

John 18:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But Peter stood at the door without. Then went out that other disciple, which was known unto the high priest, and spake unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter.

Analysis

"But Peter stood at the door without" (ὁ δὲ Πέτρος εἰστήκει πρὸς τῇ θύρᾳ ἔξω/ ho de Petros heistēkei pros tē thyra exō)—while John entered with Jesus, Peter remained outside at the θύρα (thyra, "door, gate"). The perfect tense εἰστήκει (heistēkei, "was standing") emphasizes his stationary position, unable to enter. The adverb ἔξω (exō, "outside, without") will become significant—Peter's physical position outside the courtyard symbolizes his impending spiritual distancing through denial.

"Then went out that other disciple...and spake unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter" (ἐξῆλθεν οὖν ὁ μαθητὴς ὁ ἄλλος...καὶ εἶπεν τῇ θυρωρῷ, καὶ εἰσήγαγεν τὸν Πέτρον/exēlthen oun ho mathētēs ho allos...kai eipen tē thyrōrō, kai eisēgagen ton Petron)—John's action is charitable, using his connections to bring Peter inside. The θυρωρός (thyrōros, "doorkeeper") was typically a slave or servant, here specifically feminine.

The verb εἰσάγω (eisagō, "brought in, led in") shows John facilitating Peter's entry through personal intervention. This seemingly kind act ironically leads to Peter's downfall—the very doorkeeper who admits him will trigger his first denial (v.17). Sometimes gaining access to situations beyond our spiritual readiness places us in greater danger. Peter's boldness in the garden (v.10) evaporates in the courtyard.

Historical Context

Doorkeepers in large households wielded significant power despite low social status, controlling access and identifying visitors. A female doorkeeper was common, as this was considered suitable work for slave women. Her later challenge to Peter (v.17) wasn't official interrogation but casual conversation—yet it undid Peter more effectively than Roman swords. John's connections to the high priestly household, while providing valuable eyewitness access, also placed both disciples in morally compromised territory. They were now inside the very power structure executing their Lord, surrounded by His enemies.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How can well-intentioned help (John bringing Peter in) sometimes place people in spiritual danger beyond their readiness?
2. What does Peter's inability to enter on his own merit symbolize about access to God apart from Christ's mediation?
3. Why do you think Peter's courage in the garden evaporated in the courtyard?

Interlinear Text

ὁ	δὲ	Πέτρον	εἰστήκει	πρὸς	τῇ	θύρᾳ	ἔξω	ἐξῆλθεν
G3588	But G1161	Peter G4074	stood G2476	at G4314	G3588	the door G2374	without G1854	went out G1831
οὖν	ὁ	μαθητὴς	ὁ	ἄλλος	ὅς	ἦν	γνωστὸς	τῷ
Then G3767	G3588	disciple G3101	G3588	that other G243	which G3739	was G2258	known G1110	G3588
ἀρχιερεῖ,	καὶ	εἶπεν	τῇ	θυρωρῷ	καὶ			
unto the high priest G749	and G2532	spake G2036	G3588	unto her that kept the door G2377	and G2532			
εἰσήγαγεν	τὸν	Πέτρον						
brought in G1521	G3588	Peter G4074						

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