance for avoiding conflicts with enemies: 'If a friend requires unloading, and an enemy loading, one's [first] obligation is towards his enemy, in order to subdue his evil inclinations' (*B. Meṣi'a* 32b). Still others warn against the dangers of praising one's friends (*B. Bat.* 164b). Overall, however, discussion of friendship in rabbinic literature is extremely limited, though the relationship between students and teachers of the Torah was sometimes characterized as friendship; Str-B 2.564.

stitutes friendship is found in the canonical texts. Friendship language occurs more frequently in extra-canonical texts, with Ben Sira providing extensive instruction on friendship. While strongly reflecting Greco-Roman notions of friendship, Ben Sira also adds distinctively Jewish slants to his instruction.

   Most important for this study are the writings of Josephus and Philo, who like the author of the Gospel of John, were Jewish writers attempting to make Jewish (or Christian) notions known to a broader Greco-Roman audience. Josephus, in particular, was seen to frequently adopt language that would have been more appropriate for his audience. The numerous texts where he clearly adds notions from the Greco-Roman conceptual field of friendship to the biblical account illustrate how a first-century Jew could use Greco-Roman social values as a tool for more effective communication. This practice suggests that authors of New Testament texts aimed at an audience conversant in Greek language and culture may have also made use of the conceptual field of friendship to craft a more appealing and effective text.

Christian Views of Friendship

This final major section will provide a brief overview of how early Christians viewed friendship. It begins with the relevant New Testament texts, and then briefly examines later Christian writings to demonstrate the resiliency of notions that are consistent with the conceptual field of Greco-Roman friendship.

Friendship in the New Testament

The term φίλος occurs 29 times in the New Testament. It is found eight times in the Johannine corpus (Jn 3.29; 11.11; 15.13, 14, 15; 19.12; 3 Jn 15, 15), eighteen times in Luke/Acts (Lk. 7.6, 34; 11.5, 5, 6, 8; 12.4; 14.10, 12; 15.6, 9, 29; 16.9; 21.16; 23.12; Acts 10.24; 19.31; 27.3), once in Matthew (11.19), and twice in James (2.23; 4.4). The term φιλία occurs only in Js 4.4. Notably, though Paul alludes to friendship *topoi*,[175] he never uses φίλος or φιλία. Luke, on the other hand, uses φίλος repeatedly, and appears to insert it into his sources often based on the synoptic parallels (Lk. 7.6; 12.4; 15.6; 21.16).[176] The prevalence of the term φίλος in Luke provides fairly strong lexical support for treating friendship as an important Lukan theme (note also the addressee of Luke/Acts: Theophilus, 'friend of God'). While friendship may be thematic in Luke, however, friendship language and conventions are not typically used to describe the relationship

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175. See nn. 21, 22, 28, 29, 30 in Chapter 1.
176. Mitchell, 'Greet the Friends by Name', p. 237.

between Jesus and his followers. Indeed, Luke applies the term φίλος to the disciples in only one case: 12.4.

In Acts, on the other hand, Luke appears to draw heavily on Greco-Roman conventions of friendship in chapters 2 and 4: ἅπαντα κοινά (2.44; 4.32),[177] ψυχὴ μία (4.32),[178] and οὐδὲ εἷς τι τῶν ὑπαρχόντων αὐτῷ ἔλεγεν ἴδιον εἶναι (4.32b).[179] The view of possessions reflected in Acts is consistent with Aristotle's comments on private ownership in an ideal *polis*: 'individuals while owning their property privately put their own possessions at the service of their friends and make use of their friends' possessions as common property' (*Pol.* 2.2.4-5).[180] In Acts 4.32-37, 'the practice of selling property and giving the proceeds to the community appears to involve a voluntary partial liquidation of assets to meet the needs of the community. This practice is reflected in the account of Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5.1-11 and "the daily distribution of food" in 6.1'.[181]

A number of scholars have argued that Paul's letters contain a significant amount of friendship language, particularly his letter to the Philippians. J. Reumann has provided a helpful overview and critique of scholarship on Philippians as a 'friendly letter' (ψιλικὴ ἐπιστολή).[182] L.T. Johnson has noted the use of κοινωνία (1.5; 2.1; 3.10) and κοινωνέω (4.15), various terms with the συν- prefix (1.7, 27; 2.2, 17, 18, 25; 3.10; 4.14), and Paul's emphasis on likeness and equality (1.30; 2.2, 6) as evidence of friendship language.[183] A.C. Mitchell suggests that the *topos* of friendship

177. Cf., e.g., Cicero, *Off.* 1.51; Martial 2.43; Plutarch, *Adul. amic.* [*Mor.*] 65A; *Conj. praec.* 143A; Seneca, *Ep.* 48.3; Lucian, *Merc. cond.* 19-20; Diogenes Laertius 6.37, 72; Aristotle, *Eth. nic.* 8.9.1; 9.8.2; *Eth. eud.* 7.2.33-38; Plato, *Critias* 110C; *Phaedr.* 279C; *Menex.* 71E; *Pol.* 449C; *Leg.* 5.739C; *Lys.* 207C; Euripides, *Orest.* 735.

178. Cf. Cicero, *Amic.* 21.81; 25.92; *Off.* 1.17.56; Plutarch, *Adul. amic.* [*Mor.*] 65A, B; *Amic. mult.* [*Mor.*] 93E, 96F; Iamblichus, *Vit. Pyth.* 168; Aristotle, *Eth. nic.* 9.8.2; *Eth. eud.* 7.6.6. For an analogous application of 'one soul' language to a group of individuals, see Philo, *Spec.* 1.68.

179. Cf. Seneca, *Ep.* 90; Iamblichus, *Vit. Pyth.* 167-69; Plato, *Resp.* 5.462C. See also David L. Mealand, 'Community of Goods and Utopian Allusions in Acts II-IV', *JTS* 28 (1977), pp. 97-98. Luke's use of ὁμοθυμαδόν (Acts 1.14; 2.46; 4.24; 5.12) and ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτό (Acts 1.15; 2.1, 44, 47) may also reflect the unity that is found in ideal friendship; Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Literary Function of Possessions in Acts* (SBLDS, 39; Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1977), p. 187.

180. Cf. Cicero, *Off.* 1.51.

181. Mikeal C. Parsons and Martin M. Culy, 'κοινός', *Contexticon of New Testament Language*, n.p. [cited 1 March, 2010]. Online: www.contexticon.com.

182. John Reumann, 'Philippians, Especially chapter 4, as a "Letter of Friendship": Observations on a Checkered History of Scholarship', in J.T. Fitzgerald (ed.), *Friendship, Flattery, and Frankness of Speech: Studies on Friendship in the New Testament World* (NovTSup, 82; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1996), pp. 83-106.

183. Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Writings of the New Testament: An Interpretation* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986), pp. 341-42.

also receives particular attention at 1.27; 2.6-11, 30; 4.10-11; and 4.12-20.[184] L.M. White has argued that Paul uses the language of friendship in Philippians to highlight the ethical implications of friendship.[185] J.T. Fitzgerald maintains that Paul's use of friendship language in Philippians was part of a plan to correct the Philippians' deficient understanding of friendship.[186] A.J. Malherbe contends that Paul's claim to be αὐτάρκης ('self-sufficient') in 4.11 must be understood in light of the friendship language that pervades the letter. Finally, K.L. Berry has provided a detailed treatment of friendship language in 4.10-20 and argued that Paul used such language in an attempt to strengthen his relationship with the Philippians.[187]

Examples of friendship language have also been posited in some of Paul's other letters. A.J. Malherbe has noted characteristics of Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians that are consistent with the Greco-Roman 'friendly letter'.[188] He suggests that Paul's preference for φιλαδελφία rather than φιλία may have served to distinguish the nature of Christian relationships from those outside the Christian community, and/or may have aligned him with Stoic and Platonic criticism of Epicurean friendship.[189] E.A. Judge, on the other hand, maintains that Paul avoided such language in an effort to steer clear of the status implications of patron-client friendships.[190]

H.D. Betz has provided a fairly thorough introduction to Greco-Roman friendship in his comments on Galatians 4.12-20. He concludes

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184. 'Greet the Friends by Name', p. 234.

185. 'Morality between Two Worlds'.

186. Fitzgerald, 'Philippians in the Light of Some Ancient Discussions of Friendship', in *Friendship, Flattery, and Frankness of Speech: Studies on Friendship in the New Testament World* (NovTSup, 82; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1996), pp. 141-60.

187. Ken L. Berry, 'The Function of Friendship Language in Philippians 4:10-20', in J.T. Fitzgerald (ed.), *Friendship, Flattery, and Frankness of Speech: Studies on Friendship in the New Testament World* (NovTSup, 82; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1996), pp. 107-24. See also Pheme Perkins, 'Christology, Friendship, and Status: The Rhetoric of Philippians', *SBL Seminar Papers* (SBLSP, 26; Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1987); Stanley K. Stowers, 'Friends and Enemies in the Politics of Heaven: Reading Theology in Philippians', in J.M. Bassler (ed.), *Pauline Theology, Volume I* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), pp. 105-21. Notwithstanding the title, the recent commentary by B. Witherington has little to say on the question of friendship language in Philippians; Ben Witherington, III, *Friendship and Finances in Philippi: The Letter of Paul to the Philippians* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity, 1994).

188. See 2.17 and 3.6-10; Malherbe, *Paul and the Thessalonians*, pp. 68-71. Mitchell notes the *topoi* of love and quietism in 4.9-10 as well; 'Greet the Friends by Name', p. 226. Malherbe's study actually served as the starting point for those who have made the same claim for Philippians.

189. Malherbe, *Paul and the Thessalonians*, pp. 68-71; Malherbe, *Paul and the Popular Philosophers* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989), p. 63.

190. E.A. Judge, 'Paul as Radical Critic of Society', *Interchange* 16 (1974), p. 196.

that Paul was attempting to distinguish between true and false friends through his use of friendship conventions.[191] This argument was taken up by Marshall, who has argued that after Paul's opponents had made use of friendship conventions to turn the Galatians against him, Paul responded in kind by reminding the Galatians of the nature and history of their friendship with him in 4.12-20, effectively exposing his opponents' strategy.[192]

A number of scholars have argued for friendship *topoi* in Romans. C.E.B. Cranfield, among others, has maintained that friendship *topoi* are used in Romans 5.6-8.[193] B. Fiore, on the other hand, has argued that Romans 12.1–15.33 utilizes rhetorical devices (esp. the language of mutual sharing) typically associated with Greco-Roman descriptions of friendship.[194]

These and other[195] references to friendship in the New Testament suggest that New Testament writers readily made use of social conventions from the dominant culture of the day. The impact that such conventions had on early Christians is further illustrated in the writings of the early fathers.

Friendship in the Early Fathers
Although early Christians, including the New Testament writers, tended to describe their relationships with one another in kinship terms ('brothers') rather than in terms of friendship,[196] Greco-Roman notions of

191. Hans Deiter Betz, *Galatians: A Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Churches in Galatia* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), pp. 220-37. Betz also draws a link between Paul's statements in 6.2, 6 and analogous statements by Socrates and Menander; Betz, *Galatians*, p. 299 n. 58.

192. Peter Marshall, *Enmity at Corinth: Social Conventions in Paul's Relations with the Corinthians* (WUNT, 2/23; Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1987), pp. 152-56. Cf. H.-J. Klauck, who argues that Paul used categories from Hellenistic Judaism as exemplified in Philo, Wisdom, and Sirach; Hans-Josef Klauck, 'Kirche als Freundesgemeinschaft? Auf Spurensuche im Neuen Testament', *MTZ* 42 (1991), pp. 8-9. See also Gottfried Bohnenblust, *Beiträge zum Topos ΠΕΡΙ ΦΙΛΙΑΣ* (Berlin: Schade, 1905).

193. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, I (2 vols.; ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1975), p. 265.

194. Benjamin Fiore, 'Friendship and the Exhortation of Romans 15:14-33', *Proceedings of the Eastern Great Lakes Midwest Biblical Societies* 7 (1987), pp. 95-103.

195. For more on friendship in New Testament texts, see the section on 'Friendship in the New Testament' in Chapter 1.

196. Cf. Tertullian: 'We are designated by the name of brothers... How much more worthily are they called and deemed brothers who have recognized a common father in God' (*Apol.* 39.8-9). The choice of terminology (brothers rather than friends) may have reflected a conscious effort to distinguish Christian ideals regarding relationships from Epicurean and other pagan ideals; cf. Malherbe, *Paul and the Thessalonians*, pp. 104-106.

friendship are clearly reflected in early Christian literature.[197] The tradition that Abraham was God's friend is repeated in the Apostolic Fathers several times (1 Clem. 10.1; 17.2; Ignatius to the Magnesians 11 [long version]), in Irenaeus (*Haer.* 4.13.3), and elsewhere.[198] Moses is remembered as the friend of God in *Syb. Or.* 2.240 and in Cyprian (*Laps.* 19). In the *Acts Thom.* 62, friendship implies a willingness to freely comply with one another's wishes: 'Forasmuch then as they were my good friends I could not refuse'.[199] The Gospel of Thomas 25 makes Jesus sound more familiar with Greco-Roman notions of friendship: 'Jesus said, "Love your brother like your soul [or 'friend'], guard him like the pupil of your eye"'.[200] The author of the *Epistle of Barnabas* used language consistent with the conceptual world of Greco-Roman friendship to describe his commitment to his addressees, whom he loved 'more than his own soul' (1.4; my translation). Such commitment to one's friends continued to include sharing in their fortunes, whether good or bad: 'Under what circumstances ought a man to suffer grief? In the misfortunes that befall our friends' (*Let. Aris.* 268).

Clement of Alexandria embraced Aristotle's division of friendships into three classes (one based on ἀρετή, one based on utility, and one based on pleasure)[201] and argued that friendship based on ἀρετή was ἀγάπη (*Strom.* 2.19).[202] He also regularly used the expression 'friend of God'.[203] Clement's

197. R.J. Frey points out that the nonerotic relationships between early Christian males and females represented a new phenomenon in the ancient world; Rebecca Joyce Frey, 'Freundlichkeit Gottes: Friendship in the Biblical Translation and Theology of Martin Luther' (PhD dissertation, Yale University, 1999), p. 27. These relationships demonstrate early Christian commitment to the unification of opposites as evidence of salvation; Wayne A. Meeks, 'The Image of the Androgyne: Some Uses of a Symbol in Earliest Christianity', *HR* 13 (1974), pp. 165-67.

198. Cf. *Acts Andr.*, frg. 1. Bartholomew is described as 'the friend of the Almighty God' in *Mart. Bart.*

199. From 'The Apocryphal New Testament' (ed. M.R. James; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1924).

200. Cf. *Let. Aris.* 228: 'He reckons the attitude of friend towards friend for He speaks of "*a friend which is as thine own soul*"' (ed. R.H. Charles; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913).

201. *Eth. nic.* 8.2; *Eth. eud.* 7.2. Only the first type was worthy of the label 'friendship'.

202. Throughout his *Stromata*, Clement shows a broad understanding and acceptance of Greco-Roman notions of friendship.

203. For citations, see Peterson, 'Der Gottesfreund', pp. 190-91; Luigi F. Pizzolato, *L'idea di amicizia nel mondo antico classico e cristiano* (Philosophia, 238; Torino: G. Einaudi, 1993), pp. 246-53. Christians as early as the first century appeared quite ready to accept the possibility that human beings could be friends of God (Jas. 2.23). The Christian tradition that James drew on may have stemmed from early Latin translations of the Hebrew Bible (2 Chron. 20.7).

successor, Origen, apparently made it a practice to accept his students as friends (Gregory Thaumaturgus, *Pan.* 6).[204]

Minucius Felix, a Latin Christian from the first half of the third century, stated that friends share a single soul and wish the same things.[205] Similarly, Augustine viewed true friendship as something that united two persons in mutual sympathy (*Ep.* 84.1). The depth of the resultant relationship could lead to unpleasant results when such a friend died:

> Someone spoke rightly of his friend as being 'his soul's other half'—for I felt that my soul and his soul were but one soul in two bodies. Consequently, my life was now a horror to me because I did not want to live as a half self. But it may have been that I was afraid to die, lest he should then die wholly whom I had so greatly loved (*Conf.* 4.6.11).

John Chrysostom noted that he had enjoyed 'genuine and true friends who knew the laws of friendship and observed them carefully' (*Sac.* 1.1). Such language suggests that Chrysostom 'had in mind the classical descriptions of friendship's requirements'.[206] Elsewhere, in his description of his relationship with Basil, Chrysostom emphasizes 'classical assumptions regarding friendship's demand for equality of circumstances and similarity of interests'.[207]

Gregory of Nazianzus is freer than his contemporaries in using Greco-Roman notions associated with φιλία rather than ἀγάπη.[208] He noted in his funeral oration for Basil of Caesarea that Basil had been the epitome of a frank friend in that he 'used to correct many of the things I did...by the rule of *philia*' (*Ep.* 11.2; 382 CE).[209] Ambrose, who like Gregory and Basil had

204. See James W. McClendon, Jr., *Systematic Theology: Ethics* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1986), pp. 43, 44.

205. *Octavius* 1.3; cited in Konstan, *Friendship*, p. 156.

206. Elizabeth Clark, *Jerome, Chrysostom, and Friends: Essays and Translations* (New York: Mellen, 1979), p. 42; cf. Konstan, *Friendship*, p. 162. Libanius of Antioch, one of John Chrysostom's teachers, viewed friends as great riches (*Or.* 8).

207. Clark, *Jerome, Chrysostom, and Friends*, pp. 42-43; Chrysostom, *Sac.* 1.1, 3, 4. In *De Trinitae*, Augustine focuses considerable attention on the unity and equality between Father and Son.

208. See Kurt Treu, 'Φιλία and ἀγάπη: Zur Terminologie der Freundschaft bei Basilius und Gregor von Nazianz', *SC* 3 (1961), p. 427. It is important to note that the reticence on the part of some early Christian writers to speak of Christian relationships using the terms φίλος or *amicus* was indicative of their 'misgivings concerning the classical association between friendship and virtue, by which the claim to be a friend appeared to be not just a weaker avowal than Christian love, or a more partial one, but also carried with it an unwelcome hint of pride' (Konstan, *Friendship*, p. 165). Ironically, early Christians seemed perfectly comfortable with the idea of being 'friends' of *God*!

209. See also *Or.* 43.20; *Ep.* 15.2; 31.1; cf. Augustine, *Ep.* 28. Both Gregory and Basil had received a classical education in Athens and were well versed in Greco-Roman literature, which they highly esteemed.

received a classical education, viewed friendship as an important com-
ponent in spiritual unity among his clergy: 'Preserve then, my sons, that
friendship ye have begun with your brethren, for nothing in this world
is more beautiful than that'.[210] Ambrose's focus on relationships among
clergy is indicative of the profound influence that monastic life had on
Christian social thought in late antiquity.[211]

Ambrose also noted that 'charity makes a man a friend of God', specifi-
cally validating his claim with a reference to Jn 15.15 (*Ep.* 37.23). Hilary
of Poitiers argued that the kind of friendship that Abraham and Moses
enjoyed with God has now, through the Gospel, been extended to all Jesus'
followers: 'indeed we know that Abraham was a friend of God. And the Law
said that Moses was a friend of God. But the Gospels show that now many
are friends of God' (*Enarrat. Ps.* 138, 38).

The emphasis on frankness among friends also continued among
Christians in late antiquity.[212] Basil differentiated between friends and
flatterers in much the same way as Plutarch and others had before him
(*Ep.* 63). Ambrose placed a strong emphasis on self-disclosure between
friends[213]: 'Preserve, then, my sons, the friendship that has been en-
tered upon with your brothers, than which no other in human affairs
is more lovely. For it is the solace of this life that you have one to whom
you may open your bosom, with whom you may share hidden things,
to whom you may commit the secret of your bosom' (*Off.* 3.22.131).[214]
Moreover, he specifically linked the importance of such self-disclosure
within a friendship to the teaching and example of Jesus in Jn 15.14,
where Jesus

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210. Ambrose, *Off.* 3.131; Frey, 'Freundlichkeit Gottes', p. 26.

211. Cf. Konstan, *Friendship*, p. 149. John Cassian's sixteenth *Conversation*, entitled
'On Friendship', was intended for monastic communities; Brian Patrick McGuire,
Friendship & Community: The Monastic Experience 350–1250 (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian,
1988), p. 79.

212. This same emphasis is also found in pagan texts from the period. Themis-
tius, a fourth century rhetorician, for example, noted that 'a friend is nowhere near
a flatterer, and is furthest removed in this...the one praises everything, while the
other would not go along with you when you are erring; for the former is set on
making a profit or stuffing his belly by his efforts, and is not impressed with you,
but with your money or your power' (*Or.* 276c [his 22nd oration]; cf. Maximus of
Tyre, *Or.* 14.6).

213. This represents a departure from the tradition represented by Cicero, who,
though advocating speaking openly, did not go so far as to advocate the disclosure of
one's most private concerns; Konstan, *Friendship*, pp. 150, 151.

214. Once again, it is important to remember that Ambrose's advocacy of self-
revelation was directed at the company of 'brothers' and intended to promote
harmony and loyalty within a community that shared a common vision; Konstan,
Friendship, p. 152.

gave the form of friendship we follow, that we may perform the wishes of a friend, that we may open our secrets, whichever we have in our bosom, to a friend, and that we may not be ignorant of his hidden things. Let us reveal our bosom to him, and let him reveal his to us. 'Therefore', he said, 'I have called you friends, because all that I have heard from my Father, I have made known to you' [Jn 15.14]. Therefore a friend hides nothing, if he is true: he pours forth his mind, just as Lord Jesus poured forth the mysteries of his Father[215] (*Off.* 3.22.135).

Augustine clearly valued the ability to be frank with his friends.[216] He was concerned, however, with his inability to convey his deepest experiences to his friends and 'appears to have concluded that humans are not only impenetrable mysteries to one another, but that each is largely hidden from him- or herself'.[217] Chrysostom also drew a link between frankness and friendship (*Hom. Act.* 2.37).

In some writers, this friendship appears to have depended on God's mercy rather than on finding wisdom through Torah observance: 'O how great is the mercy of our Creator! We are unworthy servants and are called friends' (Gregory the Great, *Hom. Ev.* 2.27.4). Others, however, viewed obedience to God as a prerequisite for friendship with God: 'What great or more honorable thing can be said than to be called and to be a friend of Christ...the Lord has raised the saints *who keep His commandments* to a supernatural glory' (Cyril of Alexandria, *Jo. Ev.* 15.14-15; emphasis mine).[218]

Summary

The data presented above suggest that early Christians, including the writers of the New Testament, readily made use of the conceptual world of the dominant Greco-Roman culture in which they lived, including the conceptual field of friendship.[219] Ultimately, however, Christians put a distinctively

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215. Papias' description as a 'friend of John' appears to imply that the Apostle John shared knowledge with Papias; frg. 1.

216. *Ep.* 82.36; cf. *Ep.* 155.11.

217. See *Conf.* 6.11; Frey, 'Freundlichkeit Gottes', p. 27; cf. Mary Aquina McNamara, *Friendship in Saint Augustine* (Fribourg: The University Press, 1958), pp. 187-88.

218. Cf. Irenaeus, *Haer.* 4.13.4; Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* 7.10; Athanasius, *Enarrat. Ps.* 138.17; Augustine, *Enarrat. Ps.* 131.6; *Tract. Ev. Jo.* 85; Cyprian, *Fort.* 6.13.

219. That this practice continued in subsequent centuries is illustrated in Maximus the Confessor's (seventh century) chapter on 'Friends and Brotherly Love'. Maximus clearly felt perfectly comfortable appealing to texts on friendship not only from the Bible but also from the church fathers and pagan sources (*Commonplaces*; PG 91:753-61). For a later example, see E. Frey's analysis of friendship in the writings of Martin Luther. Frey argues that 'the fact that Luther's concept of Christ as Friend includes both his human birth as proof of God's friendship and his adult relationships *in propria persona* reflects the Reformer's comprehension of Christ's entire life under the rubric of friendship' ('Freundlichkeit Gottes', p. 207). For Luther, the Gospel was

Christian spin on Greco-Roman notions of friendship. Augustine, for example, noted that 'he truly loves a friend who loves God in his friend, either because He is in him, or so that He be in him' (*Serm.* 361.1; cf. *Trin.* 9.7.13; *Doctr. chr.* 1.22.20). Moreover, while friendship was something that only a select few—or even only mythical figures—enjoyed in the Greco-Roman world, such intimacy, which was characterized by unity, mutuality, and equality, was the distinguishing mark of the Christian community.[220]

Conclusion

The analysis of friendship notions in Greco-Roman, Jewish, and Christian literature presented above suggests that while friendship language occurs in Jewish sources, particularly later sources, no thorough Jewish treatments on friendship were produced. Later Jewish texts provide helpful insights into how Jews living within a dominant Greco-Roman culture relied fairly heavily on the socio-linguistic system of that culture to communicate. Ben Sira borrowed freely from Greco-Roman notions of friendship and adapted them to his Jewish worldview. More importantly, first-century Hellenistic Jews like Josephus and Philo frequently utilized the conceptual field of Greco-Roman friendship to communicate more effectively with their audience.

Greco-Roman literature, on the other hand, revealed that friendship was a favorite topic among writers throughout all periods. The ubiquity of friendship language in Greco-Roman texts suggests that the conceptual field of friendship was a stable feature of Greco-Roman society for many centuries. The fact that friendship conventions regularly appear over the course of many centuries in a range of Greco-Roman writers, including

essentially about being a friend of God—a perspective that was significantly influence by the Fourth Gospel and other Johannine literature. Luther's 'interpretations of the theophanies in the Old Testament...and his application of the Law/Gospel dichotomy to Jn 15.15...point to a Christocentric definition of friendship drawn from texts scattered throughout the canon but integrated by a Johannine Christology' (Frey, 'Freundlichkeit Gottes', p. 202). Luther argued that God's friendship with Abraham had been extended to all his descendants who believe in its fulfillment in Christ. Commenting on Isa. 41.8, he noted that God 'addresses Abraham by the most loving name, to which God adds the promise that all of us who follow Abraham's faith are all of his seed and friends of God. *Iacob* means that the promise is extended not only to the Jews but also to all believers. Some readers take the phrase *Amici mei* as a vocative, others as a genitive construction; I like to read it as a vocative. You "seed of Abraham, you are my friends", that is a kinder form of address; however, the genitive construction also fits, and I find it acceptable: "The seed of my friend Abraham". To hear Christ saying: "My friend, my chosen servant", should make one leap for joy' (quoted in Frey, 'Freundlichkeit Gottes', p. 191).

220. Cf. W.M. Rankin, 'Friendship', *ERE*, VI, p. 133.

numerous writers that were roughly contemporaneous with the Gospel of John, strongly suggests that these writers were using conventions that would have been quite familiar to the average Greco-Roman reader. The socio-cultural information conveyed by such language would have thus represented part of the predictable information a writer would assume that his or her readers had available when relationships were in focus within the text.[221]

The question that we will examine in the following Chapters is how Greco-Roman readers would have related the information they encountered in the text of the Gospel of John with knowledge relating to friendship that they brought to the text. As we will see, the friendship language of the Fourth Gospel would have served as a powerful textual cue that activated the conceptual field of ideal friendship. Once this field had been referenced, it would serve as a tool to help the reader match, integrate, and control large amounts of thematic material.[222] As Jauss has noted

> Whenever a writer of a work is unknown, his intent not recorded, or his relationship to sources and models only indirectly accessible, the philological question of how the text is 'properly' to be understood, that is according to its intention and time, can best be answered if the text is considered in contrast to the background of the works which the author could expect his contemporary public to know either explicitly or implicitly.[223]

Attempting to read the Gospel of John in light of socio-cultural notions gleaned from a study of extant Greco-Roman and other literature does not presuppose that first- and second-century Mediterranean readers would have necessarily been consciously aware of these texts. Rather, these texts simply help us to establish the most likely conceptual field of friendship given the *available* literary evidence.[224]

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221. Cf. Brown and Yule, *Discourse Analysis*, p. 236.

222. Cf. de Beaugrande and Dressler, p. 147. In his study of benefaction in the ancient world, F. Danker argued that benefaction language functioned 'with unerring force in bringing to noetic surface the distinctive cultural significance of people and deities who are praised for their contributions to the welfare of a smaller or a larger segment of humanity' (*Benefactor*, p. 317). He went on to note that an 'analysis of the varying factors that enter into the description of such benefactor figures should materially aid a student of other types of texts to determine with a fair degree of accuracy whether a given writer at a particular point in a text wished to communicate in terms of the benefactor model' (*Benefactor*, p. 317). The present study does not attempt to correlate the high degree of language from the conceptual field of friendship with the Fourth Gospel's author's wishes. Instead, it simply recognizes that the regular use of such language, whether conscious or not, makes reading the Gospel of John in light of Greco-Roman notions of ideal friendship eminently appropriate.

223. Jauss, 'Literary History', p. 19.

224. My claims thus rely on a broad rather than narrow notion of intertextuality.

The fact that Greco-Roman notions of friendship continued to appear in Christian literature throughout the early centuries of the Common Era, suggests that these notions were well-known in the late-first and early-second century when the Gospel of John first appeared. Indeed, the tendency for the early fathers to hear friendship language in various New Testament texts helps alleviate any fears that modern scholars have constructed readings of the New Testament of which no ancient reader would have ever dreamed.

In short, the fact that the conceptual field associated with ideal friendship is ubiquitous in Greco-Roman literature, known to extracanonical Jewish writers and frequently utilized by first-century Hellenistic Jewish writers, and used by early Christian writers strongly suggests that typical notions associated with ideal friendship, like unity, mutuality, and equality, were part of the sociolinguistic world that the author of the Gospel of John would have both assumed and utilized. Precisely how he interacted with this conceptual world is the topic of the next two Chapters.

One might say that through a process of dynamic intertextuality, in which texts are alluded to and echoed repeatedly over the course of many years, the language of friendship slowly became a part of the cultural context that Greco-Roman readers brought to the reading of any text. Eventually, this language coalesced into a conceptual field of friendship that was made up of components that were familiar to average members of the socio-linguistic community; cf. M.A.K. Halliday and Ruqaiya Hasan, *Language, Context, and Text: Aspects of Language in a Social-Semiotic Perspective* (London: Oxford University Press, 1989), pp. 46-47.

Chapter 3

FRIENDSHIP IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL: JESUS AND THE FATHER

Although only a limited number of studies have focused on friendship
in the Gospel of John, or friendship in Johannine literature as a whole,
there is a long tradition linking friendship with the traditional author of
the Fourth Gospel: the apostle John. John was honored as the patron saint
of friendship in the medieval West,[1] and the image of the Beloved Disci-
ple, traditionally identified as the apostle John,[2] reclining next to Jesus at
the Last Supper came to be viewed as the prototypical example of friend-
ship during the medieval period.[3] Many traced John's unique christolog-
ical insights to his privileged familiarity with Christ, maintaining that
through his intimate relationship with Christ he 'was given to know many
secrets and profound, as of the divinity of the Son of God, and of the end
of the world'.[4]

The previous Chapter sought to demonstrate the degree to which
friendship conventions permeated the world to which the Gospel of John
was directed. More specifically, it showed that the conceptual field of
Greco-Roman ideal friendship includes a number of key elements, includ-
ing unity, mutuality, and equality. This Chapter will demonstrate how
these concepts have been woven into the fabric of the Gospel of John as a
whole, and chapters 1–12 in particular, effectively establishing a literary
motif that serves as a tool for characterizing Jesus' relationship with the
Father.[5] In an attempt to experience the Fourth Gospel as the authorial

1. Rebecca Joyce Frey, 'Freundlichkeit Gottes: Friendship in the Biblical Transla-
tion and Theology of Martin Luther' (PhD dissertation, Yale University, 1999), p. 1.

2. See, e.g., Irenaeus, *Haer.* 3.1.2.

3. Brian Patrick McGuire, *Friendship & Community: The Monastic Experience 350–1250*
(Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1988), p. 219.

4. Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend or Lives of the Saints*, I (trans. William
Caxton; 7 vols.; London: Dent, 1900), pp. 161-62; Anselm of Canterbury, *Oratio LIII.*
Thomas Aquinas linked John's special privileges to Jesus' bestowal of favor on one
of his more intellectually gifted pupils; *Lectura super Ioannem* (ed. R. Raphaelis Cai;
Rome: Marietti, 1952), 13.2.1804.

5. Perhaps the most thorough analysis of the Fourth Gospel's characterization
of Jesus' relationship with the Father is found in David A. Fennema, 'Jesus and God
according to John: An Analysis of the Fourth Gospel's Father/Son Christology' (PhD

audience would have experienced it, it is important to analyze the text in its narrative order. We will therefore begin with a careful examination of the Prologue, arguing that 1.1-18 sets the stage for the friendship language that follows, and then proceed with a close reading of the remainder of the Fourth Gospel, highlighting how the friendship motif is used as a powerful literary tool of characterization and noting how the resultant picture of Jesus is consistent with the characterization of Jesus throughout the Gospel of John. Before proceeding to the text, however, it is important to address the question of how friendship language relates to the Fourth Gospel's familial language.

Friends and Family

Given the Fourth Gospel's pervasive use of familial language (especially 'Father' and 'Son') to describe Jesus' relationship with God, could the authorial audience really be expected to associate their unity, mutuality, and equality with ideal friendship rather than their Father-Son relationship? J.G. van der Watt, in his excellent study of metaphor in the Gospel of John, argues that 'Family imagery provides the major description of the relationship between God, Jesus and the believers in this Gospel'.[6] He maintains that the Fourth Gospel makes heavy use of kinship terms (father/son) and imagery relating to birth, life, education, etc., to form a network of familial metaphors.[7] He tends to associate language relat-

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dissertation, Duke University, 1979). Fennema's analysis presupposes that the Fourth Gospel adapts various Jewish traditions, including the agency of God's prophets, the agency of God's personified attributes, the dualism of the Qumran literature, God's covenant with Israel, and Jesus as the eschatological Son of Man. Jesus is thus sent to earth as God's agent. He always acts on God's behalf, in complete conformity with the will of the one who sent him. He is the descending/ascending Son of Man who 'perfectly represents the Father above to the world below' (Fennema, 'Jesus and God', p. iii). While Jesus is functionally equal to the Father, their relationship remains hierarchical, with the Father being the one who initiates the divine purposes and works; Fennema, 'Jesus and God', p. iv. Fennema concludes that the Fourth Gospel's portrayal of the Father's relationship to the Son, which can be explained in terms of 'equality with priority', represents an 'attempt to affirm Jesus' deity without abandoning Jewish monotheism....in proposing both an equality which entails unity, and a priority which preserves the distinction, the Gospel can identify the Son with, but not as, the Father. Thus the traditional Jewish concept of 'God' is expanded, so as to accommodate two discrete beings, even as the Gospel seeks to broaden the term (theos) itself by applying it to both Father and Son' ('Jesus and God', p. iv).

6.   Jan G. van der Watt, *Family of the King: Dynamics of Metaphor in the Gospel according to John* (Biblical Interpretation Series, 47; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2000), p. 360.

7.   'Family language in the first part of the Gospel deals predominately with the relationship between the Father and the Son, with other aspects of family life (like

ing to love, unity, and mutuality with the familial metaphor rather than with the conceptual world of ideal friendship. Indeed, he refers to love and unity as 'typical familial elements', maintains that within the context of the ancient Mediterranean world 'what belongs to the family is shared by all', and claims that '*oneness* is a clear characteristic of the family on which the dynamics of family life and ethics are based'.[8]

Although such an association is not completely inconsistent with Greco-Roman literature from the period, it perhaps reads more into Greco-Roman expectations for family relationships than is warranted. While the group orientation of ancient families may well have implied 'a strong unity within the group',[9] there were limits to that unity (and mutuality and equality) both in theory and in practice. Consequently, it was not unusual for writers to take up the language of friendship to clarify what a familial relationship should look like. According to Plutarch, superior siblings were encouraged to attempt to elevate the reputation of their inferior siblings and to adopt 'them into their friendship' (*Frat. amor.* [*Mor.*] 484D). Earlier, Plutarch points out that 'through the concord of brothers both family and household are sound and flourish, and friends and intimates, like a harmonious choir, neither do nor say, nor think, anything discordant' (*Frat. amor.* [*Mor.*] 479A). He notes that a primary goal of parents was for siblings to show 'steadfast goodwill and friendship toward a brother' (*Frat. amor.* [*Mor.*] 480A). Finally, he describes a brother's friendship and confidence as 'the greatest and most valuable part of their inheritance' (*Frat. amor.* [*Mor.*] 483E).[10]

Texts such as these suggest that Van der Watt's argument regarding the relationship between the family and virtues like love, mutuality, and unity needs to be nuanced. Of first importance is the need to clarify the relationship between notions of family and notions of friendship. Van der Watt places friendship language under the rubric of familial relationships: 'friends were regarded as part of the extended family. Describing the believers in these terms would not imply a departure from familial language. It implies that the reference to personal relations functioned more

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birth, life and light) functioning in conjunction with the father-son references to develop a network of imagery related to the family' (Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, p. 265). While Van der Watt recognizes the Fourth Gospel's use of friendship language to characterize Jesus' relationship with his followers in the second part of the Gospel (*Family of the King*, p. 367), he overlooks the pervasive presence of such language in the first half of the Gospel to characterize Jesus' relationship with the Father.

8.   Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, pp. 328, 353, 291 (italics in original).

9.   Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, p. 353.

10. I am indebted to David A. deSilva for the discussion in this paragraph; *Honor, Patronage, Kinship & Purity: Unlocking New Testament Culture* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity, 2000), pp. 165-73.

widely than the circle of father and children, which formed the inner and most intimate circle'.[11] The analysis presented in Chapter 2, however, suggests that friendship language *narrows* rather than broadens the circle of intimacy. Within a schema of intimate relationships, ideal friendship transcends familial relationships. One can be a member of a family and not enjoy the level of intimacy that was characteristic of ideal friendship. Thus, the use of familial language in a particular context, or throughout the Gospel of John, does not preclude the need to use friendship language to characterize the depth of intimacy that Jesus shares with the Father. Indeed, it is precisely in response to the inadequacies of familial imagery to convey the level of intimacy involved in Jesus' relationship with the Father and with his followers (see Chapter 4) that the language of ideal friendship, which points to absolute intimacy, must be utilized. While a father and son *could* be friends, as Van der Watt rightly notes,[12] the familial relationship did not naturally entail the levels of unity, mutuality, and equality that were characteristic of ideal friendship. Thus, friendship language is used in the Gospel of John to further enrich the characterization of Jesus' relationship with the Father and his followers.[13]

When read in conversation with Van der Watt's study, the present study makes it clear that there is significant overlap between familial and friendship language. Such overlap, however, does not in any way make the presence of a friendship motif and a network of familial metaphors within the Gospel of John mutually exclusive. As Van der Watt himself aptly illustrates, similar overlap exists between the family metaphors and the mission of Jesus motif/language.[14] The range of themes, motifs, and metaphors that are developed in the macro structure of the Fourth Gospel work *together* to convey a particular message—a message that highlights relational intimacy between Jesus and the Father and Jesus and his followers.[15] Moreover, the supplementation of the family metaphor with the language of ideal friendship was both appropriate and necessary for communicating that message,[16] since within the context of first-century

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11. Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, p. 360. Fitzgerald, on the other hand, argues that 'kinship was widely recognized as a type of *philia*' ('Christian Friendship: John, Paul, and the Philippians', *Int* 61 [2007], p. 291).

12. *Family of the King*, p. 364.

13. Cf. Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, p. 365.

14. Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, pp. 296-303.

15. Van der Watt is quick to point out that although the family network of metaphors represents the 'main imagery' of the Fourth Gospel, it is not the only type of language that is used to describe either Jesus or his followers; *Family of the King*, p. 266. 'The scope of the relations within the God-man sphere is broader than the scope of a single metaphor' (Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, p. 305).

16. Similarly, the exclusive use of the language of ideal friendship would not allow

Greco-Roman social structures and values, the Father-Son metaphor eventually breaks down.

As the head of the household, the father (*paterfamilias*), who was typically the oldest living male, had near absolute authority over his family. His own children remained under his authority from their birth until his death. Even if a son reached the highest offices of state, he still remained under his father's power. While the father lived, legally his children could not personally own property. They could not even marry without the father's consent. Any rights granted to the son through contractual agreements automatically accrued to the father.[17] Indeed, the father could sell his son to a creditor if necessary and could even have his children put to death, if he so chose.[18]

Unlike family relationships, which carried many such negative connotations that were inappropriate for characterizing the relationship between the Father and the Son, the language of ideal friendship carried no such unwelcome baggage. Indeed, although family relationships provided a helpful *metaphor* for characterizing Jesus' relationship with the Father, the language of ideal friendship provided a concept that could be *literally* applied to Jesus' relationship to the Father and his followers. Jesus is not *like* an ideal friend to the Father; he *is* the Father's ideal friend. While it is generally true that discourse about God requires the utilization of metaphorical language,[19] when it comes to describing the relationship between God and Jesus both metaphorical and literal language can be employed. While God is not literally (that is, physically) Jesus' 'Father', he can literally be described as his 'friend' since the latter points to a type of relationship that does not involve physical ancestry. Although it is true that the language of friendship may not 'cover all aspects of the heavenly reality fully', such a deficiency does not mean that it should be relegated

the author of the Fourth Gospel to highlight the responsibility that followers of Jesus have to obey his commands; cf. Van der Watt: 'The Father has absolute authority over his children. That is not the case with friends' (*Family of the King*, p. 311).

17. Alan Watson, *The Law of the Ancient Romans* (Dallas: SMU Press, 1970), pp. 37-39.

18. For more on the rights of the *paterfamilias*, see Edward W. Watson, *Paul, his Roman Audience, and the Adopted People of God: Understanding the Pauline Metaphor of Adoption in Romans as Authorial Audience* (Lewiston, NY: Mellen, 2008), pp. 116-33. For more on the family in ancient Rome, see Suzanne Dixon, *The Roman Family* (London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992); Beryl Rawson (ed.), *The Family in Ancient Rome* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1986); Lewis H. Morgan, *Systems of Consanguinity and Affinity of the Human Family* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Press, 1970); F. Engles, *The Origins of the Family, Private Property, and the State* (Chicago: Kerr, 1984). For more on the authority of the *paterfamilias*, see J.A. Crook, *Law and Life of Rome* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1967); Alan Watson, *The Law and Persons of the Later Roman Republic* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967), pp. 98-101.

19. Cf. Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, pp. xvii, 22.

to the status of metaphor. Metaphor must be defined and identified in terms of linguistic usage not transcendent realities. The lack of semantic or syntactic incongruity points to a literal sense.

The distinction between familial language and language from the conceptual world of ideal friendship ultimately comes down to a question of degree. While unity, mutuality, and equality could be associated with or used to describe a wide variety of relationships or associations in the ancient world, including familial relations, the distinguishing feature of ideal personal friendship was the degree to which these notions were characteristic of such a relationship. Ideal friendship, for example, required absolute unity—unity to the utmost degree. As Cicero stated, friendship 'is nothing else than accord in *all* things' (*Amic.* 6.20). Although all associations required some degree of unity, only absolute unity could lead to a 'one soul' type of relationship (Cicero, *Amic.* 21.81, 25.92; *Off.* 1.17.56; Plutarch, *Adul. amic.* [*Mor.*] 65A, B; *Amic. mult.* [*Mor.*] 93E, 96F; Aristotle, *Eth. nic.* 9.8.2; Iamblichus, *Vit. Pyth.* 168). Only an ideal friend could be described as 'Another I' (Diogenes Laertius 7.23; Aristotle, *Eth. nic.* 9.4.5; *Mag. mor.* 2.15; Cicero, *Off.* 1.56; Plutarch, *Vit. poes. Hom.* 151) or as 'half my soul' (Horace, *Carm.* 1.3.8), since only ideal friendship could 'make, as it were, one soul out of many' (Cicero, *Amic.* 25.92). Thus, while in the Greco-Roman world strong unity typically characterized familial relationships, it was ideal friends, rather than fathers and sons, who could become 'a single soul dwelling in two bodies' (Diogenes Laertius 5.20); it was within an ideal friendship that there was '*no* element unlike, uneven, or unequal, but *all* must be alike to engender agreement in words, counsels, opinions, and feelings, and it must be as if one soul were apportioned among two or more bodies' (Plutarch, *Amic. mult.* [*Mor.*] 96F).

As with unity, mutuality could be used to characterize a range of associations. What distinguished ideal friendship from other relationships was the level of mutuality that it entailed. While sharing was characteristic of many relationships, it was ideal friends who had '*all* things in common' (Aristotle, *Eth. nic.* 9.8.2; Plutarch, *Conjug. praec.* 143A; Lucian, *Merc. cond.* 19-20; cf. Seneca, *Ep.* 48.3; Cicero, *Off.* 1.51; Martial 2.43; Plutarch, *Adul. amic.* [*Mor.*] 65A).[20] The participants in such a relationship 'had to consider *nothing* their own'.[21] Moreover, they had to treat one another's concerns and misfortune as their own (Seneca, *Ep.* 48.2; Lucian, *Tox.* 6). While a high degree of mutuality could characterize familial relationships, sharing in such a relationship was limited. What sets apart the mutuality of ideal

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20. This is not to imply a one to one correlation between having all things in common and ideal friendship. Such commonality could exist in other contexts. The point here is that this notion, accompanied by others, was often used to characterize the depth of intimacy that prevailed within a particular relationship.

21. Timaeus of Tauromenium, see Delatte, *La vie de Pythagore*, p. 196.

friendship is the fact that it is both absolute in nature and takes place irrespective of a familial relationship. Thus, while fathers and sons shared possessions at some level, only ideal friendship brought absolute mutuality. Similarly, while family members would have frequently been willing to die for one another, ideal friendship results in a willingness to die for someone with whom one has no family ties (Seneca, *Ep.* 6.2; 9.10; Plutarch, *Amic. mult.* [*Mor.*] 93E; Epictetus, *Disc.* 2.7.3; Lucian, *Tox.* 10, 36, 58-60; Chariton, *Chaer.* 4.2.14; 7.1.7; Achilles Tatius, *Leuc. Clit.* 3.22.1; 7.14.4; Plato, *Symp.* 179B, 208D).[22]

The same is true of communicative mutuality. While a degree of frankness would naturally be expected between a father and a son, or between other members of the same family, frank speech had distinct disadvantages, even within one's own family.[23] Individuals had to be careful not to disclose private information to those who could use it against them (Epictetus, *Disc.* 4.14.11, 15). Since willingness to employ frankness (παρρησία) required deep intimacy, such communicative mutuality served as both the foundation of friendship and the surest mark of a genuine friend (Plutarch, *Adul. amic.* [*Mor.*] 55E-62B). Consequently, παρρησία could be called 'the voice of φιλία' (Plutarch, *Adul. amic.* [*Mor.*] 51C). In the context of ideal friends one need not watch one's words (Cicero, *Att.* 1.18). Instead, one could speak as if he or she were alone (Seneca, *Ep.* 3.3).

Could a father-son relationship be described in terms of unity and mutuality? Certainly. Within such a relationship, however, such unity and mutuality would be restricted. In contrast, the absolute unity and mutuality that is extolled in a wide range of Greco-Roman texts is consistently restricted to characterizing ideal friendship. This fact suggests that the authorial audience would have read the Fourth Gospel's allusions to Jesus' unity and mutuality with God as indications that their relationship went *beyond* what was typically expected within a father-son relationship.

The issue of equality is somewhat different. Where unity and mutuality naturally imply some level of affinity within a relationship, the use of equality to characterize a relationship did not necessarily indicate affinity. Political rivals could be described as social equals who share the same abilities but lack affinity for one another. In such a relationship, equality would fuel rivalry. On the other hand, as demonstrated in the

22. The texts cited provide illustrative cases of this notion, with the friendship motif being used in a variety of ways.

23. As is true today, even within a family great rivalries and discord could prevail. The emperor Claudius's account of intrigue within the imperial household provides a vivid example of the lack of unity and mutuality in one first-century Greco-Roman 'household'; see Robert Graves, *I, Claudius: From the Autobiography of Tiberius Claudius, Born B.C. 10, Murdered and Deified A.D. 54* (New York: Smith and Haas, 1934).

previous Chapter, while equality was a requirement for an ideal friendship, this requirement does not appear to have been as inviolable in the first century BCE as it had been earlier. Inequality was not an insurmountable barrier to intimacy. Intimate friendships could exist without absolute equality. Is it possible, then, that the authorial audience would have understood the Fourth Gospel's allusions to Jesus' equality with God as indicative of a father-son relationship?

Although some degree of unity and mutuality naturally characterized a father-son relationship, Greco-Roman father-son relationships were not typically characterized as equal. As noted above, first-century Roman fathers exercised almost unqualified authority over their household as the *paterfamilias.* Equality was simply not associated with the father-son relationship in the first-century Greco-Roman world. Therefore, although language intimating unity and mutuality between Jesus and God *could* have been read as further indications of their Father-Son relationship, the absolute nature of such language in the Fourth Gospel, coupled with the equality that characterizes their relationship, would have driven the authorial audience to the conceptual field of ideal friendship. While the familial language of 'Father' and 'Son' indicates that a close relationship exists, language from the conceptual world of ideal friendship details the *depth* of intimacy that the Son enjoys with the Father.

The conceptual language of friendship thus complements the familial metaphorical network as yet another tool for characterizing Jesus in the Gospel of John. Both tools derive from the larger field of intimate personal relationships and thus function together to highlight the nature of Jesus' relationship with God and, in the case of friendship language, his relationship with his followers. Given the high Christology of the Gospel of John, the Father/Son metaphor, though important, was deficient. Indeed, from the very beginning of the Fourth Gospel, where the writer declares, 'the Word was God', it is obvious that he is going to have to look beyond the Father/Son metaphor. Fathers and sons are, by definition, distinct. While the metaphor thus allows for the description, 'the Word was *with* God', it cannot account for and in fact is in tension with the clause, 'the Word *was* God'. The latter thus piques the interest of the authorial audience, who begin the reading of the Fourth Gospel with questions spinning in their minds. Yes, Jesus is the Father's Son, but how can he *be* the Father and still be the Son? The very words that raise the question ('the Word was God') point to the answer as well, since they draw heavily on the conceptual world of ideal friendship through reference to the notion of equality. How can the Word be both *with* God and *be* God? Given the background of Greco-Roman notions of ideal friendship the answer is quite simple. Unlike the Father/Son metaphor, which points to a distinction between Jesus and God, within an ideal friendship equality prevails,

equality that permits one friend to speak of the other as 'another I'—the Word *was* indeed God.[24]

The Prologue

For centuries readers have been struck by the majesty of the opening words of the Fourth Gospel: 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God'.[25] This bold and esoteric assertion, which would have arrested early readers' attention much like the opening bars of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, serves as a thematic signpost that helps readers navigate through the narrative that follows.[26] It 'awakens memories of the familiar, stirs particular emotions in the reader and with its "beginning" arouses expectations for the "middle and end"'.[27]

The prominence of Jn 1.1 is heightened by the reverberating echo of Gen. 1.1.[28] As in the Genesis account, the reader cannot help but expect that something new and remarkable is about to follow.[29] Readers familiar with one or more of the Synoptic Gospels would have found the beginning

24. The use of the conceptual world of ideal friendship to further characterize a father/son relationship appears to represent a Johannine innovation.

25. The implication that the Word preexisted has led many scholars to posit Wisdom Christology in the Fourth Gospel; see, e.g., Elizabeth A. Johnson, 'Jesus, the Wisdom of God: A Biblical Basis for a Non-Androcentric Christianity', *ETL* 61 (1985), pp. 284-89; T.H. Tobin, 'The Prologue of John and Hellenistic Speculation', *CBQ* 52 (1990), pp. 252-69.

26. One of Rabinowitz's rules of notice states that 'first and last sentences in most texts are privileged' (Peter J. Rabinowitz, *Before Reading: Narrative Conventions and the Politics of Interpretation* [Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987], p. 44). In fiction, and most other literary genres, titles are also afforded privileged status. Since John's Gospel originally lacked a title, the first sentence may bear an even greater literary significance than in other genres. For more on 'rules of notice', see p. 28 above.

27. Hans Robert Jauss, 'Literary History as a Challenge to Literary Theory', *New Literary History* 2 (1970), p. 12.

28. John 1.1 thus would have functioned like an epigraph—a quotation set at the beginning of a literary work or section that identifies its theme. R. Schnackenburg notes that 'The phrase "in the beginning" contains no reflection on the concept and problem of time. It is chosen deliberately with reference to Gen. 1.1, since the Logos proclaimed by the hymn is the "Word" by which God created all things (v. 2)' (Rudolf Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St. John*, I [3 vols.; New York: Crossroad, 1982], p. 232; cf. Rudolf Bultmann, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary* [trans. G.R. Beasley-Murray *et al.*; Oxford: Blackwell, 1971], p. 20; Ernst Haenchen, *John: A Commentary on the Gospel of John*, I [2 vols.; Hermeneia; trans. R.W. Funk; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984], p. 109).

29. G.S. Sloyan maintains that 'Just as Genesis starts out, "In the beginning" (1.1) to tell the origins of the cosmos and the human race, this Gospel of John will be a story about fresh beginnings, a new human race' (Gerald S. Sloyan, *John* [Interpretation; Atlanta, GA: John Knox Press, 1988], p. 15).

of the Fourth Gospel even more striking. The mundane, though unique beginnings of each of the other canonical gospels cannot compare to the grandeur of the opening words of the Gospel of John, where the curtain on eternity past is pulled back granting readers a glimpse of 'the beginning'.[30] This 'Olympian perspective'[31] provides readers with a privileged view of the story that is about to unfold and intimates its cosmic significance.

Indirect Character Introduction

Although Jesus is technically the first character mentioned in the Gospel of John, the Prologue does not come right out and identify the *Logos* with Jesus.[32] There are only hints of the referent of the Prologue's *Logos*.[33] Jesus is not actually named until the end of the Prologue (1.17),[34] he does not come onto the stage until 1.29, and he does not speak until 1.38. This narratological strategy of introducing the protagonist without explicitly naming him helps build both interest and tension, and effectively forces the audience to anticipate answers to the unstated questions within the text.[35] In particular, the first words of the Prologue evoke the question: Who is this *Logos*?[36] The oblique manner in which

30. Unlike Matthew and Luke, John is interested in Jesus' origins—a topic he returns to repeatedly (6.42; 7.42; 8.19; 19.9)—but not his birth; David W. Wead, *The Literary Devices in John's Gospel* (Basel: Friedrich Reinhart, 1970), p. 59.

31. R. Alan Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A Study in Literary Design* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983), p. 32.

32. Nor does the writer feel any need to define λόγος for his readers. At Jn 1.1, and throughout the Prologue, Jesus remains the 'submerged tenor' of the *Logos* metaphor; Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, p. 102.

33. D.M. Smith points out that 'Interpreters of John have exhausted almost every conceivable possibility in an effort to understand the background, meaning, and implications of the Greek word *logos*' (D. Moody Smith, *John* [ANTC; Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1999], p. 49).

34. The fact that Jesus is explicitly named more times (245 times) in the Fourth Gospel than all the other characters combined (204 times) leaves no doubt as to his status as the central character; see Steve Booth, *Selected Peak Marking Features in the Gospel of John* (New York: Peter Lang, 1996), pp. 52-53.

35. The temporary anonymity may also indicate that 'a name is unnecessary for the reader's perception of a character' (David R. Beck, *The Discipleship Paradigm: Readers and Anonymous Characters in the Fourth Gospel* [Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1997], p. 11).

36. A. Reinhartz notes that it is virtually axiomatic in Johannine studies to view Christology as 'the central theme of this gospel...[that] is expressed, either directly or indirectly, in virtually every verse' (Adele Reinhartz, *The Word in the World: The Cosmological Tale in the Fourth Gospel* [SBLMS, 45; Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1992], p. 30). Köstenberger and Swain observe that 'a striking feature of John's Gospel is that, after the prologue, Jesus is never again called "the Word" ' (Andreas J. Köstenberger and Scott R. Swain, *Father, Son and Spirit: The Trinity and John's Gospel* [NSBT, 24; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2008], p. 113).

the central character[37] is introduced also helps prepare readers for the nature of the text to follow, providing 'firm footing for the reader's reconstruction of hidden meanings and reception of suppressed signals behind the backs or "over the heads" of the characters'.[38]

The Prologue and 'Primacy Effect'

The immediate uncertainty created in readers' minds helps extend the privileged status of the first sentence to the Prologue as a whole (1.1-18). These eighteen verses play an important role in preparing readers for the story they are about to encounter and provide them with 'a concentrated, more or less chronologically arranged, block of exposition...which proves to be reliable as the work progresses'.[39] The entire Prologue thus creates a powerful 'primacy effect'[40] by immediately providing the readers with inside information regarding Jesus' identity and implicitly raising questions in their minds. By the end of the Prologue, readers know that the *Logos* was the true light that came into the world (1.9), of whom John the Baptist testified (1.6-8). They know that he was rejected by his own people (1.11), that he was able to make people 'children of God' (1.12), that he 'became flesh and lived among us' (1.14), and that he was greater than John the Baptist (1.15). These descriptions provide fairly transparent clues that would have enabled the authorial audience, who would have already known the overall story of Jesus, to readily identify the *Logos* with Jesus

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37. Culpepper notes that the Gospel of John, 'in which Jesus is a literary character, can make him known to readers more profoundly than he, as a person, could have been known by his contemporaries' (*Anatomy*, pp. 102-103). The other characters in the Fourth Gospel serve primarily as foils for the characterization of Jesus by (1) highlighting various aspects of his character through supplying a range of diverse interactions, and (2) representing alternative responses to Jesus and revealing to the reader the consequences of such responses; Culpepper, *Anatomy*, p. 145; cf. David Mark Ball, *'I Am' in John's Gospel: Literary Function, Background and Theological Implications* (JSNTSup, 124; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), p. 83.

38. Culpepper, *Anatomy*, p. 168.

39. Culpepper, *Anatomy*, p. 19. 'By the end of the Prologue the reader knows Jesus' origin and status and the primary significance of his life' (Culpepper, *Anatomy*, p. 107). Bultmann highlights the importance of the Prologue in introducing the reader to the motifs that follow and creating a sense of anticipation: 'He cannot yet fully understand them, but because they are half comprehensible, half mysterious, they arouse the tension, and awaken the *question* which is essential if he is going to understand what is going to be said' (*The Gospel of John*, p. 13).

40. See Meir Sternberg, *Expositional Modes and Temporal Ordering in Fiction* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), pp. 102-104. It should be noted that 'the evidence for primacy effects on recalling texts is still inconclusive' (Robert-Alain de Beaugrande and Wolfgang Ulrich Dressler, *Introduction to Text Linguistics* [London and New York: Longman, 1981], p. 207 n. 23).

by the end of the Prologue. The implicit questions raised by the opening words of the Prologue, however, would have persisted: Who *is* this Jesus? How can he be both *with* God and also *be* God?[41] How could Jesus have had a role in creation—a role that Jews traditionally limited exclusively to Yahweh? What exactly is the relationship between Jesus and God? 'All of the Gospel's various presentations of this theme of the relationship of Jesus with the Father, briefly and boldly stated in Jn 1.1-2, indicate an effort to unpack the perplexing notion of the Word's distinction from God, juxtaposed with the Word's identity with God'.[42] Indeed, the questions associated with the identity of Jesus, given the superficially contradictory assertions of the Prologue, set the fundamental direction of the plot of the Fourth Gospel.[43]

The Relational Focus of the Prologue

P.B. Harner has argued that although John speaks of both relationship ('the Word was with God') and identity ('the Word was God') in the opening

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41. Philip B. Harner, *Relation Analysis of the Fourth Gospel: A Study in Reader-Response Criticism* (Lewiston, NY: Mellen, 1993), p. 3. Augustine acknowledged the difficulty of answering this question; *Tract. Ev. Jo.* 1.1.12. If the textual variant in 1.18 is accepted as original, then this enigmatic notion is even more prominent and serves as bookends to the Prologue. The referent in 1.18, who is described as μονογενής, is clearly the *Logos*. While some manuscripts read ὁ μονογενὴς υἱὸς ὁ ὢν εἰς τὸν κόλπον τοῦ πατρὸς ἐκεῖνος ἐξηγήσατο (A C³ W^supp Δ Θ Ψ *f* ^1,13 𝔐 *al*), others explicitly refer to the *Logos* as 'God': μονογενὴς θεὸς ὁ ὢν εἰς τὸν κόλπον τοῦ πατρὸς ἐκεῖνος ἐξηγήσατο (𝔓⁶⁶ ℵ* B C* L *pc*; with 𝔓⁷⁵ ℵ² 33 *pc* adding an article: ὁ μονογενὴς θεός). The strong early external support for μονογενὴς θεός, coupled with the fact that it is clearly the harder reading, has led most textual critics to accept it as original; see UBS⁴/NA²⁷; Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1971), p. 198. Once again, then, the *Logos* is both 'with God' and, in fact, 'is God'. For a more thorough overview of the textual issue in 1.18, see Elizabeth Harris, *Prologue and Gospel: The Theology of the Fourth Gospel* (JSNTSup, 107; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), pp. 91-115; David A. Fennema, 'John 1:18: "God the Only Son" ', *NTS* (1985), pp. 124-35.

42. Laura Ann Weber, ' "That They May Be One": John 17:21-23 and the Plotinian Application of Unity' (PhD dissertation, Marquette University, 1996), p. 138. As Barrett notes, 'John intends that the whole of his gospel shall be read in light of this verse [1.1]. The deeds and words of Jesus are the deeds and words of God' (C.K. Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John: An Introduction with Commentary and Notes on the Greek Text* [Philadelphia: Westminster, 1978], p. 156).

43. Cf. John A. Darr, *On Character Building: The Reader and the Rhetoric of Characterization in Luke–Acts* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992), p. 39. Similarly, Köstenberger and Swain argue that 'Jn 1.1-18 provides us with John's initial characterization of Jesus, identifying him with a 'paradigm of traits' that will characterize his messianic identity and mission for the rest of the Gospel' (*Father, Son and Spirit*, p. 113).

lines of the Prologue, the reference to relationship first, along with its reiteration in verse 2 ('He was in the beginning with God'), strongly suggests that the author was primarily concerned with defining relationships as he began the Fourth Gospel.[44] While the Gospel of John as a whole begins with Jesus, the Divine *Logos*, in the presence of the Father and ends with Jesus having returned to the Father,[45] suggesting the centrality of the relationship between the Father and the Son, other relationships are also introduced in the Prologue. The Prologue notes that the *Logos* is related to the world as Creator to creation (1.3, 10); the *Logos* is related to John the Baptist as the one to whom John bore witness (1.6-8); the *Logos* is related to most of his own people as the one whom they rejected (1.11); and the *Logos* is related to others as the one whom they received and the one who is able to make them children of God (1.12),[46] convey to them grace and truth (1.14, 17), and make the Father known to them (1.18).

   R.A. Culpepper has argued that, as the center or pivot of a chiastic structure that makes up verses 1-18, 1.12b ('he gave power to become children of God') has special prominence in the Prologue—a claim potentially supported by Rabinowitz's rules of configuration.[47] In Culpepper's view,

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44. Harner, *Relation Analysis*, p. 1.

45. Just as it opens with the words of the narrator and closes with the narrator's words, and commences with the words of a model witness (John the Baptist; 1.6-7) and concludes with the words of another model witness (the Beloved Disciple; 21.24), so the Fourth Gospel may also be viewed as beginning with Jesus' descent to earth and concluding with his ascent to heaven; cf. Charles H. Talbert, *Reading John: A Literary and Theological Commentary on the Fourth Gospel and the Johannine Epistles* (Reading the New Testament; New York: Crossroad, 1992), pp. 265-84. Although his return to the Father is not stated in the narrative, it is clearly implied not only by Jesus' statement in 20.17 of his imminent return, but also by the shift to the narrator's time, which postdates the earthly life of Jesus, in the final two verses of the Fourth Gospel (21.24-25).

46. Jesus' relationship to his followers, the focus of Chapter 4 of this study, is highlighted in 1.12-14 and 1.16.

47. See R. Alan Culpepper, 'The Pivot of John's Prologue', *NTS* 27 (1980–81), pp. 1-31; cf. Jeffrey Lloyd Staley, 'The Structure of John's Prologue: Its Implications for the Gospel's Narrative Structure', *CBQ* 48 (1986), pp. 241-63; Michael Theobald, *Die Fleischwerdung des Logos: Studien zum Verhältnis des Johannesprologs zum Corpus des Evangeliums und zu 1 Joh* (NTAbh, N.F. 20; Münster: Aschendorff, 1988), pp. 132-40. Culpepper's analysis built on earlier studies that had posited a chiastic structure for the Prologue, particularly those of N.W. Lund and M.-É. Boismard; Nils Wilhelm Lund, 'The Influence of Chiasmus upon the Structure of the Gospels', *ATR* 13 (1931), pp. 41-46; M.-É. Boismard, *St. John's Prologue* (Westminster, MD: Newman, 1957). Building also on criteria for identifying chiastic structures put forward by D.J. Clark, Culpepper argued that the language, concepts, and content of the Prologue all point to a careful chiastic structure of which 1.12b is structurally the pivot or 'bottom line' ('Pivot', pp. 15, 16); see David J. Clark, 'Criteria for Identifying Chiasm', *LB* (1975), pp.

the Gospel of John gives significant attention to the identity of the τέκνα θεοῦ, the way in which one becomes a child of God, and the role God has ordained for his τέκνα. It is therefore understandable and appropriate that the phrase which grounds the authority of the τέκνα θεοῦ in the Son of God, v. 12b, stands at the pivot of John's Prologue.[48]

While some may question whether the authorial audience would have identified 1.12b as the 'pivot of John's Prologue', most would agree that the Prologue forces readers to focus on the astonishing notion that the 'Word became flesh' (1.14)[49] and the related notions that while some rejected the incarnate Word others received him and became children of God.[50] The claim that all who believed in Jesus' name were given the right to become 'children of God' would have raised a number of questions concerning Jesus' relationship with humankind. To the Jews, who already viewed God as their Father (8.41), what would it mean to *become* 'children of God'? What kind of relationship would result? The audience knows from the outset (1.11-12) that some will respond favorably to Jesus and others will not. How will Jesus relate to those who respond to him with favor? What form will the relationship between Jesus and his followers take?

Jesus' interaction with his followers is further highlighted in 1.14, where the audience is informed that the divine *Logos* took on human form.

63-72; cf. Nils Wilhelm Lund, *Chiasmus in the New Testament* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1942), p. 46. The chiastic structure of the Prologue continues to be upheld by some scholars; see, e.g., Talbert, *Reading John*, p. 66. Others, however, have noted that some of the putative correspondences that make the chiasmus plausible are 'highly imaginative', particularly the parallels between verses 3 and 17, and between verses 4-5 and 16; Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel according to John: Introduction, Translation, and Notes*, I (2 vols.; AB, 29, 29A; New York: Doubleday, 1966, 1970), p. 23; George R. Beasley-Murray, *John* (WBC, 36; Waco, TX: Word Books, 1987), p. 4. The difficulty that modern scholars have in making the Prologue fit into a chiastic structure accentuates the question of how likely it is that ancient readers would have noticed such a complex structure; cf. D.A. Carson, *The Gospel according to John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), p. 113. On Rabinowitz's rules of configuration, see pp. 28-29 above.

48. *Anatomy*, pp. 30-31.
49. Cf. Beasley-Murray, *John*, p. 4; Carson, *John*, p. 113.
50. Cf. Carson, *John*, p. 113. Moloney argues for three parallel parts to the Prologue (vv. 1-5, 6-14, 15-18), which 'state and restate the same message' (Francis J. Moloney, *Belief in the Word: Reading John 1–4* [Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993], p. 26). He maintains that 'In each successive section, the author informs the reader of the Word, his coming as the light of humankind, and the response to the gift who is Jesus Christ, the Son of God' (Moloney, *Belief in the Word*, p. 27). G.R. O'Day notes that Jn 1.18 is located at a pivotal point in the Fourth Gospel, since it provides a transition from the Prologue to the main body of the Gospel; Gail R. O'Day, *Revelation in the Fourth Gospel: Narrative Mode and Theological Claim* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986), pp. 33-34.

The mention of such an extraordinary event signals the reader to antici-
pate an explanation of that event. Its conceptual starkness (God becoming
human) marks it as an important theme that readers expect to be devel-
oped in what follows.[51] How will this God-Man relate to 'other' human
beings? The Prologue, then, would have left the authorial audience with
unanswered questions to stimulate their interest and prepare them for
key themes that follow, among which are Jesus' relationship with the
Father and Jesus' relationship with his followers.[52]

The Structure of the Prologue and the Themes of the Fourth Gospel
As noted above, numerous scholars have argued that the Prologue forms a
chiastic structure. Regardless of whether or not one accepts the specifics
of such analyses, the light they shed on the introduction of themes in the
Prologue that are then developed in the rest of the Fourth Gospel should
not be overlooked. A recent study by J.L. Staley is particularly pertinent
to the present study. Staley maintains that the chiastic structure of 1.1-
18 highlights certain key themes.[53] At the beginning of the Prologue the
focus is on the relationship of the *Logos* to God, the creation, and human-
kind (vv. 1–5). These same themes reappear at the end of the Prologue
where verses 16–18 treat them in inverse order.[54] Verses 1–5 are followed
by a focus on the witness of John in verses 6–8 and then the journey of the
Light in verses 9-11. These two topics are then addressed in inverse order
in verses 14 and 15.

Of particular importance for the present study is the fact that in the
first section of the main body of the Gospel of John the author returns
to these same topics, again (according to Staley) using a chiastic struc-
ture. In 1.19-42 he describes the witness of John, followed by the journey
of Jesus into Galilee in 1.43-51. This is followed by an account of the jour-
ney of Jesus into Judean territory in 3.22-24 and the witness of John in

3.25-36.[55] Staley graphically highlights the lack of subsequent mention of the relationship of the *Logos* to God, creation, and humankind after 1.1-5, 16-18:[56]

PROLOGUE	SECTION 1
The relationship of the Logos to God/creation/humankind (1.1-5)	
The witness of John (1.6-8)	The witness of John (1.19-42)
The journey of the Light (1.9-11)	The journey of Jesus into Galilee (1.43-51)
X	X
The journey of the Logos (1.14)	The journey of Jesus into Judean territory (3.22-24)
The witness of John (1.15)	The witness of John (3.25-36)
The relationship of the Logos to humankind/re-creation/God (1.16-18)	

Notably, Staley's analysis reveals no parallels in the first section of the body of the Fourth Gospel to the themes of the relationship of the *Logos* to God/creation/humankind and the relationship of the *Logos* to humankind/re-creation/God. In what follows, however, we will see that the entire first half of the Fourth Gospel (1.19–12.50) focuses on the relationship of the *Logos* to God,[57] while the second half (13.1–21.25) focuses on the relationship of the *Logos* to humankind. Rabinowitz's notion of rules of configuration suggests that the structure of the Prologue would have led the authorial audience to expect the Fourth Gospel to return to the topics of Jesus' relationship with the Father and Jesus' relationship with his followers in the body of the narrative.[58]

The Prologue, Characterization, and the Conceptual Field of Friendship
The author provides some indication of *how* relationships will be characterized in the Fourth Gospel at the end of the Prologue, where he

55. Staley, 'The Structure of John's Prologue', p. 250.
56. Staley, 'The Structure of John's Prologue', p. 250.
57. While the upper room scene also frequently uses the friendship motif to characterize the relationship between Jesus and the Father, the conceptual field of friendship is used to further emphasize their unity, mutuality, and equality, which was introduced in the first half of the Fourth Gospel, rather than to expand the characterization of their relationship; cf. Harner, *Relation Analysis*, p. 127.
58. See above, pp. 28-29.

implicitly shifts to a focus on the relationship between Jesus and human-kind and draws on the conceptual field of friendship: 'It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has *made him known*' (1.18).[59] In Greco-Roman thinking, such intentional revelation of intimate knowl-edge was characteristic of ideal friendship. To whom did Jesus make the Father known? He made him known to those who had received him and believed in his name (1.12), those whom he had made 'children of God' (1.12), those who had seen his glory (1.14; cf. 2.11), and those whom he had called 'friends' (15.15).[60]

Such revelation also has something to say about Jesus' relationship with the Father. In order to make the Father known Jesus must himself have had an intimate relationship with the Father that would lead to the requisite knowledge.[61] The Prologue, then, begins with a focus on rela-tionships and ends with a characterization of the relationship that exists between Jesus and the Father and Jesus and his followers that is expressed in terms that draw on the conceptual field of Greco-Roman friendship.[62] The author effectively highlights not only the importance of such rela-tionships as a narrative theme in what follows, but also, through refer-ence to the conceptual field of friendship, puts the authorial audience on alert for other friendship language in the body of the narrative.[63]

Summary
In summary, the Prologue introduces the reader to a number of enigmatic notions that are to be addressed in the remainder of the Gospel of John. These notions relate principally to the ontological conundrum of a *Logos* that is both distinct from God and yet himself God, and the conceptually

59. I do not intend to minimize the return to the theme of the *Logos* being 'with God' in 1.18. Indeed, 'the correspondence between the beginning and end of the Prologue is probably the most widely accepted point in the hypothesis of a chiastic structure' (Culpepper, 'Pivot', p. 9). Culpepper ('Pivot', p. 10) notes that verses 1–2 and verse 18 are the only points where the *Logos* is 'with God'. The term θεός occurs three times in verses 1–2 and twice in verse 18 (only three times in the remainder of the Prologue), and both the beginning and end of the Prologue include references to eternal time (ἀρχῇ in vv. 1, 2 and πώποτε in v. 18).

60. Note, though, that Fitzgerald argues that Jesus' open disclosure to his disciples is what *creates* the friendship, rather than friendship being the basis for disclosure, as is typical in Greco-Roman literature; 'Christian Friendship', p. 285.

61. Cf. Schnackenburg, *St. John*, I, p. 280.

62. Staley notes that the first and final strophes emphasize the relation of the *Logos* to God; 'The Structure of John's Prologue', p. 248.

63. 'Just as the first strophe of the Prologue sets the tone for the symmetrical, rhythmic shape of the entire Prologue, so also the symmetrical shape of the Prologue sets the tone for the structure of the narrative to follow' (Staley, 'The Structure of John's Prologue', p. 242).

difficult notion of a divine *Logos* becoming flesh and relating to other fleshly creatures whom he himself created.[64] Not only does the Prologue raise implicit questions that would have led the authorial audience to expect answers in what follows, but it also introduces the friendship motif through reference to the conceptual field of friendship in 1.18. In what follows, the Fourth Gospel will frequently return to the friendship motif and the conceptual field of friendship in order to characterize the relationship between Jesus and the Father and between Jesus and his followers. Before turning to the Fourth Gospel's focus on Jesus' relationship with the Father, however, it is important to note three key motifs that help to keep the reader asking: Who is Jesus?

Identity, Knowledge, and (Mis)Understanding in the Fourth Gospel[65]

The question of Jesus' identity, first raised in the Prologue, reverberates throughout the Fourth Gospel. Where the Prologue evokes implicit questions regarding who he is, in what follows such questions are repeatedly given voice. Nathaniel wonders who Jesus can be since he appears to know him even though they have never met (1.48). Nicodemus wonders who Jesus can be since his signs testify to the presence of God in his life even though the religious establishment rejects him (3.2). The Jews in Capernaum wonder who Jesus can be since they know his father and mother (6.42). The crowds debate whether he is a good man (7.12), a deceiver (7.12), the Prophet (7.40), or the Messiah (7.41), and they wonder who this Son of Man is to whom he keeps referring (12.34). The Pharisees debate with the healed blind man whether he is a prophet (9.17) or 'not from God' (9.16). Other Jewish leaders debate whether or not he is demon possessed (10.19-21). In spite of all his words and deeds,[66] the Jewish leaders ask,

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64. W. Kelber has noted how the centrality of the theme of the *Logos*, who is both divine and eternal, taking on human form leads to a number of problems that are highlighted in the Fourth Gospel, principally transcendence versus immanence, divinity versus humanity, and glory versus flesh; Werner Kelber, 'The Birth of a Beginning: John 1:1-18', *Semeia* 52 (1990), pp. 121-44.

65. For more on the motif of misunderstanding in the Fourth Gospel, see Culpepper, *Anatomy*, pp. 152-65; Herbert Leroy, *Rätsel und Missverständnis: Ein Peitrag zur Formgeschichte des Johannesevangeliums* (BBB, 30; Bonn: Peter Hanstein, 1968); Wead, *Literary Devices*, pp. 68-69.

66. The Fourth Gospel also regularly alludes to the relationship between signs and belief. Many who witnessed the signs that Jesus did responded with belief (2.23; 6.14; 7.31). They recognized, as Nicodemus did, a correlation between the signs and the presence of God (3.2). Jesus recognized that many people needed signs before they would believe (4.48). He thus gave his disciples certain signs to help them believe (13.19) and encouraged them to believe because of his signs if for no other reason

'Who are you?' (8.25); they even accuse Jesus of keeping them in suspense regarding his identity (10.24). Finally, toward the end of the Fourth Gospel, Pilate wonders if Jesus is the King of the Jews (18.33).

This consistent focus on the question of Jesus' identity is strengthened by the motifs of knowing (γινώσκω/οἶδα)[67] and misunderstanding/lack of understanding. In the Prologue, the *Logos* is the one whom the world did not know (1.10).[68] The representatives of the Pharisees do not know

(14.11). The Beloved Disciple's belief comes only after he sees the empty tomb (20.8). Similarly, Thomas believes only after he has witnessed the resurrected Jesus (20.27-29). In spite of Jesus' willingness to let his signs provide evidence to his identity, however, he placed a higher value on belief that does not require signs (20.29). Nevertheless, as D.M. Smith (*John*, p. 384) notes: 'Jesus' statement articulates this Gospel's position on the relationship between seeing and believing in Jesus. Although seeing is not believing, there is no belief without seeing, that is, without somebody's having seen… The blessing of 'those who have not seen and yet have come to believe' (20.29) is predicated upon the fact that Jesus' own disciples, including Mary Magdalene, have seen the risen Jesus and believed in him (20.18, 20, 25, 28-29)'.

At times, people believed in him because of what he said rather than because of what he did (4.41, 50; 8.30). At other times, even the signs were ineffective. Some observers were more interested in how they could benefit from the signs than in the significance of the signs themselves (6.26). The Jewish leaders, on the other hand, though they asked for signs from Jesus to demonstrate his credentials (6.30), later bemoaned the fact that the masses were believing in him because of all the signs he was doing (11.48; 12.18-19). Fortunately for them, the belief was not widespread and, in the end, the crowds did not believe in him despite the signs that he had performed (12.37).

67. The verb γινώσκω is used 57 times in the Fourth Gospel, compared to 20 times in Matthew, 12 times in Mark, and 28 times in Luke. The verb οἶδα is used 84 times in the Fourth Gospel, compared to 24 times in Matthew, 21 times in Mark, and 25 times in Luke. These statistics highlight the Fourth Gospel's clear emphasis on both relational and conceptual knowledge, or the lack thereof—though these two types of knowledge cannot be identified through reference to any difference in meaning between these two terms as they are used in the Fourth Gospel; see, e.g., James Gaffney, 'Believing and Knowing in the Fourth Gospel', *TS* 26 (1965), p. 228. For an extensive treatment of the Fourth Gospel's emphasis on mutual knowledge, see Fennema, 'Jesus and God', pp. 169-200. While Van der Watt is correct in noting that 'knowledge is not developed extensively as a central theme within the family imagery', he misses its strong connection to the friendship motif; *Family of the King*, p. 323.

68. Commenting on verse 10, Patterson suggests that 'this, in a sense, is the whole unfolding story of the Gospel of John in a nutshell' (Stephen J. Patterson, 'The Prologue to the Fourth Gospel and the World of Speculative Jewish Theology', in R.T. Fortna and T. Thatcher (eds.), *Jesus in Johannine Tradition* [Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 2001], p. 326). Verse 10 marks the authorial audience's first encounter with an important 'character' in the Fourth Gospel: 'the world'. This use of ὁ κόσμος to denote those creatures of flesh as a group who oppose Jesus and serve the prince of this world (12.31; 14.30; 16.11) will recur throughout the Fourth Gospel (7.7; 14.17, 22, 27, 30; 15.18-19; 16.8, 20, 33; 17.6, 9, 14-16); Moloney, *Belief in the Word*, p. 37 n. 61; see also Reinhartz, *The Word in the World*, pp. 38-41.

that the Messiah stands among them (1.26). In fact, John the Baptist himself had not 'known' him until God revealed his identity to him (1.31-34).[69] Interestingly, the first use of the verb οἶδα in relation to Jesus in the Fourth Gospel is placed on the lips of the Samaritans of Sychar: 'we know that this is truly the Savior of the world' (4.42).

The Jews in the Temple fail to understand Jesus' reference to his death when he speaks of them destroying 'this temple' (2.20). Nicodemus fails to understand the significance of Jesus' words about being born again/ from above (3.4, 9, 10).[70] The Samaritan woman fails to understand Jesus' reference to 'living water' (4.11). Jesus accuses the Jewish leaders (with a rhetorical question) of not understanding what he says (8.43). The narrator informs the reader that Jesus' opponents 'did not understand what he was saying to them' when he used the metaphor of the shepherd and the sheep (10.6).

Jesus' opponents, however, not only lack understanding, they are also unaware of their lack of understanding. Indeed, they express certainty regarding their knowledge of Jesus' mission and identity. They accuse the crowd of mistaking Jesus for the Messiah because they do not know the Law, while they themselves, on the other hand, *know* that prophets do not come from Galilee (7.45-52). They do not know where Jesus comes from (9.29; an intended slur),[71] but they *know* that he is a sinner (9.24). Their supposed lofty knowledge is almost comically set against the accurate knowledge of the man born blind who knows that God does not listen to sinners (9.31).[72]

While Jesus' opponents lack knowledge of him, Jesus knows that they do not have the love of God in them (5.42) and that they do not know the Father (7.28; 15.21; 16.3). He is also aware that they do not really know him (7.25-27; 16.3). In light of the consistent theme of associating ignorance with Jesus' opponents in the Gospel of John, the reader can readily concur with the statement made by Caiaphas to the Pharisees and chief priests: 'You know nothing at all!' (11.49).

At first, even Jesus' own followers do not know him or his mission and lack understanding. They fail to understand his reference to Lazarus's

69. John had known Jesus, but had not recognized his identity as Messiah; cf. Carson, *John*, p. 151.

70. Since the conversation actually took place in Aramaic, and Aramaic does not contain a word with the same ambiguity, it is virtually certain that Jesus spoke of being born 'again'. See, e.g., F.P. Cotterell, 'The Nicodemus Conversation: A Fresh Appraisal', *ET* 96 (1985), p. 240.

71. Cf. Smith, *John*, p. 198.

72. As the man born blind points out, given what Jesus has done for him, the 'astonishing thing' (9.30) is not his faith in Jesus, but the Jewish leaders' unbelief; Beasley-Murray, *John*, p. 158.

death (11.12).[73] Peter misunderstands what Jesus is doing by washing his feet and thus requests a more thorough bath (13.9). Thomas does not understand where Jesus could be going (14.5). Jesus is astounded that Philip could have spent so much time listening to his teaching and observing his actions and still not know him (14.9). The problem, however, goes beyond Peter, Thomas, and Philip; all of the disciples are baffled by Jesus' statements regarding his departure:

> Some of his disciples said to one another, 'What does he mean by saying to us, "A little while, and you will no longer see me, and again a little while, and you will see me"; and "Because I am going to the Father"?' They said, 'What does he mean by this "a little while"? We do not know what he is talking about' (16.17-18).

While such misunderstanding regularly appears in the Gospel of John, however, through Jesus' revelation of himself, the Father, and the Holy Spirit his followers slowly come to understand. In contrast to the world, Jesus' followers know the Holy Spirit (14.17). In contrast to the world, they know the Father (14.7). In contrast to the world, they know that Jesus has been sent by God (17.25). Thanks to his revelation, they eventually know what he, their master, is doing and they know what he has heard from his Father (15.15). In the end, Jesus' followers no longer need to ask, 'Who are you?' because they now know the Lord (21.12).[74] Readers of the Fourth Gospel understand how important such knowledge is in light of Jesus' words: 'And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent' (17.3).

The continual themes of knowledge and lack of knowledge, understanding and misunderstanding encourage readers to think carefully about what is being said so that they *will* understand and know. Such thematic development thus would have served as directions to the authorial audience to read this text carefully lest they too fail to grasp the identity of Jesus, the significance of his life, death, and resurrection, and the nature of the relationship that he shares with the Father and offers to them.

73. This misunderstanding serves as a foil that allows the Johannine Jesus to clarify 'the theological purpose of what is happening' (Brown, *John*, I, p. 432). O'Day suggests that Jesus' response, using παρρησία (11.14), represented an act of friendship; 'Jesus as Friend', p. 154. Indeed, although the context points to παρρησία as 'clear explanation' rather than 'frankness' or 'boldness', the pervasive friendship language in the Fourth Gospel may have led to subtle echoes of the friendship motif when this term was used (cf. 7.26; 18.19), at least in subsequent readings of the book.

74. Bultmann argues that 'Since they have indeed recognized him, the meaning of the question obviously must be, 'Is it really you?' This is intended to describe the peculiar feeling that befalls the disciples in the presence of the Risen Jesus: it is he, and yet it is not he; it is not he, whom they hitherto have known, and yet it is he!' *The Gospel of John*, 709-10; see also Haenchen, *John*, II, p. 225.

Jesus' Relationship with the Father

The remainder of this Chapter will focus primarily on the relationship between Jesus and the Father in the Fourth Gospel. Although this relationship is repeatedly highlighted and fleshed out throughout the Gospel of John, it receives more attention in the first twelve chapters.[75] The emphasis on this relationship in the first half of the Gospel of John is crucial since it will serve as the basis for characterizing the relationship between Jesus and his followers in the second half. While chapters 1–12 relate the experience of Jesus in the presence of his followers, they do very little in the way of characterizing his relationship with them. Instead, from 1.1 to 12.50b, the first sentence of the section to the last, the author uses the conceptual field of friendship to establish the friendship motif and provide readers with a glimpse into the relationship between God and the *Logos*.[76] Such language, however, is only one of many tools of characterization used in the Fourth Gospel to highlight the relationship between the Jesus and the Father.

Jesus as the Father's Son

In the early portions of the Fourth Gospel, Jesus is repeatedly identified as the Son of the Father, first by the narrator (1.14, 18), then by John the Baptist (1.34) and Nathaniel (1.49), and finally by Jesus himself in 2.16, where he refers to the temple as 'my Father's house'.[77] 'Father-Son' language pervades the remainder of the Gospel of John.[78] Overall, the title 'Father' is used more than 120 times to refer to God, almost exclusively as a designation of God's relationship to Jesus.[79] Similarly, Jesus is frequently

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75. In the first part of the Gospel, familial language also 'deals predominately with the relationship between the Father and the Son' (Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, p. 265).

76. The same language is used, to a somewhat lesser degree, in the second half of the Fourth Gospel to further develop or reiterate the nature of Jesus' relationship with the Father.

77. Weber points out that this public declaration was apparently not culturally offensive, though there is no known precedent for such a statement; 'That They May Be One', p. 149.

78. Van der Watt argues that this language, along with other familial language makes family the main metaphor used in the Fourth Gospel to characterize Jesus' relationship with the Father. His 'argument about the family imagery starts with the relationship between Father and Son and is supported by the birth-life language. From that relationship, which is based on having life through birth, other actions and relations flow. The Father-Son relationship, with the clear reference to birth and life, form[s] the logical bridge into the family imagery as it is developed in the Gospel' (*Family of the King*, p. 266).

79. The term πάτηρ is used 136 times overall. Jesus addresses God directly or refers to him as 'Father' more than 100 times in the Fourth Gospel; W. Hall Harris,

referred to as the 'Son of God', 'Son of Man', God's 'only Son' (τὸν υἱὸν τὸν μονογενῆ), or simply the 'Son'.[80] On the heels of Jn 1.1, the characterization of Jesus' relationship with God as a father-son relationship helps emphasize the degree of intimacy that the *Logos* enjoys with God.[81]

Jesus as the One Who is Loved by the Father
The intimacy that the Son shares with the Father is highlighted in the Prologue's note that Jesus was 'close to the Father's heart' (εἰς τὸν κόλπον τοῦ πατρὸς; 1.18). This statement is followed by a series of explicit statements of the Father's love for the Son that begin in 3.35 and become a recurrent refrain throughout the course of the Fourth Gospel. In four cases, the explicit mention of the Father's love for the Son is accompanied by other features of the conceptual field of friendship.[82] Three focus on

'The Theology of John's Writings', in R.B. Zuck (ed.), *A Biblical Theology of the New Testament* (Chicago: Moody, 1994), pp. 183-84.

80. Fennema notes that 'the fundamental designation of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel is the reciprocal title: *the Son*. Jesus comes as the Son whom the Father has sent to be his representative and it is into this Father/Son schematic that the other titles are assimilated' ('Jesus and God', p. 45).

81. Ultimately, it is the nature of the relationship between the *Logos* and God that brings the wrath of the Jewish establishment down upon Jesus: 'For this reason the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him, because he was not only breaking the Sabbath, but was also calling God his own Father, thereby making himself equal to God' (5.18).

82. Van der Watt rightly associates love with family; see, e.g, *Family of the King*, pp. 288, 305. While devotion to family was highly esteemed, however, virtues of love and unity, particularly in their highest forms, were typically associated with ideal friendship and often absent within a given family. The same was true of mutuality. Van der Watt's claim (p. 353) that 'what belongs to the family is shared by all' should not be equated with absolute mutuality. Historian Richard Saller's portrayal of the Roman head of the household is instructive: 'The Roman father was a powerful type, because he possessed almost unlimited powers within the family, according to later Roman law. He had the power of life and death over his children, meaning that at birth he could choose to raise them or kill them, and later he could punish them by execution. (The celebrated legendary founder of the Roman Republic, Junius Brutus, had his sons executed for disobedience.) In addition, the early Roman father owned all property in his family; his children, no matter how old, were unable to own anything in their own name as long as the father lived. A 45-year-old senator could hold the highest office of the state, the consulship, but if his father was still alive he couldn't own a denarius' worth of property. The father also had the power to make or break his children's marriages. In early times, fathers ruled their households, and their authority maintained order and stability' (Richard Saller, 'Family Values in Ancient Rome', n.p. [cited 26 April, 2002]. Online: http://www.fathom.com/feature/121908.) While Saller may be overstating the case, or at least overgeneralizing, the type of sharing that was indicative of a healthy Greco-Roman family should be distinguished from the absolute mutuality of ideal friendship.

mutuality, which includes both the sharing of possessions and complete transparency: 'The Father loves the Son and has placed all things in his hands' (3.35); 'The Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing' (5.20); 'my glory, which you have given me because you loved me' (17.24). The fourth reference appeals to the notion of willingness to sacrifice one's life: 'For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life' (10.17).[83] Jesus' love for the Father is also mentioned in terms of his acting in accord with the Father's wishes (14.31). Thus, in these passages, we find a considerable degree of reliance upon the conceptual field of friendship to supplement explicit references to love and thus characterize Jesus' relationship with the Father as one of deep intimacy.

Jesus as the Revealer of the Father

The Johannine Jesus' intimacy with the Father lends itself to one of his primary roles in the Gospel of John, a role that has been emphasized since Bultmann—Jesus the Revealer.[84] Jesus is the one who has made God (1.18) and God's name known (17.6, 26). He is the one who speaks God's words (3.34). He is the one who testifies of what he has seen and heard from the Father above (3.11, 32; 8.26, 40).[85] He is the one who reveals that God is Spirit and thus must be worshipped in spirit and in truth (4.24).

Jesus has the unique ability to reveal the Father as the only one who has ever seen God (6.46) and as the one who comes from God.[86] The importance of this feature of Jesus' unique credentials is underscored through repetition. His unique access to God and heavenly knowledge is stated or alluded to frequently (1.18; 3.11, 12, 32; 6.46; 8.38);[87] his origins are repeatedly emphasized (3.31; 6.38; 7.29; 8.23);[88] and the Johannine Jesus frequently reminds his followers that his return to the Father is imminent (7.33; 14.12; 16.5, 10, 17; 17.11, 13).

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83. The voluntary nature of Jesus' death is highlighted in 10.18: 'No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord' (cf. 15.13; 18.11); cf. Smith, *John*, p. 209.

84. Rudolf Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1955), p. 66; cf., e.g., C.H. Talbert, who repeatedly identifies Jesus as 'the one who comes as revealing, empowering presence' (*Reading John*, pp. 66, 95, 179, 189, 200, 223, 232, etc.). See also O'Day, *Revelation*, esp. pp. 38-43.

85. As the Son has heard everything from the Father, so the Father always hears the Son (11.41-42). As the Son only speaks what he has heard, the same is true of the Holy Spirit (16.13). O'Day plausibly argues that 11.41-42 plays off friendship conventions, i.e., the notion of direct speech as opposed to flattery; 'Jesus as Friend', p. 154.

86. Cf. Schnackenburg, *St. John*, I, p. 62.

87. Weber, 'That They May Be One', p. 152.

88. Fennema notes that the theme of Jesus' origins is particularly highlighted in John 7, where Jesus' opponents insist that they are fully aware of where he comes from; 'Jesus and God', p. 36.

Finally, Jesus is also the Revealer in other ways. He reveals his own glory (2.11); he reveals people's hearts (4.29); he reveals that the deeds of the world are evil (7.7); and he reveals himself to his followers (14.21).

Jesus as the Bearer of the Father's Glory

In the Old Testament, God is portrayed as the unique possessor of divine glory, a glory that is inaccessible to others (Isa. 42.8; 48.11). To possess glory is to be divine, since 'glory is the quality of God as God'.[89] In the Gospel of John, however, it comes as no surprise that the one who was with God and was God (1.1-2) is also the bearer of divine glory. Indeed, the glory to which the narrator bears witness is 'the glory as of a father's only son' (δόξαν ὡς μονογενοῦς παρὰ πατρός; 1.14), who is himself the 'unique God' (μονογενὴς θεός; 1.18; my translation). The purpose of the seven sign-miracles in the Fourth Gospel is identified in 2.11, where the narrator provides an explicit statement concerning the purpose of Jesus' first sign-miracle, which was performed at the wedding feast in Cana: 'Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory' (2.11).[90] Each of the subsequent signs serves to further reveal the glorious person of Jesus.[91] Indeed, the fifth sign, Jesus walking on the water (6.16-21), 'takes on the character of a theophany, not unlike the Transfiguration recorded in the Synoptics',[92] as Jesus utters the divine name, ἐγώ εἰμι (see below). Later, Jesus not only restores sight to the blind but also raises the dead (11.1-44)—prerogatives associated with God in the Old Testament (Exod. 4.11; Ps. 146.8; 1 Sam. 2.6).[93]

The glory revealed through such signs, however, could not compare to the glory that Jesus had in the presence of the Father. Indeed, the glory that Jesus bears in the narrative world of the Gospel of John was not afforded him simply as a result of his sign-miracles or any other actions recorded within the narrative. Instead, Jesus was the bearer of divine glory 'before the world existed' (17.5, 24)[94]—a divine glory to which the great prophet Isaiah bore witness (12.41).[95]

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89. D. Moody Smith, *The Theology of the Gospel of John* (Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 121.

90. Bultmann notes that 'As understood by the Evangelist this [glory] is not the power of the miracle worker, but the divinity of Jesus as the Revealer' (*The Gospel of John*, p. 119).

91. Cf. Harris, 'The Theology of John's Writings', p. 176.

92. Harris, 'The Theology of John's Writings', p. 177.

93. Harris, 'The Theology of John's Writings', pp. 177-78. In spite of such signs, Jesus' 'own' (1.11) as a whole refuse to recognize his glory and believe in him (12.37).

94. Haenchen points out that 'The sojourn of Jesus on earth does not then mean merely an irrelevant change in scene, but a forfeiture of that pre-worldly existence that he once possessed' (*John*, II, p. 152).

95. Presumably a reference to the theophany recorded in Isa. 6.1-13; Smith,

That Jesus' glory is on par with God's glory is implied in a number of pas-sages. The resurrection of Lazarus reveals both God's glory and the Son of God's glory (11.4).[96] In the Gospel of John, the fullest revelation of Jesus' glory is found in his death (12.23-24; 13.31-32)[97] and subsequent resurrection and return to the side of the Father (17.5). Jesus' death brings about both his glorification (12.23; 17.1) and the glorification of the Father (12.28; 17.1).[98] Indeed, the Father and Son glorify one another in a reciprocal relationship (17.1); when the Son is glorified, the Father is glorified (13.31; 14.13).

Jesus as the Bearer of the Father's Attributes

In the narrative world of the Fourth Gospel, Jesus shares in the Father's divine attributes. Like God, Jesus is eternal and existed 'in the beginning' (1.1). He shared in the divine prerogative of creation (1.3). Like the 'Most High' Father, he enjoys the rank of 'above all' (3.31). Like the Father, he is omnipresent and thus able to see Nathaniel under the fig tree before Philip called him (1.48). Moreover, the Gospel of John frequently asserts Jesus' omniscience. Jesus knew 'all things' (16.30) and 'all that was to hap-pen to him' (18.4). He knew which people did not or would not believe in him (6.64). He knew who would betray him (6.64; 13.11, 21, 26-27) and when the betrayal would take place (13.18-19). He knew what people were thinking (2.24) and planning (6.15). He knew whose illness was a result of sin (5.14) and whose was not (9.3). He knew all about the Samaritan woman whom he met for the first time at Jacob's well (4.17-18, 29, 39). He knew that he must die (3.14), and he knew the time of his death and return to the Father (2.4; 7.8; 13.1, 3). He even knew the mode of execution that would be used to bring about his death (12.32-33) and the later death of Peter (21.18-19). He knew when he had finished all that he was sent to accomplish (19.28, 30). He knew that his followers would desert him at the time of his death (16.32). He knew that they would be persecuted in the future (15.20-21; 16.2-4) and that Peter would suffer martyrdom (21.18-19; cf. 13.36). He even knew where fish were lurking below the surface of Lake Galilee (21.4-6). In short, Jesus is portrayed as one who is well aware of all that is taking place and all that will take place.[99]

Theology, p. 121. On the appropriateness of viewing 12.41 as a claim by Jesus that Isaiah saw *his* preexistent glory, see, e.g., Carson, *John*, pp. 449-50.

96. Elsewhere, Jesus' works are also characterized as illuminators of God's glory (11.40).

97. For more on the function of Jesus' death in the Fourth Gospel, see Godfrey C. Nicholson, *Death as Departure: The Johannine Descent-Ascent Schema* (SBLDS, 53; Chico, CA: Scholars, 1983); Donald Senior, *The Passion of Jesus in the Gospel of John* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1991).

98. Peter's future death is also described as bringing glory to God (21.18-19).

99. Brown notes that 'it cannot easily be doubted that for John the reason Jesus

Finally, the Johannine Jesus is also portrayed as omnipotent. He has the ability to change water to wine (2.1-11), perform a long-range healing (4.46-54), heal a man who had been ill for 38 years (5.1-9), feed a huge crowd with five loaves of bread and two fish (6.1-14), walk on water (6.16-21), heal a man who had been blind since birth (9.1-41), raise a man who had been dead for four days (11.1-44), and a tantalizing variety of other acts that John alludes to but does not innumerate (21.25).[100] Jesus not only has the power to raise people from the dead but also has absolute control over his own destiny (10.18), since the ruler of this world has no power over him (14.30), and the destiny of others (21.22). Finally, Jesus has the power to raise the dead 'on the last day' (6.39-40, 54).

Jesus as the Bearer of the Father's Name

Perhaps the best known and most potent among the Fourth Gospel's distinctive tools of characterization are the 'I am' statements of Jesus.[101] The Johannine Jesus uses the phrase ἐγώ εἰμι 21 (or perhaps 23) times,[102] suggesting that it is an important literary device for the author. Thirteen times the phrase is used with a predicate. Jesus refers to himself as 'the bread of life' (6.35, 41, 48, 51), 'the gate for the sheep' (10.7, 9), 'the good shepherd' (10.11, 14), 'the resurrection and the life' (11.25), 'the way, and the truth, and the life' (14.6), and 'the true vine' (15.1, 5). In the other eight occurrences, ἐγώ εἰμι is used absolutely, that is, Jesus does not use a predicate metaphor to define who or what he is (4.26; 6.20; 8.24, 28, 58; 13.19; 18.5, 8). John 8.58 ('before Abraham was, I am') is often viewed as the

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possessed this power was not because it had been given to him, but because of who he is' (*John*, I, p. 127).

100. 'The hyperbole ["But there are also many other things that Jesus did; if every one of them were written down, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written"] serves to glorify Jesus' deeds in a literary manner' (Schnackenburg, *St. John*, III, p. 374).

101. H. Sahlin has argued that there is a typological link between the ἐγώ εἰμι sayings and the Exodus event, suggesting that Jesus was the leader of a new 'exodus'; Harald Sahlin, *Zur Typologie des Johannesevangeliums* (Uppsala: A.-B. Lubdequistska Bokhandeln, 1950), pp. 71-72; cf. T. Francis Glasson, *Moses in the Fourth Gospel* (SBT, 40; London: SCM Press, 1963). J.J. Enz built upon Sahlin's study and maintained that the book of Exodus, as a whole, functions as a literary type for the Gospel of John, suggesting that the ministry of the Johannine Jesus could profitably be read against the ministry of Moses; Jacob J. Enz, 'The Book of Exodus as a Literary Type for the Gospel of John', *JBL* 56 (1957), pp. 208-15. For a critique of Sahlin's and Enz's positions, see Robert Houston Smith, 'Exodus Typology in the Fourth Gospel', *JBL* 81 (1962), pp. 329-42.

102. Some also include 8.18 ('the one who bears witness of himself') and 8.23 ('the one who is from above').

most significant use of this phrase,[103] with some arguing that this passage represents the clearest intimation of the divinity of Jesus in the Gospel tradition.[104] As such, it and the other ἐγώ εἰμι sayings serve as important tools in accomplishing a task with which this Chapter is concerned, the characterization of Jesus vis-à-vis the Father.

Most studies of the ἐγώ εἰμι sayings in the Gospel of John have focused on attempting to locate formal parallels in either biblical or extra-biblical literature. A wide range of possible backgrounds have been posited.[105] D. Ball has provided some helpful guidelines for weighing the relative plausibility of these putative parallels.[106] He maintains that the range of parallels can be significantly narrowed through a careful examination of the relationship of the ἐγώ εἰμι sayings to the themes and characteristics of John's Gospel. After a detailed literary analysis of each pericope in which ἐγώ εἰμι sayings occur,[107] Ball concludes that these sayings were intended to be read in light of Old Testament backgrounds and that the Gospel of

103. See Billy E. Simmons, 'A Christology of the "I am" Sayings in the Gospel of John', *TTE* 38 (1988), pp. 94-103.

104. Brown, *John*, I, p. 367.

105. These include Egyptian texts (Wetter), inscriptions from Nysa and Ios (Deissmann), Gnosticism and Mandaism (MacRae, Bultmann), and Judaism (Feuillet, Brown, Coetzee, Davies, Dodd, Schulz, Daube)—particularly Deutero-Isaiah (Feuillet, Brown, Coetzee, Ball), Wisdom literature (Davies), rabbinic literature (Daube), Qumran literature (Schulz), or a dual influence from both Judaism and Hellenistic thinking (Barrett, Kysar); G.P. Wetter, ' "Ich bin es": Eine Johanneische Formel', *TSK* 88 (1915), pp. 224-38; Adolf Deissmann, *Light from the Ancient East* (New York: George H. Doran, 1927), 133-40; George W. MacRae, 'The Ego-Proclamation in Gnostic Sources', in E. Bammel (ed.), *The Trial of Jesus* (London: SCM Press, 1970), pp. 123-39; Rudolf Bultmann, 'Die Bedeutung der neuerschlossenen Mandäischen und Manichäischen Quellen für das Verständnis des Johannesevangeliums', *ZNW* 24 (1925), p. 115; A. Feuillet, 'Les ego eimi christologiques du Quatrième Évangile: La révélation énigmatique de l'être divine de Jésus dans Jean et les synoptiques', *RSR* 54 (1966), pp. 11-12; Brown, *John*, I, pp. 535-37; J.C. Coetzee, 'Jesus' Revelation in the Ego Eimi Sayings in John 8 and 9', in J.H. Petzer and P.J. Hartin (eds.), *A South African Perspective on the New Testament* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1986), pp. 170-77; Margaret Davies, *Rhetoric and Reference in the Fourth Gospel* (JSNTSup, 69; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992), pp. 82-87; C.H. Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953), pp. 94-95; Siegfried Schulz, *Komposition und Herkunft der Johanneischen Reden* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1960), p. 118; David Daube, 'Ego Eimi', *JTS* 50 (1949), pp. 56-57; Barrett, *John*, pp. 292, 342; Robert Kysar, *The Fourth Evangelist and his Gospel: An Examination of Contemporary Scholarship* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1975), p. 122.

106. Ball, *'I Am' in John's Gospel*.

107. Ball examines each relevant pericope through reference to seven literary categories: setting, structure, characters and characterization, irony, point of view, implied reader, and other themes and titles.

John uses these sayings to characterize Jesus as the realization of important Old Testament images.[108]

First, Ball notes that the ἐγώ εἰμι sayings tend to occur within the context of discussions on Jewish subjects (John 4, 6, and 8), involving Jewish ancestors (Jacob, John 4; Moses, John 6; Abraham, John 8), and reflecting Jewish expectations (John 6 and 11), suggesting a primary link to Jewish Scripture.

Second, Ball points out that the ἐγώ εἰμι sayings function as an integral part of the structure of the pericope in which they occur. They may introduce a new section (8.12; 15.1), serve as the climax or conclusion (4.26; 8.58), serve as a focal point for a whole section of text (ch. 8; 18.5, 6, 8), or be part of a structural link between two sections (13.19).

Third, Ball notes the important role that the ἐγώ εἰμι sayings play in the characterization of Jesus. Throughout each of the ἐγώ εἰμι pericopes Jesus is the dominant character while other characters function primarily as a foil to Jesus, providing him with an opportunity to 'explain, add to and re-emphasize his own claims'.[109]

Fourth, Ball contends that the ἐγώ εἰμι pericopes also significantly contribute to Johannine irony.[110] Often, Jesus' ἐγώ εἰμι saying reveals himself as the realization of another character's desires. The Samaritan woman (John 4) is looking for the Messiah; Jesus is that Messiah. The crowd wants Jesus to provide bread like Moses did (John 6); Jesus is the bread of life. Martha longs for the resurrection that will reunite her with her brother (John 11); Jesus is the resurrection and the life. Thomas wants to know the way to the Father; Jesus is the way of which he spoke (14.5, 6). The irony in the other characters' failure to see Jesus for who he is is heightened by the portrayal of Jesus' opponents as the opposite of what they claim to be: instead of being free (8.33), they are slaves to sin; although they claim to be Abraham's children, they fail to demonstrate any relationship to him in their behavior (8.39); instead of having God as their Father (8.41), their true father is the devil (8.44).[111] In John 11, the Jewish leaders are

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108. For broader Jewish connections, see esp. Catrin H. Williams, '"I Am" or "I Am He"? Self-Declaratory Pronouncements in the Fourth Gospel and Rabbinic Tradition', in R.T. Fortna and T. Thatcher (eds.), *Jesus in Johannine Tradition* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 2001).

109. Williams, ' "I Am" or "I Am He"?', p. 83.

110. For an excellent treatment of this literary device in John, see especially R. Alan Culpepper, 'Reading Johannine Irony', in R.A. Culpepper and C.C. Black (eds.), *Exploring the Gospel of John: Essays in Honor of D. Moody Smith* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1996), pp. 193-207.

111. The Fourth Gospel's relational focus carries a strong implicit ethical component. As the Jewish leaders act in accord with their father (the devil), so the followers of Jesus, as children of God, are to act in accord with their Father.

portrayed as impostors who are bringing destruction to their flock rather than providing guidance and direction.

In contrast to the use of irony to portray Jesus' opponents in a negative manner, the narrator uses irony to further develop the positive characterization of Jesus. In John 13, Jesus is presented as the one in control of his betrayal through both his knowledge of his betrayer (vv. 10, 11, 18, 19, 21) and through actually sending him on his way to betray him (v. 27).[112] Jesus' betrayal is portrayed not as an unfortunate event, but rather as an event that will lead to belief through its fulfillment of Scripture. Even at the moment of his arrest (John 18), Jesus seizes control of the events from Judas who thinks he is the one orchestrating the arrest.

Fifth, in the Gospel of John, the narrator's point of view is both retrospective (cf. 20.30-31; 21.24) and focused on Jesus. The narrator writes from a position of omniscience. He is aware of the various reactions to Jesus (John 10), and he is aware of what Jesus is thinking (13.1). As the narrator's conceptual point of view is played off that of the narrative audience (through Jesus' answers to their questions), the readers are able to interact with Jesus and adopt the narrator's point of view.

Sixth, the authorial audience had some knowledge of Jewish law (8.17) and understood why the narrative audience would react to his absolute ἐγώ εἰμι saying (8.58) as they did. Likewise, since John does not provide any additional explanation of Jesus' absolute use of ἐγώ εἰμι in 13.19 and 18.5, 6, the significance of his statements must have been readily accessible to the authorial audience.

Finally, the ἐγώ εἰμι sayings have a close relationship to the main themes of the Gospel of John. Sometimes they build on a theme introduced in the immediate context (John 6). At other times they pick up a theme that was introduced earlier in the narrative. For example, Jesus had already been identified as 'the light' in the Prologue (1.4, 5, 7, 8, 9); in John 8, the narrator makes it clear that Jesus is 'the light of the world' (8.12). Elsewhere, ἐγώ εἰμι sayings are thematically linked to important events (a typical Johannine pattern).

Ball concludes that

> the only explicit indicators of the author's conceptual/theological world view in the context of ἐγώ εἰμι are Jewish ones: our father Jacob (4.12), discussion about Jerusalem (4.20ff.); the Passover, the Feast of the Jews (6.4), our fathers (6.31), Scripture quotation and Moses (6.31, 32); Abraham (ch. 8), your law and Scripture quotation (8.17).[113]

More specifically, he contends that the ἐγώ εἰμι saying in 4.26 would have pointed the reader back to Isa. 52.6. A second level of meaning would

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112. Smith notes that this is a typically Johannine motif; *John*, p. 258.
113. Ball, *'I Am' in John's Gospel*, p. 159.

then identify Jesus as the fulfillment of the Lord's promise that his people would know his name. In discussing the background of 6.20, Ball notes that there are numerous examples in the Old Testament where a command not to fear is accompanied by the words ἐγώ εἰμι. In each case, the words come from the mouth of God. This suggests that the authorial audience may have heard the phrase in 6.20 as a statement of God's immanence in the person of Jesus.[114]

According to Ball, the form of the absolute ἐγώ εἰμι sayings in John is designed to point the reader to the *ani hu* sayings in Isaiah in order to reveal the true identity of Jesus. He suggests that the statement, 'then you will know that ἐγώ εἰμι' (8.28), is linked to statements by Yahweh in Isa. 43.10; 45.3, 6, 7; and 52.6. Similarly, he sees a link between Jn 13.19 and Isa. 43.10 through which Jesus, like Yahweh, is portrayed as sovereign. Jesus thus assumes soteriological functions that in Isaiah (43.10b, 11) were reserved for God alone.[115]

> Like many of the major themes of John, they [the ἐγώ εἰμι sayings] are interwoven in the fabric of the Gospel, gathering further meaning each time they occur. Because the 'I am' sayings also focus attention on the person of Jesus, each time the words occur they further reveal something of Jesus' role or identity so that the narrator's point of view first disclosed in the prologue is reinforced.[116]

Thus, viewed within the context of the passages in which they occur and the broader themes of the Fourth Gospel, Ball maintains that the ἐγώ εἰμι sayings function primarily as a formula for applying Old Testament concepts to the person of Jesus who both embodies and fulfills them. They help both to flesh out the major themes of the Gospel of John and to relate those themes more directly to Jesus. In the process, the narrator effectively appeals to the reader to accept his conceptual point of view: that Jesus, who was with God in the beginning, was in fact God, the bearer of the divine name.[117]

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114. Williams points out that in John's account of this scene the disciples are afraid 'because they actually recognize Jesus as the one who approaches the boat across the sea (6.19). If *egō eimi* does not serve here as a statement of identity ('It is I, Jesus'), its purpose must be to explain the significance of Jesus' act of walking on water, for *egō eimi* is the vehicle whereby he makes himself manifest as the one exercising the power that the Hebrew Bible attributes to God alone' (Williams, ' "I Am" or "I Am He"?', p. 346).

115. Williams, '"I Am" or "I Am He"?', pp. 192-93.

116. Williams, '"I Am" or "I Am He"?', p. 149.

117. The authorial audience likely would have understood the 'I am' statements of Jesus not only as a helpful literary tool for constructing the Fourth Gospel's high Christology but also, by their revelatory nature, as implicit acts of friendship—or more precisely, as *offers* of friendship that were typically rejected by Jesus' opponents

Jesus as the 'Friend of God'

In addition to these well-established tools of characterization, it is the contention of this study that the Gospel of John utilizes an additional important literary device for characterizing Jesus' relationship to the Father: the friendship motif. As noted above, one of the most perplexing questions raised in the Prologue relates to the *Logos*'s relationship to God: How can Jesus be both *with* God and *be* God? The answer posed by the Fourth Gospel is found, in part, in its use of the friendship motif.

As noted above, the Prologue not only situates the Fourth Gospel in the semantic field of relationships but also introduces the conceptual field of friendship (Jesus has *made* the Father *known*; 1.18) as a tool for characterizing the relationships in view. As readers progress into the body of the Fourth Gospel, they encounter frequent references to the friendship motif, particularly key components of ideal personal friendship: unity, mutuality, and equality.

Unity. Unity is a recurrent theme throughout the Gospel of John.[118] It is introduced in the first line of the Gospel where the *Logos* is said to have been 'with God' since the very beginning (1.1, 2), and is thus the first theme expressed in the Fourth Gospel.[119] It is reiterated in 1.3 where Jesus and the Father are described as co-agents of creation (1.3). In 1.18, the unity between the Father and the Son is highlighted through reference to the Son's unique position ('in the bosom of the Father')—a position that points to the deepest level of intimacy.[120] If the textual variant at 1.18 is taken as original, the unity between the *Logos* and God is expressed in even more explicit terms.[121] This unity is then made explicit in statements attributed

but embraced by his followers. It is through Jesus' 'I am' sayings, his other statements, and his actions that Jesus made himself and his Father known to his followers (15.15); cf. E. Puthenkandathil, who notes that when Jesus uses the absolute form of his 'I am' sayings he reveals the Father by revealing himself; Eldho Puthenkandathil, *Philos: A Designation for the Jesus-Disciple Relationship: An Exegetico-Theological Investigation of the Term in the Fourth Gospel* (New York: Peter Lang, 1993), p. 163.

118. For one of the most thorough treatments of unity in the Fourth Gospel, both between the Father and Jesus and Jesus and his followers, see Weber, 'That They May Be One', esp. pp. 135-257. D.L. Mealand argues that unity and communion are the central themes of the Fourth Gospel; 'The Language of Mystical Union in the Johannine Writings', *DownRev* 95 (1977), pp. 19-34. Köstenberger and Swain rightly point out that 'the Son everywhere affirms his unity with the Father in both his works and his words' (*Father, Son and Spirit*, p. 105).

119. Köstenberger and Swain, *Father, Son and Spirit*, p. 137.

120. Cf. Beasley-Murray, *John*, p. 16; Royce Gordon Gruenler, *The Trinity in the Gospel of John: A Thematic Commentary on the Fourth Gospel* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1986), p. 25.

121. See n. 41.

to Jesus: 'the Father and I are one' (10.30; cf. 17.11).[122] All that Jesus does is in accord with the will of the Father (5.30), and his words represent the words of the Father (12.50).

The Father's work is viewed as Jesus' work (4.34). Jesus and the Father are so unified in their purposes and actions that the purposes and actions of Jesus reflect those of the Father (5.19).[123] The teaching of Jesus is the teaching of the Father (7.16).[124] When Jesus speaks, it is the Father's words that are heard (8.28; 12.49-50; 14.10).[125] Jesus and the Father together bear witness to Jesus' identity (8.18).[126] Indeed, in the Gospel of John, the Father and Son always act in concert. 'The relationship between the Father and Son, John suggests, precludes independent or divergent action on the part of either'.[127] When the Father is working, the Son is working (5.17). Both the Father and the Son are givers of life (5.21, 26); both act as ultimate judge (8.16). By presenting both the Father and the Son as the senders of the Spirit (14.26; 15.26), the author of the Fourth Gospel, rather than con-tradicting himself, effectively emphasizes the degree of the Father and Son's unity of purpose and action.[128] Similarly, the link between the glory of God and the glorification of the Son is so close in the Gospel of John 'as to be practically synonymous'.[129] So unified are Jesus and the Father in

122. This unity and the ontological equality between the Father and Son do not preclude distinctions in roles in which the Son obeys the Father (see below). Jesus can be God and yet still affirm that the Father is 'greater' than the Son: 'My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all' (so 10.29, as interpreted by the RSV).

123. 'Because of the intimate unity between Father and Son, their actions corre-spond and unity can be concluded from corresponding actions' (Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, p. 287).

124. Commenting on Jesus' claim ('My teaching is not mine but his who sent me'), Bultmann notes: 'In the ears of his audience this must sound like a bald and pre-sumptuous statement; yet there is no other way for the word of revelation to "prove" its authority; it must risk being misinterpreted as mere presumption' (*The Gospel of John*, pp. 273-74).

125. P. Borgen explains this phenomenon through reference to Jewish rules of agency. He argues that in Jewish thinking the agent is like the one who sent him (*Mek. Exod.* 12.3, 6), the agent is subordinate to the sender (*Gen. Rab.* 78), the agent is obedient to the sender, the agent returns to the sender (*Hag.* 76d), and the agent appoints other agents to carry on his mission (*Qidd.* 41a); Peder Borgen, 'God's Agent in the Fourth Gospel', in J. Neusner (ed.), *Religions in Antiquity* (SHR, 14; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1968), pp. 138-44; see also Paul N. Anderson, *The Christology of the Fourth Gospel: Its Unity and Disunity in the Light of John 6* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity, 1996), p. 175.

126. A.E. Harvey suggests that appealing to God as a witness 'is equivalent of swear-ing an oath' (*Jesus on Trial: A Study in the Fourth Gospel* [London: SPCK, 1976], p. 58).

127. Harner, *Relation Analysis*, p. 41.

128. The ability of both to send the Holy Spirit also implies a mutuality that typifies ideal friendship (see below).

129. Puthenkandathil, *Philos*, p. 99; see, e.g., 17.1, 5. The unity of purpose between

purpose, that the Johannine Jesus has no need to pray in Gethsemane that the Father's will might be changed.[130] Where the Synoptics portray a Jesus in turmoil in light of his imminent suffering and desirous of an alternative plan, the Johannine Jesus strongly affirms that he *came* to suffer (12.27).[131] His will is always in concert with the Father's will (4.34; 5.30) and thus always pleasing to the Father (8.29). The Johannine Jesus does nothing on his own (5.30; cf. 8.28). This theme is reiterated in the farewell scene, where attention shifts to the relationship between Jesus and his followers (see Chapter 4): 'The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work' (14.10).[132] Through the use of unity language taken from the conceptual field of ideal friendship, the Gospel of John characterizes Jesus' relationship with the Father as one of supreme intimacy.

Mutuality. Unity of relationship naturally leads to the sharing of possessions. The mutuality between the Father and Son is portrayed in absolute terms: 'The Father loves the Son and has placed *all* things in his hands'[133] (3.35; 13.3), including authority over all people (17.2), his teaching (7.16; 17.8), those who belonged to him (17.6-7), and even his name (17.11).[134] Jesus shared the right to give life and the right to judge with the Father (5.21-22). This full sharing of possessions between the Father and the Son is also emphasized in the farewell scene: '*All* that the Father has is mine'

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the Father and the Son in the Fourth Gospel is used to characterize the sureness of the relationship between God and the followers of Jesus in John 6. Those who come to Jesus, come as a result of the prior action of the Father (6.37a, 44). Those who come to Jesus will never be rejected by him (6.37b), since they have been given to him by the Father's choice, Jesus always does the will of the Father (6.38), and the Father's will is that they be resurrected and enjoy eternal life (6.39-40).

130. Raymond E. Brown, *The Community of the Beloved Disciple* (New York: Paulist Press, 1979), p. 115.

131. 'Jesus, in turmoil of spirit, shrinks from the fearful experience before him, and in his address to God seeks avoidance of it; yet he acknowledges that to endure it is the reason for his mission from God; in an act therefore of total obedience to the Father's will his spirit rises in unreserved affirmation' (Beasley-Murray, *John*, p. 212).

132. Culpepper rather implausibly argues that the imagery of Jesus' seamless robe (19.23) and the net that does not tear (21.6, 8, 11) 'remind the reader of the emphasis on the unity of Jesus with his Father and his followers' (*Anatomy*, p. 198).

133. Here we find the link between relationship ('the Father loves the Son') and mutuality ('and has placed all things in his hands') made explicit; cf. Carson, *John*, p. 214.

134. For more on this passage, see G. Franklin Shirbroun, 'The Giving of the Name of God to Jesus in John 17:11, 12' (PhD dissertation, Princeton Theological Seminary, 1985). Harner argues that the Johannine Jesus' use of the divine name, ἐγώ εἰμι, stresses the unity between him and the Father; *Relation Analysis*, p. 75 n. 32.

(16.15). The Father is the source of all that the Son possesses: 'Now they know that *everything* you have given me is from you' (17.7).

As a result of this mutuality, the Son is perfectly free to ask the Father for anything that the Father possesses (11.22; 14.16). The mutuality, however, is not unilateral in nature. The Son and the Father both fully share what they possess individually with the other: 'All mine are yours, and yours are mine' (17.10).[135]

For members of the authorial audience familiar with Isaiah, Jn 17.22 may have further emphasized the mutuality of the Father and the Son: 'The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one'. In Isa. 42.8 and 48.11, God specifically stated his unwillingness to share his glory with anyone else: 'I am the LORD, that is my name; my glory I give to no other'; 'My glory I will not give to another'. In the Gospel of John, however, Jesus makes the claim that the Father has given him glory. Would the authorial audience have taken this as simply a conferring of 'generic' glory or as a sharing of the Father's own glory? The latter would mark a dramatic claim to divinity from the lips of the Johannine Jesus. The fact that Jesus' glory was enjoyed by him prior to the creation of the world (17.24) suggests that this glory would have been understood in relation to his status as the *Logos* who was with God 'in the beginning' and was himself God.

In addition to his glory, the Father also shared his name with the Son. This is implied by the Johannine Jesus' frequent use of ἐγώ εἰμι as a self-designation (see above), and made explicit in 17.11: 'Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me'. In and of itself, the fact that the Father has given the Son his name indicates a unique relationship. The only place in the Old Testament where God's name is conferred on someone is found in Exod. 23.21 where the recipient is the 'angel of God'. A comparison of analogous Old Testament passages demonstrates that the 'angel of God', though distinct from God, nevertheless represented a theophany. In Exod. 13.21, we are told that 'the LORD went in front of them in a pillar of cloud by day, to lead them along the way, and in a pillar of fire by night, to give them light'. Then, in 14.19, the 'angel of God' is associated with the pillar: 'the angel of God who was going before the Israelite army moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud moved from in front of them and took its place behind them'. Similarly, while Exod. 32.34 describes the angel as leading the Israelites ('my angel shall go in front of you'), 33.14 says that it is God himself who leads the Israelites:

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135. Read in light of the conceptual field of Greco-Roman ideal friendship and the function of the friendship motif in the Fourth Gospel, statements such as this that appear to impede the logical progress of ideas in the discourse are clearly more than 'ornamental additions' (contra Schnackenburg, *St. John*, III, p. 178).

'My presence will go with you'. In light of these passages, God's statement regarding the angel in Exod. 23.21 ('my name is in him') appears to imply that the angel somehow shares in the divine nature, even though he is distinct from God (God sends him; verse 20).

From the first verse of the Gospel of John, the authorial audience has known that Jesus shares in the divine nature as well. Moreover, like the 'angel of God'/'angel of the Lᴏʀᴅ', Jesus is both distinct from God (he was 'with God' and was sent by God) and at the same time represents the very presence of God among God's people. Thus, in Jn 17.11, 'God's "name" has its most common connotation of the revelation of God's character, and *the name you gave me* assumes that God has supremely revealed himself in Jesus'.[136]

Finally, as noted in Chapter 2, in the Greco-Roman world sharing all things in common included maintaining perfect transparency within the relationship.[137] True friends did not hide anything from one another. Such transparency is used to further characterize the intimacy between the Father and the Son in the Gospel of John: 'The Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing' (5.20).[138] Taken together with the other language of mutuality, this declaration highlights the ideal friendship that the Son enjoys with the Father. Moreover, it helps clarify Jesus' unique position as one who was able to make the Father known (1.18).[139]

Equality. Finally, the Gospel of John utilizes the conceptual field of friendship to characterize Jesus as one who is equal with God. The Johannine Jesus is consistently portrayed as a divine figure. Although there are

136. Carson, *John*, p. 562. The italics, which are Carson's, are simply used to cite the text.

137. To the examples of such transparency listed below, O'Day adds the suggestion that Jesus' words in 12.27, which stand in contrast to his request in the Synoptic Gospels for 'the cup' to pass from him, serve to emphasize that he will not resort to flattery to move God to change his purpose; 'Jesus as Friend', p. 153.

138. Van der Watt argues that the language of 5.19-24 alludes to the Father 'educating' the Son, and is thus familial language; *Family of the King*, pp. 206-209. Such a reading would assume that the 'showing' language implies that the Father shows the Son *how* to do something; Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, p. 209; see also pp. 272-78. Jesus is thus able to continue the Father's work, namely to give life and judge, precisely because he has been educated well; Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, pp. 273, 275. While education language is found in one passage (8.28, where διδάσκω is used), the 'showing' language of 5.20 is more indicative of the transparency that is characteristic of ideal friendship. Indeed, while revelation and education may go hand in hand (Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, p. 279), the language of revelation is more consistent with ideal friendship than education.

139. Tenney notes in his comments on 1.18 that 'As a confidant of the Father, Jesus is peculiarly qualified to act as the intermediary who can carry the knowledge of God to men' (Merrill C. Tenney, *John* [EBC, 9; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981], p. 34).

strong allusions to his humanity, which serve to balance the Fourth Gospel's otherwise high Christology,[140] the portrayal of Jesus as the *Logos* (1.1, 14), the Son of God (1.34; 3.16-18, etc.), and the one who has come down from heaven (3.13, 31; 6.38), all emphasize the extent to which Jesus is superior to those he calls his friends. The Johannine Jesus, however, is not only portrayed as superior to his followers but also as one who is equal with God. He not only was *with* God in the beginning, he *was* God (1.1).[141] Where Gen. 1.1 places the agency of creation with God, Jn 1.3 states that all things came into being through Jesus, making him a partner in the divine activity of creation. In the most likely reading of 1.18, Jesus is identified as the μονογενὴς θεός.

The narrator's characterization of Jesus in the Prologue as one who is equal with God is echoed throughout the Gospel of John in the statements of Jesus. Within the narrative world of the Fourth Gospel, when Jesus claims that God is his 'Father', he is claiming equality with God (5.18).[142] The same is true of his claim to be the 'Son of God' (19.7).[143] In case the reader had missed the significance of Jesus' claims, the Johannine Jesus also claims to be worthy of the same honor that is due to the Father (5.23), to have the power of life typically associated only with God (5.26), to be 'one' with God (10.30)—a claim that the Jewish authorities viewed as making himself God (10.33)—and to be 'in the Father' and have the Father dwelling in him (10.38; 14.10, 11).[144] While Jesus' statement in 5.18 appears to have drawn the ire of the Jewish authorities because it implied that he enjoyed the same power and authority as God, his subsequent statement in 8.58 implies ontological equality as well: 'Jesus said to them, "Very

140. For examples of John's 'low' Christology, see, e.g., 1.14 (Jesus became 'flesh'; cf. 6.51-56, 63; see also 19.34; 20.27); 2.12; 7.3 (Jesus had a mother and brothers); 4.6 (Jesus was tired from traveling); 11.33 (Jesus groaned); 11.35 (Jesus wept); 19.28 (Jesus was thirsty); and 20.20, 27 (Jesus bore the scars of his execution).

141. Gruenler notes that the equality between Father and Son is the 'opening theme' of the Fourth Gospel; *The Trinity*, p. 24.

142. Brown notes that 'For the Jews the Sabbath privilege was peculiar to God, and no one was equal to God (Exod. xv 11; Isa. xlvi 5; Ps lxxxix 8). In claiming the right to work even as his Father worked, Jesus was claiming a divine prerogative' (*John*, I, p.217; cf. Talbert, *Reading John*, p. 124). J.H. Neyrey points out that 'Although there is no doubt that equal to God constitutes the essence of the high christological confession, it is indeed curious that it never appears formally either on the lips of Jesus or his disciples, but only as an accusation against him by his enemies' (Jerome H. Neyrey, *An Ideology of Revolt: John's Christology in Social-Science Perspective* [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988], p. 102).

143. 'For John, Jesus' sonship does indeed involve a metaphysical relationship with the Father; it is not simply messianic' (Barrett, *John*, p. 72).

144. The 'in' language also points to the unity between Father and Son; Harner, *Relation Analysis*, p. 75 n. 33.

truly, I tell you, before Abraham was, I am"'. Although the background, meaning, and significance of this statement have been debated,[145] within the narrative world of the Fourth Gospel Jesus' opponents have no doubt that he is claiming divinity. They thus respond accordingly and 'picked up stones to throw at him' (8.59).[146]

Jesus and the Father share in the same identity (8.19; 10.38). Consequently, to honor Jesus is to honor the Father (5.23); to know Jesus is to know the Father (8.19; 14.7); to see Jesus is to see the Father (12.45; 14.9); to believe in Jesus is to believe in the Father (12.44); to receive Jesus is to receive the Father (13.20); and to hate the Son is to hate the Father (15.23). Belief in one naturally entails belief in the other (14.1). Accordingly, eternal life is gained through (or defined by)[147] a relationship with both the Father *and* the Son: 'And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent' (17.3).

Taken together, these frequent references to Jesus' equality with the Father function as strong indicators of the divinity of the Johannine Jesus.[148] In case the reader has missed the ubiquitous statements to this effect, the author reiterates that the *Logos* 'was God' at the end of the Fourth Gospel where Thomas exclaims to Jesus: 'My Lord and my God!' (20.28).

The language of equality, however, points beyond Jesus' ontological nature. Given the importance of such language within the conceptual field of friendship and the frequent references to this field throughout the Gospel of John, the authorial audience would have likely understood the characterization of Jesus as one who is equal with God as another indicator of the level of intimacy that he enjoyed with God.[149]

The Holy Spirit's Relationship to the Father, Son, and Followers of Jesus

Finally, a discussion of the Son's relationship with the Father raises the question of how the Holy Spirit figures into the narrative world of the

145. See, e.g., Linwood Urban and Patrick Henry, ' "Before Abraham Was I Am": Does Philo Explain John 8:56-58?' *SPhilo* 6 (1979–1980), pp. 157-93; Edwin D. Freed, 'Who or What was before Abraham in John 8:58?', *JSNT* 17 (1983), pp. 52-59; Heinrich Zimmermann, 'Das absolute *Ego eimi* als die neutestamentliche Offenbarungsformel', *BZ* 4 (1960), pp. 54-69, 266-76.

146. Cf. Weber, 'That They May Be One', pp. 154 n. 32, 155 n. 33.

147. Cf. Talbert, *Reading John*, p. 225.

148. J.H. Neyrey notes that in the Fourth Gospel, Jesus' equality with God is 'presented with exceptional narrative clarity' (*An Ideology of Revolt*, p. 95).

149. Jesus' role as eschatological judge probably also implies his equality with the Father (5.22, 27). If only God has the prerogative to act as eschatological judge and he shares that prerogative with Jesus, such a claim says something about Jesus' status and/or nature.

Gospel of John. The Spirit, according to P.B. Harner, plays a supportive role throughout the Fourth Gospel.[150] The Spirit's role is not to initiate new relationships for himself but rather to enable and enhance relationships between other parties.[151] A good example of this is found in 3.31-36, where the reference to the Spirit occurs in a passage that focuses on the relationships involving Jesus, the Father, and believers. The author 'presents the work of the Spirit in ways that presuppose and continue the close relationships among Father, Son, and Holy Spirit'.[152]

At times, descriptions of the Spirit utilize the conceptual field of friendship. He is the conveyer of the same intimate knowledge that the Father and Son share (14.26). He is the 'Spirit of truth' (14.17; 15.26; 16.13)—the one who is privy to the full truth of God—who comes from the Father (15.26), hears what the Father says (16.13),[153] shares in what Jesus and the Father possess (16.14-15), and is thus able to guide the followers of Jesus 'into all truth' (16.13). The Spirit will take the place of Jesus, the ultimate Friend, after his death (14.16). Reciprocity in the relationship between the Spirit and the Son is also highlighted. Just as the Spirit takes what is the Son's and passes it on to the followers (16.14), so Jesus' ability to know the words of God and thus speak them appears to be predicated on his possession of the Spirit (3.34).[154]

The followers' relationship with the Spirit is to mirror ideal friendship in that it will last forever (14.16b). Like Jesus, the Spirit will be 'in' the disciples (14.17). Again, however, the Spirit's role is supportive. The followers of Jesus are baptized in the Spirit (1.33; 20.22), receive life from the Spirit (3.5-8; 6.63), and worship the Father, who is Spirit (4.24), 'in spirit/the Spirit' (4.24).[155]

Conclusion

The Gospel of John begins with an audacious claim that not only places the *Logos* in the beginning with God, but also identifies the *Logos* as God himself. Such claims leave the reader asking: Who *is* this *Logos*/Jesus? In

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150. See Harner, *Relation Analysis*, pp. 31-43.

151. Harner, *Relation Analysis*, p. 33.

152. Harner, *Relation Analysis*, p. 33.

153. As the intimacy between Father and Son results in the Son saying what he has heard from the Father (8.28; 12.49-50; 14.10), so the Holy Spirit's intimate relationship with Father and Son leads him to speak of what he has heard.

154. 'Three centuries after John wrote, Rabbi Aha rightly commented that the Holy Spirit who rested on the prophets did so according to the measure...of each prophet's assignment (*Leviticus Rabbah* 15.2). Not so to Jesus: to him God *gives the Spirit without limit*' (Carson, *John*, p. 213).

155. Brown suggests that 'in s/Spirit and truth' could be regarded as a hendiadys: 'in the Spirit of truth' (*John*, I, p. 180).

what follows, the Fourth Gospel proceeds to answer this question through a progressive characterization of Jesus.[156] Jesus is the preexistent one (1.1, 15), the light of the world (3.19-21), the true light (1.7-9; 12.35-36), the bread of life (6.35, 48), and the bread that comes down from heaven (6.50, 58). He is the bridegroom (3.29), the giver of living water (4.10), and a miracle worker who can change water to wine (2.1-11), heal the sick (5.1-9), feed 5,000 people with a handful of food (6.1-14), walk on water (6.16-21), heal a man who was born blind (9.1-7), and even raise the dead (11.43-44). He is the good shepherd (10.11, 14) and the gate for the sheep (10.7). He is the one who is greater than John the Baptist (1.27), greater than Moses (1.17),[157] and greater than Jacob (4.12). He is 'the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world' (1.29, 36), the Messiah (1.41), the Savior (4.42), the Holy One of God (6.69), the one sealed by God (6.27), the 'stairway to heaven' (1.51), the giver of life (5.21; 6.27), and the one who makes people free (8.36). He is the one 'about whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote' (1.45; 5.46), the King of Israel (1.49; 12.13). He is the one who has the words of eternal life (6.68), the Rabbi (1.49; 3.2; 4.31; 20.16) and the Teacher (8.2, 4; 11.28; 13.13, 14), though he is uneducated (7.15). He is above all (3.31) and is the ultimate judge (5.22, 27; 8.16). He is the one who is not of this world (8.23), but who came into the world (11.27). He is the one who comes from heaven above (3.31; 6.38; 8.23), from which he descended (3.13). He is the one who is in the Father and in whom the Father dwells (10.38; 14.10, 11, 20; 17.21).[158] He is the one who was with God (1.1),[159] came from the presence of God (8.38, 42; 16.30), was sent by God (3.34; 4.34; 5.30, 36, 37, 38; 6.29, 44, 57; 7.18, 33; 8.16, 18, 29, 42; 9.4; 10.36; 11.42; 15.21; 16.5; 17.8),[160] and does the will of God (4.34; 5.30; 6.38). He is the one who will ascend back to heaven (6.62) and return to the Father (14.12; 16.5, 10, 17; 17.11, 13).

156. The Fourth Gospel's approach to the characterization of Jesus is both 'sequential and cumulative' (Darr, *On Character Building*, p. 103).

157. Fennema notes that Jesus is compared to Moses throughout the Fourth Gospel (1.17-18; 5.45-47; 6.25-51; 9.28-29); 'Jesus and God', p. 39.

158. After examining possible backgrounds, Dodd sums up the possible meanings of this language as 'dependence on God, conformity with His will, and the like—and two specific meanings: ecstatic possession by the divine, and, in a quasi-pantheistic sense, a 'mystical' inclusion in, or absorption into, the divine being' (*Interpretation*, p. 192). For an extensive treatment of the language of indwelling, see Fennema, 'Jesus and God', pp. 231-41.

159. The Father was also with Jesus (16.32).

160. Fennema notes that in contrast to a handful of references in the Synoptics to Jesus being sent by God (Mt. 10.40; 15.24; Mk 9.37; Lk. 4.18, 43; 9.48; 10.16), the Fourth Gospel continually returns to this theme, repeating it over forty times; 'Jesus and God', 2; cf. Josef Kuhl, *Die Sendung Jesu und der Kirche nach dem Johannes-Evangelium* (Studia Instituti Missiologici Societatis Verbi Divini, 11; St. Augustin: Steyler, 1967), p. 58.

According to the Gospel of John, however, Jesus is much more than all these things. He is the Son of Man, the Only Son, the Son of God, who calls God his Father. The latter two expressions are taken as claims of divinity within the narrative world of the Fourth Gospel. Such claims are further substantiated not only by Jesus' adoption of the divine name (ἐγώ εἰμι), but also by the nature of his relationship with the Father—a relationship that is described in unambiguous terms as one of deepest intimacy in which Jesus and the Father enjoy a relationship of ideal friendship in which perfect unity, mutuality, and equality prevail.

Right from the beginning of the Gospel of John, the audience's attention is drawn to the relationship between Jesus and the Father. As B. Lindars has noted: 'John has felt it desirable to place Jesus in the cosmic setting of his relationship to the Father'.[161] Lindars's subsequent claim that this relationship 'is everywhere presupposed but not treated systematically',[162] however, needs to be clarified in light of the function of the friendship motif in the Gospel of John. The persistent use of language from the conceptual field of friendship to characterize Jesus' relationship with the Father suggests that the precise nature of this relationship is a *central* topic of the Fourth Gospel. Moreover, it clearly establishes friendship as an important motif in the Gospel of John.

As noted in Chapter 1, the establishment of a motif depends upon two criteria: frequency and avoidability/unlikelihood.[163] The above discussion has established the fact that language associated with the Greco-Roman motif of ideal friendship is frequently utilized in the Gospel of John to characterize the Son's relationship with the Father. More precisely, the data surveyed in this Chapter and Chapter 2 suggest that this field is referenced in the following passages: 1.1 (unity, equality); 1.2 (unity); 1.3 (unity/equality); 1.18 (unity, equality [μονογενὴς θεός]); 3.35 (mutuality); 4.34 (unity); 5.17 (unity); 5.18 (equality); 5.19 (unity); 5.20 (mutuality); 5.21 (unity); 5.22 (mutuality); 5.23 (equality); 5.26 (unity, equality); 5.30 (unity); 7.16 (unity, mutuality); 8.16 (unity); 8.18 (unity); 8.19 (equality); 8.28 (unity); 8.58 (equality); 10.18 (equality); 10.30 (unity); 10.30-33 (equality); 10.38 (equality); 11.22 (mutuality); 12.44 (equality); 12.45 (equality); 12.49 (unity); 12.50 (unity); 13.3 (mutuality); 13.20 (equality); 14.7 (equality); 14.9 (equality); 14.10 (unity, equality); 14.11 (unity, equality); 14.16 (mutuality); 14.26 (unity); 15.23 (equality); 15.26 (unity); 16.15 (mutuality); 17.2 (mutuality); 17.3 (equality); 17.6 (mutuality); 17.7 (mutuality); 17.8 (mutuality); 17.10 (mutuality); 17.11 (unity, mutuality); 17.22 (mutuality);

161. Barnabas Lindars, *The Gospel of John* (NCBC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), p. 76.
162. Lindars, *The Gospel of John,* p. 76.
163. See pp. 14-15.

19.7 (equality); and 20.28 (equality). Thus, there are at least 58 allusions to the conceptual field of friendship that are used as a tool for characterizing Jesus' relationship with the Father. The majority of these (34) occur in the first half of the Gospel of John.

In addition to these passages, the Johannine Jesus' equality with the Father is repeatedly emphasized through his twenty-one ἐγώ εἰμι sayings and constant references to his divine attributes. The Johannine Jesus is described as the 'unique God' (μονογενὴς θεός; 1.18; my translation), who not only shares the Father's name but also shares his glory. Like the Father he is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent. He is the Creator of the cosmos. The intimate nature of the relationship between Jesus and God is further highlighted through repeated references to Jesus as the recipient of the Father's love, more than one hundred references to God as his 'Father', and more than forty references to Jesus as the 'Son'.

The ubiquitous nature of language from the conceptual field of friendship strongly suggests that the use of such language is not coincidental. As we consider the use of the friendship motif to characterize Jesus' relationship with his followers in the following Chapter, the overwhelming frequency of friendship language will become even clearer.

Like the criterion of frequency, the criterion of avoidability/unlikelihood is easily met. Using the language of ideal friendship to characterize an individual's relationship with a deity appears to be unprecedented, suggesting that the author could have easily avoided the use of such language. Moreover, while the friendship motif is well suited for characterizing an intimate relationship, the contexts in which the friendship motif occurs do not demand reference to the motif. In particular, the consistent appeal to key notions of ideal friendship (unity, mutuality, and equality) could have easily been avoided. What significance, then, would the authorial audience have attached to the friendship motif, in terms of its use as a tool for characterizing Jesus' relationship with the Father?

The use of language from the conceptual field of friendship to characterize Jesus' relationship with God would have made it clear to the authorial audience that something beyond the average father-son relationship was in view. While such a relationship would typically feature a degree of unity and mutuality, Greco-Roman fathers and sons were not viewed as equals. Furthermore, the Fourth Gospel's language of unity and mutuality goes far beyond basic unity and mutuality. Instead, these notions are stated in the strongest and most emphatic terms possible, using language typically associated with ideal friendship.[164]

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164. It is possible that the author of the Fourth Gospel has (consciously or not) avoided an explicit reference to Jesus being the 'friend of God' because it could have undermined the high Christology that he was seeking to construct. A skeptical

By highlighting the identity of Jesus through the use of the friendship motif, particularly in terms of his relationship with the Father, John 1–12 moves the reader toward the climax of the Fourth Gospel where concerns over Jesus' identity will eventually bring about his death.[165] In the intervening chapters (13–17), the authorial audience would have become increasingly aware that Jesus' unique, intimate relationship with the Father serves as the basis for his intimate relationship with his followers. Indeed, as we will see in the next Chapter, in describing Jesus' relationship with his followers the Gospel of John once again takes up the language of ideal friendship as a powerful tool of characterization.

reader could have potentially turned the author's own argument against him and maintained that Jesus was *merely* a 'friend' of God but not God himself. Through using the conceptual field of ideal friendship rather than the semantic field of friendship the author achieved his goal of characterizing Jesus as completely equal with God, while at the same time avoiding unwanted connotations that the explicit label 'friend' might have carried. Such connotations, however, remain appropriate for the relationship between Jesus and his followers and thus the author freely made use of the label in 15.13-15.

165. Cf. Weber, 'That They May Be One', p. 200.

Chapter 4

FRIENDSHIP IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL: JESUS AND HIS FOLLOWERS

This study began by raising the question of what the Johannine Jesus meant when he referred to his followers as 'friends' in Jn 15.15. As we have seen, friendship language, far from being rare elsewhere in the Gospel of John, actually pervades the text and serves as an effective tool for characterizing Jesus' relationship with the Father. It is against this prior characterization that Jesus' statements and actions in the upper room scene (John 13–17) must be read. Indeed, the profundity of his explicit declaration of friendship can only be grasped when it is recognized that the relationship he offers his followers in some way mirrors the relationship he has with the Father.

In our exploration of the Fourth Gospel's characterization of the relationship between the incarnate *Logos* and his followers, we begin with an examination of Jesus' relationship with a few specific characters—John the Baptist, the siblings from Bethany, and the Beloved Disciple. Once again, we will see that the author's presentation of these relationships makes use of the conceptual field of friendship. The bulk of this Chapter, however, will seek to demonstrate how the friendship motif is woven into the fabric of the upper room scene, in particular, and serves as the primary tool for characterizing Jesus' relationship with his followers. We will conclude with a brief examination of the friendship motif in the final four chapters of the Gospel of John.

Jesus and his Friends

Although friendship between Jesus and his followers comes into sharpest focus in the second half of the Gospel of John, particularly in the upper room scene, this motif is also present in the first half, particularly in the narratives concerning John the Baptist, Jesus' friends from Bethany, and the Beloved Disciple. The first occurrence of the term φίλος is in 3.29, where John the Baptist is described as the 'friend of the bridegroom'.

The 'Friend of the Bridegroom'

Although John the Baptist is given a special role in the Synoptic Gospels, only in the Gospel of John is he given the title ὁ φίλος τοῦ νυμφίου.[1] This expression was used to refer to the most intimate friend of the bridegroom, the 'best man' who had the role of preparing and presenting the bride to the bridegroom.[2] While a mutual relationship existed between Jesus and John the Baptist, however, in the Gospel of John the focus is on the contrasts between them.

   Throughout Jn 3.27-36 the superiority of Jesus is repeatedly emphasized.[3] Jesus' status must increase (v. 30), since he is the one who has come from above (v. 31) and is above all (v. 31), while John is merely one from the earth (v. 31). Jesus bears firsthand knowledge from above (v. 32), is sent from God, possesses the fullness of God's Spirit (v. 34), and is thus able to perfectly speak the words of God (v. 34). Moreover, God has given Jesus authority over everything (v. 35), including the right to convey eternal life (vv. 35-36). Thus, although the friend of the bridegroom's joy comes from helping to bring joy to the bridegroom,[4] and there is thus unity of pur-

1.   For more on John's role as 'friend of the bridegroom', see Lorenzo Infante, *L'amico dello Sposo: Figura del Ministero di Giovanni Battista nel Vangelo di Giovanni* (Rome: Pontificia Universitas Gregoriana, 1984).

2.   Eldho Puthenkandathil, *Philos: A Designation for the Jesus-Disciple Relationship: An Exegetico-Theological Investigation of the Term in the Fourth Gospel* (New York: Peter Lang, 1993), p. 69; Sjef van Tilborg, *Imaginative Love in John* (Biblical Interpretation Series, 47; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1993), pp. 75-77. For a fuller description of the role of the friend of the bridegroom, see Mary L. Coloe, 'Witness and Friend: Symbolism associated with John the Baptiser', in J. Frey, J.G. van der Watt and R. Zimmermann (eds.), *Imagery in the Gospel of John* (WUNT, 200; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), pp. 319-32. An analogous expression is found in the Mishnah (*Sanh.* 3.5); Puthenkandathil, *Philos*, p. 64; cf. Israel Abrahams, *Studies in Pharisaism and the Gospel* (Second Series; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1924), p. 213. Strack and Billerbeck compare the friend of the bridegroom's role to that of Moses, who mediated the alliance between Yahweh and Israel at Mt. Sinai; Str-B, I, pp. 501-502.

3.   Puthenkandathil, *Philos*, pp. 71-86. This is accomplished both through the voice of John the Baptist (vv. 27-30) and through the voice of the narrator (vv. 31-36). D.M. Smith notes that 'John's [the Baptist] concluding word [v. 30] is well crafted to ensure that his disciples, and the reader, are left with no doubt about who is more prominent in their relationship' (D. Moody Smith, *John* [ANTC; Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1999], p. 105). C.H. Talbert points out that in verses 31-36 Jesus' superiority to John is based on three factors: (1) Jesus' heavenly origins; (2) Jesus' permanent endowment with the Spirit; and (3) Jesus' distinctive role as judge; Charles H. Talbert, *Reading John: A Literary and Theological Commentary on the Fourth Gospel and the Johannine Epistles* (Reading the New Testament; New York: Crossroad, 1992), pp. 107-108.

4.   As noted in Chapter 2, ideal friends shared in all of life's experiences, whether good or bad (see, e.g., Seneca, *Ep.* 48.2). Their joy or sorrow was in large part dependent on the joy or sorrow of their friend; cf. Jan G. van der Watt, *Family of the King:*

pose, ultimately the friendship between John the Baptist and Jesus is not conveyed in the same language as the friendship between Jesus and his followers.

The Friends at Bethany

John the Baptist, though, is not the only individual described as Jesus' friend in the Gospel of John; the Johannine Jesus also gives Lazarus this title (11.11).[5] In their message to Jesus, Mary and Martha describe Lazarus as the one whom Jesus loved (11.3), appealing to him for help based on his affection for their brother. As Puthenkandathil notes, 'the very act of sending the message and the mode of their addressing Jesus as well as the content of their message etc. testify to the fact of the friendship between Jesus and the Bethany family'.[6] Indeed, the narrator proceeds to inform the reader that Jesus loved Martha and Mary, as well as Lazarus (11.5).[7] The nature of his love is expressed in his willingness to risk his life in order to help his friends (11.7-8).[8]

Jesus' expectation that his followers will accompany him is based on the fact that Lazarus is their friend as well as his (11.11).[9] He thus responds to his friend Lazarus's needs with a willingness to risk his life and expects his followers to do the same. Their response, conveyed by Thomas, shows the same willingness to die for a friend: 'Let us also go, that we may die

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Dynamics of Metaphor in the Gospel according to John (Biblical Interpretation Series, 47; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2000), p. 362.

5.   Lazarus is the only individual character in the Fourth Gospel explicitly identified as Jesus' friend. One cannot read John 11, however, without coming away with the impression that Jesus had a very close relationship with the sisters of Lazarus, Mary and Martha, as well.

6.   *Philos*, p. 124.

7.   Such intimate male-female friendships within the early church, which crossed cultural as well as gender boundaries, provided opponents of Christianity with a ready tool for attacking the church. R.E. Brown suggests that the inclusion of this bit of information is designed to reassure the reader that Jesus' delay did not imply a lack of love for Lazarus; Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel according to John: Introduction, Translation, and Notes*, I (2 vols.; AB, 29, 29A; New York: Doubleday, 1966, 1970), p. 423; cf. Ernst Haenchen, *John: A Commentary on the Gospel of John*, II (2 vols.; Hermeneia; trans. R.W. Funk; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), p. 57.

8.   Presumably, the raising of Lazarus did not require that Jesus go to Bethany (see 4.46-54); Puthenkandathil, *Philos*, p. 113.

9.   J. Leal suggests that Jesus' comment about Lazarus being 'our friend' highlights the disciples' responsibility as friends and serves to motivate them to accompany him; J. Leal, 'De amore Jesu erga amicum Lazarum (Jo 11)', *VD* 21 (1941), p. 61; cf. Puthenkandathil, *Philos*, p. 104. Jesus' sharing of intimate information with his followers, namely, that Lazarus has died (11.11, 14), may be viewed as an expression of friendship for them as well; Puthenkandathil, *Philos*, pp. 100-101.

with him' (11.16). We see from his response that Thomas understood Jesus' exhortation to act in accord with the responsibilities of friendship and responded in a way that made it clear that he was playing the role of a genuine friend.[10]

Jesus' intervention in response to Martha's request (11.21-26) also demonstrates his friendship with her.[11] The same friendship is evident in his expressed concern for Mary (11.28) and in his strong emotional response to the situation (11.33, 35).[12] In short, Jesus' 'delay of two days, His eventual coming to Bethany, His sympathy with the bereaved to the point of shedding tears, and above all, the manifestation of His divine power by raising Lazarus, all His deeds are concrete expressions of His friendship with the Bethany family'.[13] Indeed, the interaction between the characters in this story can only be understood against the background of genuine friendship.[14]

The Beloved Disciple

In addition to John the Baptist and the siblings from Bethany, the Gospel of John also draws special attention to Jesus' relationship with the Beloved Disciple. While the character of the Beloved Disciple remains somewhat obscure in the Fourth Gospel, he is clearly identified as a friend of Jesus. This disciple is introduced in 13.23 as 'the one whom Jesus loved' (ὃν ἠγάπα ὁ Ἰησοῦς). A synonymous title is used in 19.26; 20.2 (ὃν ἐφίλει ὁ

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10. It is unclear whether Thomas's act of friendship was directed toward Jesus, Lazarus, or both. His bold statement, however, is reminiscent of Polycharmus' desire to quickly dispense with Mithridates' questions so that he can be crucified with his friend Chaereas. Polycharmus even goes so far as to beg Mithridates to order the executioner not to separate their crosses; Chariton, *Chaer.* 4.2.14; 4.3.5; cf. 7.1.7-8.

11. Where it is Peter who makes the climactic confession of faith in Jesus as Messiah at Caesarea Philippi in the Synoptics (Mk 8.27-29), and indeed the Johannine Peter makes a similar confession at 6.69, in the Fourth Gospel the closest parallel to Peter's confession is found on the lips of Martha: 'Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world' (11.27); Dennis E. Smith and Michael E. Williams (eds.), *The Storyteller's Companion to the Bible: John* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996), p. 109.

12. The meaning of Jn 11.33 is hotly disputed; see, e.g., George R. Beasley-Murray, *John* (WBC, 36; Waco, TX: Word Books, 1987), pp. 192-93; Talbert, *Reading John*, pp. 174-75.

13. Puthenkandathil, *Philos*, p. 110. Jesus' calling of Lazarus by name may also be an expression of their friendship; Puthenkandathil, *Philos*, p. 121. Puthenkandathil suggests that Lazarus plays the role of true friend by (unwittingly) sacrificing his life for the glorification of Jesus (11.4); Puthenkandathil, *Philos*, p. 99. Jesus' prayer before raising Lazarus also makes use of friendship conventions. The Father 'always' (11.42) listens to the Son because of their intimate unity, mutuality, and equality.

14. Puthenkandathil, *Philos*, p. 139.

Ἰησοῦς); and 21.7, 20. Each time the Beloved Disciple appears in the narrative, the context as well as his title helps define his relationship with Jesus more fully.

In the first reference to the Beloved Disciple we learn that he was 'reclining next to Jesus' as the disciples shared a meal together. Such an description not only implies intimacy but also has conceptual parallels to 1.18. Where Jesus was 'close to the Father's heart' (εἰς τὸν κόλπον τοῦ πατρός; 1.18), the Beloved Disciple reclined next to Jesus (ἐν τῷ κόλπῳ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ; 13.23).[15] Similar language is used to refer to the Beloved Disciple in 21.20 (ἐπὶ τὸ στῆθος αὐτοῦ). Thus, the Beloved Disciple's relationship with Jesus is characterized, in part, using the same language that has previously been used to characterize Jesus' relationship with the Father.[16] The Beloved Disciple's unique position next to Jesus made intimate communication—characteristic of ideal friendship—with Jesus possible (13.24-25).

In his second appearance, there is also an important link to the conceptual field of friendship. In 19.26-27, Jesus entrusts the care of his mother to the Beloved Disciple: 'When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, "Woman, here is your son". Then he said to the disciple, "Here is your mother". And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home'. Jesus' actions here fit very well within the context of ideal friendship. In the Greco-Roman world, a person readily assumed filial responsibilities for a friend. A letter from the late second century, from a man who was caring for his friend's daughter and home, nicely illustrates the sense of commitment that friends shared in this regard: 'Have no more anxiety about your household than you would if you were present' (P. Oxy. 6.933). J.C. Thom, citing Clitarchus (*Sent.* 91), has noted that 'sharing a friend's responsibilities continues even after his death: one should not mourn the death of a friend, but take care of his relatives'.[17] Jesus' words to the Beloved Disciple thus presume a level of intimacy that is characteristic of the closest of friends.[18]

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15. C.K. Barrett points out that 'At 1.18 the only begotten Son is described as ὁ ὢν εἰς τὸν κόλπον τοῦ πατρὸς; 13.20, emphasizing the relationship between God, Christ, and those whom Christ sends, points forward to the special case in which the specially favoured disciple is represented as standing in the same relation to Christ as Christ to the Father' (*The Gospel according to St. John: An Introduction with Commentary and Notes on the Greek Text* [Philadelphia: Westminster, 1978], p. 446).

16. Cf. Merrill C. Tenney, *John* (EBC, 9; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981), p. 34.

17. Johan C. Thom, '"Harmonious Equality": The *Topos* of Friendship in Neopythagorean Writings', in J.T. Fitzgerald (ed.), *Greco-Roman Perspectives on Friendship* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1997), p. 87.

18. B. Witherington notes that 'the phrases "Behold your son" and "Behold your mother" suit the language of Jewish family law where someone is legally entrusted to another' (Ben Witherington, III, *John's Wisdom: A Commentary on the Fourth Gospel* [Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1995], p. 309).

In his third appearance, the Beloved Disciple is involved in a race to the tomb with Peter to confirm the news that Mary had brought to them (20.1-10). Here, the Beloved Disciple's absolute devotion to Jesus is highlighted as the empty tomb immediately leads to belief (20.8).

In his fourth appearance, in John 21, the Beloved Disciple's intimacy with Jesus allows him to quickly recognize him (21.7). Once again, his devotion to Jesus is highlighted—this time in an almost humorous manner for Western readers—as he tags along behind while Jesus converses with Peter (21.20). The Beloved Disciple must always be near Jesus.

Finally, in the closing lines of the Gospel of John, the narrator identifies himself with the Beloved Disciple. Here we find that this disciple is not only loved by Jesus, not only does he enjoy a special place next to Jesus, not only does he take responsibility for Jesus' mother's care, not only does he believe in the resurrected Jesus and follow him, but he also has a special role as witness to what Jesus said and did.

Summary
The Gospel of John contains only four specific individuals who are explicitly identified as recipients of Jesus' love (Mary, Martha, Lazarus, and the Beloved Disciple),[19] though John the Baptist bears the title 'friend of the bridegroom'. Jesus' behavior toward these individuals provides a starting point for understanding what friendship with Jesus entails. He responds to his friends' requests for help, though not always as they may have expected (11.6). He exercises his divine initiative on their behalf by raising Lazarus from the dead, even though he had every reason to believe that this act would lead to his own death.[20] Similarly, the Johannine Jesus' willingness to share extremely delicate personal information with the Beloved Disciple (13.26) reveals the ideal nature of their friendship. While these relationships shed light on how the *Logos* made flesh relates to his own, however, the densest concentration of material used to characterize the relationship between Jesus and his followers is found in the upper room scene of John 13–17.

19. A number of scholars have argued that Lazarus was himself the Beloved Disciple; see, e.g., James H. Charlesworth, *The Beloved Disciple: Whose Witness Validates the Gospel of John?* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity, 1995). For more on this question, see R. Alan Culpepper, *John, the Son of Zebedee: The Life of a Legend* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1994).

20. John 11 thus serves as a vivid example of Jesus' willingness to lay down his life for his friends. 'Since the raising of Lazarus is the final offense which sets in motion the plot to kill Jesus—and he was well aware that it would be (11.7, 8, 16)—Jesus actually lays down his life for a friend by returning to bring life to Lazarus' (R. Alan Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A Study in Literary Design* [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983], p. 141).

Echoes of Friendship in the Upper Room

Many scholars have noted that John 13–17 is typical of the farewell, or testament, of a hero who is about to die, a recurrent theme in biblical, extrabiblical Jewish literature, and Greco-Roman literature.[21] Such discourses typically encapsulated the hero's most significant teachings and thus would have been seen as a part of the text that was particularly noteworthy and worthy of the readers' special attention. As a farewell discourse, then, the authorial audience would have likely given particular attention to John 13–17.

The Footwashing Pericope

How does the footwashing pericope fit with the overall structure and themes of John 13–17? There are a number of features of this pericope that highlight its importance both for what immediately follows and for the structure of the Gospel of John as a whole. In order to understand the significance of the beginning of John 13 and the footwashing pericope as a whole, we will draw on insights from a number of theoretical perspectives. Taken together, the features of Jn 13.1-6 make these verses 'the gospel's most majestic scene introduction'.[22]

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21. See, e.g., Fernando F. Segovia, *The Farewell of the Word: The Johannine Call to Abide* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), p. 5. For an excellent overview of the constitutive motifs of farewell type-scenes, see Segovia, *The Farewell of the Word*, pp. 5-20. In brief, 'the farewell type-scene may be portrayed as one in which a dying hero/leader gathers his followers/disciples/heirs, and speaks his last words which take on special significance in the community which survives him' (Laura Ann Weber, ' "That They May Be One": Jn 17.21-23 and the Plotinian Application of Unity' [PhD dissertation, Marquette University, 1996], p. 78). See also Jürgen Becker, 'Die Abschiedsreden Jesu im Johannesevangelium', *ZNW* 61 (1970), pp. 215-46; John J. Collins, 'Testaments', in M.E. Stone (ed.), *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period: Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Qumran, Sectarian Writings, Philo, Josephus* (CRINT, 2/2; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), pp. 325-55; Enric Cortès, *Los discursos de adiós de Gn 49 a Jn 13-17: Pistas para la historia de un género literario en la antigua literatura judía* (Barcelona: Herder, 1976); William S. Kurz, *Farewell Addresses in the New Testament* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1990); Anitra Bingham Kolenkow, 'The Literary Genre "Testament" ', in R.A. Kraft and G.W.E. Nickelburg (eds.), *Early Judaism and its Modern Interpreters* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1986), pp. 259-67; John Painter, 'The Farewell Discourses and the History of Johannine Christianity', *NTS* 27 (1981), pp. 525-43; R.W. Paschal, Jr., 'Farewell Discourse', in J.B. Green and S. McKnight (eds.), *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1992), pp. 229-33. For a cogent argument that the author of the Fourth Gospel engaged in 'genre bending', i.e., combined features of various genres to shape the farewell discourse, see George L. Parsenios, *Departure and Consolation: The Johannine Farewell Discourses in Light of Greco-Roman Literature* (NovTSup, 117; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2005).

22. Culpepper, *Anatomy*, p. 33.

The Shift in Narrative Speed. First, there is a dramatic change in the pace of the narrative that occurs in the verses immediately preceding John 13. The interpretive comments of the narrator in 12.37-43 combined with the brief speech[23] of Jesus in 12.44-50 lead to a 'perceptible slowing of the speed of the narrative in chapter 12, with 12.37-50 acting as a rhetorical "brake" '.[24] What follows in chapters 13–17 represents a narrative 'scene' in which the length of the narrative more closely approximates the duration of the story, causing the reader to focus more carefully on this material than on the 'summaries', which provide only basic facts related to the story.

The Marked Section Break. Second, certain discourse markers serve as indicators of a new episode.[25] Here, the sentence-initial temporal marker (Πρὸ δὲ τῆς ἑορτῆς τοῦ πάσχα; 13.1) alerts the reader that Jesus' speech at the end of chapter 12 has ended and a new scene is being set.[26] The shift in time is accompanied by a shift in location (δείπνου γινομένου; 13.2). Moreover, the sentence structure of the first two verses also bears an important function. Linguists have argued that writers make frequent use of sentence length as a surface structure clue to guide readers. They

23. Culpepper suggests that Jesus' speech has the appearance of a soliloquy; Culpepper, *Anatomy*, pp. 71, 109. On the formal characteristics of a soliloquy, see Seymour Chatman, *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1978), pp. 178-79.

24. Culpepper, *Anatomy*, p. 71. John 12 may thus be viewed as a 'transitional chapter' (Culpepper, *Anatomy*, p. 94).

25. Discourse linguists note that grammatical and lexical surface features within a passage are used to highlight the relative prominence of various themes within a text; Steve Booth, *Selected Peak Marking Features in the Gospel of John* (New York: Peter Lang, 1996), pp. 10-11.

26. L.A. Weber notes that Jn 13.1-20 is 'conspicuous as...[a] marker of the introduction of a farewell address in the larger narrative unity of chaps. 13-17' ('That They May Be One', p. 88). Some scholars have argued that it is inappropriate to place a major break in the text after 12.50, since the arrival of Jesus' hour in 12.23 marks a major turning point in the narrative and the words and actions of Jesus in chapters 13–17 can only be understood in light of the significant turn of events that began in 11.1; see, e.g., Matthias Rissi, 'Der Aufbau des vierten Evangeliums', *NTS* 29 (1983), pp. 50-51; Jeffrey Lloyd Staley, 'The Structure of John's Prologue: Its Implications for the Gospel's Narrative Structure', *CBQ* 48 (1986), pp. 241-63. Such an approach, however, ignores the strong linguistic markers in 13.1. It is probably better to view the second half of chapter 12 as transitional. By intimating that Jesus' death is imminent it provides a rationale for the farewell discourse that follows. Given the fact that his hour has come, the authorial audience, who is familiar with farewell scenes, is not surprised when Jesus gathers his disciples around him, gives them an example to follow, predicts his imminent betrayal, commissions them with a series of exhortations, and offers a prayer for his followers who are about to be separated from him.

may use sentences that are shorter than their norm to quicken the tempo of the story or they may use longer sentences for dramatic effect. John tends to open scenes with lengthy sentences. In this case, the length of the first two sentences (13.1-4) far exceeds his other scene openings. Comprising eighty-four words, these sentences are the longest sentences in the Gospel of John. Indeed, in 13.1-4 the author of the Fourth Gospel shifts from an average sentence length of 9.8 words to an average of 42 words per sentence. Such a shift helps not only to mark a section break but also highlights the importance of this scene as the beginning of the final climax of John's story.[27]

The Shift in Plot and Topic. Third, 13.1 not only clearly indicates that a shift in scene has taken place but also marks a shift in topic. The author, in fact, uses 13.1 to set the stage for what is to come and presents this verse to the reader as an interpretive guide for what follows.[28] J. Grimes has pointed out that 'every clause, sentence, paragraph, episode, and discourse is organized around a particular element that is taken as its point of departure. It is as though the speaker presents what he wants to say from a particular perspective'.[29]

In John 13–17, the author sets out to establish the claim that Jesus loved his disciples εἰς τέλος.[30] The ambiguity in the prepositional phrase serves his broad purposes. On the one hand, he wants to show that Jesus' love for his followers extended even to being willing to offer his life on their behalf. He loved them 'to the end'. On the other hand, he demonstrates, particularly in chapters 13–17, the extent and nature of Jesus' love: he loved them 'completely'. Thus, drawing on Grimes's notion of 'staging', the introduction of the topic of the discourse[31] (Jesus' love for his followers) serves as a clue to the audience regarding how the material that follows should be read. 'It is as though stage directions were given to the spotlight handler in a theater to single out a particular individual or an action',[32] or in this case a conceptual field. While 13.1 reiterates many of the same themes introduced in the Prologue (Jesus' relationship with the Father, his relationship with his own, the world, and his departure), the focus is on his relationship with his followers.

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27. See Weber, 'That They May Be One', pp. 106-109.

28. Cf. Peter J. Rabinowitz, *Before Reading: Narrative Conventions and the Politics of Interpretation* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987), p. 76. Aristotle noted that good communicators first state their case and then proceed to prove it (*Rhet.* 3.13).

29. Joseph E. Grimes, *The Thread of Discourse* (New York: Mouton, 1975), p. 323.

30. Cf. Puthenkandathil, *Philos*, p. 212.

31. Here, the term 'discourse' is used in its technical sense to indicate a large unit of text rather than a speech.

32. Grimes, *Thread*, p. 327.

The Use of the 'Historical Present'. Fourth, the importance of the footwashing scene for the overall story is highlighted through the author's use of the 'historical present' tense. 'Significant groupings of the historical present (and possibly even the more isolated occurrences) signal that particular section as important in the plot development of the total discourse'.[33] Thirteen times in the short span of 30 verses (13.1-30) the present tense is used to refer to past events.[34] The 'historical present' is first used to highlight Jesus' surprising behavior: 'he got up from the table' (ἐγείρεται; 13.4), 'took off his outer robe' (τίθησιν τὰ ἱμάτια; 13.4), 'poured water into a basin' (βάλλει; 13.5), 'came to Peter' (ἔρχεται; 13.6), and so forth.[35] D. Boos has argued that the 'historical presents' in the Gospel of John serve as a helpful guide to the overall plot structure of the narrative and as clues to the author's purposes.[36] In John 13, this literary device not only helps build suspense toward a climax in the plot structure,[37] as Jesus is betrayed

33. David Boos, 'The Historical Present in John's Gospel', *START* 11 (April 1984), p. 20. For helpful fuller treatments of the function of the historical present, see esp. Stephen H. Levinsohn, *Discourse Features of New Testament Greek: A Coursebook on the Information Structure of New Testament Greek* (2nd edn; Dallas: SIL, 2000), pp. 197-213; Steven E. Runge, *A Discourse Grammar of the Greek New Testament* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, 2010), §6.2.

34. There is considerable debate regarding what makes the present tense significant in contexts such as this. Porter agrees that the so-called historical present is used where the author 'wishes to draw attention to an event or a series of events' (Stanley E. Porter, *Verbal Aspect in the Greek of the New Testament, with Reference to Tense and Mood* [New York: Peter Lang, 1989], p. 196). Indeed, the repeated use of the historical present distinctly highlights this scene's importance at this point in the narrative. The highlighting effect of the present tense, however, does not stem from the fact that it is used to refer to a past event, according to Porter. After all, the present tense may be used to refer to past, present, or future events, or it may carry timeless or omnitemporal reference. In Porter's view, Greek tenses do not generally carry temporal reference at all. Instead, the highlighting effect of the present tense in a narrative context such as this stems from the fact that it is a more marked tense (imperfective aspect) than the aorist (perfective aspect), rather than from any putative temporal mismatch. In the end, then, most agree that the so-called historical present functions as a highlighting device, while the reason for that function continues to be disputed. See Porter, *Verbal Aspect*, pp. 189-208; Porter, *Idioms of the Greek New Testament* (2nd edn; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), pp. 30-31.

35. The so-called historical present is used a total of 23 times in this episode (13.1–17.26). Historical presents are also clustered in six other episodes: 1.19–2.12 (23 occurrences), 4.1-42 (14 occurrences), 11.1-54 (12 occurrences), 18.1–19.16a (17 occurrences), 20.1-18 (18 occurrences), and 21.1-25 (22 occurrences). In two of these, however, the present tense is used only in speech or to denote movement, but not with action clauses (4.1-42; 11.1-54); Booth, *Selected Peak Marking*, p. 99.

36. Boos, 'The Historical Present', p. 22.

37. Boos, 'The Historical Present', p. 22. The episode in 18.1–19.42 is identified as

(13.18-30) and subsequently executed, but also highlights the importance of the footwashing scene in the narrative structure of the Fourth Gospel as a whole.

Rules of Configuration. Finally, Rabinowitz argues that 'when an event changes a major character's relationship to other characters, that event is to be read as charged'.[38] Thus far in the Gospel of John, the author has systematically characterized Jesus in lofty language—including the language of friendship—that creates certain expectations on the part of the reader. In accord with Rabinowitz's rules of configuration, the structure of the narrative helps create a sense of expectation on the part of the reader that this Jesus, who was with God in the beginning and who was himself God, this Jesus who has done sign after sign to reveal his identity, this Jesus who enjoys the deepest level of intimacy in his relationship/friendship with God will behave in a manner befitting his status. Instead, when the authorial audience arrives at John 13, they find that Jesus does something extremely unexpected, something that diverges from the configuration of the narrative thus far: He takes the role of the lowest servant and washes the feet of his followers.[39]

The divine master of the disciples, thus effectively placed himself below his followers;[40] the master became a servant. 'Inappropriate' behavior such as this will always draw the attention of the reader.[41] In such role

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the actual climax, or 'zone of turbulence' by a variety of linguistic features; Booth, *Selected Peak Marking*, p. 121.

    38. Rabinowitz, *Before Reading*, p. 65.

    39. John 13 is thus full of 'situational irony' marked by the incongruity between readers' expectations and the events that are presented. Malina and Rohrbaugh note that footwashing was a task that was 'usually performed by slaves and low-status servants. It was an onerous and demeaning task because it meant washing off human and animal waste. Human waste was emptied out windows onto the city streets each morning, while animal waste was ever-present' (Bruce J. Malina and Richard L. Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science Commentary on the Gospel of John* [Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998], p. 219-20).

    40. The degree to which Jesus lowers himself is highlighted by the fact that early in the Fourth Gospel the practice of footwashing was referred to in a manner that emphasized the low status associated with tasks related to people's feet (1.27). It is further emphasized by the Johannine Jesus' prior actions. He first 'took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself' (v. 4) and then 'poured water into a basin' (v. 5). J.C. Thomas points out that the former made Jesus' attire 'reminiscent of the dress of servants depicted in Roman works of art', while the later was a duty 'assigned specifically to slaves according to the evidence from antiquity' (John Christopher Thomas, *Footwashing in John 13 and the Johannine Community* [JSNTSup, 61; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991], p. 59).

    41. Cf. Rabinowitz, *Before Reading*, p. 66. J.C. Thomas's study highlights just how

reversals, the nature of the changes that are revealed often 'begin to suggest what the story is about'.[42] As Rabinowitz has noted, 'a rule of configuration can be just as important to the reading experience when the outcomes it predicts turn out not to take place as when they do'.[43] In the context of the Gospel of John as a whole, the footwashing pericope carries with it a certain shock value.[44] Rules of configuration (specifically rules of balance regarding action) allow readers 'to predict the consequences of an event by moving from cause to effect'.[45] Readers tend to assume that events will produce some results, and authors tend to leave out events that do not have consequences that are relevant to the narrative.[46] The dissonant note struck by the unexpected development in this pericope would have effectively captured the authorial audience's attention and led them to consider carefully the significance of this structural divergence.

Footwashing as an Act of Friendship. At first glance, Jn 13.1-30 appears to provide little more than background information for the farewell discourse that follows. The events contained in this pericope can easily be dismissed as of secondary importance or as a portion of the Gospel of John that is only loosely linked with what follows. When read through the lens of Greco-Roman notions of friendship, however, the connection to what follows becomes more obvious. The Johannine Jesus' actions in this pericope are given new significance as they are reinterpreted in light of his audacious statements in his farewell discourse that follows.

To understand Jesus' actions as the authorial audience might have understood them, one must take careful note of a number of features within the pericope that suggest that the conceptual field of ideal friendship is in view. First, as has already been noted, the pericope is introduced using friendship language: 'Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end' (13.1). Second, Jesus' statement of his mutuality

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shocking Jesus' behavior would have been to the authorial audience. He points out that the Johannine 'Jesus' action is unparalleled in ancient evidence, for no other person of superior status is described as voluntarily washing the feet of a subordinate' (*Footwashing in John 13*, p. 58). The fact that the footwashing apparently took place during rather than prior to the meal draws even more attention to Jesus' actions; cf. Segovia, *Farewell*, pp. 21, 22.

42. Robert Scholes, Nancy R. Comely, Carl H. Klaus and Michael Silverman (eds.), *Elements of Literature, Poetry, Drama, Essay, Film* (5th edn; New York: University Press, 1982), p. 10.

43. *Before Reading*, p. 111.

44. Rabinowitz notes that 'any violation of an actual cultural taboo will attract a reader's notice' (*Before Reading*, p. 68).

45. Rabinowitz, *Before Reading*, p. 133.

46. Cf. Rabinowitz, *Before Reading*, p. 133.

with the Father (13.3) further notifies the reader that the conceptual field of friendship is in play.[47] Third, the setting for the footwashing should not be overlooked. Particularly in the Roman period, there was a strong link between meals (*convivia*) and friendship (*amicitia*).[48] Philo viewed meals as a sign of 'genuine friendship',[49] while Cato the Elder considered meals 'the very best promoter of friendship' (Plutarch, *Cat. Maj.* 25.2). For Seneca, having a meal without the company of friends was unthinkable (*Ep.* 19.10).

As we will see, Jesus' statements in his upper room discourse function, in large part, as a means of extending an offer of ideal friendship to his followers. What better setting, then, for Jesus to extend such an offer to his followers than a meal—an event shared by friends? What better setting for Jesus to extend an offer of 'equality' to his guests than at a meal, where social conventions were often relaxed?

How might these features of the setting of John 13–17 affect how the authorial audience would have understood what follows? Jesus' statement to Peter in 13.7 ('You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand') encourages the reader to look for greater significance to Jesus' actions in this pericope and in the discourse that follows. If references to the conceptual field of friendship in 13.1-3 frame what follows as an act of friendship, how might Jesus' washing of his followers' feet have been understood?

As noted in Chapter 2, although ideal friendship was generally thought to require equality, there were avenues by which inequality could be bridged so that such friendship could be enjoyed. In particular, Cicero noted that the initiative in such situations lay with the person of higher status: 'those who are superior should [both] lower themselves...[and] lift up their inferiors' (Cicero, *Amic.* 20.72). In the footwashing pericope, Jesus, the superior, takes on the role of a slave, vividly bridging the gap between himself and his disciples by lowering himself.[50] While some have argued

47. The emphasis on Jesus' relationship with his followers is carefully placed within the context of his relationship with the Father. Jesus' act of friendship in the pericope that follows and his declarations of friendship in the upper room discourse flow out of his unity, mutuality, and equality with the Father.

48. For a full discussion, see John D'Arms, 'The Roman *Convivium* and Equality', in O. Murray (ed.), *Sympotica: A Symposium on the Symposion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), pp. 308-20. This link suggests that Luke's meal motif in his gospel may well have had strong friendship overtones.

49. *Ios.* 210; *Contempl.* 41.

50. Reading the significance of Jesus' actions in the footwashing pericope in light of Greco-Roman notions of friendship helps to clarify the close link that this pericope has with the rest of John 13–17. S. Schneiders has also argued that the footwashing pericope represents an expression of friendship that addresses the issue of inequality; Sandra Schneiders, 'The Foot Washing (John 13:1-20): An Experiment in Hermeneutics', *CBQ* 43 (1981), pp. 76-92.

that by washing the disciples' feet Jesus was acting out the cleansing significance of his death,[51] and others have suggested that the footwashing scene reflected a practice of the Johannine community that was used as a preparation for martyrdom,[52] it is quite possible that Jesus' actions in general and his seemingly harsh words to Peter in 13.8 in particular ('Unless I wash you, you have no share with me') would have been understood, in part, in terms of ideal friendship. In order for the disciples to enjoy the kind of intimate relationship that Jesus was offering, the problem of their inequality had to be addressed first.[53] After surveying relevant ancient texts and ancient artistic representations, J.C. Thomas concludes that in the majority of texts, 'footwashing serves to prepare one for a specific task, experience, or relationship. Specifically, footwashing can prepare one for religious duties, or for sharing a meal, a bed, or an intimate relationship'.[54] Given the use of the friendship motif throughout the Gospel of John, the authorial audience may well have understood Jesus' actions in John 13 as preparation for an intimate relationship.[55] Read within the context of Greco-Roman friendship, then, the footwashing pericope plays an important role in developing the friendship motif in John 13–17 and in the Fourth Gospel as a whole.[56]

Summary. This section has argued that 13.1 and the footwashing pericope as a whole marks an important shift in direction in the Gospel of John. This pericope does far more than set the time and place of the ensuing action and introduce the primary characters; it also marks a major shift in

51. James D.G. Dunn, 'The Washing of the Disciples' Feet in John 13:1-20', *ZNW* 61 (1970), p. 249. For the most thorough treatment of both the practice of footwashing in antiquity and the significance of footwashing in John 13, see Thomas, *Footwashing in John 13*.

52. Herold Weiss, 'Footwashing in the Johannine Community', *NT* 21 (1979), p. 320.

53. Weber argues that Jesus' statement about having a share with him in 13.8 refers to the extension of the Father-Son relationship to Jesus' followers; 'That They May Be One', p. 205.

54. *Footwashing in John 13*, p. 58.

55. Coloe plausibly draws a connection between the footwashing scene and Jesus' statement in 14.2 ('In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?'). 'Fittingly, before the disciples enter the Father's house (14.2), they are welcomed with the traditional gesture of having their feet washed (13.4-5)... Since the term "my Father's house" carries the earlier sense of "temple" from 2.16, it is doubly appropriate that the disciples' feet are washed prior to entry, for they are being welcomed into the Father's household and so to become the living temple of God' (Mary L. Coloe, 'Sources in the Shadows: John 13 and the Johannine Community', in F. Lozada, Jr. and T. Thatcher [eds.], *New Currents through John: A Global Perspective* [SBLRBS, 54; Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006], p. 77).

56. We will return the significance of this pericope below.

thematic focus. Where chapters 1–12 focused in large part on the relationship between Jesus and the Father, first introduced in 1.1 and culminating in the final sentence of the first section of the Fourth Gospel (12.50b), chapters 13–17 focus on the relationship between Jesus and his followers. This shift is marked, in part, by a rule of notice: 'first and last sentences in most texts are privileged'.[57] In 13.1 (a single sentence in the Greek), the reader is notified that what follows will concern Jesus' relationship with his followers. More specifically, it will demonstrate and establish the truth of the statement that Jesus' love for his followers is absolute and unending. This theme will culminate in the final sentence of the section (17.26), which draws together the nature of the relationship between Jesus and his followers and again highlights the link that that relationship has to Jesus' relationship with the Father.[58]

What Rabinowitz refers to as 'rules of bundling' also serve as indicators that what follows is somehow analogous to what precedes. Such rules dictate that readers 'are generally invited to assume that any elements—characters, plot lines, settings—that *can* be treated as parallel *should* be treated in that way'.[59] Thus the shifts from a focus on the relationship between Jesus and the Father in the first half of the Fourth Gospel to a focus on Jesus' relationship with his followers in the second half would likely have been consistent with conventional reading experience. As we will see, when Jesus' actions in this pericope are placed alongside his statements in the farewell discourse, a pattern emerges. The narrative moves smoothly from the parabolic actions of Jesus in the footwashing pericope, where he lowers himself, to the elevation of the disciples through the pronouncements of the farewell discourse.

In both the actions and dialogue that follow, the Johannine Jesus interprets the disciples' relationship with himself from his own distinctive point of view.[60] In the upper room scene, the characterization of Jesus remains consistent with the preceding twelve chapters.[61] The consistency

57. Rabinowitz, *Before Reading*, p. 44. Rabinowitz notes that this rule applies to sections of texts as well as to texts as a whole; *Before Reading*, p. 58.

58. Rabinowitz notes that although last sentences cannot focus an initial reading experience, they do 'serve to scaffold our retrospective interpretation of the book' (*Before Reading*, p. 44). Coloe presents the intriguing suggestion that 'the footwashing story begins with a 'mini-prologue' that recapitulates a number of themes present in the opening Prologue of chapter 1' ('Sources in the Shadows', p. 73). Coloe's analysis provides strong confirmation that the narrator is about to do something new and important at this point in the narrative.

59. Rabinowitz, *Before Reading*, p. 159.

60. Cf. Culpepper, *Anatomy*, p. 36.

61. Cf. Philip B. Harner, *Relation Analysis of the Fourth Gospel: A Study in Reader-Response Criticism* (Lewiston, NY: Mellen, 1993), p. 127.

in point of view that carries through disparate elements of the Gospel of John 'demonstrates the remarkable unity of perspective'.[62] In particular, the correlation between the themes reflected in the narrator's explanatory comments in earlier chapters and the point of view of Jesus in the farewell discourse reveal this unity:

> The [narrator's] comments deal with Judas (6.71; 12.6; 13.11), Jesus' hour (7.30; 8.20), his glorification (7.39; 12.16), the giving of the Spirit (7.39), exclusion from the synagogue (9.22; 12.42), the Father (8.27), the significance of Jesus' death (11.51-53), and the manner of his death (12.33; 18.32). Missing are statements related to Jesus' going away and the unity and mutual love of the disciples. With these exceptions, the narrator's explanatory or interpretative comments deal with virtually all of the main themes of the farewell discourse, and with only one or two exceptions (11.13 and perhaps 12.41) every point at which the narrator intervenes to interpret a statement is related to concerns dealt with by the farewell discourse. Many of the themes of the farewell discourse, therefore, are foreshadowed by the narrator.[63]

Also missing from the narrative commentary are references to Jesus' relationship to the disciples, a major theme of the farewell discourse. Such an omission, however, does not mean that this theme is not foreshadowed by the narrator, and narrative as a whole, in other ways. As we have seen, the Prologue not only leaves the reader anticipating an answer to the question it raises regarding Jesus' relationship to the Father, but it also leads the reader to ask: How does the incarnate Word relate to other creatures of 'flesh'? To answer this question, the farewell discourse takes up the friendship motif and the conceptual field of friendship that was consistently used to characterize Jesus' relationship with the Father in chapters 1–12.

From the opening words of the Gospel of John, the authorial audience has been challenged to consider the full significance of Jesus' identity, which has been progressively revealed through his actions and words. The plot thus far has revolved, to a large degree, around various characters' ability or inability to recognize the identity of Jesus.[64] John 13.1-20 would have naturally left the authorial audience wondering: How do Jesus' actions correlate with what has been revealed about his identity thus far?[65] The dissonance created by the Divine *Logos* stooping to

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62. Culpepper, *Anatomy*, p. 38.

63. Culpepper, *Anatomy*, p. 39. Culpepper goes on to note that the interpretative comments also function as 'vehicles of plot development' that 'focus the reader's attention on the betrayal, death, and glorification of Jesus and thereby build dramatic interest in how these events will occur'.

64. Culpepper, *Anatomy*, pp. 88-89.

65. A similar dissonance is created by Jesus' crucifixion. Just as he modeled his

wash his followers' feet, combined with the structural clues that signal the reader to expect something new in this new section, create a sense of expectation for what follows. How will the discordant note struck in 13.1-20 be brought into harmony with the rest of the Gospel?[66] The answer is found in the function of the friendship motif and the Fourth Gospel's use of the conceptual field of friendship.

The Farewell Discourse

With the shift from the action of 13.1-30 to the extended discourse that follows (13.31–17.26) the speed of the story slows to near real time.[67] Jesus' actions give way to his final teachings. He had risen from the supper (v. 4), laid aside his garment (v. 4), wrapped a towel around himself (v. 4), poured water into a bowl (v. 5), washed the feet of his disciples (v. 5), and wiped them dry with the towel (v. 5). After dismissing Judas (vv. 21-30), he then turned to the task of giving his followers his final instructions.

The Johannine Jesus' speech in the upper room is far more extensive than his other speeches in the Gospel of John,[68] with 36 percent of his recorded words appearing in the upper room scene (13.1–17.26).[69] Scholars have extensively debated the structure, boundaries, and compositional history of the farewell discourse.[70] Central to these debates is the question of the significance of Jn 14.31d: 'Rise, let us be on our way'. For most, such a command indicates the culmination of Jesus' speech and thus reveals the redactional activity of an editor. Much of the debate, however, is irrelevant for the present study, which is concerned with how the friendship

command to 'love one another' (15.12) by doing the task of a common slave (washing the feet of guests), so also the sacrifice of his life for his friends entailed suffering a form of execution used for rebellious slaves; Susan M. Elliott, 'John 15:15—Not Slaves but Friends: Slavery and Friendship Imagery and the Clarification of the Disciples' Relationship to Jesus in the Johannine Farewell Discourse', *Proceedings: Eastern Great Lakes and Midwest Biblical Societies* 13 (1993), p. 38.

66. The conceptual dissonance is highlighted by the inclusion of Peter's apoplectic response to Jesus' disregard for social conventions.

67. See Booth, *Selected Peak Marking*, pp. 78-79.

68. Dialogue, which makes up 56% of the Fourth Gospel, appears to be more important than in the Synoptic Gospels; Booth, *Selected Peak Marking*, p. 113.

69. Booth, *Selected Peak Marking*, p. 121.

70. For a helpful overview of the various approaches that have been proposed, particularly in the last century, see Segovia, *Farewell*, pp. 25-47. For a recent study of the rhetorical structure of the farewell discourse, see Jongseon Kwon, 'A Rhetorical Analysis of the Johannine Farewell Discourse' (PhD dissertation, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1993). Strong arguments for the unity of the farewell discourse, drawing on both literary and linguistic arguments, may be found in L. Scott Kellum, *The Unity of the Farewell Discourse: The Literary Integrity of John 13:31–16:33* (JSNTSup, 256; New York: T. & T. Clark, 2004).

motif is used in the final form of the Gospel of John rather than with the prehistory of the text. As F. Segovia has noted, 'The meaning of the text as it presently stands is by no means directly dependent on an understanding of its process of growth and composition'.[71] What *is* relevant is the question of how the structure of the final form of the farewell discourse contributes to the literary significance of the friendship language that has been used.

Scholars have also debated whether Jesus' farewell discourse begins at 13.31 or at 14.1.[72] While there are good reasons for accepting the majority view, which links 13.31-38 with what follows, in terms of plot development 13.31-38, like 13.21-30, are transitional. Jesus' subsequent discourse is intended exclusively for his friends. This exclusivity makes it imperative that Judas departs before the farewell speech begins. The Johannine Jesus' request that Judas leave their group effectively marks Judas's total separation from the group[73] and limits the addressees of his discourse to a select few. 13.21-30 thus serves to situate the farewell discourse among friends.[74]

In contrast to those who remain, the character of Judas functions as an anti-friend.[75] He has enjoyed a close relationship with Jesus and yet spurns his friendship. Indeed, the betrayal by Judas would have been all the more abhorrent to the authorial audience given Greco-Roman notions of friendship. Judas is the opposite of all a friend is supposed to be. Rather

71. Segovia, *Farewell*, pp. 48-49.

72. For advocates of the former, see C.H. Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953), p. 403; Rudolf Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St. John*, III (3 vols.; New York: Crossroad, 1982), pp. 53-54. For advocates of the latter, which takes 13.31-38 as a transitional introduction to the farewell discourse, see, e.g., Barrett, *John*, p. 449; Brown, *John*, II, p. 608.

73. Segovia, *Farewell*, p. 22.

74. L.A. Weber suggests that the identification of Judas as Jesus' betrayer (13.21-30) probably serves 'the literary function of heightening the expectation of Jesus' imminent and tragic betrayal and death' ('That They May Be One', p. 88).

75. Narrative symbols and motifs are frequently expressed in dualistic terms in the Fourth Gospel (light/darkness, above/below). The motif of friendship, likewise, includes references both to what it means to be a friend, and what it means to be a non-friend. Like Judas, the Jewish leaders represent the opposite of what it means to be a friend of Jesus. They are intent on killing Jesus (5.18; 7.1; 8.59; 10.31; 11.45-53). They represent those who do not receive Jesus and thus cannot become 'children of God' (1.11-12). Ironically, the narrator portrays their burning desire to eliminate Jesus to be a result of Jesus' audacious claims, which serve as major tools for the Fourth Gospel's characterization of Jesus. Jesus has made himself equal with God (5.18). He claimed to have come down from heaven (chapter 6). He claimed to have preexisted and took for himself the very name of God (8.58). He claimed to be God (10.33). He exercised authority over death itself (11.43-44).

than being willing to die for his friend, he initiates the events that lead to Jesus' death. Rather than being open and forthright, he is a sly schemer whose true nature was hidden from his close companions (13.29). His rejection of Jesus' friendship would have been understood as an action that would have inflicted great pain upon the rejected one.[76] Little could compare with the trauma of losing a friend in this manner. As Ben Sira lamented, 'Is it not a grief to the death when a companion and friend turns to enmity?' (*Sir.* 37.2).[77]

John 13.21-30 thus helps set the stage for the farewell discourse by removing Judas, the anti-friend, from the scene. While 13.31-38 introduces many of the themes that pervade the first part of the farewell discourse,[78] it makes more sense as a transitional section than as the first part of the extended discourse that follows.[79] The reader has just seen in Judas what it means *not* to be a friend of Jesus. Now, as Jesus announces that his time has come, his followers respond with a declaration of absolute friendship: 'Peter said to him, "Lord, why can I not follow you now? *I will lay down my life for you*" ' (13.37). By making this claim of absolute loyalty, Peter declares himself to be a true friend of Jesus.

Once again, however, a character in the Gospel of John serves primarily as a foil for the characterization of Jesus. Rabinowitz's 'rule of chutzpah' (a rule of configuration) is instructive: 'When a character states with assurance that which he or she has no good reason to believe to be the case, we can expect that he or she will turn out to be wrong, especially if the

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76. Jesus' own brothers represent another example of those who spurned friendship with him. Instead of receiving him, they rejected him and challenged him to prove his status (7.2-4). Members of the authorial audience familiar with the Synoptic accounts, or the stories they record, likely would have noticed a distinct similarity between the request that Jesus' brothers make of him ('If you do these things, show yourself to the world'; 7.4), and the temptation narratives in Matthew and Luke, which use analogous formulas; Culpepper, *Anatomy*, p. 138. The refusal of Jesus' 'own' (1.11) to believe in him, even given the revelation of his glory through his sign miracles (12.37), serves as a foil for characterizing the relationship between Jesus and those who *did* receive him (1.12) in the second half of the Fourth Gospel.

77. Similarly, Ambrose later wrote: 'So the one who does the will of God is His friend and is honored with this name. He who is of one mind with him, he too is His friend. For there is unity of mind in friends, and no one is more hateful than the one who injures friendship. Hence in the traitor the Lord found this worst point on which to condemn his treachery, namely, that he gave no sign of gratitude and had mingled the poison of malice at the table of friendship' (*Off.* 3:136).

78. For other arguments in favor of viewing this section as the beginning of the discourse, see Segovia, *Farewell*, p. 62.

79. Coloe rightly points to a number of structural and thematic features that closely connect these verses to what precedes. She concludes that the footwashing pericope extends through verse 38; 'Sources in the Shadows', pp. 73-74.

claim is important for the outcome of the plot'.[80] In this case, the reader discovers that it is not only Judas who has a problem acting as a genuine friend; Peter also falls short. The friendship between Jesus and his followers, then, is not based on equal devotion that leads to intimacy. Instead, it is based on *Jesus'* ability to be a friend.[81] Peter's declaration of friendship and Jesus' rejection of the veracity of that declaration set the stage for Jesus' own elucidation of what it means to be a friend. Only he is a true friend—a friend who extends an offer of unity, mutuality, and even some semblance of 'equality' to his followers.[82]

Unity. As we have seen, the conceptual field of friendship is frequently used to highlight the absolute unity between the Father and the Son and thus characterize their relationship as one of absolute intimacy, or ideal friendship. The remarkable feature of the farewell discourse is the way in which the Johannine Jesus characterizes his relationship with his followers in terms of their unity by utilizing the same conceptual field that he had previously used (and subsequently uses) to characterize his relationship with the Father. Just as receiving Jesus entails receiving the Father, so also receiving those sent by Jesus entails receiving Jesus (13.20). Jesus thus welcomes his disciples into a relationship with himself that mirrors his relationship with the Father.[83]

80. *Before Reading*, p. 121.

81. Jesus' response to Peter's declaration of friendship helps establish the unilateral basis for the intimacy that the followers enjoy with Jesus. It is Jesus who lowers himself to his followers' level through the act of footwashing, and subsequently raises his disciples through declarations of friendship. He is the one who acts as a true friend and extends the offer of friendship to his followers. They, on the other hand, have little or no role in establishing the friendship relationship; cf. R.E.O. White, *The Night He was Betrayed: Bible Studies in Our Lord's Preparation for his Passion* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), p. 94; Harner, *Relation Analysis*, p. 81 n. 39; Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, p. 266.

82. Jesus' exhortation in Jn 14.1-3 for his followers not to be disheartened at his absence may well reflect the Greco-Roman notion that friends remember their friends whether they are together or apart; cf. Diogenes Laertius 1.37. Moreover, it assumes the common Greco-Roman notion that a primary characteristic of friends is that they live together; see, e.g., Aristotle, *Eth. nic.* 8.5.3; 8.6.1; 9.10.4. Yes, Jesus is going away; but he is going with a purpose: to prepare a place for his followers so that they can be together once more.

83. Cf. T.E. Pollard, who argues that the Father-Son relationship is extended to believers; 'The Father-Son and God-Believer Relationship according to St. John: A Brief Study of John's Use of Prepositions', in M. de Jonge (ed.), *L'Évangile de Jean: Sources, redaction, theologie* (BETL, 44; Gembloux: J. Duculot, 1977), pp. 363-70; see also Mark L. Appold, *The Oneness Motif in the Fourth Gospel: Motif Analysis and Exegetical Probe into the Theology of John* (WUNT, 2/1; Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1976), pp. 18-47; Harner, *Relation Analysis*, p. 131.

The unity between Jesus and his followers is emphasized in the parable of the vine and the branches (15.1-8). Jesus' disciples/friends are so closely linked to him that they can be described as branches of the vine (Jesus). They cannot function without their relationship with Jesus (15.5).[84] Sharing in Jesus' possessions depends on maintaining unity with him (15.7).[85]

The unity between Father and Son, and the Son and his followers, is also used to characterize the followers' relationships among themselves (15.12). Indeed, Jesus' actions and prayers are meant, in part, to facilitate the type of unity between the disciples that exists between Jesus and the Father (17.11).[86] The groundwork for Jesus' teaching on the unity of believers (esp. 17.21) was laid in 10.16: 'So there will be one flock, one shepherd'.[87] Their unity was thus to extend to an even broader set of friends: 'My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for

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84. While Jesus' relationship with his followers is patterned after a relationship between a vine and its branches rather than between two branches, such a metaphor does not require that the friendship that Jesus speaks of in Jn 15.15 is simply another label for a master-disciple relationship; Puthenkandathil, *Philos*, p. 240. While the metaphor implies the superiority of the vine and the dependence of the branches, it also implies a level of intimacy or connectedness that goes beyond the master-disciple relationship.

85. Brown is probably correct in arguing that Jn 15.1-17 makes up a discreet unit with the first six verses introducing the metaphor of the vine and branches and verses 7-17 providing 'an explanation of this figure in the context of Last Discourse themes' (*John*, II, p. 665). The metaphor speaks of the importance of the interpersonal relationship between Jesus and his followers—a theme that pervades the upper room discourse. Indeed, the parallel drawn between 'remaining' in Jesus (15.4, 5, 6, 7) and 'remaining' in his love (15.9) makes it clear that the former is referring to their relationship—a relationship of intimate friendship; cf. Yu Ibuki, *Die Wahrheit im Johannesevangelium* (Bonn: Peter Hanstein, 1972), p. 248. The section, as a whole, also highlights the relationship between the metaphysical and ethical dimensions of love. Remaining in Jesus' love is closely linked to the bearing of fruit; see Victor Paul Furnish, *The Love Command in the New Testament* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1972), p. 141.

86. D.A. Fennema notes that 'the believers' sharing of knowledge, love, and unity with Jesus, God, and one another both emulates and is derived from the prior relationship of Father and Son' (David A. Fennema, 'Jesus and God according to John: An Analysis of the Fourth Gospel's Father/Son Christology' [PhD dissertation, Duke University, 1979], p. 228). Similarly, F.J. Moloney points out that 'Jesus asks the Father to care for his fragile disciples by gathering them into all that can be known of the reality of God ["protect them *in your name*"]..., creating a unity among them, repeating the oneness that has always existed between Jesus and the Father'; Francis J. Moloney, *Glory not Dishonor: Reading John 13–20 (21)* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998), p. 114; cf. T. Evan Pollard, '"That They All May Be One" (John xvii.21)—and the Unity of the Church', *ET* 70 (1958–59), pp. 149-50; Brown, *John*, II, p. 769; Barrett, *John*, p. 424.

87. Weber, 'That They May Be One', p. 180.

those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us' (17.20-21).

Finally, the unity motif in this section relies heavily on the language of indwelling.[88] In speaking of the Father being *in* the Son (14.10, 11; 17.21, 23) and the Son being *in* the Father (14.10, 11, 20; 17.21), Jesus being *in* the disciples (14.20; 15.4-5; 17.23) and the disciples being *in* Jesus (14.20; 15.4-5; 17.21),[89] the writer is likely describing these relationships in terms consistent with Greco-Roman notions of ideal friendship.[90] Aristotle,[91] Cicero (*De amic.* 25.92), Plutarch (*Amic. mult.* [*Mor.*] 96F), Horace (*Carm.* 1.3.8), and Ovid (*Ep. Pont.* 1.8.2.) all wrote of relationships in which two individuals shared one soul. The author of the Fourth Gospel appears to have drawn on this notion to describe the relationship between the members of the Godhead and between Jesus and his followers. If this analysis is correct, then the authorial audience would have understood the indwelling language in the Gospel of John as a poignant description of the deepest levels of intimacy.[92]

Through regular use of the language of unity, the Johannine Jesus described his perfect relationship with the Father and offered that same type of relationship to his followers.[93] This relationship would not only be with himself but with the Father as well (14.7; 17.3). Moreover, the Johannine Jesus made it clear that such relational unity should characterize the relationships between all of his followers. Just as the Son and the Father

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88. B. Lindars has suggested that the introduction of the term φίλοι helps to elucidate the relationship of mutual indwelling; Barnabas Lindars, *The Gospel of John* (NCBC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), p. 491. Dodd has argued that the language of mutual indwelling refers to the nature of eternal life; *Interpretation*, p. 398.

89. After Jesus' departure, the Holy Spirit will also be 'in' Jesus' followers (14.17).

90. Van der Watt associates the language of indwelling with the family metaphor in the Fourth Gospel. Two or more individuals act and think as one because they are part of the same family; *Family of the King*, p. 210. While the present study suggests a different focus, Van der Watt's analysis reinforces the view that the language of indwelling would have conveyed a sense of profound relational intimacy.

91. See Diogenes Laertius 5.20.

92. Fennema argues that 'the mutual indwelling of Jesus and his disciples centers in their continued dependence on him—as the source and originator of their life and works' ('Jesus and God', p. 238). The apparent redundancy in the passages with indwelling language should probably be explained as intentional efforts to emphasize this aspect of the relationship between Father and Son, and Son and followers.

93. M.L. Appold points out that Jesus' statements regarding his unity with his followers cannot be read in isolation from his statements regarding his unity with the Father since the former statements are a 'necessary consequence of the reciprocity between Father and Son because [their] oneness is revelational' (*The Oneness Motif*, p. 47).

are one, and the Son and his followers are one, so too are his followers, as a community, to be one.[94]

Mutuality. As noted in the previous Chapters, unity of relationship naturally led to a sharing of possessions. Such sharing between the Father and Son is an important motif in the Gospel of John. The one who was with God and was God shared everything with the Father. Remarkably, this perfect friendship is not portrayed as a closed relationship from which others are excluded. Where Phintias and Damon refuse to allow Dionysius to join in their friendship,[95] the Johannine Jesus explicitly extends the mutuality that he shares with the Father to include his followers. As the Father had given his words to Jesus, so Jesus shared the word of the Father with his followers: 'the words that you gave to me I have given to them' (17.8; cf. 14.24; 17.14).[96] Along with the Father's words, Jesus also revealed the Father's name (17.26), and shared his own peace (14.27) and joy (15.11) with his followers.[97] In fact, just as Jesus' intimacy with the Father led to all the Father's possessions being at his disposal (3.35; 16.15; 17.7; cf. 11.22; 14.16), so also within the intimate relationship that Jesus offers to his followers he makes all that he possessed available to them: 'I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it' (14.13-14; cf. 15.7; 16.23-24).[98] This mutuality knew no bounds. Jesus, who as God shared

94. 'The eternal unity of the Father and the Son, sustained unbroken on earth by the loving obedience of the Son-become-Servant, is now extended to embrace the Eleven in the Son's own love, and established as the—ideally unbreakable—unity of all who experience that love of God in Christ' (R.E.O. White, *The Night He was Betrayed*, p. 92; cf. Ernst Käsemann, *The Testament of Jesus: A Study of the Gospel of John in the Light of Chapter 17* [trans. G. Krodel; London: SCM Press, 1968], pp. 57-58).

95. Diodorus Siculus 10.4.3-6; see p. 60 n. 123 above.

96. Culpepper may be correct in also seeing the conceptual field related to being 'children of God' here. As the Father, God fulfills his paternal responsibility to his children by teaching them. Moreover, he does not leave them 'orphans' (14.18) but instead remains with them along with the Son (14.23); R. Alan Culpepper, 'The Pivot of John's Prologue', *NTS* 27 (1980–81), p. 29; cf. Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, pp. 206-209, 272-78.

97. The Fourth Gospel appears to link the notion of 'fullness of joy' with friendship. The 'friend of the bridegroom's' joy is made complete when the bridegroom assumes his role (3.29). Jesus' desire is that his followers'/friends' joy be complete (15.11). That joy is to be a byproduct of the mutuality that Jesus extends to his followers (16.24), part of which includes his revelation of the Father and the Father's relationship with the Son (17.13).

98. Van der Watt claims that the focus on open and direct communication endorses the conclusion 'that the prayer sections in John should also be seen as part of the larger universal family imagery' (*Family of the King*, p. 295). While it clearly

the Father's distinctive and unique glory (Isa. 42.8; 48.11), even shared that glory with his followers: 'I have given them the glory that you gave me' (17.22a). As D.M. Smith observed, 'When he gives his disciples his God-given glory, he unites them with himself and with God'.[99]

The Johannine Jesus identified this complete mutuality as a prerequisite to intimacy: 'so that they may be one, as we are one' (17.22b). Through their relationship with Jesus, his followers were given access to whatever they could possibly need. As the Son's unique relationship with the Father meant that he was free to ask the Father for anything (11.22; 14.16), so also Jesus' followers' relationship with him would allow them to freely ask him or the Father for whatever they needed: 'If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you' (15.7; cf. 16.24).

Implicit within the language of asking 'in his name' is a unity of purpose. 'To pray in the name of Christ is not any magical invocation of the name, nor is it enough to add 'per Jesum Christum Dominum nostrum', but it is to pray as one who is in Christ'.[100] Those who 'remain' in Jesus have the same wishes that Jesus has. By remaining in him, his followers' prayers become Jesus' prayers—prayers that are always answered by the Father. 'As friends of Jesus who share divine knowledge [the] disciples are in a position to understand God's will', and thus ask accordingly.[101] 'Request and answer are [thus] the two sides of friendship with God. And friendship with God gives prayer the certainty that it will be answered'.[102] Followers of Jesus are called to 'not only the submissiveness of a servant, and not only the gratitude of a child, but to the familiarity and boldness of a friend'.[103]

reflects a relationship of intimacy, the language is more indicative of ideal friendship than family relationships.

99. D. Moody Smith, *The Theology of the Gospel of John* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 122.

100. J.H. Bernard, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to St. John*, II (2 vols.; ICC; Edinburgh, T. & T. Clark, 1928), p. 490.

101. Puthenkandathil, *Philos*, pp. 220, 227; cf. José Caba, *La oración de petición: Estudio exegético sobre los evangelios sinópticos y los escritos joaneos* (AnBib, 62; Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1974), pp. 257-64; see also Hans Bietenhard, 'ὀνομάζω, ἐπονομάζω, ψευδώνυμος', *TDNT*, V, p. 276.

102. Jürgen Moltmann, 'Open Friendship: Aristotelian and Christian Concepts of Friendship', in L.S. Rouner (ed.), *The Changing Face of Friendship* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1994), p. 37.

103. Moltmann, 'Open Friendship', p. 37. Moltmann draws a helpful distinction between the prayer and the status of servant, child, and friend. Servants beg without any certainty of an answer. They thus have respect for God, but not affection. Children try to force an answer to prayer demonstrating that they have affection for God, but not respect. Friends, on the other hand, ask out of both affection and respect,

This mutuality between the Son and his followers also included the perfect transparency that characterized an ideal friendship. Earlier, this familiar friendship convention had been used to describe the intimacy between the Father and the Son (5.19). In the farewell scene, the Johannine Jesus grants the same intimacy to his followers: 'I have called you friends, because *I have made known to you everything* that I have heard from my Father' (15.15).[104] The absolute nature of the statement suggests that it points to a reality beyond the words themselves. If we are correct in assuming that Jesus did *not* literally make known to his followers *everything* he had heard from his Father, then the absolute language must be intended to highlight the nature of their relationship—a relationship where there is absolute relational transparency—rather than simply to provide propositional truth. Indeed, Jesus goes on to promise them that 'The hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figures, but will tell you plainly [παρρησίᾳ] of the Father' (16.25).[105] While others are excluded from this relational transparency ('I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world'; 17.6), within the bounds of ideal friendship free revelation prevails: 'those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them' (14.21).[106]

Culpepper notes that 'the revelation of the Father seems to be the distinctive Johannine contribution which has been imposed on the traditional interpretation of Jesus' role (taking away sin)'.[107] This revelation is both a cause and a consequence of Jesus' role in taking away the sin of the world. The Gospel of John reveals that the Father gave his Son's life so that his broken relationship with the world could be restored, but also puts forward the distinctive view that within that relationship there is an openness that is not revealed in the Synoptic Gospels. Jesus is free to reveal the Father to those who are 'children of God' and 'friends of God'.[108]

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trusting in God's friendship and thus respecting his freedom to reply appropriately; 'Open Friendship', p. 38.

104. In light of the ubiquitous language of ideal friendship found in the upper room discourse and throughout the Fourth Gospel, Puthenkandathil is surely incorrect in claiming that the title of φίλοι granted to the disciples in 15.15 'is purely based on the communication of knowledge and its comprehension' (*Philos*, pp. 217-18). Quite the contrary, although 15.15 uses such revelation as the warrant for the title, additional warrants appear throughout the upper room scene, particularly those that highlight the unity, mutuality, and equality that Jesus emphasizes through both his words and deeds.

105. Gail R. O'Day, 'Jesus as Friend in the Gospel of John', *Int* 58 (2004), p. 155.

106. Part of this revelation would come through Jesus' surrogate, the Holy Spirit (14.26; 16.13). O'Day suggests that Jesus' frankness of speech in 11.11-15 should be viewed as an act of friendship; 'Jesus as Friend', pp. 154-55.

107. *Anatomy*, p. 88.

108. Again, the question remains regarding which comes first, revelation or

Through his many declarations, Jesus invited his followers to enter into the mutuality of possessions that characterized ideal friendship. Ultimately, this mutuality would provide access to the Father that had previously been Jesus' sole prerogative (13.36).[109]

Equality. The ideal friendship that existed between Jesus and the Father included not only unity and mutuality but also equality. From beginning to end, the Gospel of John portrays Jesus as a divine figure. When the Johannine Jesus invites his followers to be his 'friends', readers are left wondering how such a relationship could exist. In Chapter 3 we saw how the Johannine Jesus is portrayed as a heavenly figure who partakes fully in the Father's divinity and prerogatives. Such a characterization of Jesus further intensified the implicit conundrum raised in the Prologue: How can such a lofty figure have a relationship with humankind?[110]

When we examine the language used to describe the relationship between Jesus and his followers, we find that the writer makes no attempt to mask their inequality.[111] The disciples, whom Jesus addressed as 'my children' (13.33), remained bound to obey their superior: 'If you love me, you will keep my commandments' (14.15).[112] Their relationship is predicated not just upon love but also upon obedience. Indeed, in the context

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friendship; see Fitzgerald, 'Christian Friendship: John, Paul, and the Philippians', *Int* 68 (2007), p. 286.

109. Cf. Royce Gordon Gruenler, *The Trinity in the Gospel of John: A Thematic Commentary on the Fourth Gospel* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1986), p. 111. The mutuality enjoyed by the disciples in their relationship with Jesus, however, was not to be completely positive in nature. Like true friends they would share both in Jesus' good fortune and in his misfortune (15.20; 21.18-19). The enmity that the world felt toward Jesus would be transferred to his friends after his departure (15.18-19).

110. Some scholars have thus supposed that Jesus' relationship with his followers could not reflect Greco-Roman notions of friendship: 'Es ist keine Freundshaft, aufgebaut auf gegenseitiger Gleichrangigkeit; insofern ist das hellenistische Freundschaftsideal nicht verwirklicht' (Jürgen Becker, *Das Evangelium nach Johannes*, II [2 vols.; ÖTK 4/1, 2; Gütersloh: Mohn, 1979–1981], p. 485). In Greco-Roman thinking 'like was known by like' (Plato, *Prot.* 337d; *Tim.* 45C; Plotinus, *Enn.* 4.5.7, 23-62; 1.6.9.30-45; cf. Philo, *Mut.* 2-6). Philodemus addressed the question of whether or not friendship could exist between gods and mortals and concluded that 'we do not seem to call such things friendship' (*D.* 1.17-18).

111. Many scholars have been quick to note that Jesus' granting of friendship to his disciples did not entail granting them equality in status; see, e.g., Haenchen, *John*, II, p. 132; Rudolf Bultmann, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary* (trans. G.R. Beasley-Murray *et al.*; Oxford: Blackwell, 1971), p. 544.

112. 'Jesus' absolute right to command is in no way diminished' by granting his disciples the status of 'friends' (D.A. Carson, *The Gospel according to John* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991], p. 523).

of the passage with which we began our discussion (15.13-15), we find that the friendship between Jesus and the disciples is expressed in conditional terms: 'You are my friends *if* you do what I command you' (15.14).[113]

Earlier scholars have typically sought to affirm the intimate nature of the relationship between Jesus and his followers, while at the same time recognizing the inherent problem caused by the inequality in their relationship:

> It is true that the relationship of Jesus to the Twelve, and in particular to individuals like John and Lazarus, did not contain the element of 'equality' which marks ordinary friendship. But this feature should not be pressed unduly. Jesus welcomed His disciples and followers to the higher platform of His friendship, and made their admission to His confidence and intimacy a matter of distinct recognition (Jn 15[15]).[114]

Moltmann has pointed out that had Jesus abided by the principle that only equals could be friends, he would have been forced to stay in heaven, keeping his friendship with the Father and Holy Spirit an exclusive relationship. 'But his incarnation and his friendship with sinners and tax collectors break through exclusive circles'.[115] As noted above, others have maintained that the friendship between Jesus and his followers should be read in terms of a patron-client relationship.[116] Without a doubt there is a level of inequality that continues in the relationship between the disciples and Jesus. Moreover, the mutual responsibilities of Jesus and his disciples are consistent with the notion of patronage in which 'a powerful benefactor (*patronus*) lent protection and support to his dependents or *clientes*, who...owed him the more humble services of obeisance and allegiance in return'.[117] Those who love Jesus, keep his commands (14.15; 15.14). In return Jesus gives them the *Paraclete* (14.16), reveals himself to them (14.21), reveals the Father to them (15.15; 17.6, 26), loves them (14.21), protects them (17.12), comes with the Father to live with them (14.23), and gives them whatever they ask in his name (16.24).

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113. While obedience is a component of the friendship between Jesus and his followers, their friendship cannot be reduced to a relationship of obedience; contra Merrill C. Tenney, *John* (EBC, 9; ed. F.E. Gaebelein; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981), p. 153. Moreover, 'Friendship is not conditional upon obedience...but upon the Father's prior love: by abiding in his love one is both sustained and commanded. That has been the whole point of 15.1ff. The reciprocity of God's action and man's response is presumed' (Furnish, *Love Command*, p. 141).

114. W.M. Rankin, 'Friendship', *ERE*, VI, p. 133.

115. Moltmann, 'Open Friendship', p. 39.

116. Carolyn Osiek and David L. Balch, *Families in the New Testament World: Households and House Churches* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1997), pp. 189, 281.

117. David Konstan, *Friendship in the Classical World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 136.

The ubiquitous language of *ideal* friendship that is used to characterize the relationship between Jesus and his followers in the upper room scene, however, makes it clear that their relationship goes far beyond simple patronage. Within the context of the Gospel of John as a whole, and the farewell scene in particular, we find striking clues that point beyond patronage to a relationship of the most intimate nature.[118] Indeed, the actions and words of Jesus serve as an effective bridge over the chasm of inequality that ontologically characterizes his relationship with his followers. To repeat Cicero's solution to such unequal relationships: 'the superior should put himself on a level with his inferior' (*De amic.* 20.71) and 'those who are superior should lower themselves...[and] lift up their inferiors' (*De amic.* 20.72). In the upper room scene, Jesus uses both steps to bridge the gap in status. Through his declarations that extend unity and mutuality to his followers, Jesus effectively raises their status.[119] He also, however, dramatically demonstrates his willingness to lower himself. Although Jesus does not *remove* the inequality between himself and his followers, he does erect a *bridge* over it so that it is no longer a hindrance to intimacy. To understand the extent to which Jesus went in order to deal with the status gap between himself and his disciples we will return to the footwashing scene that was used to introduce the upper room discourse in a moment; but first, we must return to the passage with which this study began: Jn 15.13-15.

Reading John 15.13-15 in Context

John 15.13-15 has been aptly described as the climax of the Fourth Gospel's treatment of the friendship motif.[120] Not only is the term φίλος used in each of these three verses, but verse 13 also alludes to a common feature of the conceptual field of friendship: 'No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends'.[121] It would have been virtually

118. After providing a helpful analysis of the friendship between Moses and God, Lapsley rightly argues that that friendship should serve as a model for the church's relationship with God; Jacqueline E. Lapsley, 'Friends with God? Moses and the Possibility of Covenantal Friendship', *Int* 58 (2004), p. 127.

119. The importance of Jesus' declarations of friendship in the upper room scene is highlighted by the repeated use of the expression, Ταῦτα λελάληκα ὑμῖν (14.25; 15.11; 16.1, 4, 6, 25, 33). J.H. Bernard has argued that this phrase should probably be viewed as a revelatory formula analogous to ἐγώ κύριος λελάληκα in Ezekiel (5.13, 15, 17; 6.10; 17.21, 24; 21.22, 37; 22.14; 24.14; 30.12; 37.14); *St. John*, II, p. 485.

120. Puthenkandathil, *Philos*, p. 155.

121. The type of love portrayed here *is* characteristic of the Fourth Gospel; contra Martin Dibelius, 'Joh. 15, 13. Eine Studie zum Traditionsproblem des Johannesevangeliums', in *Festgabe für Adolf Deissmann zum Geburtstag 7 November 1927* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1927), pp. 168-86.

impossible for the authorial audience to encounter this textual cue that clearly points to ideal friendship and not interpret what follows (and what precedes) in light of Greco-Roman notions of friendship (see Seneca, *Ep.* 6.2; 9.10; Plutarch, *Amic. mult.* [Mor.] 93E; Epictetus, *Disc.* 2.7.3; Lucian, *Tox.* 10, 36, 58-60; Chariton, *Chaer.* 4.2.14; 7.1.7; Achilles Tatius, *Leuc. Clit.* 3.22.1; 7.14.4; Plato, *Symp.* 179B, 208D).[122]

    In addition to this concentration of friendship language, the structural location of these verses also marks them as important. John 15.13-15 is at the structural center of the upper room account. Eighty-one verses occur between 13.1 and the key statements in 15.13-15, and eighty-one verses occur between 15.13-15 and 17.26. Thus, the language of friendship is highlighted not only in the first and last sentence of the section but also at the mid-point of the upper room scene. So what does it mean for Jesus to call his followers 'friends' rather than 'servants'?[123] And what is the significance of Jesus' declaration that he has called his followers 'friends'?

Friendship and Analepsis

Within the narrative world of the text, the use of the perfect tense in 15.15 would have raised a question in the disciples' minds: 'When did he call us "friends" '?[124] As an example of the literary device known as analepsis, this verse effectively directed the original readers of the Gospel of John to look back at what has preceded in an effort to find where Jesus had called his disciples 'friends'. In the case of Jn 15.15, we appear to be dealing with an

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122. As Köstenberger notes, Jesus' statement in verse 13 'would resonate particularly with John's Greco-Roman audience' (*John* [BECNT; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004], p. 458). It would have also been difficult for the authorial audience, most of whom would have presumably been familiar with the story of Jesus' life, not to read this verse in light of his death. The appeal to this common friendship motif would have highlighted Jesus' sacrifice of his life as the ultimate expression of his friendship for his followers; cf. Furnish, *Love Command*, p. 141. As O'Day notes, 'Jesus did what the philosophers only talked about' ('Jesus as Friend', p. 150).

123. By using φίλος rather than ξένος ('guest friend') to refer to the relationship between Jesus and his followers, John may have sought to avoid the connotation inherent in the latter. Guest friendship or 'ritualized friendship' refers to 'a bond of solidarity manifesting itself in an exchange of goods and services between individuals originating from separate social units' (Gabriel Herman, *Ritualized Friendship and the Greek City* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987], p. 10). Such a relationship differs significantly from the ideal friendship suggested by the language of the Fourth Gospel.

124. Elliott notes that Jesus' promise in 14.2, 3 to 'prepare a place' for his followers would have been incongruent if they were slaves, who have no permanent place in a household (cf. 8.35); 'John 15:15', p. 45 n. 43. It is also possible that in 15.15 Jesus' language reflects the retrospective viewpoint of the author; cf. Culpepper, *Anatomy*, pp. 36-37.

example of 'completing analepsis', in which readers are notified of something that has happened at an earlier point in the temporal progression of the narrative of which they have not yet been informed.[125] It is also possible, however, in light of our analysis of the footwashing scene, that this is an example of 'repeating analepsis' rather than 'completing analepsis'. Repeating analepsis recalls earlier portions of the narrative and serves to clarify, recall for further interpretation, or emphasize something about the previously mentioned material.[126] If the above analysis of the foot-

125. So Culpepper, *Anatomy*, p. 59; see also Gérard Genette, *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method* (trans. Jane E. Lewin; Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1980), p. 51. Culpepper lists Jn 4.38; 6.70; 10.41; 11.2; 13.2; 15.15, 16; 16.11; 17.18; and 20.30 as examples of this device; *Anatomy*, pp. 59-60. The analysis here, of course, relies on a fairly traditional understanding of the significance of the perfect tense. Although the jury is still out on whether the perfect tense carries perfective aspect, imperfective aspect, stative aspect, or some other aspectual significance, it quite clearly is typically used to portray something that has already been accomplished. For a brief overview of the debate surrounding the Greek perfect tense, though his own proposal has significant weaknesses, see Constantine R. Campbell, *Verbal Aspect, the Indicative Mood, and Narrative: Soundings in the Greek of the New Testament* (Studies in Biblical Greek, 13; New York: Peter Lang, 2007), pp. 161-75. Porter maintains that since the perfect tense may be used to refer to past, present, or future events, not to mention that it may have timeless or omnitemporal reference, any apparent temporal mismatch here stems from faulty ways of reading the perfect tense. If we leave aside the question of temporal reference, however, Porter's theory of the relative markedness of the Greek tenses still suggests that Jesus' statement in this verse would be prominent and would have thus arrested the attention of the readers, even if it did not do so through analepsis. The shift from present tense (λέγω) to the more marked perfect tense (εἴρηκα) would help contrast what is no longer true (οὐκέτι) with what is now true, drawing attention to Jesus' statement about the disciples' change of status. See Porter, *Verbal Aspect*, pp. 245-70; Porter, *Idioms of the Greek New Testament*, p. 23.

126. Culpepper also examines *pro*lepsis in the Fourth Gospel, a literary device in which events are mentioned that have not yet occurred in the narrative; Culpepper, *Anatomy*, p. 61; cf. Genette, *Narrative Discourse*, pp. 68, 77. He points out that mixed (internal) prolepses, which tell of events that 'begin prior to the end of the narrative and continue past its ending', frequently appear in the farewell discourse and often serve to further define the nature of Jesus' relationship with his followers. He lists the following examples: 14.16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21; *Anatomy*, pp. 61, 63. Unlike repeating prolepsis, mixed prolepsis is not used to build dramatic intensity, but rather to create a closer link between the narrative and the intended readers; Culpepper, *Anatomy*, p. 63. Interestingly, the greatest concentration of external prolepses, which refer to events that will occur following the end of the narrative, is found in the farewell discourse; Culpepper, *Anatomy*, p. 67. While many of these are of a general nature (14.21; 15.16) and serve to encourage the followers of Jesus (14.13, 23, 26; 15.7, 10, 11, 26; 16.7-8, 13-14, 26), others 'point toward ostracism, hostility, and exclusion from the synagogue': 15.18, 20, 21; 16.2, 3, 4; Culpepper, *Anatomy*, p. 67. Within the context of

washing scene is correct, the purpose of the perfect tense in 15.15 may be to place a new interpretation on that event. At any rate, to determine why this feature of the story has been omitted we must look at the characterization of the followers of Jesus.[127]

As we have seen, the Gospel of John takes the very language that has been used to characterize the relationship between Jesus and the Father and applies it to Jesus' relationship with his followers. Their relationship with him is to mirror his relationship with the Father. Through his declarations of friendship in the upper room discourse, the Johannine Jesus effectively holds out an offer of friendship to his followers—indeed, he declares that such a relationship exists. While a great gap in social standing had formerly separated him from his followers, making genuine friendship impossible, Jesus now bridges that gap by raising the status of his followers through statements that intimate his willingness to extend to them unity and mutuality. This bridging of the relational chasm that was created by their inequality is also effected through Jesus' actions in lowering himself.

Footwashing in Retrospect

In the upper room scene of John 13–17, then, the author of the Gospel of John took an experience from everyday life (washing dirty feet), and invested it with symbolic meaning through the discourses that follow. It is important to recognize that the author made a conscious choice regarding what to include and what to leave out of his account. He is the only Gospel writer to include the footwashing scene and the only one to include the farewell discourse.

In order to fashion the Gospel of John into a coherent whole, the writer had to impose a meaning on the various events and convince the readers that this meaning was implicit in the events even before being made explicit later in the narrative.[128] As Rabinowitz notes, 'Virtually any event or statement can imply some consequences; authorial reading involves the ability to sort out those for which the consequences are likely to be vital in the text'.[129] Given the fact that the footwashing scene occurs at the beginning of a new major section, the primary interpretation of this event is to be found in the following context. The question addressed to

this emphasis on trials, the characterization of Jesus' followers as intimate friends of the incarnate *Logos* provides a strong note of reassurance.

127. Culpepper, *Anatomy*, p. 59.

128. The plot interprets events by placing them in a particular sequence; Culpepper, pp. 84-85; cf. Hayden White, 'The Value of Narrativity in the Representation of Reality', *Critical Inquiry* 7 (1980), p. 24.

129. *Before Reading*, p. 139.

the disciples in the narrative world of the Gospel of John would have also rung in the ears of the authorial audience: 'Do you understand what I have done for you?' (13.12).[130] What exactly had Jesus done?

The significance of the footwashing pericope would probably not have been fully realized by the authorial audience by simply reading through 13.17. While they would have known that the actions of Jesus were significant, their significance would probably have remained somewhat obscure for a time. What is important to recognize is that readers 'usually start with the presumption that diverse strands of action will in some way be linked'.[131] The fact that characters are defined by what they do as well as what they say would have placed the authorial audience on alert to try to determine the full significance of Jesus' actions for his characterization. According to Rabinowitz's rules of coherence, readers assume that a 'work *is* coherent and that apparent flaws in its construction are intentional and meaning bearing'.[132] As John 13 leads into the upper room discourse, it is not immediately clear how Jesus' extended discourse relates to his actions in Jn 13.1-20. Such apparent disunity leads the reader to look for a link between the texts since it is generally appropriate when reading a narrative to assume that actions or events will produce results. The apparent gap in coherence thus presses the reader to look for a way to unify the text.[133]

As the authorial audience came to 15.15, with Jesus' question ('Do you understand what I have done for you?') still ringing in their ears, the implicit significance of the events in Jn 13.2-17 may have finally become apparent: 'I *have* called you friends'. The missing 'appointment scene' that Jn 15.15 implies may well be found in John 13 where the full extent of Jesus' love (13.1) begins to find expression and the issue of the inequality within their relationship is first addressed. As one of superior status, Jesus had lowered himself and served his inferior followers. He had leveled the playing field, as much as possible, between himself and his disciples.[134]

It is quite likely that Jn 15.15 would have represented a moment of realization for the authorial audience. Jesus declares that his followers now

130. Jesus' words a few verses later would have also caused ancient readers to pause and contemplate their significance: 'You should do as I have done for you' (13.15).

131. Rabinowitz, *Before Reading*, p. 132.

132. Rabinowitz, *Before Reading*, p. 147; cf. Gary Saul Morson, *The Boundaries of Genre: Dostoevsky's* Diary of a Writer *and the Traditions of Literary Utopia* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1981), p. 41.

133. Rabinowitz, *Before Reading*, p. 133.

134. The same is to be true within the community of Jesus' followers. Leaders are to be servants, not despots. The rich are to view the poor as brothers and sisters in Christ, not as inferior riff raff. Men are to view women as equal partakers of the rich salvation that Jesus came to bring, not as second-class citizens in the Kingdom of Heaven.

enjoy the status of friends rather than servants, but he does not explicitly provide the means by which the change has taken place. Rabinowitz's rules of signification allow the reader to determine the meaning of what has preceded (and what follows) by moving from the effect (the disciples' status as friends) to the cause. Thus, Jn 15.15 would have led the authorial audience to ask the question: How did we get to this point where the Divine *Logos* extends the intimacy of friendship to his followers? Thinking back through what has occurred in this section, which began in 13.1, it likely would have become apparent that Jesus' unexpected actions in the footwashing pericope and his declarations in the upper room discourse bear a causal relationship with his statement in 15.15.

Commenting on the reading process, W. Iser has noted that reading involves a continual process of anticipation and retrospection by which new information that is introduced into the text leads readers to reevaluate previous features of the text:

> The new background brings to light new aspects of what we had committed to memory; conversely these, in turn, shed their light on the new background, thus arousing more complex anticipations. Thus, the reader, in establishing these interactions between past, present, and future, actually causes the text to reveal its potential multiplicity of connections.[135]

Reading is thus a process of trial and error in which the reader organizes and then reorganizes the data presented by the text.[136] In Jn 15.15, the authorial audience's encounter with an explicit reference to friendship would have led them to reevaluate the role that friendship, and the conceptual world and language associated with it, had already played in the narrative. This reevaluation would have pointed not just to what had preceded in the upper room scene—the explication of Jesus' relationship with his followers—but also to the persistent friendship motif that was introduced in the Prologue and developed in chapters 1–12. Thus, Jesus' relationship with his followers, which comes to the foreground of the narrative in 15.15, would have naturally been compared with and evaluated in light of Jesus' relationship with the Father.

Friendship and Obedience
Does the fact that Jesus' friendship with his followers depends upon them obeying his commands (15.14), however, force readers to view the relationship as something other than an ideal friendship? Most modern readers would be inclined to echo Philodemus's words: 'We do not seem to call such things friendship' (*D.* 1.17-18). Others may take it to imply more of

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135. Wolfgang Iser, *The Implied Reader: Patterns in Communication in Prose Fiction from Bunyan to Beckett* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), p. 278.

136. Iser, *The Implied Reader*, p. 288.

a patron-client relationship or a master-disciple relationship. The author of the Gospel of John, however, appears to take great pains to dispel such notions.

Not only does he consistently utilize the language of *ideal* friendship to characterize the disciples' relationship with Jesus, but he also draws correlations between Jesus' relationship with them and Jesus' relationship with the Father that imply that something more than a patron-client or master-disciple relationship is in view.[137] He draws heavily on the notion of reciprocity from the conceptual field of friendship to characterize both Jesus' relationship with the Father and Jesus' relationship with his followers.[138] True friends do what the other wants. Since they are unified and place their resources at one another's disposal (i.e., enjoy a relationship of unity and mutuality), they naturally respond positively to the desires of one another. In the divine-divine relationship between Father and Son, the Father loves the Son (3.35) and the Son loves the Father (14.31). Such a loving relationship does not preclude, however, one carrying out the wishes of the other. Quite the contrary, such willing obedience is demanded by the intimate relationship that Jesus shares with the Father. Consequently, the Son always does what pleases the Father (8.29). Thus when readers hear that Jesus' followers are his friends *if* they obey his commands, they understand that Jesus' obedience to the Father functions as an expression of his love for the Father: 'I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father' (14.31). Indeed, the Father-Son relationship appears to require such obedience: 'If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, *just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love*' (15.10).[139]

Jesus' affirmation that both relationships require the keeping of commandments (15.10), the proximity of these statements to his statement correlating friendship and obedience in 15.14, and the fact that these are the first times that Jesus' love for the Father is explicitly mentioned, all suggest that 14.31 and 15.10 prepare readers for what they are to encounter in 15.14. Just as the one who not only was *with* God but also *was* God can keep the Father's commands without being any less a 'friend of God', or even any less God himself, so also the disciples' obedience to Jesus'

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137. Malina and Rohrbaugh are careful to note that the reference in Jn 15.12-17 is not to political friendship but to fictive kinship friends—a relationship in which the 'friends' are treated as though they were members of the same family; *Social-Science Commentary on the Gospel of John*, pp. 235-36.

138. The latter is illustrated in the vine and branches metaphor that immediately precedes Jesus' statement.

139. 'Jesus is presented everywhere in the Fourth Gospel as equal yet obedient to God the Father' (Köstenberger and Swain, *Father, Son and Spirit*, p. 105).

commands does not dampen the level of intimacy that their ideal friendship brings.[140]

From Slavery to Friendship

Such intimacy clearly does not naturally flow out of a master-slave relationship. How would the authorial audience have understood the shift in status alluded to in Jn 15.15? To understand the significance that they would have attached to friendship with Jesus we must first understand something of what it would have meant for Jesus' followers to be his 'slaves'. Why would any effort be made to shed a label that the apostle Paul appears to wear as a badge of honor?

S.M. Elliott has observed that 'Two criteria define a friend of Jesus: a friend <u>does</u> what is commanded (v. 14) AND <u>knows</u> "everything", (presumably everything necessary for the actions required). The slave, on the other hand, <u>does</u> what is commanded but acts as a mere instrument without personal knowledge of the master's overall purpose'.[141] Elliott cites two important reasons why Jesus had to change the status of the disciples. First, she notes that slaves did not have the ability to obey his command to 'love one another'. The only legally and socially sanctioned relationship that slaves could 'enjoy' was with their master: 'Part of what it means to be a slave is to have no relational "nexus", to relate in one direction only: "vertically" as an extension of the master'.[142] The horizontal relationship highlighted in 15.12 ('love one another as I have loved you') is expressly prohibited for slaves.

Elliott also observes that slaves could not act as ideal friends and lay down their lives for others (15.13) since they were not in possession of their own lives; their bodies and lives belonged to their master.[143] Moreover, noting the commissioning aspect of the farewell discourse,[144] Elliott maintains that in order for Jesus' followers to carry out the task of being his agents and continuing his mission, they had to first have the power to make decisions, power that was not granted to slaves. She argues that the understanding that is granted to the disciples (15.15) provides the conceptual and legal basis for the carrying out of their assigned task.[145]

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140. Keener agrees: 'friendship means not freedom to disobey but an intimate relationship that continues to recognize distinctions in authority' (Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, II [2 vols.; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2003], p. 1015).

141. Elliott, 'John 15:15', p. 37.

142. Elliott, 'John 15:15', p. 39.

143. Elliott, 'John 15:15', p. 39.

144. See John Ashton, *Understanding the Fourth Gospel* (Oxford: Clarendon; New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), pp. 443-84.

145. Elliott, 'John 15:15', pp. 40-42. 'An agent must have the same capacity of understanding as the principal [Jesus] to carry out the assigned task in order for the legal

Given the evidence cited above, however, the authorial audience would have likely assigned greater significance to the shift in status than simply allowing Jesus' followers to relate to one another as he intended and to serve as his agents.[146] When read in light of the pervasive use of language from the conceptual field of ideal friendship to characterize Jesus' relationship with his followers, the shift from a slave-master relationship to a friend-friend relationship in Jn 15.15 would have likely been understood as involving a significant deepening of intimacy.

Such shifts were not unprecedented. Culpepper has noted the interesting parallels between Jn 15.15 and Philo's *Sobr.* 55-56, where a distinction is drawn between being a friend (φίλος) and being a slave/servant (δοῦλος):

> 'For wisdom is rather God's *friend* than his *servant*. And therefore He says plainly of Abraham, "shall I hide anything from Abraham my friend?" (Gen. xviii.17). But he who has this portion has passed beyond the bounds of human happiness. He alone is nobly born, for he has registered God as his father and become by adoption His only son'.

Here, we find a description of Abraham that not only highlights the upward shift in status from slave to friend, but also appears to correlate friendship with God with sonship.[147] Indeed, it is probably best to recognize that the metaphors of friendship, family, sonship, and even slavery all provide insights into Jesus' followers' relationship with both him and the Father. At the risk of reading the Gospel of John in light of Paul, something the authorial audience *may* have done, one does not cease to be a

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power to be transferred to the agent' (Elliott, 'John 15:15', p. 40). Elliott also applies this notion of agent to Jesus, as the agent of the Father, following Peder Borgen, 'God's Agent in the Fourth Gospel', in J. Neusner (ed.), *Religions in Antiquity* (SHR, 14; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1968), pp. 137-44.

146. There is no contextual basis for the view that the authorial audience would have read 15.15 as indicative of friendship with a king; contra Keener, *Gospel of John*, II, pp. 1006-1007.

147. An analogous contrast between being a 'son' and being a 'slave' is found in Jn 8.35 (ὁ δὲ δοῦλος οὐ μένει ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα· ὁ υἱὸς μένει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα) and also in Gal. 4.7 (ὥστε οὐκέτι εἶ δοῦλος ἀλλὰ υἱός). Thus, arguing that John uses friendship conventions to flesh out what becoming 'children of God' (1.12) entails is not inconsistent with Jewish thinking of the day. The designation τέκνα θεοῦ is further fleshed out in 1 John (3.1-2, 10; 5.2), where it becomes clear that 'the children of God are they who believe in Jesus as the Christ, the son of God, have been born from God, practise love for one another in His name, keep his teachings (commandments), do righteousness, and claim a hope in Christ for their future relationship with God, their Father' (Culpepper, 'The Pivot of John's Prologue', p. 26). Culpepper is probably not correct, however, in viewing friendship with God as a lower status than sonship, which could only be attained after the resurrection. Instead, it is more likely that φίλοι and τέκνα θεοῦ represent two sides of the same coin.

servant of God when one becomes his friend.[148] Similarly, one does not cease to be God's friend when one becomes his child.

The new status that Jesus' followers enjoy redefines what it means to be a servant of God or a child of God. While his followers continue to serve him as Lord and to call on God as Father, their access to Jesus and the Father and the intimacy they enjoy with them goes beyond what it would be not only in the servant-master relationship but also in the child-father relationship.[149] Each of these metaphors, then, stands as an important tool for characterizing Jesus' followers' relationship to both him and the Father.

Friendship in John 18–21

While the upper room scene in general and Jn 15.13-15 in particular represents the climax of the Fourth Gospel's use of the friendship motif, the final four chapters serve as a denouement. Jesus' relationship with his followers has been extensively highlighted in the preceding chapters. It has been repeatedly characterized using the conceptual field of friendship and the authorial audience has been reminded that true friendships find their ultimate expression in the willingness of one friend to die for another (15.13). In John 18–19, the final outcome of Jesus' commitment to friendship with his followers is realized as the ultimate expression of the friendship is detailed. Then, in the final two chapters (John 20–21) various loose ends related to the friendship motif are resolved.

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148. Cf. Carson, *John*, p. 522. The author is not opposed to viewing Christ's followers as servants of the Master (13.13). However, they are more than servants. 'In NT thought the Christian remains a *doulos* from the viewpoint of service that he should render, but from the viewpoint of intimacy with God he is more than a *doulos*' (Brown, *John*, II, p. 683). Puthenkandathil has noted the juxtaposition of 'servant' and 'friend' in Isa. 41.8 and maintains that Israel would have seen no antithesis between the two roles; *Philos*, p. 215. Christians could be servants of God (see, e.g., Rom. 1.1; Gal. 1.10; Phil. 1.1; 2 Pet. 1.1; Rev. 1.1) and still be friends of God. Interestingly, in explaining why the Essenes rejected slavery, Philo maintained that they felt that slavery brought 'hostility in place of friendship' (*Prob.* 79). Perhaps Essene readers of Jn 15.15 would have heard Jesus' declaration as a final rejection of any type of hostility in his relationship with his followers. Being both a 'slave' and a 'friend', however, would probably not have been contradictory to a Greco-Roman reader. 'Odysseus and Herakles both accept the role of slave, while (implicitly both) were convinced of God's fatherly care for all, and called him father (according to Epictetus)' (F. Gerald Downing, *Cynics, Paul and the Pauline Churches* [London and New York: Routledge, 1998], p. 218; Epictetus, *Disc.* 3.24.13-16; cf. 26.30-33).

149. Being a friend of God does not preclude being his servant and child. For a similar notion, see Philo's comments on how children are naturally friends to their parents but must also fear them; *Spec.* 2.240; cf. Seneca, *Ben.* 4.17.2.

John 18–19: Friendship's Ultimate Expression

John 18 begins with Jesus affirming his identity through the use of the divine name (ἐγώ εἰμι) for the final time as a group of soldiers come to arrest him. Indeed, in the span of four verses (18.5-8) the Johannine Jesus uses the expression three times. It is Jesus' own question ('Whom are you looking for?') that sets up his 'I am' declaration. Given the context, the most natural understanding of the absolute ἐγώ εἰμι saying for the narrative audience would be 'I am *he*', with the pronoun implied by the context. However, 'the narrator's repetition of ἐγώ εἰμι and the reaction of the onlookers to those words urges the reader to look for a double-meaning to the phrase "I am" '.[150] Thus, this pericope naturally begs the question that D.M. Ball addresses in the second part of his book: What background information did the authorial audience possess that would have allowed them to understand the reaction of the Johannine Jesus' opponents without any explanation from the narrator?

The authorial audience would have interpreted the authorities' reaction to Jesus' ἐγώ εἰμι saying in light of the characterization of Jesus throughout the Gospel of John. From the first words of the Gospel of John Jesus has been characterized as a figure who shares in the attributes of God and through whom the entire cosmos came into existence. Through repeated encounters with the ἐγώ εἰμι formula, the authorial audience would have slowly grasped its significance as a literary tool for characterizing Jesus. While some among the authorial audience may have missed the potential link to the *ani hu* sayings in Isaiah,[151] they could not have missed the clear markers within the narrative that highlight the significance of the Johannine Jesus' ἐγώ εἰμι sayings.

This is the second occasion in the Gospel of John where an absolute use of ἐγώ εἰμι has provoked a surprising reaction. On the first occasion (8.58-59), the narrator made it very clear that within the narrative world of the Fourth Gospel Jesus' use of ἐγώ εἰμι represented a claim to divinity. Coupled with the consistent characterization of Jesus as a divine figure and the reminder that Jesus shares in the Father's divine attributes ('knowing all that was to happen to him'; 18.4), the authorial audience would have readily understood that none of the Divine *Logos*'s creation can stand before the one who was with God and was God.[152]

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150. David Mark Ball, *'I Am' in John's Gospel: Literary Function, Background and Theological Implications* (JSNTSup, 124; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), p. 142.

151. See p. 117 above.

152. 'This verse does not describe unruly soldiers backing away and stumbling (Carson), nor is it about the psychological effect of Jesus' personality on the mob (Morris). Rather, John creates another of his many ironic scenes: Jesus' words provoke a response that even those who hear it likely do not understand. This is the biblical response of fear before the Lord (Ezek. 1.28; Dan. 10.9; Acts 9.4; 22.7; 26.14; Rev.

Throughout the arrest scene, Jesus the Bearer of the Divine Name is portrayed as one who is in absolute control of his destiny.[153] The Johannine Jesus does not go passively to his doom. Instead, he knows all that is going to happen and in fact initiates the confrontation that leads to his death by asking Judas and the authorities whom they are seeking (v. 4). Ball has noted the intense irony in this scene. Jesus seizes control of the events from Judas who thinks he is the one orchestrating his arrest.[154] Jesus is the one who provides for Peter's safety (18.8-9) and the safety of all his followers,[155] rather than vice versa (18.10).[156]

Peter's subsequent denials (18.17, 25-27) of the one for whom he had professed genuine friendship (13.37) set the stage for the characterization of Jesus as the True Friend who voluntarily lays down his life for his friends. Similarly, Jesus' words to the high priest highlight what 'the world' has missed out on. The Johannine Jesus makes it clear that he had attempted to relate to the world as friends relate to one another. He had 'spoken openly' (Ἐγὼ παρρησίᾳ λελάληκα) and 'said nothing in secret' (18.20). While on a surface level this claim may appear to entail nothing more than a declaration that his teachings were obvious to all, given the use of the term παρρησία, which was one of the key markers of ideal friendship, coupled with the extensive use of the conceptual field

1.17). This is a theophany in which God has been revealed before mortals and the only response is to fall prostrate (Barrett, Brown, Beasley-Murray; see Ezek. 1.28; Isa. 6.5)' (Gary M. Burge, *John*, [NIVAC; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000], p. 492).

153. Cf. Brown, *John*, II, p. 809. The theme of Jesus' control continues throughout the trial scene and the crucifixion. While Pilate supposes that he is the ultimate authority who holds Jesus' fate in his hands (19.10), the Johannine Jesus points out that Pilate's power is derivative in nature, not absolute (19.11). It comes from the Father above, the one from whom Jesus has the right to ask anything. Where the Synoptic Gospels portray Jesus as requiring help in carrying his cross (Mt. 27.32; Mk 15.21; Lk. 23.26), the Johannine Jesus retains control of his fate and carries the cross himself (19.17). Even as he hangs on the cross, he is in complete control as he takes care of the needs of his mother by entrusting her care to a friend (19.26-27). In the end, it is Jesus who decides when his task is complete and chooses to give up his spirit (19.30). 'To the last, Jesus is the one taking the initiative' (Schnackenburg, *John*, III, p. 284).

154. Ball, *'I Am' in John's Gospel*, p. 145.

155. Talbert notes that Jesus' actions here represent the outworking of his statement in 13.1: 'Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end' (*Reading John*, p. 234). Talbert goes on to point out that 'In John, instead of the disciples forsaking him and fleeing (Mk 14.50), Jesus dismisses them out of concern for their safety' (Talbert, *Reading John*, p. 234).

156. The desire and initiative to save one's friends' lives is another common *topos* associated with friendship in the ancient world. The nature of Polycharmus' friendship with Chaereas, for example, is made crystal clear by the fact that he is continually saving his life in Chariton's *Callirhoe*. Cf. also O'Day, 'Jesus as Friend', p. 151.

of friendship throughout the Gospel of John, the authorial audience may well have interpreted Jesus' remarks as a claim that he had offered the world friendship. Jesus' openness (παρρησία) with all served as an invitation to an intimate relationship just as the Father's giving of his Son to gain eternal life for those who believe in Jesus (3.16) served as an expression of friendship.

The 'world's' response is vividly highlighted in chapter 19 as 'the Jews' question Pilate's allegiance to Caesar: 'If you release this man, you are no friend of the emperor' (19.12). The use of φίλος to refer to a political ally demonstrates that the author of the Gospel of John was familiar with a range of uses of this term. The notion of *amicus Caesaris* found here, however, does not shape the meaning of φίλοι in the Fourth Gospel as a whole.[157] Elsewhere in the Gospel of John, the term is always used of personal friendship.

While Pilate's negative response to Jesus is a passive response that is only implied, Jesus' 'own' (1.11) respond with outright rejection. In renouncing their own heritage by claiming, 'We have no king but the emperor' (19.15), the Jewish leaders effectively indicate that they are more concerned with maintaining friendship with Caesar than entering into a friendship with God.

In contrast, at least some of Jesus' followers continue to act as friends throughout the final moments of his life. Jesus' mother, aunt, Mary Magdalene, and the Beloved Disciple remain with him until the end (19.25-27). The authorial audience, familiar with the conceptual field of friendship, would have noticed the contrast between those who fled or even denied a relationship with Jesus, and this small group who stood by the cross as genuine friends who willingly shared in Jesus' misfortune.

John 20–21: A Lasting Friendship

Although chapters 18–19 provide a meaningful culmination to Jesus' teachings on friendship by recounting his ultimate expression of love for his friends, they leave a number of issues related to the friendship motif unresolved. From John 1–17, the authorial audience has encountered Jesus as a divine figure who, although he relates to the Father in the most intimate of terms, and indeed shares in the divine attributes and bears the divine name, is nevertheless willing to enter into an intimate relationship with those whom he created. His death (John 18–19) seemingly signals an end to the friendship that was proffered in the upper room scene. John 20, however, makes it clear that Jesus' death was

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157. Contra E.A. Judge, 'Paul as Radical Critic of Society', *Interchange* 16 (1974), p. 196; Peter Marshall, *Enmity at Corinth: Social Conventions in Paul's Relations with the Corinthians* (WUNT, 2/23; Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1987), pp. 131-32.

a beginning not an end.[158] What kind of relationship, though, will follow? Now that Jesus' period in the flesh has come to an end, how will he relate to those who continue in the flesh?

John 20: Children of God. Jesus' words to Mary Magdalene in John 20 reiterate the nature of his followers' relationship with both him and the Father. The disciples are now much more than servants; they are now Jesus' brothers and sisters. The Divine *Logos* who came from above and created all things willingly calls his followers ἀδελφοί (20.17); but that is not all. The implications of Jesus' upper room offer of ideal friendship become even clearer. His followers not only have the privilege of entering into an intimate relationship with Jesus but can also now relate to God as Father. Jesus' Father is now their Father (20.17).[159] They truly have become the 'children of God' that the Prologue (1.12) intimated. The authorial audience is reminded, however, that the friendship Jesus has extended to his followers, while it involves sufficient equality to allow for intimacy, does not nullify Jesus' unique role in the universe. As Thomas exclaims, Jesus continues to be both Lord and God (20.28).[160]

John 21: The Rest of the Story. John 20.30-31 would have served as a fitting conclusion to the Fourth Gospel: 'Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name'. The final form of the Gospel of John, however, contains an additional chapter that puts the finishing touches on the friendship motif in response to questions that remain concerning Jesus' relationship with his followers.[161]

Perhaps the most important bundling technique (a rule of coherence) noted by Rabinowitz is the rule of conclusive endings. This rule essentially dictates that the ending of a text is important and typically serves to sum

158. As Moltmann has noted: 'Through Jesus' death in friendship the disciples become friends forever' ('Open Friendship', p. 35).

159. Cf. Brown, *John*, II, p. 994; Lindars, *John*, pp. 607-608.

160. With Thomas's statement, the Fourth Gospel comes full circle to the christological theme with which the Prologue began: 'the Word was God' (1.1). 'The return to the opening proposition of the gospel is intended, and there can be no doubt that John intended this confession of faith to form the climax of the gospel' (Barrett, *John*, p. 573).

161. On the authenticity and integrity of John 21, see esp. Stanley E. Porter, 'The Ending of John's Gospel', in W.H. Brackney and C.A. Evans (eds.), *From Biblical Criticism to Biblical Faith: Essays in Honor of Lee Martin McDonald* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2007), pp. 55-73.

up a work's overall meaning.[162] Does this apply to John 21? Does the writer save his best thoughts for last? Regardless of whether or not John 21 is an epilogue added shortly after the completion of the Gospel of John, it fits well with the form of the text that has come down to us.[163]

First, there are some general ways in which John 21 provides closure for the Gospel of John. The Fourth Gospel opens with the words of the narrator, providing a rich overview of what is to follow, and closes with the narrator indicating that he has finished his task. The narrator begins 'in the beginning' with Jesus in his role as creator and his coming to the world in human flesh, and concludes with the end of Jesus' earthly existence. The Gospel of John begins with the promise that those who believe in Jesus will become 'children of God' (1.12), and ends with a vivid reminder of what it means to be a 'child of God' (21.15-17).[164]

Second, the friendship motif in the Gospel of John would not be complete unless Jesus' strained relationship with the most outspoken of his followers was resolved. Peter's earlier claim to be Jesus' genuine friend (13.37) has been set in stark contrast to his own denial of Jesus in John 18 and Jesus' act of genuine friendship in John 19. Rather than laying down his life for Jesus, Peter denied him. In contrast, Jesus, the Good Shepherd,[165] willingly laid down his life for his friends. Peter's triple affirmation of his

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162. *Before Reading*, p. 160.

163. On source theories that seek to explain the relationship between chapter 21 and the remainder of the Fourth Gospel, see Schnackenburg, *St. John*, III, p. 341-74. The recent trend, in line with the move toward literary approaches to the text, has been to view John 21 as an integral part of the Fourth Gospel; see, e.g., Gunnar Ostenstad, 'The Structure of the Fourth Gospel: Can it be Defined Objectively?', *ST* 45 (1991), pp. 33-55; Lars Hartman, 'An Attempt at a Text-Centered Exegesis of John 21', *ST* 38 (1984), pp. 29-45; Paul S. Minear, 'The Original Functions of John 21', *JBL* 102 (1982), pp. 85-98; F. Neirynck, 'John 21', *NTS* 36 (1990), pp. 321-36; Sandra M. Schneiders, 'John 21:1-14', *Int* 43 (1989), pp. 70-75; Peter E. Ellis, 'The Authenticity of John 21', *SVTQ* 36 (1992), pp. 17-25.

164. Notice that analogous arguments could be made for John 20 as a fitting conclusion to the Fourth Gospel. The Fourth Gospel begins with Jesus' descent to earth and concludes with his (implied) ascent to the Father (20.17). It begins with the promise that those who believe in Jesus will become 'children of God' (1.12), and ends with a declaration by Jesus himself that God is now their Father as well as his Father and he is now their brother (20.17).

165. Ringe notes that 'the shepherd's patient spending of time with the sheep—sharing the circumstances of their daily life, nurturing and caring for them, coming to know them by name, and if necessary, risking his very life on their behalf—is the life of a friend among friends' (Sharon H. Ringe, *Wisdom's Friends: Community and Christology in the Fourth Gospel* [Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1999], p. 82). Similarly, O'Day rightly maintains that 'This mini-parable could be taken as an illustration of the classical distinction between the true and the false friend' ('Jesus as Friend', p. 150).

love for Jesus in John 21 emphasizes the dissolution of any apparent barriers within their relationship.[166] The erstwhile denier is not rejected for his faithlessness, but reinstated as a true friend of the resurrected Jesus.[167]

Third, the final chapter of the canonical Fourth Gospel also further highlights the role of the Beloved Disciple, who by his very title is a friend of Jesus and the epitome of an ideal disciple.[168] He has enjoyed a position of intimacy in dining with Jesus (13.23)—a position that made intimate communication possible (13.24-25). His devotion to Jesus brought him to the place of the crucifixion where Jesus entrusted his mother to him (19.26-27). His love for Jesus drove him to outrace Peter to the tomb and to believe that Jesus had risen (20.1-9). His intimate familiarity with the Lord allowed him to recognize the resurrected Jesus (21.7). His friendship with Jesus made him the ideal candidate to make Jesus known through the writing of the Gospel of John (21.24). His link with Jesus established his authority as a legitimate source for the traditions contained in the Fourth Gospel.[169]

Fourth, John 21 is all about Jesus' continuing revelation of himself to his disciples, a motif that plays off the mutuality that is inherent in an ideal friendship relationship. The chapter begins with a pericope that is framed with an inclusio focusing on the revelation of Jesus: 'Jesus again revealed himself to the disciples' (v. 1; ἐφανέρωσεν ἑαυτὸν πάλιν ὁ Ἰησοῦς τοῖς μαθηταῖς) and 'this was now the third time Jesus was revealed to the disciples after being raised from the dead' (v. 14; τοῦτο ἤδη τρίτον ἐφανερώθη Ἰησοῦς τοῖς μαθηταῖς ἐγερθεὶς ἐκ νεκρῶν). This theme is then supported

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166. Cf. Talbert's discussion of the rehabilitation of Peter in this pericope; *Reading John*, p. 261. Drawing on the notion of 'recency effect', Claussen notes that by including this pericope at the end of the Fourth Gospel 'Peter will not be remembered as the one who betrayed Jesus but rather as the one to whom the risen Lord entrusted his followers' (Carsten Claussen, 'The Role of John 21: Discipleship in Retrospect and Redefinition', in F. Lozada, Jr. and T. Thatcher [eds.], *New Currents through John: A Global Perspective* [SBLRBS, 54; Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006], p. 66).

167. Peter's fishing trip with Jesus' other followers may illustrate *their* friendship, since 'Friends share whatever activity is the focus of their lives: some drink together, others train together, and some philosophize together' (David K. O'Connor, 'Two Ideals of Friendship', *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 7 [1990], p. 114; Aristotle, *Eth. nic.* 9.12.1; *Eth. eud* 7.12.9-10).

168. Culpepper, *Anatomy*, p. 123. Puthenkandathil argues that the Beloved Disciple and Peter function as two models of true friendship with Jesus; *Philos*, pp. 245-327. M. Davies suggests that the Johannine Jesus' words to the Beloved Disciple as he hung on the cross (19.27) intimate that the Beloved Disciple was the one who took Jesus' place in the world; Margaret Davies, *Rhetoric and Reference in the Fourth Gospel* (JSNTSup, 69; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992), p. 340.

169. Cf. Culpepper, *Anatomy*, p. 122.

by Peter's exclamation of recognition ('It is the Lord!', v. 7) and the narrator's comment in verse 12 that none of the disciples needed to ask who this man was because they all knew that it was the Lord. Claussen summarizes the revelation of Jesus theme in the Fourth Gospel: 'John the Baptist presents as the aim of his ministry "that he (Jesus) might be revealed to Israel" (1.31); Jesus then "revealed his glory" at the wedding at Cana (2.11). Although his brothers prompt Jesus "to reveal himself to the world" (7.4), this does not happen until Jn 21.1, and even here the revelation is not to "the world" but only to a small group of disciples'.[170] As is appropriate for ideal friendship, mutuality in the form of revelation is present, but this sharing is limited to those who qualify as friends.

Finally, the final chapter of the Gospel of John brings closure to a number of issues raised in the opening lines of the Prologue. In terms of theme, the Fourth Gospel begins with Jesus, the Divine *Logos*, in the presence of the Father and ends with Jesus having returned to the Father, though the latter is left implicit.[171] More important, the Gospel of John first introduced the theme of the relationship between both Jesus and the Father (1.1) and Jesus and his followers (1.12) in the Prologue, and then systematically developed these twin themes, with the first part of the Gospel of John focusing on the former and the second part on the latter. It is appropriate, then, in light of this thematic structure, to conclude the Fourth Gospel with a pericope that addresses the question: How are Jesus' friends to relate to him after he has left this world and returned to the Father?[172]

Jesus' words to Peter in 21.15-19 essentially function as a delegation of responsibility from one friend to another. As Jesus delegated the care of his mother to the Beloved Disciple (and vice versa) from the cross, so now he delegates the care of his 'sheep' to Peter. Jesus first models friendship and then provides guidance for how his followers are to live as his friends. As the Gospel of John begins with a promise that Jesus' followers will be called 'children of God' (1.12) and fleshes out what such a title means, in part through reference to the conceptual field of friendship, so it ends with the fulfillment of that promise and an illustration

170. Claussen, 'The Role of John 21', p. 60.

171. Although Jesus' return to the Father is not stated in the narrative, it is clearly implied not only by Jesus' statement in 20.17 of his imminent return, but also by the shift to the narrator's time, which postdates the earthly life of Jesus, in the final two verses of the Fourth Gospel (21.24-25).

172. Gaventa notes that 'although it would be too much to say that chapter 21 places Jesus in the background, here the narrator moves the disciples and their responses and responsibilities to the foreground'; (Beverly Roberts Gaventa, 'The Archive of Excess: John 21 and the Problem of Narrative Closure', in R.A. Culpepper and C.C. Black [eds.], *Exploring the Gospel of John: Essays in Honor of D. Moody Smith* [Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1996], p. 247).

of what membership in the family of God will entail after Jesus has returned to the Father.

In Jesus' exchange with Peter, his command to truly love his sheep, coupled with the warning of Peter's impending death, forms an intratextual link with Jesus' words in Jn 10.11 about the good shepherd who lays down his life for his sheep and his declaration of the epitome of true friendship in 15.13.[173] Jesus had shown that he related to his followers in the same way the Father relates to him: 'As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you' (15.9).[174] The disciples, in turn, are to relate to one another in the way that Jesus relates to them: 'Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another' (13.34). As Jesus has behaved as a friend to his followers, so his followers are to live within the family of God as friends—friends who practice the unity, mutuality, and equality that characterize Jesus' relationship with both the Father and with them as his followers.[175]

Conclusion

The upper room scene and the concluding chapters of the Gospel of John represent the climax and denouement of the Fourth Gospel's use of the friendship motif. While at first glance the footwashing pericope may

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173. John 21 thus makes a fitting conclusion to the final form of the Fourth Gospel, regardless of whether it represents a later addition. Though one might view it as an excessively lengthy ending following chapter 20, it nevertheless draws together important themes from what precedes and brings closure to the narrative. Gaventa suggests that that dual endings in John 20 and 21 'differ in their relationship to the story that precedes, with chapter 20 primarily circling back to the prologue and chapter 21 paralleling a number of points throughout the Gospel' ('The Archive of Excess', p. 248).

174. The startling point in the Johannine Jesus' statement is that he places his love for his followers on par with the Father's love for him (15.9).

175. The intimacy among Jesus' followers is grounded in the intimacy that he shares with the Father (see, e.g., 17.21, 22, 23). 'John, in particular, wants the reader to perceive the connection between these two relationships... The relationship of Son to Father underlies and informs the relationship of Jesus to his disciples' (Harner, *Relation Analysis*, p. 49). The close link between the portrayal of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel through reference to his relationship with the Father and with his followers is mirrored in the close link between the portrayal of God in the Fourth Gospel through reference to his relationship with Jesus and Jesus' followers. On the latter, see D. Francois Tolmie, 'The Characterization of God in the Fourth Gospel', *JSNT* 69 (1998), pp. 60-63. For other recent studies on the characterization of God in the Fourth Gospel, see Marianne Meye Thompson, ' "God's Voice You Have Never Heard, God's Form You Have Never Seen": The Characterization of God in the Gospel of John', *Semeia* 63 (1993), pp. 177-204; Thompson, *The God of the Gospel of John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001).

appear to supply little more than background information for the more important discourse that follows, when read in light of Greco-Roman notions of ideal friendship, this scene, which is unique to the Gospel of John, takes on new significance. As Culpepper has noted, the Fourth Gospel 'achieves its most subtle effects...through its implicit commentary, that is, the devices and passages in which the author communicates with the reader by implication and indirection'.[176]

As the authorial audience came to John 13, they brought with them a well-defined picture of who Jesus was. His divinity had repeatedly been asserted, right from the opening lines of the Prologue. Suddenly, he acts completely out of character by washing his followers' feet. What are the implications of such behavior? Why is such a story included in this account of Jesus' life? As the authorial audience encountered Jesus' repeated declarations of friendship in what follows, his unprecedented actions in John 13 would have likely taken on new meaning. As with the rest of the frequently opaque Fourth Gospel, the authorial audience and subsequent readers were forced to take what they had acquired in their memory and blend it with new information to form a fresh, or at least fuller, interpretation of the narrative as a whole.

Even if the authorial audience missed the friendship language that introduces the entire upper room scene ('Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end'; 13.1), the frequent use of language from the conceptual field of friendship throughout the upper room discourse, combined with the climactic explicit declaration of friendship in 15.13-15, would have highlighted friendship as an important motif in this section of the Gospel of John.[177] While the issue of equality is addressed primarily through the parabolic footwashing scene, and declarations of unity depend in part on the extended metaphor of the vine and branches, numerous statements by the Johannine Jesus that depend on the conceptual field of friendship are found in this section of the Fourth Gospel as well. In all, the language from the conceptual field of friendship is used at least 18 times to characterize Jesus' relationship with his followers: 13.20 (unity); 14.13-14 (mutuality); 14.20 (unity); 14.21 (mutuality); 14.27 (mutuality); 15.4-5 (unity); 15.7 (mutuality); 15.11 (mutuality); 15.15 (mutuality); 15.18-19 (mutuality); 15.20 (mutuality); 16.23-24 (mutuality);

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176. *Anatomy*, p. 233. Culpepper's statement relates to the use of misunderstanding, irony, and symbols in the Fourth Gospel. The same, however, is true of the friendship motif.

177. 'The more repetition there is in a work the more evidence it is that the author is using repetition to make a point' (Culpepper, *Anatomy*, p. 87; cf. William A. Beardslee, *Literary Criticism of the New Testament* [GBS; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1970], p. 25; John Painter, *John: Witness and Theologian* [2nd edn; London: SPCK, 1979], p. 11).

17.6 (mutuality); 17.8 (mutuality); 17.21 (unity); 17.22 (mutuality); 17.23 (unity); and 17.26 (mutuality). Although such language is applied to the relationship between Jesus and his followers in a more limited manner than it is used to describe Jesus' relationship with the Father, when read in light of the pervasive use of the friendship motif in the first half of the Gospel of John, its use in the upper room scene would have driven the authorial audience to assess the significance of this motif.

Most striking would have been the fact that the Fourth Gospel uses the friendship motif to accomplish two related but distinct goals: the characterization of Jesus' relationship with the Father and the characterization of Jesus' relationship with his followers. Although both associations involve a relationship of some sort, the authorial audience would have approached the reading of the Gospel of John with the assumption that these two sets of relationships were fundamentally different. This presupposition would have only been enhanced by the opening lines of the Fourth Gospel, which portray Jesus as existing prior to the creation of the cosmos at the Father's side ('In the beginning was the Word') and enjoying a unique status ('and the Word was God'), a status that makes Jesus uniquely qualified to enjoy a relationship of intimacy with the Father. He alone is the one 'who is close to the Father's heart' (ὁ ὢν εἰς τὸν κόλπον τοῦ πατρός; 1.18). It comes as no surprise, then, to find the author of the Gospel of John characterizing the relationship between Jesus and the Father in the most intimate terms possible—as an ideal friendship.

Such predictability, however, would not have continued as the Fourth Gospel shifted its attention to the characterization of the relationship between Jesus and his followers. To describe Jesus as a genuine friend of God was imminently appropriate given his status as the one who was with God and who was God. To describe Jesus' relationship with his followers in the same exalted terms, however, would have likely come as a shock to the authorial audience. How can it be that the one through whom 'all things came into being' could possibly relate to mere flesh on an intimate level? Ideal friendship required unity. Ideal friendship required mutuality. Ideal friendship required equality. How could mere mortals be unified with one who was sovereign over the cosmos? How could mere mortals share in the infinite possessions of the eternal *Logos*? How could mere mortals relate to one who was infinitely superior to them in status?

To answer these seemingly impenetrable questions, the author took up the conceptual field of friendship and built upon the literary foundation of the first half of the Fourth Gospel. In Jn 13.1, the entire upper room pericope is situated within the context of friendship: 'Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end'. The narrative then moves from a vivid parabolic expression of friendship—as Jesus lowers himself to, and even below, the status of his followers—to Jesus'

upper room discourse where he liberally peppers his speech with declarations of ideal friendship that extend unity and mutuality—ideal friendship—to his followers. Thus, through the complementary accounts of the Johannine Jesus' actions (in the footwashing scene) and his words (in the upper room discourse)[178] the Gospel of John presents a startling claim to the authorial audience: like is *not* only known by like. Ideal friendship *can* exist where ontological equality is absent. The Johannine Jesus came not just to save the world but also to offer those who would follow him a relationship that Greco-Roman philosophers only dreamed of, a relationship where all the ingredients of ideal friendship were present because of the unilateral actions and declarations of the one who in the beginning was with God and was God.[179]

178. Harner has noted that with the exception of 13.1, 3, 11, where the narrator characterizes Jesus, and 16.30, where Jesus is characterized by his disciples, in the upper room scene the characterization of Jesus is accomplished strictly through reference to his own statements and actions; *Relation Analysis*, p. 169.

179. Some have claimed that 'Jesus is never portrayed as coming emotionally very close to the disciples' in the upper room scene (Harner, *Relation Analysis*, p. 128). The analysis above, however, suggests that his words and actions actually were evidence of the deepest overture of intimacy.

Chapter 5

READING THE GOSPEL OF JOHN AS AUTHORIAL AUDIENCE

A superficial reading of the Gospel of John suggests that friendship is a relatively insignificant motif. The author does not explicitly set out to provide a philosophical discourse on the nature of friendship, nor does he explicitly state that the narrative is about friendship. This study, however, has demonstrated that the language of friendship pervades the Fourth Gospel from beginning to end and serves as a primary vehicle for characterizing the relationships that are introduced in the Prologue and fleshed out throughout the course of the narrative.[1] The prevalence of such language alerts 'every thoughtful "authorial" listener to the presence of a choosing, inventing narrator'.[2] As the authorial audience encountered the web of friendship language that is woven throughout the fabric of the Gospel of John, they could not help but ask why the author had chosen to make such language a fundamental part of the story of Jesus.[3] This study suggests that the answer is found in the correlation that is drawn, using the conceptual field of friendship, between Jesus' relationship with his Father and Jesus' relationship with his followers. Taking up the friendship motif as a tool of characterization, the Gospel of John points to a startling implication of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus: Followers of Jesus are invited to enjoy a level of intimacy with him that can actually (and

1. The conceptual field of ideal friendship is utilized throughout the Fourth Gospel to highlight 'the progressive intimacy between Jesus and His disciples' (Eldho Puthenkandathil, *Philos: A Designation for the Jesus-Disciple Relationship: An Exegetico-Theological Investigation of the Term in the Fourth Gospel* [New York: Peter Lang, 1993], p. 242). Indeed, given the ubiquitous nature of the friendship language, it would not be inappropriate to view the Fourth Gospel as a 'friendship text'. As Rabinowitz has noted, the more features of a text that can be subsumed under a particular label, the more appropriate that label is; Peter J. Rabinowitz, *Before Reading: Narrative Conventions and the Politics of Interpretation* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987), p. 159.

2. Wayne C. Booth, 'Where is the Authorial Audience in Biblical Narrative—and in Other "Authoritative" Texts?', *Narrative* 4 (October 1996), p. 250 n. 6.

3. Culpepper notes that 'questions about how the story is told inevitably raise interest in...why it is told as it is' (R. Alan Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A Study in Literary Design* [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983], p. 11).

perhaps only) be compared to the level of intimacy that he enjoys with the Father.[4]

The reading of the Fourth Gospel offered in this study presumes the interaction of the text and reader—in this case the authorial audience. The validity of the proposed reading is, therefore, heavily dependent on the appropriateness of the presupposed background information and narrative rules that the authorial audience brought to the text.[5] Anyone attempting to read as authorial audience runs the risk of imposing his or her own ideology, as an actual reader, on the authorial audience, rather than following the instructions of the text and reading in light of the ideology that the text presumes.[6]

Regardless of the labels that are used, and whether or not one takes a literary approach that relies on how readers would use narrative conventions or what textual markers signify, the 'rules' upon which the reading of this work rely are ultimately not dependent on modern literary theory. Instead, they rely upon a common sense proposition that authors share with their intended audience a set of background information and presuppositions that make communication possible. While we cannot look accurately into the mind of an author long since dead, or a living one for that matter, we can say a great deal about the types of background information—whether historical, literary, political, cultural, or otherwise— that readers of particular periods in particular places *likely* would have

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4. Similarly, 'Family imagery is found in the description of the relation between the Son and the Father and is then gradually applied to the believers' (Van der Watt, *Family of the King*, p. 266). When Chaereas's friend Polycharmus is first introduced in *Callirhoe*, Chariton tells the reader that 'Polycharmus was a special friend of his, as Patroclus was of Achilles in Homer' (5.1); see B.P. Reardon, 'Chaereas and Callirhoe', in *Collected Ancient Greek Novels* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), p. 27. As Chariton uses a comparison between the friendship of Polycharmus and Chaereas and the legendary friendship between Achilles and Patroclus as a tool for characterizing the depth of intimacy shared by the former, so the Fourth Gospel uses the *language* of ideal friendship to characterize the relationship between Jesus and the Father and Jesus and his followers. The latter requires a significant paradigm shift whether the audience is Greco-Roman, where like may only be known by like, or Jewish, where Israel's relationship to a transcendent Yahweh makes such intimacy difficult to embrace. In this regard, Culpepper's estimation of the purpose of the Fourth Gospel is appropriate: 'the implicit purpose of the gospel narrative is to alter irrevocably the reader's perception of the real world' (*Anatomy*, p. 4). Given the broader context of Christian teaching, the authorial audience would have presumably not associated a physical component—which was part of the ideal friendship of many of the heralded friendships from Greek antiquity—with the ideal friendship of which the Fourth Gospel speaks.

5. Rabinowitz, *Before Reading*, p. 168.

6. Cf. Rabinowitz, *Before Reading*, p. 194.

brought to a reading of a text. Thus, while it cannot be established beyond doubt that the authorial audience would have read the portions of the Gospel of John examined in this work in the way that has been suggested, and the fact that the reading strategy makes good sense of the text does not necessarily imply that we have successfully joined the authorial audience, the proposed reading is quite *likely* given the available evidence and our current knowledge of how readers read.[7]

The fact that the author (or narrator) never comes out and explicitly points to the importance of the friendship motif does not weaken the thesis of this work. Culpepper has argued that 'when characters, places, customs, and terms are not explained, the interpreter can assume that the intended reader was capable of understanding them without any explanation from the narrator'.[8] As a feature of the social fabric of the ancient Mediterranean world, the notion of ideal friendship required no explicit identification for ancient readers to realize, at least subconsciously, that it was being evoked. Such notions represented part of the background information that an ancient audience brought to the reading of the text.[9] Indeed, the preponderance of friendship language, without explanation, serves as an important clue into the identity of the implied reader.[10]

On what basis is it possible to suggest that ancient Mediterranean readers would have been attuned to the Fourth Gospel's use of friendship language? While the search for 'intertextual' or conceptual echoes within a text always runs the risk of imposing modern notions on ancient texts,[11] there are sound theoretical bases for maintaining that a text makes reference to a conceptual world that is stored in frames, scripts, schemata, or some other form. 'Text-presented knowledge is privileged in

7. Repeated readings of the Fourth Gospel would further reveal the friendship motif.

8. *Anatomy*, p. 8.

9. Unlike earlier narratological analyses of the Fourth Gospel, the present study has taken a very specific feature from the Fourth Gospel's milieu and traced how it contributes to the process of characterization and plot development within the narrative. Such an approach could fruitfully be employed using any number of other socio-cultural features of the first-century Mediterranean world.

10. Cf. Culpepper, *Anatomy*, p. 8.

11. Cf. Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), p. 25; John Hollander, *The Figure of Echo: A Mode of Allusion in Milton and After* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), p. ix. H.R. Jauss notes that 'the philological method of criticism is obviously not protected by its historical objectivity from the interpreter who, though supposedly eliminating his subjective evaluation, unconsciously raises his preconceived aesthetic sense to an unacknowledged standard and unwittingly modernizes the meaning of a text from the past' (Hans Robert Jauss, 'Literary History as a Challenge to Literary Theory', *New Literary History* 2 [1970], p. 20).

understanding and recall if it matches patterns of stored knowledge'.[12] In other words, by using language that appears to have been quite common in the first- and second-century Greco-Roman world, the Gospel of John drew particular attention to that language. By repeatedly using language that comes from the same conceptual field or 'frame', this highlighting effect would have been dramatically intensified.[13]

Drawing on Hays' criteria for identifying echoes within a text,[14] this study suggests that (1) the broad literary testimony concerning the nature of ideal personal friendship that spans many centuries of Greco-Roman literature provides strong evidence that the conceptual world of friendship was readily available to the authorial audience; (2) the repeated use of common expressions associated with friendship in the Gospel of John would have resulted in relatively 'loud' echoes; (3) the recurrence of friendship language highlights the importance of this motif in interpreting the Fourth Gospel;[15] (4) the putative 'references' to friendship fit well with the thematic coherence of the Gospel of John; (5) it is plausible both that the author of the Fourth Gospel used friendship language as a tool for characterizing Jesus and that his audience would have been able to understand its significance; and (6) the proposed reading of portions of the Gospel of John where putative friendship language occurs significantly illuminates the surrounding discourse.[16] Indeed, this study establishes the

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12. Robert-Alain de Beaugrande and Wolfgang Ulrich Dressler, *Introduction to Text Linguistics* (London and New York: Longman, 1981), p. 202.

13. Cf. de Beaugrande and Dressler, *Introduction to Text Linguistics*, p. 202.

14. *Echoes of Scripture*, pp. 29-32; cf. W. Freedman: 'If the reader can show satisfactorily that the presence of the motif is at least sometimes quite easily avoidable, that its overall frequency is greater than sheer coincidence or necessity might produce, that the separate members of the family or cluster operate together to a common end, and that they are singularly appropriate to a given aspect of the work in hand, he has, I think, shown both the existence and efficacy of a motif in that work' (William Freedman, 'The Literary Motif: A Definition and Evaluation', *Novel* 4 [1971], p. 127).

15. Rabinowitz notes that 'the stressed features of a text serve as a basic structure on which to build an interpretation. As authorial audience, we read with the prior understanding that we are more expected to account for a detail that is stressed by a rule of notice than for a detail that is not' (*Before Reading*, p. 53).

16. Thus, six of Hays' seven criteria for hearing echoes are met. The only one that cannot clearly be established is the criterion of 'history of interpretation', which looks to earlier interpreters (critical and pre-critical) to determine whether or not they noticed the same 'echoes'. There are certain early Christian writers, such as Ambrose ('A friend, then, if he is a true one, hides nothing; he pours forth his soul as the Lord Jesus poured forth the mysteries of His Father' [*Off.* 3.22.135]), who seem to associate texts like Jn 15.15 with broader notions of ideal friendship, but the evidence is not decisive. The fact that Hays does not explicitly use his criteria in his

fact that the friendship motif in the Gospel of John has 'become a part of the total perspective, pervading the book's atmosphere and becoming an important thread in the fabric of the work'.[17] The repeated use of language associated with the conceptual field of friendship serves as 'rhetorical underlining' that highlights the importance of such language within the Fourth Gospel.[18]

The presence of relational language should come as no surprise. John could hardly have written a work about Jesus, the Divine *Logos*, and his ministry among humankind without frequently using such language. What *is* surprising is the *type* of relational language he chose to use. Unlike in the Synoptic Gospels, where friendship language is sparse,[19] the Gospel of John overflows with the language of ideal friendship, often in places where such language was not necessary or at least could have easily been avoided.

The use of Greco-Roman literature to identify a conceptual field and the concomitant claim that at least some readers of the Fourth Gospel would have brought that conceptual field to the reading of the text does not imply that the authorial audience was familiar with any particular body of literature. Instead, it presupposes that the corpus of data used to identify the conceptual field *reflects* broader societal ways of looking at the world. J. Rosenberg's comments on Shakespearean scholars' use of English historical literature as a tool for understanding some of Shakespeare's works are instructive:

> This is not to suggest that a Tudor or Stuart audience needed to read such histoires in order to understand their poet, only that some members of those audiences possessed the political and institutional sophistication required to make full sense of Shakespeare's political themes, and that such understanding was a principal ingredient of the literary delight they certainly experienced.[20]

own analysis (*Echoes of Scripture*, p. 29), but rather treats them as 'serviceable rules of thumb to guide our interpretive work' (*Echoes of Scripture*, p. 32) mitigates the importance of meeting any individual criterion. Nevertheless, a thorough search of early Christian writers who comment on the relevant passages in the Fourth Gospel is in order, though it is beyond the scope of this study.

17. Freedman, 'The Literary Motif', p. 125.

18. For more on rhetorical underlining, see Robert E. Longacre, *The Grammar of Discourse* (New York: Plenum, 1983), p. 26. S. Booth lists a good example of such underlining in John 19, where the words σταυρός and σταυρόω appear fifteen times between verses 6 and 41; Steve Booth, *Selected Peak Marking Features in the Gospel of John* (New York: Peter Lang, 1996), pp. 115-16.

19. Although Jesus does call his disciples 'my friends' in Luke 12.4, this theme is not fleshed out in Luke as it is in the Fourth Gospel.

20. Joel Rosenberg, *King and Kin: Political Allegory in the Hebrew Bible* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1986), p. 108.

In the present case, we are dealing not with the type of socio-political sophistication that would have been limited to the elite, but rather with a socio-cultural value that almost certainly permeated all levels of society. Indeed, the type of knowledge that this study posits as part of the authorial audience's repertoire is far less specialized than seventeenth-century readers would have needed to recognize the full import of Shakespeare's implicit political commentary.

Furthermore, modern readers should not be surprised to find the apparently Jewish author of a piece of Christian literature using essentially Greco-Roman ideas to convey a particular point or create a particular motif.[21] 'The story and its roots in the religious and cultural heritage of both Jews and Gentiles were complex and fertile enough to allow for a great variety of themes, emphases, ironies, and implications'.[22] Just as citizens of many nations today have come to have a fairly broad level of familiarity with American culture and values, so too in the first and second century, Greco-Roman culture and values were so pervasive in the Mediterranean world that it was impossible for most citizens not to have encountered important features, including the notion of ideal friendship. Indeed, just as Christian pastors in the U.S. today tend to use illustrations and language that comes from their American culture, rather than distinctively Christian language, so the author of the Gospel of John utilized language and cultural notions that were at his disposal and that would have been familiar to his intended audience.

How sharp, though, would the authorial audience have to have been to catch the significance of the author's use of friendship language? Although one could argue that the proposed reading of the Gospel of John requires the reader to catch overly subtle inferences, such subtlety is consistent with the nature of the Fourth Gospel itself:[23] 'Traffic on the gospel's subterranean frequencies is so heavy that even the perceptive reader is never sure he or she has received all the signals the text is sending'.[24] Culpepper notes that 'the gospel achieves its most subtle effects...through its implicit commentary, that is, the devices and

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21. I do not intend to rule out or even minimize any echoes of Jewish notions of friendship in the Fourth Gospel. Jesus' sharing of knowledge with his followers certainly may have been linked by some Jewish readers to Abraham's relationship to Yahweh, who asked (rhetorically), 'Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do?' (Gen. 18.17); cf. D.M. Stanley, 'I am the Genuine Vine (Jn 15,1)', *TBT* 1 (1963), p. 491.

22. Culpepper, *Anatomy*, p. 85.

23. R. Scholes and R. Kellogg note that 'the ideal reader of narratives...must bring to his consideration of character a versatility of response commensurate with the infinite variety of narrative characterization' (Robert Scholes and Robert Kellogg, *The Nature of Narrative* [London: Oxford University Press, 1966], p. 206).

24. Culpepper, *Anatomy*, p. 151.

passages in which the author communicates with the reader by impli-
cation and indirection. Here the gospel says more than it ever makes
explicit'.[25]

It is not unlikely that the authorial audience would have recognized
the significance of the persistent references to ideal friendship in the
Gospel of John. Reader alertness is encouraged from the very begin-
ning of the Fourth Gospel in the author's use of a chiastic structure,[26]
Old Testament allusions, implicit questions, and diverse imagery in
the Prologue and continues throughout the body of the narrative
with his use of metaphor, irony, and the motif of misunderstanding,
among other literary devices. Often, as in 2.21, the narrator will make
the intended meaning of a pericope transparent. At other times, read-
ers are left to work out the meaning on their own. For example, when
Nicodemus misunderstands Jesus' expression, 'to be born again/from
above' (γεννηθῇ ἄνωθεν; John 3), the narrator does not explain Jesus'
meaning.[27] Similarly, when Jesus offers the woman at the well 'living
water' (John 4), she misses the point of the metaphor. The reader, how-
ever, by now knows that he or she must look beyond the surface mean-
ing of Jesus' words and is thus on the alert for additional clues within
the text.

Reader alertness is particularly reinforced by the motif of misunder-
standing. Indeed, as Culpepper notes: 'the most significant function of the
misunderstandings...is to teach readers how to read the gospel. The misun-
derstandings call attention to the gospel's metaphors, double-entendres,
and plurisignations'.[28] This motif and the motif of lack of understanding
encourage the reader to read carefully and to look for meaning in the text
that is often not grasped by those who inhabit the narrative world of the

25. Culpepper, *Anatomy*, p. 233.

26. Citing the intricate chiastic structure of Jn 1.1-2 posited by N.W. Lund (Nils
Wilhelm Lund, 'The Influence of Chiasmus upon the Structure of the Gospels', *ATR* 13
[1931], p. 42), Culpepper ('The Pivot of John's Prologue', *NTS* 27 [1980–81], p. 10) has
argued that this structure alerts the reader from the very beginning to look for chi-
astic structures throughout the Prologue:

A ἐν ἀρχῇ	F' καὶ θεός
B ἦν	E' ἦν
C ὁ λόγος	D' ὁ λόγος
D καὶ ὁ λόγος	C' οὗτος
E ἦν	B' ἦν
F πρὸς τὸν θεόν	A' ἐν ἀρχῇ πρὸς τὸν θεόν

27. It may well be that the issue here is not a lack of understanding, but rather a
deliberate *choice* not to understand. See F.P. Cotterell, 'The Nicodemus Conversation:
A Fresh Appraisal', *ET* 96 (1985), p. 240.

28. *Anatomy*, p. 165.

text.[29] This same type of implicit message within the text naturally flows from the ubiquitous friendship language.[30] The cumulative effect of the author's appeal to the conceptual field of friendship makes it more than reasonable to assume that ancient readers who were familiar with this field would have grasped its implications.

Indeed, this study strongly suggests that when the Gospel of John was encountered by the authorial audience, who brought an understanding of Greco-Roman notions of ideal friendship to the text, the result would have been an extensive commentary on the relationship between key figures in the text. In particular, the Fourth Gospel would have served, in large part, as a tool for explicating the nature of the relationship between Jesus and the Father and Jesus and his followers. The subtlety and culturally-bound nature of the friendship language is illuminated by the distinction that D. Gowler has drawn between 'direct definition' and 'indirect presentation' as means of characterization. Gowler maintains that while authors can build a character through direct defining features within the narrative, characterization often relies upon indirect presentation, which requires readers to draw the necessary conclusions. Such indirect presentation may take the form of speech, action, external appearance, environment, or comparison/contrast.[31] The cultural knowledge, or 'cultural scripts', that the authorial audience brought to the Gospel of John would

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29. Culpepper also notes the clear correlation between misunderstanding and characterization in the Fourth Gospel; *Anatomy*, pp. 162-63. Within the narrative world of the Fourth Gospel some understand Jesus' claims but reject them (8.59), while 'his own' often seem incapable of understanding his message (8.27) and continue, in spite of his seemingly transparent words and actions, to ask, 'Who are you?' (8.25; cf. 8.53; 10.24). At one point, the Johannine Jesus' reply to this question (8.25b: Τὴν ἀρχὴν ὅ τι καὶ λαλῶ ὑμῖν;) takes the readers back to the inside information they were given 'in the beginning': Jesus was with God and was God. On the various ways in which Jesus' answer can be read, see C.K. Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John: An Introduction with Commentary and Notes on the Greek Text* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1978), p. 343; George R. Beasley-Murray, *John* (WBC, 36; Waco, TX: Word Books, 1987), pp. 125-26. Thus, 'in John, the reader finds that the evangelist says a great deal without actually saying it. Having drawn readers to his side by means of the Prologue, the evangelist trusts them to pick up the overtones of his language' (Culpepper, *Anatomy*, p. 151). A good example is provided by 12.34. Careful readers may well have avoided the crowd's misunderstanding, even without the narrator's comment (12.33), given the earlier association of the expression 'be lifted up' with 'Son of Man' (3.14; 8.28); cf. Culpepper, *Anatomy*, p. 159.

30. Eco has noted that 'frequently a text establishes its topic by reiterating blatantly a series of sememes belonging to the same semantic field' (Umberto Eco, *The Role of the Reader: Explorations in the Semiotics of Texts* [Bloomington: Indiana University, 1979], p. 26).

31. David B. Gowler, *Host, Guest, Enemy and Friend: Portraits of the Pharisees in Luke and Acts* (New York: Peter Lang, 1991), p. 73.

have therefore led to 'implicit communication that modern readers would not necessarily glean' from the text.[32]

Culpepper has noted that 'A plot requires a change of some kind, and its peculiar affective power is produced by the hopes and fears, desires and expectations it imposes on the reader as it unfolds the change from beginning to end'.[33] Clearly, the central plot line of the Fourth Gospel begins with the incarnate *Logos* descending from above in human form, continues through his life and ministry, and concludes with his death, resurrection, and implicit return to the Father. This study has suggested, however, that part of the overall plot includes the answering of an implicit question raised in the Prologue: How will the divine *Logos* made flesh relate to others in the flesh?[34] The prevalence of friendship language in the farewell discourse, coupled with the leveling of status implied by the footwashing, provides the answer. The incarnate *Logos* came not as a transcendent individual, too lofty for mere humans to relate to. Instead, he came offering friendship, the deepest level of intimacy, to those who would follow him. Where Greco-Roman writers tended to expound on personal friendship as an idealistic, utopian concept, somewhat analogous to Plato's portrayal of an ideal world in his *Republic*, the Gospel of John makes the startling claim that such a relationship not only exists between Jesus and the Father, but is also available to Jesus' followers. Indeed, the special qualities of the Father's love for the Son depicted in the first half of the Fourth Gospel, in particular, and the access that Jesus' followers have to the Father's love through their friendship with Jesus depicted in the second half, both stimulate 'the reader to compare this narrative world with the "real world" of everyday life and ask how the Father's love for the Son can be part of this everyday world'.[35]

The intimate terms in which the Gospel of John casts Jesus' relationship with his followers have often been overlooked or minimized.

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32. Gowler, *Host, Guest, Enemy and Friend*, p. 317; cf. John A. Darr, *On Character Building: The Reader and the Rhetoric of Characterization in Luke–Acts* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992), p. 37.

33. *Anatomy*, p. 81. Culpepper (*Anatomy*, pp. 83-84) points to similarities between the plot of the Fourth Gospel and the genre or *mythos* of romance. Romances present a hero who embarks on a successful quest, typically comprised of three stages: 'the preliminary minor adventures; the crucial struggle, usually some kind of battle in which either the hero or his foe, or both, must die; and the exaltation of the hero' (Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays* [Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1957], p. 187; quoted by Culpepper, p. 83).

34. The need to 'bring Jesus down to earth', so to speak, emerges precisely because the Fourth Gospel has portrayed Jesus in such exalted terms.

35. Philip B. Harner, *Relation Analysis of the Fourth Gospel: A Study in Reader-Response Criticism* (Lewiston, NY: Mellen, 1993), p. 31.

Culpepper argues that in spite of the narrator's frequent comments that Jesus loves his followers (13.1, 34; 14.21; 15.9, 12; 17.23; 19.26; 20.2; 21.7, 20), with the exception of Jesus' defense of Mary (12.7-8), his washing of his followers' feet (13.1-20), and the favored place for the Beloved Disciple at the table (13.23), 'there is little evidence of warmth in these relationships'.[36] Others have felt compelled to point out that while Jesus calls his followers his 'friends', God is never called the disciples' friend.[37] In their view, to do so would be to demean God.[38] Puthenkandathil, for example, is careful to qualify the nature of the relationship between Jesus and his followers:

> The intimacy between Jesus and the believer is an intimacy honoured by the term φίλοι; but this 'friendship' must be carefully understood. It is to be noted that the disciples are Jesus' friends, but Jesus is not called their friend. It seems to be a deliberate attempt of the Evangelist to show that friendship is an offer on the part of Jesus to His disciples. They must still enjoy certain qualities in themselves to reach a status to call Jesus their real friend. By keeping Jesus' commandment of fraternal love and bearing fruit the disciples can establish a friendship with Him.[39]

Claims such as these are inconsistent with the pervasive use of the conceptual field of Greco-Roman ideal friendship in the Gospel of John. This study has suggested that while there is no explicit reference to God being a friend of the disciples, the array of friendship language that is used to describe not only the relationship between the Father and Jesus, but also the relationship between Jesus and his followers points to a different conclusion. Jesus does lower himself to become a genuine friend of his followers. In doing so, he invites and allows them to enter into the kind of intimate relationship that previously had been reserved for the members of the Godhead alone.[40]

The Fourth Gospel's use of the friendship motif is thus not only aesthetically pleasing, in terms of the creative way in which friendship language is woven throughout the text, and linguistically productive, in terms of the cohesion such language provides to the text as a whole, it is also theologically revolutionary in terms of its startling claim about human-

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36. Culpepper, *Anatomy*, p. 111.

37. Cf. D.A. Carson, *The Gospel according to John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), p. 522; Rudolf Bultmann, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary* (trans. G.R. Beasley-Murray *et al.*; Oxford: Blackwell, 1971), p. 545.

38. Carson, *John*, p. 522.

39. Puthenkandathil, *Philos*, p. 239.

40. Such a relationship is not *gained* by obedience, but rather (to borrow from E.P. Sanders) is *maintained* and revealed by obedience.

divine relationships.[41] The Word who was with God and was God invites his followers to be 'with God' in the full measure of intimacy that only the language of ideal friendship can begin to describe.

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41. As Culpepper notes: 'The Gospel of John is therefore more unified and coherent than has often been thought because its unity is not found primarily in plot development, which as we have seen is rather episodic, or in the progression of action from scene to scene. It consists instead in the effect it achieves through thematic development, the spectrum of characters, and the implicit commentary conveyed through irony and symbolism. In other words, the unity of this 'spiritual gospel' is more evident in the subtle elements of its narrative structure than in the obvious ones' (*Anatomy*, p. 234); contra, e.g., C.R. Bowen, who has argued that the Fourth Gospel is 'a miscellany of material conceived dramatically, passages, dialogue, monologue, sketches of setting, of characters, of exits and entrances, of time and place and such like' (Clayton R. Bowen, 'The Fourth Gospel as Dramatic Material', *JBL* 49 [1930], p. 295).

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