

John 21:20-25

²⁰ Peter turned and saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them, the one who had been reclining at table close to him and had said, "Lord, who is it that is going to betray you?" ²¹ When Peter saw him, he said to Jesus, "Lord, what about this man?"

20,21 Apparently Jesus and Peter had walked off to have this one on one, but John tagged along. It is wonderful how Jesus deals with us personally, and yet we are part of a community. I am glad John felt he could not leave Jesus' side so that we could have the details that follow (Romans 14:4).

²² Jesus said to him, "If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow me!"

22 Peter! Snap out of it! This is YOUR 're-call' notice. Forget about other people and competition and focus on what is happening right here and right now. You must follow me! Did you get it? Do I need to repeat it?"

Someone always has a word for someone else. Their life is a mess, but they need to be the voice of God to you. Here is the voice of God for you, "Follow Jesus!" That is what we really need to hear! "What about that other guy, that para-church ministry, or that strange person who has been coming to church?" No, what about you and I doing what is most important, following Jesus, and let Jesus deal with the other person in His good time (Romans 14:4). Let us follow Jesus!

²³ So the saying spread abroad among the brothers that this disciple was not to die; yet Jesus did not say to him that he was not to die, but, "If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you?"

23 John was the last Apostle to die. That fact combined with this expression from Jesus started people assuming that John wouldn't die. But of course, he did. He died in Ephesus. Tradition tells us that in his old age he was carried to the church in a chair. They would always give him a chance to speak. Each week he would simply say, "Little children, love one another. When this is done, all is done."

²⁴ This is the disciple who is bearing witness about these things, and who has written these things, and we know that his testimony is true.

24 Dear brother John, the Beloved Apostle, lived to an old age. If tradition is correct, the Romans tried to boil him in oil, and when it did not bother him, they exiled him to the island of Patmos. His last years were spent in Ephesus as an elder. Because he followed Jesus, we have this wonderful Gospel that is so rich with details and revelations of Jesus, John's letters, and the Book of Revelation.

He is giving testimony, like in a court of law, but actually in the court of the world. You and I are like jurors who have heard his testimony. He swears to have told us the truth. Now we must decide. Everyone must decide what they believe about Jesus.

25 Now there are also many other things that Jesus did. Were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.

25 John is saying he had to pick and choose because there is so much material. He picked from his memory the things that would help us believe. I think that is why we love this Gospel so much.

Jesus is still at work. He is still doing things in your life and mine. The book of Acts is really the acts of Jesus in the lives of believers. The history of the church is the acts of Jesus over the last 2000 years. Think of all the little and big acts of Jesus in your life. Multiply that times millions, even billions. The world would not have room for the books that would be written, the testimonies of all those saints who have each been met individually, called and “re-called”, humbled, blessed time and time again, witnessed a thousand God-incidences, wondered at His care and yet we each probably cannot even see most of His gracious working in our lives. No, the world could not contain a record of all the incredible works of Jesus during His earthly life, and even more, in the lives of His own.

This is John’s good news. It calls us to be like his rabbi, Jesus. It calls us to love one another. It calls us to see Jesus as the eternal God incarnate, who demonstrated the greatness of His love for you. It calls us to go out into the world and be like Him!

Let us close this incredible Gospel with the same question in our hearts. Hear Jesus ask you, “Do you agape Me?” What is your answer? What is His response?

Questions:

When wondering about others, what is Jesus’ advice?

What happened to John?

Why can’t the world contain the books that could be written?

Do you love Jesus? What does He say to you?

Here are a few key verses from John worth committing to memory:

1:1,9, 12, 14

3:16,17, 30, 36

4:13,14, 23,24

5:19

6:35; 63

7:37,38

8:12, 31,32, 34, 58

10:7, 30

11:25,26

12:32, 46

13:14,15 34,35

14:6

15:1-5, 13

16:33

17:3,16-18, 23

18:37

20:21,22