

Thoughts on John

John 13: 23; John 19: 26; John 20: 2; John 21: 7-20.

J. G. Bellett.

BT vol. 8 p. 302.

"The disciple whom Jesus loved." I have been just feeling that I can fully enjoy the truth which these words convey. And I would cherish such an experience, and ask the Lord to fix and enlarge it.

It is far from intimating that one is more interested than another in the grace or salvation of God, or loved with a more faithful and enduring love. But it does intimate that there may be a more personal attachment between the Master and some of His disciples than between Him and others. All, I may say, sat at supper with Him, while only one leaned then on His bosom. All continued with Him in His temptations, and are to receive the kingdom together, but only three were in the garden or on the holy hill with Him. For there is more personal oneness of thought and feeling in some than in others, more of that which, as among ourselves, draws the willing heart along.

If I look at a brother whose way savours much of that which I know Jesus must delight in, being meek, and self-renouncing, and unaffectedly humble, and withal devoted and unworldly, I may remember John, and see that disciple whom Jesus loved reflected in my brother. But then, how happy is it to remember that John himself was but one of a company whom the same Jesus had chosen and called, and bound to Himself for ever! Did John exclude Thomas or Bartholomew? Thomas and Bartholomew, in the great evangelical sense, were as much to Christ as John. The one was not a whit more accepted man than the other.

This is sure and blessed, as well as plain and simple. I may rejoice in it with all certainty. And if I have any love to Him who has called me to such assured and eternal blessedness, will I not rejoice in this, that He has an object in which He can take more delight than I must well know I and my way can afford Him?

Thus do I find reasons for enjoying that sentence, again and again repeated, "the disciple whom Jesus loved," and for delighting also in the thought that such a truth finds its illustration among the saints now, as it did in the midst of the apostles in earlier days.

The love with which we have to do is too perfect to be *partial*. It does not act irregularly or carelessly. We are all the objects of it. Thomas is not neglected because John is thus loved. But because this love is real, it is moved in this way by a John. But when I see a John leaning on Jesus while I myself am at a distance, let me have grace to look still, and to delight in the vision, and to say, "It is good for me to be here." If I am not in the same experience, still it is blessed to enjoy the thought that another is there. *Peter was gladdened by the vision of a glory in Moses and Elias, though it was all beyond him.* So is my happy and thankful spirit to entertain the thought of my more heavenly brother pressing the bosom of our common Lord. J. G. B.