

Matthew 26:58

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But Peter followed him afar off unto the high priest's palace, and went in, and sat with the servants, to see the end.

Analysis

But Peter followed him afar off unto the high priest's palace (Ὁ δὲ Πέτρος ἠκολούθει αὐτῷ ἀπὸ μακρόθεν ἕως τῆς αὐλῆς τοῦ ἀρχιερέως)—The imperfect ἠκολούθει ('was following') shows continued action—Peter didn't completely abandon Jesus. The phrase ἀπὸ μακρόθεν ('from afar, at a distance') reveals fearful caution. He wanted to know Jesus's fate but not identify with Him. Following 'from afar' characterizes compromised discipleship—close enough to observe but distant enough to deny association. This fulfilled Jesus's prediction (26:34) and set up Peter's denials (vv. 69-75).

And went in, and sat with the servants, to see the end (καὶ εἰσελθὼν ἕσω ἐκάθητο μετὰ τῶν ὑπηρετῶν ἰδεῖν τὸ τέλος)—John 18:15-16 explains 'another disciple' (likely John) knew the high priest and got Peter admitted. Peter sat (κάθημαι, kathēmai) with the ὑπηρέτες (servants, attendants, officers)—warming by their fire (John 18:18), physically comfortable while Jesus suffered. The infinitive ἰδεῖν τὸ τέλος ('to see the end, the outcome') shows Peter's motive: observation, not participation. He wanted to witness events without personal cost—impossible neutrality.

Historical Context

The αὐλή (courtyard) was open-air space within the high priest's house complex. Servants, guards, and staff gathered there, likely warming themselves (it was night, early spring—cold). Archaeological findings show wealthy Jerusalem homes

had spacious courtyards with multiple rooms surrounding them. Peter's presence among enemies showed courage (he didn't flee completely) but his denials showed cowardice (he couldn't confess Christ publicly). This mixed state characterizes many disciples—genuine faith combined with fearful compromise.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. In what areas of life do you follow Jesus 'from afar'—maintaining association but avoiding full identification?
2. How does Peter's warming by the enemy's fire while Jesus faced trial picture compromised discipleship seeking comfort while Christ suffers?

Interlinear Text

ὁ	δὲ	Πέτρος	ἠκολούθει	αὐτῷ	ἀπὸ	μακρόθεν	ἕως
G3588	But	Peter	followed	him	afar off	G3113	unto
	G1161	G4074	G190	G846	G575		G2193
τῆς	αὐλῆς	τοῦ	ἀρχιερέως	καὶ	εἰσελθὼν	ἔσω	ἐκάθητο
G3588	palace	G3588	the high priest's	and	went	in	and sat
	G833		G749	G2532	G1525	G2080	G2521
μετὰ	τῶν	ὑπηρετῶν	ἰδεῖν	τὸ	τέλος		
with	G3588	the servants	to see	G3588	the end		
G3326		G5257	G1492		G5056		

Additional Cross-References

John 7:32 (Parallel theme): The Pharisees heard that the people murmured such things concerning him; and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take him.

John 18:25 (References Peter): And Simon Peter stood and warmed himself. They said therefore unto him, Art not thou also one of his disciples? He denied it, and said, I am not.

John 7:45 (Parallel theme): Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought him?

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