

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 μαθητῆς 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** **Peter** **stood** **at** G3588 **the door** **without** **went out**
G1161 G4074 G2476 G4314 G2374 G1854 G1831

οὖν ὁ μαθητὴς ὁ ἄλλος ὃς ἦν γνωστὸς τῷ
Then G3588 **disciple** G3588 **that other** **which** **was** **known** G3588
G3767 G3101 G243 G3739 G2258 G1110

ἀρχιερεῖ, καὶ εἶπεν τῇ θυρωρῷ καὶ
unto the high priest **and** **spake** G3588 **unto her that kept the door** **and**
G749 G2532 G2036 G2377 G2532

εἰσήγαγεν τὸν Πέτρον
brought in G3588 **Peter**
G1521 G4074