

John 18:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple: that disciple was known unto the high priest, and went in with Jesus into the palace of the high priest.

Analysis

"And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple" (Ἠκολούθει δὲ τῷ Ἰησοῦ Σίμων Πέτρος καὶ ἄλλος μαθητής/Ēkolouthei de tō Iēsou Simōn Petros kai allos mathētēs)—the verb ἀκολουθέω (akoloutheō, "followed") is the standard term for discipleship. Despite fleeing (Matthew 26:56), Peter and another disciple rally and follow at a distance, attempting to see Jesus's fate. The imperfect tense ἠκολούθει (ēkolouthei) indicates continuous action—they kept following despite danger.

"That disciple was known unto the high priest" (ὁ μαθητὴς ἐκεῖνος ἦν γνωστὸς τῷ ἀρχιερεῖ/ho mathētēs ekeinos ēn gnōstos tō archierei)—this unnamed disciple (almost certainly John himself, given the Gospel's pattern of self-reference) had prior acquaintance with the high priestly household. The adjective γνωστός (gnōstos) means "known, acquainted with"—suggesting personal connections, possibly family or business ties. Some traditions suggest John's family supplied fish to the priestly household.

"And went in with Jesus into the palace of the high priest" (καὶ συνεισῆλθεν τῷ Ἰησοῦ εἰς τὴν αὐλὴν τοῦ ἀρχιερέως/kai syneisēlthen tō Iēsou eis tēn aulēn tou archiereōs)—the compound verb συνεισερχομαι (syneiserchomai, "enter together with") shows John gained entry immediately with Jesus. John's access allowed him to witness events Peter initially could not—providing eyewitness testimony for his Gospel.

Historical Context

High priestly residences in Jerusalem were substantial compounds with courtyards where servants and guards gathered. Only those with known connections or official business gained entry, especially during nighttime proceedings. John's acquaintance with the high priest (whether through family, business, or other connections) gave him privileged access that would prove crucial for Gospel testimony. The other disciples had scattered (Matthew 26:56), but Peter and John—the two often paired throughout the Gospels—remained close enough to follow. This showed genuine courage despite the danger, yet it also set the stage for Peter's denial.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. What does Peter and John's decision to follow Jesus despite danger teach about courageous discipleship?
2. How did God's providence position John with connections to the high priest's household to serve as eyewitness?
3. What is the difference between following Jesus 'at a distance' versus intimate discipleship?

Interlinear Text

Ἦκολούθει	δὲ	τῷ	Ἰησοῦ	Σίμων	Πέτρος	καὶ	ὁ
followed G190	And G1161	G3588	Jesus G2424	Simon G4613	Peter G4074	and G2532	G3588
ἄλλος	μαθητὴς	ὁ	δὲ	μαθητὴς	ἐκεῖνος	ἦν	
so did another G243	disciple G3101	G3588	And G1161	disciple G3101	that G1565	was G2258	
γνωστὸς	τῷ	ἀρχιερέως	καὶ	συνεισῆλθεν	τῷ	Ἰησοῦ	εἰς
known G1110	G3588	of the high priest G749	and G2532	went in with G4897	G3588	Jesus G2424	into G1519
τὴν	αὐλὴν	τοῦ	ἀρχιερέως				
G3588	the palace G833	G3588	of the high priest G749				

Additional Cross-References

Mark 14:54 (References Peter): And Peter followed him afar off, even into the palace of the high priest: and he sat with the servants, and warmed himself at the fire.

Luke 22:54 (References Peter): Then took they him, and led him, and brought him into the high priest's house. And Peter followed afar off.