

Hans-Ulrich Weidemann, *Der Tod Jesu im Johannesevangelium: Die erste Abschiedsrede als Schlüsseltext für den Passions- und Osterbericht* (BZNW 122; Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 2004). Pp. xx + 573. \$128.97.

The present work is a revised doctoral dissertation written under the supervision of Michael Theobald at the Eberhard-Karls-Universität Tübingen. In investigating the death of Jesus in John's Gospel, the author contends that the "first farewell discourse," that is, John 13:31–14:31, represents a key text for the passion and Easter narrative (i.e. John 18–21). Weidemann contends that previous research has unduly neglected the Johannine passion narrative in understanding the Johannine theology of the cross. Instead, emphasis has typically been placed on the reference to the Word becoming flesh in John 1:14; the Johannine *hyper*-texts (i.e. John 6:51; 10:11, 15; 11:50–52; 15:13; 17:19; 18:14); the depictions of Jesus as the Lamb of God (John 1:29, 36); and on the "lifted-up sayings" (John 3:14–15; 8:28; 12:32–34).

However, contra Bultmann and Käsemann, Weidemann maintains that John 1:14 is a summary of John's Gospel, not a key to an understanding of the Gospel's theology of the cross. Taking his point of departure from John 14:29 ("I have told you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe"), the author argues that the first Johannine farewell discourse serves as a *Leseanweisung* (reader's manual) for the passion narrative and John's *theologia crucis*. According to Weidemann, John 14:29: (1) transforms eschatology from being futuristic and collective to having a present and individual orientation; (2) serves as a principlization of Easter; and (3) puts the emphasis on the post-Easter period as a culmination of salvation history.

Indeed, Weidemann's work serves as a helpful corrective to those who, like Bultmann or Käsemann, unduly bypass important portions of the Gospel material. To be sure, a careful study of the Johannine passion narrative ought to be an indispensable component of one's investigation of John's theology of the cross. At the same time, however, there is good reason why most studies of the subject have focused on the depiction of Jesus as the Lamb of God as well as on the "lifted up sayings" and on statements that Jesus died "for" others (be it as the "Bread of Life," as the "Good Shepherd," or in some other capacity). In fact, it is curious that Weidemann virtually ignores these indisputable aspects of John's theology of the cross in his monograph.

The author's neglect of these passages and his unilateral focus on John 13:31–14:31 in relation to the passion narrative render his study partial at best and lopsided at worst. While few would deny that the passion narrative is important for a study of John's theology of the cross, Weidemann's work is too reactionary and insufficiently balanced in failing to consider *all* the relevant component parts of the Johannine *theologia crucis*. Not only does this pertain to the above-mentioned passages, but also to the preamble to the first Johannine farewell discourse, that is, the footwashing narrative (John 13:1–30). Arguably, it is there that Jesus' selfless, sacrificial love for his own is said to be revealed (see the reference to the revelation of the "full extent" of Jesus' love in John 13:1).

For these and other reasons, Weidemann's work may serve as an interesting complement to other studies but hardly constitutes the definitive work on John's theology of the cross as a whole.

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