

NICOLAS FARELLY

The Disciples
in the Fourth Gospel

*Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen
zum Neuen Testament 2. Reihe
290*

Mohr Siebeck

Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen
zum Neuen Testament · 2. Reihe

Herausgeber / Editor

Jörg Frey (Zürich)

Mitherausgeber / Associate Editors

Friedrich Avemarie (Marburg)

Markus Bockmuehl (Oxford)

Hans-Josef Klauck (Chicago, IL)

290



Nicolas Farelly

The Disciples in the Fourth Gospel

A Narrative Analysis of their Faith and Understanding

Mohr Siebeck

NICOLAS FARELLY, born 1978; 2009 PhD, University of Gloucestershire, UK; since 2005 director of the Forum Culturel Protestant, Compiègne, France; instructor in New Testament Theology, Faculté Libre de Théologie Réformée, Aix-en-Provence, France; instructor in New Testament Theology, Institut Biblique, Nogent-sur-Marne, France.

e-ISBN 978-3-16-151633-7

ISBN 978-3-16-150583-6

ISSN 0340-9570 (Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament, 2. Reihe)

Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliographie; detailed bibliographic data are available on the Internet at <http://dnb.d-nb.de>.

© 2010 by Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen, Germany.

This book may not be reproduced, in whole or in part, in any form (beyond that permitted by copyright law) without the publisher's written permission. This applies particularly to reproductions, translations, microfilms and storage and processing in electronic systems.

The book was printed by Laupp & Göbel in Nehren on non-aging paper and bound by Buchbinderei Nädele in Nehren.

Printed in Germany.

Preface

The present monograph is a slightly revised version of my thesis, which was submitted in 2009 to the University of Gloucestershire for the degree of Ph.D. More people than can be mentioned here have contributed to my research by providing academic insight, support, inspiration, or encouragement. I owe a special debt of gratitude to my supervisors, Professor Andrew T. Lincoln and Dr. Angus Paddison. I am particularly thankful that, at a time when professional and family responsibilities overwhelmed me and made me question the very rationale for pursuing my research interests, they found the appropriate words of encouragement to help me carry on this project. So many of their ideas on the Fourth Gospel have enriched my understanding of it. Their gracious guidance and insightful suggestions have rendered this thesis better than it could have ever been without them. I would also like to express my gratitude to the editor of this series, Professor Dr. Jörg Frey, for accepting this thesis for publication, and to Dr. Henning Ziebritzki and his wonderful editorial staff for their able assistance. As I worked on the monograph in preparation for publication, I also received the support of Rev. Robert Fossett, a dear friend who accepted to read over the thesis for a final check on my written English. Of course, none of them can be held responsible for the remaining deficiencies in the thesis.

I am very thankful to my parents, Paul and Danielle Farelly, and to my grandparents, Jean and Janine Farelly, for their constant encouragement throughout my life, and for their financial support during my studies.

Two dear friends deserve to be mentioned here as well. Alexander Bukovietski and Rodrigo de Sousa have accompanied me with their friendship during most of my theological and biblical training. Throughout our numerous conversations, their ideas and faith have impacted me more than they will ever know. I am so fortunate to count them as my friends.

Last, but by no means least, my deepest appreciation goes to my wife Alison. But for her love, support, patience, and many sacrifices, neither this thesis nor much that is worthwhile in my life would exist. Together with our three children, William, Elliot, and Aimée, they have brought me joy and continuing encouragement in the past several years, even when so much of my time was spent physically or emotionally away from them. It is with love and gratitude that I dedicate this monograph to them.

Table of Contents

Preface.....	V
Table of Contents	VII
Abbreviations.....	XI
Chapter 1. Introduction.....	1
Chapter 2. The Faith and Understanding of the Disciples as a Group in the Sequence of the Fourth Gospel's Narrative	14
Introduction	14
<i>A. The Prologue: 1:1–18</i>	18
<i>B. The Book of Signs: 1:19–12:50</i>	21
1. The Opening Days and the Revelation of Jesus (1:19–1:51)	21
2. From Cana to Cana (2:1–4:54).....	28
3. Jesus and the Principal Feasts of the Jews (5:1–10:42).....	42
4. Jesus Moves Toward the Hour of Death and Glory (11:1–12:50).....	56
<i>C. The Book of Glory: 13:1–20:31</i>	63
1. The Last Supper (13:1–17:26).....	63
2. The Passion Narrative (18:1–19:42).....	78
3. The Risen Jesus (20:1–29).....	81
4. Conclusion (20:30–31)	85
<i>D. The Epilogue: 21:1–25</i>	86
Chapter 3. The Faith and Understanding of Key Individual Disciples.....	89

<i>A. Peter</i>	89
1. “You shall be called Cephas” (1:40–42).....	89
2. “You have the words of eternal life” (6:67–69).....	91
3. “Not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!” (13:6–11)	93
4. “Simon Peter motioned to him to ask Jesus” (13:23–26).....	94
5. “Till you have denied me three times” (13:36–38).....	95
6. “Put your sword into its sheath” (18:10–11).....	97
7. “And at once the rooster crowed” (18:15–18, 25–27).....	98
8. “Simon Peter ... went into the tomb” (20:2–10)	100
9. “Feed my lambs” (21:2–22).....	102
 <i>B. Judas</i>	106
1. “One of you is a devil” (6:64, 70–71).....	106
2. “He said this ... because he was a thief” (12:4–8)	108
3. “You are clean, but not every one of you” (13:1–20).....	110
4. “What you are going to do, do it quickly” (13:21–30).....	112
5. “Not one of them has been lost, except the son of destruction” (17:12).....	114
6. “Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them” (18:1–5)	115
 <i>C. Thomas</i>	118
1. “Let us go also, that we may die with him” (11:16).....	118
2. “Lord, we do not know where you are going” (14:5).....	120
3. “My Lord and my God!” (20:24–29).....	121
4. “By the sea of Tiberias” (21:1–2).....	127
 <i>D. The Beloved Disciple</i>	128
1. “Reclining at the table close to Jesus” (13:21–26)	130
2. “He entered with Jesus into the court of the high priest” (18:15–16)	133
3. “Standing nearby” (19:25–27).....	135
4. “His testimony is true” (19:35–36).....	138
5. “He saw and believed” (20:1–10).....	140
6. “It is the Lord!” (21:7).....	144
7. “If it is my will that he remain until I come back...” (21:20–25).....	145
 <i>E. Mary Magdalene</i>	150
1. “But standing by the cross ... Mary Magdalene.” (19:25)	152
2. “Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early” (20:1–2).....	153
3. “I have seen the Lord!” (20:11–18).....	157

Chapter 4. An Evaluation of the Disciples' Faith and Understanding in Narratological Perspective.....	162
<i>A. Of Disciples, Plot, and Purpose in the Fourth Gospel</i>	162
1. The Place of the Disciples within the Plot of the Fourth Gospel....	162
a. Plot Definitions and Basic Plot Structures	162
b. Plot and Characterisation	164
c. The Plot of the Fourth Gospel.....	168
d. The Disciples' Faith and Understanding within the Plot	169
2. The Rhetorical Functions of the Disciples' Faith and Understanding	176
a. The Rhetorical Purpose of the Fourth Gospel.....	176
b. The Role of the Disciples' Misunderstandings within the Purpose.....	179
c. The Relation between the Disciples' Characterisation and Implied Readers: The State of the Research	184
d. A Way Forward: The Disciples as Figures for Identification.....	190
<i>B. Temporality and the Disciples' Faith and Understanding</i>	195
1. A Brief Overview of Theological and Historical Perspectives on the Faith and Understanding of the Disciples.....	195
2. Retrospection and the Merging of Time Perspectives	200
3. Retrospection and Order	202
4. Literary and Theological Functions of Time in the Fourth Gospel	207
5. Realised Eschatology and the Disciples' Faith and Understanding.....	211
6. Conclusion	216
Chapter 5. Conclusion: Johannine Faith and Understanding	219
Bibliography	231
Index of Sources	249
Index of Authors	256
Index of Subjects.....	258

Abbreviations

AB	Anchor Bible
AcaBib	Academia Biblica
ACR	<i>The Australian Catholic Report</i>
AGJU	Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums
AJBI	<i>Annual of the Japanese Biblical Institute</i>
AnBib	Analecta Biblica
Anton	<i>Antonianum</i>
BA	Bibliothèque Augustinienne
BBB	Bonner biblische Beiträge
BBET	Beiträge zur biblischen Exegese und Theologie
BeauR	Beauchesne Religion
BECNT	Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament
BETL	Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium
Bib	<i>Biblica</i>
BibInt	<i>Biblical Interpretation</i>
BibIntS	Biblical Interpretation Series
BLS	Bible and Literature Series
BNTC	Black's New Testament Commentaries
BRS	The Biblical Resource Series
BSac	<i>Bibliotheca Sacra</i>
BTB	<i>Biblical Theology Bulletin</i>
BVC	Bible et Vie Chrétienne
BVC	<i>Bible et Vie Chrétienne</i>
CahRB	Cahiers de la Revue Biblique
CAR	Cahiers de l'actualité religieuse
CBQ	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
CBQMS	Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series
CI	<i>Critical Inquiry</i>
CNTDs	Commentaire du Nouveau Testament; Deuxième série
ColT	<i>Collectanea theologica</i>
Did	<i>Didaskalia</i>
DRev	<i>Downside Review</i>
EBib	Études Bibliques
ER	<i>Ecumenical Review</i>
ESV	English Standard Version
ETL	<i>Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses</i>
ETR	<i>Études Théologiques et Religieuses</i>
EvQ	<i>Evangelical Quarterly</i>
ExAud	<i>Ex Auditu</i>
ExpTim	<i>Expository Times</i>

<i>FoiVie</i>	<i>Foi & Vie</i>
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
FTS	Frankfurter theologische Studien
<i>FZPhTh</i>	<i>Freiburger Zeitschrift für Philosophie und Theologie</i>
GNTS	Guides to New Testament Scholarship
HBS	Herders Biblische Studien
<i>Hok</i>	<i>Hokhma</i>
HTIBS	Historic Texts and Interpreters in Biblical Scholarship
HTKNT	Herders theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
<i>HTR</i>	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
<i>HvTSt</i>	<i>Hervormde Theologiese Studies</i>
ICC	International Critical Commentary
IET	Institut d'Études Théologiques
<i>IJST</i>	<i>International Journal of Systematic Theology</i>
<i>Int</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JCTR</i>	<i>Journal for Christian Theological Research</i>
<i>Jeev</i>	<i>Jeevadhara</i>
<i>JSNT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
JSNTSup	Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series
<i>JTS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
<i>KD</i>	<i>Kerygma und Dogma</i>
LCBI	Literary Currents in Biblical Interpretation
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
LD	Lectio Divina
LThPM	Louvain Theological & Pastoral Monographs
<i>LTP</i>	<i>Laval Théologique et Philosophique</i>
McMNTS	McMaster New Testament Studies
MdB	Le Monde de la Bible
NABPRSSS	National Association of Baptist Professors of Religion, Special Studies Series
NCB	The New Century Bible
<i>Neot</i>	<i>Neotestamentica</i>
NFTL	New Foundations Theological Library
NICNT	The New International Commentary on the New Testament
NIV	New International Version
<i>NovT</i>	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
NovTSup	Novum Testamentum Supplements
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
<i>NRTh</i>	<i>Nouvelle Revue Théologique</i>
NTAbh	Neutestamentliche Abhandlungen
NTL	The New Testament Library
NTTS	New Testament Tools and Studies
<i>NTS</i>	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
ÖTBK	Ökumenischer Taschenbuchkommentar zum Neuen Testament
PBM	Paternoster Biblical Monographs
PdD	Parole de Dieu
PNTC	The Pillar New Testament Commentary
<i>PRSt</i>	<i>Perspectives in Religious Studies</i>
<i>PT</i>	<i>Poetics Today</i>

<i>Presb</i>	<i>Presbyterion</i>
<i>PRSt</i>	<i>Perspectives in Religious Studies</i>
RNBC	Readings: A New Biblical Commentary
<i>RSR</i>	<i>Recherches de sciences religieuses</i>
<i>RTL</i>	<i>Revue Théologique de Louvain</i>
<i>RTP</i>	<i>Revue de Théologie et de Philosophie</i>
SP	Sacra pagina
<i>Sal</i>	<i>Salesianum</i>
SBEC	Studies in the Bible and Early Christianity
SBG	Studies in Biblical Greek
SBib	Sciences Bibliques
SBL	Society of Biblical Literature
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLMS	Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series
SBLRBS	Society of Biblical Literature Resources for Biblical Study
SBSBS	Society of Biblical Literature Sources for Biblical Studies
<i>SE</i>	<i>Studia Evangelica</i>
SPNT	Studies on Personalities of the New Testament
<i>StudBibT</i>	<i>Studia Biblica et Theologica</i>
SubBi	Subsidia Biblica
THKNT	Theologischer Handkommentar zum Neuen Testament
TNIV	Today's New International Version
<i>TS</i>	<i>Theological Studies</i>
<i>TTE</i>	<i>The Theological Educator</i>
<i>TU</i>	<i>Texte und Untersuchungen</i>
<i>TynBul</i>	<i>Tyndale Bulletin</i>
<i>TZ</i>	<i>Theologische Zeitschrift</i>
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
<i>WW</i>	<i>Word & World</i>
<i>ZNW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der Älteren Kirche</i>

Chapter 1

Introduction

What originally motivated the study of the present topic were intriguing and recurrent remarks found in scholarly literature on the Fourth Gospel. For instance, Brown, in his commentary's introduction, writes that "the full faith in Jesus which brings life to men is possible only after the resurrection, when men confess him as Lord and God (xx 28)."¹ Likewise, Painter states that "from the narrative confessions, it is clear that authentic faith was not a reality during Jesus' ministry."² While these, and many other authors, distinguish pre- and post-resurrection faiths, the nature of the difference is not clearly explicated. If "full faith" leading to life must await the resurrection, how exactly should one consider the faith of those who believed prior to the resurrection? Was, for instance, their faith imperfect because it did not or could not properly understand Jesus' identity, words, and mission?³ Consequently, were the disciples during Jesus' earthly ministry already in a saving relationship with Jesus?

Questions associated with the nature of faith prior to Jesus' resurrection come to the fore often in this Gospel, generally due to ambiguities in the presentation of the disciples. The evangelist does portray them as believing, confessing, and even witnessing about their faith quite early in the course of the narrative (e.g. 1:41, 45, 49; 2:11; 6:68–69). Yet, Jesus apparently considers that the disciples still need to believe (11:15) and even questions whether they do indeed believe (16:31). Finally, the Fourth Gospel's narrative points to a time, after the resurrection, when faith and understanding would be present in them (e.g. 2:22; 12:16; 20:8).⁴ It follows that the literary and theological coherence of

¹ R. E. Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2 vols, AB 29 & 29a (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1966, 1970), 1:cxviii.

² J. Painter, *The Quest for the Messiah: The History, Literature and Theology of the Johannine Community*, 2nd ed. (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1993), 414.

³ So for instance, Painter, *Quest*, 411–12, states that misunderstanding Jesus is a mark of superficial faith. Likewise, R. A. Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A Study in Literary Design* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1983), 116–18, argues that there is a pattern of misunderstanding in the disciples so that their faith is imperfect and "only [Jesus'] death and resurrection, his glorification, will enable them to understand what he has revealed."

⁴ Thus, for Painter, *Quest*, 414: "[...] the words and works of Jesus could not provoke authentic faith in the context of his ministry, but the reminiscence of them in the apostolic witness would." For Painter authentic faith presupposes the glorification of Jesus, the coming of the Paraclete, and the resurrection of Jesus.

the narrative is at stake as readers wonder why the evangelist chose to portray the disciples' faith in such an ambiguous manner. Based on these apparently contradictory statements, many have concluded that the disciples' faith prior to Easter was in some way deficient or faulty. But is this a necessary conclusion? Are the distinctions between pre-Easter faith and post-Easter "full faith" or between pre-Easter inauthentic faith and post-Easter "authentic faith" appropriate? What could be the evangelist's reasons for portraying the disciples' faith in the way he does? The issue deserves to be revisited in a thorough fashion.

It has long been recognized that the themes of faith and understanding play a significant role in the Fourth Gospel. For instance, Mlakuzhyil proposed that "Christocentric faith is one of the most prominent Johannine themes."⁵ For Culpepper, the plot of the Fourth Gospel is "propelled by conflict between belief and unbelief as responses to Jesus"⁶ and most of the disciples typify a response to Jesus, which he labels "commitment in spite of misunderstanding."⁷ Commentaries on this Gospel frequently draw attention to faith and understanding in passing while several scholarly articles and monographs have dealt with particular passages or concepts related to one or other aspect of the overall question.⁸ There is also agreement that the disciples are important characters

⁵ G. Mlakuzhyil, *The Christocentric Literary Structure of the Fourth Gospel*, AnBib 117 (Rome: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1987), 290. More recently, C. R. Koester, *The Word of Life: A Theology of John's Gospel* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008), 161–86, has devoted an entire chapter to the theme of faith in his overview of Johannine theology.

⁶ Culpepper, *Anatomy*, 97.

⁷ Culpepper, *Anatomy*, 147.

⁸ On faith in the Fourth Gospel, see e.g. A. Schlatter, *Der Glaube in Neuen Testament* (Stuttgart: Calwer Verlag, 1927), 176–221, 486–520, 595–600; J. Huby, "De la connaissance de foi dans Saint Jean," *RSR* 21 (1931): 385–421; M. Bonningues, *La foi dans l'évangile de saint Jean* (Paris/Bruxelles: Office Général du Livre/La pensée catholique, 1955); A. Decourtray, "La conception johannique de la foi," *NRTh* 81 (1959): 561–76; G. F. Hawthorne, "The Concept of Faith in the Fourth Gospel," *BSac* 116 (1959): 117–26; W. Grundmann, "Verständnis und Bewegung des Glaubens im Johannes-Evangelium," *KD* 6 (1960): 131–54; A. Vanhoye, "Notre foi, oeuvre divine, d'après le quatrième évangile," *NRTh* 86 (1964): 337–54; J. Gaffney, "Believing and Knowing in the Fourth Gospel," *TS* 26 (1965): 215–41; R. Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to John*, trans. by K. Smyth, 3 vols, HTKNT IV/1–3 (London/New York, NY: Burns & Oates/Crossroad, 1968–1982), 1:558–75; L. Walter, "Foi et incrédulité selon Saint Jean" (Thèse de doctorat. Paris: Institut Catholique de Paris, 1975); abbreviated in L. Walter, *L'incroyance des croyants selon saint Jean*, Lire la Bible 43 (Paris: Cerf, 1976); E. Szymanek, "Glaube und Unglaube im Evangelium des hl. Johannes," *ColT* 46 (1976): 97–121; J.-M. Faux, *La foi du Nouveau Testament* (Bruxelles: Institut d'Études Théologiques, 1977), 177–235; D. Mollat, *Études johanniques*, PdD 19 (Paris: Seuil, 1979); Y. Ibuki, "'Viele glaubten an ihn' – Auseinandersetzung mit dem Glauben im Johannesevangelium," *AJBI* 9 (1983): 128–83; R. L. Adkinson, "An Examination of the Concept of Believing in the Gospel of John" (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis. New Orleans, LA: New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, 1990); A. D. Hopkins, "A Narratological Approach to the Development of Faith in the Gospel of John" (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis. Louisville, KY: Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1992); and most recently A. Barus, "The Faith Motif in John's Gospel: A Narrative Approach"

in the narrative of the Fourth Gospel, and research in this domain necessarily mentions something about their faith and understanding. Yet, though discipleship has become the focus of increased interest in the last several decades,⁹ Culpepper's 1983 remark that "the role of the disciples in John has escaped the intense interest that has recently been turned on their role in Mark"¹⁰ remains true overall today. Clearly, the door is still open for further research on discipleship and on the faith and understanding motifs in the Fourth Gospel. More to the point, and quite surprisingly given the dilemma briefly exposed above, there remains to be written a substantial work fully dedicated to the disciples' faith and understanding in the Fourth Gospel. Therefore, this study will seek to establish how and why the characterisation of the disciples has been presented

(Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis. Aberdeen: University of Aberdeen, 2000). On faith as it relates to signs in the Fourth Gospel, see e.g. R. Bultmann, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, trans. by G. R. Beasley-Murray (Oxford: Blackwell, 1971), 69, 131; M. de Jonge, *Jesus, Stranger from Heaven and Son of God: Jesus Christ and the Christians in Johannine Perspective*, trans. by J. E. Steely, SBLSPS 11 (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1977), 117–40; F. J. Moloney, "From Cana to Cana (Jn. 2:1–4:54) and the Fourth Evangelist's Concept of Correct (and Incorrect) Faith," *Sal* 40 (1978): 817–43; M.-É. Boismard, "Rapport entre foi et miracles dans l'évangile de Jean," *ETL* 58 (1982): 357–64; C. R. Koester, "Hearing, Seeing, and Believing in the Gospel of John," *Bib* 70/3 (1989): 327–48; G. H. Twelftree, *Jesus the Miracle Worker: A Historical and Theological Study* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1999), 189–238.

⁹ See R. M. Chennattu, *Johannine Discipleship as a Covenant Relationship* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2006), 1–22, for a helpful overview of research on the Johannine discipleship motif since 1970. Particularly influential studies in this area are: Schnackenburg, *John*, 3:203–17; de Jonge, *Stranger*, 1–17; M. Vellanickal, "Discipleship according to the Gospel of John," *Jeev* 10 (1980): 131–47; J. S. Siker-Gieseler, "Disciples and Discipleship in the Fourth Gospel: A Canonical Approach," *StudBibT* 10 (1980): 199–227; F. F. Segovia, "'Peace I Leave with You; My Peace I Give to You': Discipleship in the Fourth Gospel," in *Discipleship in the New Testament*, ed. by F. F. Segovia (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1985), 76–102; M. M. Pazdan, "Nicodemus and the Samaritan Woman: Contrasting Models of Discipleship," *BTB* 17 (1987): 145–48; C. L. Winbery, "Abiding in Christ: The Concept of Discipleship in John," *TTE* 38 (1988): 104–20; R. F. Collins, *These Things Have Been Written: Studies in the Fourth Gospel*, LThPM 2 (Louvain/Grand Rapids, MI: Peeters/Eerdmans, 1990), 46–55; J. A. du Rand, "Perspectives on Johannine Discipleship according to the Farewell Discourse," *Neot* 25 (1991): 311–25; W. H. Gloer, "'Come and See': Disciples and Discipleship in the Fourth Gospel," in *Perspectives on John: Methods and Interpretation in the Fourth Gospel*, ed. by R. B. Sloan and M. C. Parsons, NABPRSSS (Lewiston, NY/Queenston/Lampeter: Edwin Mellen, 1993), 269–301; M. R. Hillmer, "They Believed in Him: Discipleship in the Johannine Tradition," in *Patterns of Discipleship in the New Testament*, ed. by R. N. Longenecker, McMNTS (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996), 77–97; D. G. van der Merve, "Towards a Theological Understanding of Johannine Discipleship," *Neot* 31 (1997): 339–59; A. J. Köstenberger, *The Missions of Jesus and the Disciples according to the Fourth Gospel: With Implications for the Fourth Gospel's Purpose and the Mission of the Contemporary Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998), 141–98.

¹⁰ Culpepper, *Anatomy*, 115. For a treatment of discipleship in Mark, with a recent bibliography, see S. W. Henderson, *Christology and Discipleship in the Gospel of Mark*, SNTSMS 135 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 3, n.2.

in the way it is in the Fourth Gospel. Simply stated, recognizing the exegetical and theological obscurities still facing Johannine interpreters, this study proposes to investigate how one should consider the faith and understanding of Jesus' disciples before and after the resurrection.

Given the limited space available, a wide-ranging exploration of the topic from the mutually illuminating perspectives of literary, historical, and theological analyses cannot possibly be undertaken. Although the study will at times refer to the manner in which questions have been answered from a historical and theological point of view,¹¹ its primary interest is in the literary, and only secondarily in the theological. Indeed, this study will propose that a narrative understanding of the disciples' faith and understanding may give new breath to further historical and theological examinations. Arguably, of the three perspectives, the literary task is primary, as the investigation of what the text says and how it functions both within itself and in relation to its readers is essential for questions of the text's meaning. As Lee argues, "What lies behind the text is important, yet it is always dependent on, and secondary to, what lies within."¹² Only when questions have been formed on this level, however tentative they may be, is it possible to employ the text properly as a resource for enquiries into 'the world behind the text' and 'the world in front of the text.'¹³ It should be noted that a literary approach is neither necessarily a-historical, nor does it exclude theological explorations. It is rather that the emphasis and focus of the questions posed by literary critics are different from those posed by historians and theologians.¹⁴ For instance, literary analysts attempt to appreciate a story apart from its referential function, *i.e.*, its ability to refer to the real world: "the story world is to be entered and experienced rather than evaluated in terms of historicity."¹⁵ But this is not to say that a degree of historical or theological analysis is not necessary to the literary task. It remains useful, for instance, to understand historically what was going on during the Jewish feasts to better grasp how the narrative of the Fourth Gospel functions within itself.

This study will employ narrative criticism in its focus on the disciples' faith and understanding. Narrative criticism or narratology is interested both in the content and the form of the text. Its development began around 1970, and ad-

¹¹ See especially chapters 4 and 5. These questions are essentially the following: *Did* the disciples believe prior to Jesus' glorification and *what* would such belief have entailed? *Could* the disciples believe prior to Jesus' glorification?

¹² D. A. Lee, *Flesh and Glory: Symbolism, Gender, and Theology in the Gospel of John* (New York, NY: Crossroad, 2002), 5.

¹³ See *e.g.* E. S. Malbon, "Texts and Contexts: Interpreting the Disciples in Mark," *Semeia* 62 (1993): 82, n.3, for whom it is necessary to view the text as both window and mirror in order for the interpretive task to be fully carried out.

¹⁴ For M. A. Powell, *What Is Narrative Criticism?*, GNTS (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1990), 8, literary critics "bracket out questions of historicity in order to concentrate on the nature of the text as literature."

¹⁵ Powell, *Narrative Criticism*, 8.

vanced with the works of literary critics such as Genette, Iser, Chatman, Booth, and Ricoeur.¹⁶ As such, it can still be considered a recent method of analysis. But in the last forty years, it has been very productive. For instance, though the resources of earlier approaches have certainly not been exhausted, literary approaches have moved beyond the traditional narrative and reader-response criticisms, to, for example, poststructuralist, deconstructive, or ideological criticisms.

Biblical scholars rapidly learned to use the tools of narrative analysis,¹⁷ so that in 1983 Culpepper's seminal study *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel* introduced Johannine scholars to this method of analysis.¹⁸ At the time, its main import was to show that the Fourth Gospel's narrative, taken as a unified whole, was inherently meaningful regardless of its sources or composition history. Needless to say, Culpepper began a revolution of sorts in Johannine studies. His monograph convinced many that new insights could be gained through a narrative analysis of this Gospel, and so paved the way for the publication of diverse narrative studies, such as Duke's *Irony in the Fourth Gospel* and O'Day's *Revelation in the Fourth Gospel* respectively only two and three years

¹⁶ G. Genette, *Figures III, Poétique* (Paris: Seuil, 1972); G. Genette, *Nouveaux discours du récit* (Paris: Seuil, 1983); W. Iser, *The Implied Reader: Patterns of Communication in Prose Fiction from Bunyan to Beckett* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974); W. Iser, *The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978); S. Chatman, *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film* (Ithaca/London: Cornell University Press, 1978); W. C. Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, 2nd ed. (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1983); P. Ricoeur, *Temps et récit. Tome I: L'intrigue et le récit historique*, Points-Essais (Paris: Seuil, 1983); P. Ricoeur, *Temps et récit. Tome II: La configuration dans le récit de fiction*, Points-Essais (Paris: Seuil, 1984); P. Ricoeur, *Temps et récit. Tome III: Le temps raconté*, Points-Essais (Paris: Seuil, 1985); W. C. Booth, *The Company We Keep: An Ethics of Fiction* (Berkeley, CA/Los Angeles, CA/London: University of California Press, 1988).

¹⁷ See the works of pioneers of biblical narrative criticism, such as N. R. Petersen, *Literary Criticism for New Testament Critics* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1978); R. Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1981); D. Rhoads and D. Michie, *Mark as Story: An Introduction to the Narrative of a Gospel* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1982); J. D. Kingsbury, *Matthew as Story* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1986); R. C. Tannehill, *The Narrative-Unity of Luke-Acts: A Literary Interpretation*, 2 vols, Foundations and Facets (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1986–90); J.-N. Aletti, *L'art de raconter Jésus Christ*, Parole de Dieu (Paris: Seuil, 1989); S. D. Moore, *Literary Criticism and the Gospels: The Theoretical Challenge* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989); or Powell, *Narrative Criticism*. More recently, see J. L. Resseguie, *Narrative Criticism of the New Testament: An Introduction* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005).

¹⁸ Culpepper, *Anatomy*. If Culpepper's essay is a watershed in Johannine literary studies, precursors to his *Anatomy* are H. Leroy, *Rätsel und Missverständnis; ein Beitrag zur Formgeschichte des Johannesevangeliums*, BBB 30 (Bonn: P. Hanstein, 1968); D. Wead, *The Literary Devices in John's Gospel* (Basel: Friedrich Reinhardt Kommissionsverlag, 1970); or de Jonge, *Stranger*.

later.¹⁹ This new trend in Johannine studies reached its height in the 1990s, with the publication of an issue of *Semeia* entitled *The Fourth Gospel from a Literary Perspective*,²⁰ and several important monographs such as Stibbe's *John as Storyteller* and *The Gospel of John as Literature*,²¹ Davies' *Rhetoric and Reference in the Fourth Gospel*,²² Tovey's *Narrative Art and Act in the Fourth Gospel*,²³ and Resseguie's *The Strange Gospel*.²⁴ Most recently, Thatcher and Moore published a collection of essays seeking to recount the history of narrative analysis of the Fourth Gospel and to project the future of such an approach to this Gospel, thus showing that this area of research is still alive and well.²⁵

Thus this study will make use of basic narratological terminology²⁶ in its focus on the story-as-discoursed.²⁷ Throughout, it will seek to read the text as the implied reader. Clearly, to the extent that the implied reader is an idealised abstraction only perceptible in clues suggested by a narrative, this goal is never perfectly attainable. Even more, actual (real) readers are each influenced by their own reading conventions and competences, by their knowledge of other texts (such as Synoptic Gospels), and by their location in space and history. Thus, it

¹⁹ P. D. Duke, *Irony in the Fourth Gospel* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1985); G. R. O'Day, *Revelation in the Fourth Gospel: Narrative Mode and Theological Claim* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1986). See also J. L. Staley, *The Print's First Kiss: A Rhetorical Investigation on the Implied Reader in the Fourth Gospel*, SBLDS 82 (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1988), though he uses reader-response criticism rather than narrative criticism.

²⁰ R. A. Culpepper and F. F. Segovia, eds., *The Fourth Gospel from a Literary Perspective*, *Semeia*, vol. 51 (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1991).

²¹ M. W. G. Stibbe, *John as Storyteller: Narrative Criticism and the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992); M. W. G. Stibbe, *The Gospel of John as Literature: An Anthology of Twentieth-Century Perspectives*, NTTS 17 (Leiden/New York: Brill, 1993).

²² M. Davies, *Rhetoric and Reference in the Fourth Gospel*, JSNTSup 69 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992).

²³ D. Tovey, *Narrative Art and Act in the Fourth Gospel*, JSNTSup 151 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997).

²⁴ J. L. Resseguie, *The Strange Gospel: Narrative Design and Point of View in John*, BibIntS 56 (Leiden/Boston, MA: Brill, 2001).

²⁵ T. Thatcher and S. D. Moore, eds., *Anatomies of Narrative Criticism: The Past, Present, and Future of the Fourth Gospel as Literature*, SBLRBS, vol. 55 (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2008). See also G. Hallbäck, "The Gospel of John as Literature," in *New Readings in John: Literary and Theological Perspectives. Essays from the Scandinavian Conference on the Fourth Gospel in Aarhus 1997*, ed. by J. Nissen and S. Pedersen, JSNTSupS 182 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 31–46.

²⁶ See Chatman, *Story*, for a thorough explanation of the theoretical model that is most often used by narrative analysts. His model is then expressed through a diagram on p. 267. See also the diagrams (derived from Chatman) used by Culpepper, *Anatomy*, 6; Powell, *Narrative Criticism*, 27; or Barus, "Faith", 21.

²⁷ Chatman, *Story*, 19. Chatman distinguishes the "what" (the story) from the "how" (the discourse) of a narrative.

may never be possible for them to perfectly read the text as the implied reader.²⁸ Yet, the following question, though implicit, will continually beg answering in much of the following research on the disciples' faith and understanding in the Fourth Gospel's narrative: "Is there anything in the text that indicates how the reader is expected to respond to the characterisation of the disciples?"

Indeed, since this study attempts to clarify issues surrounding the faith and understanding of Jesus' disciples in the narrative of the Fourth Gospel, it is a study of their characterisation.²⁹ Characterisation is arguably the most interesting element of the story. In fact, for Culpepper "Much of the power of the Fourth Gospel comes from its vivid characterizations and their effects upon the reader."³⁰ It is all the more surprising that this area of narrative analysis has not produced a larger array of studies on the Fourth Gospel's characters. Nevertheless, since Culpepper's section of his *Anatomy* on the topic,³¹ one that is still of much use and continues to influence new generations of Johannine scholars, several studies have made a significant impact in the field, laying the groundwork for further research in the area. These are best represented by Beck's *The Discipleship Paradigm* and Conway's *Men and Women in the Fourth Gospel*.³²

²⁸ See discussion in Powell, *Narrative Criticism*, 19–21.

²⁹ On characterisation in literature, see especially E. M. Forster, *Aspects of the Novel* (San Diego, CA/New York, NY/London: Harcourt, Inc., 1955), 43–82; W. J. Harvey, *Character and the Novel* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1965); Chatman, *Story*, 96–145; T. Docherty, *Reading (Absent) Character: Towards a Theory of Characterization in Fiction* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1983); B. Hochman, *Character in Literature* (Ithaca, NY/London: Cornell University Press, 1985); J. Phelan, *Reading People, Reading Plots: Character, Progression, and the Interpretation of Narrative* (Chicago, IL/London: University of Chicago Press, 1989); S. Bar-Efrat, *Narrative Art in the Bible*, BLS 17 (Sheffield: Almond, 1989), 48–92; On characterisation in biblical literature, see D. Rhoads and K. Syreeni, eds., *Characterization in the Gospels: Reconceiving Narrative Criticism*, JSNTSup, vol. 184 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999); P. Létourneau and M. Talbot, eds., *Et vous, qui dites-vous que je suis? La gestion des personnages dans les récits bibliques*, SBib, vol. 16 (Montréal/Paris: Médiaspaul, 2006); or E. S. Malbon and A. Berlin, eds., *Characterization in Biblical Literature*, Semeia, vol. 63 (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1993).

³⁰ Culpepper, *Anatomy*, 7.

³¹ Culpepper, *Anatomy*, 99–148.

³² D. R. Beck, *The Discipleship Paradigm: Readers and Anonymous Characters in the Fourth Gospel*, BibIntS 27 (Leiden/New York, NY: Brill, 1997); C. M. Conway, *Men and Women in the Fourth Gospel. Gender and Johannine Characterization*, SBLDS 167 (Atlanta, GA: SBL, 1999). In addition to these, particularly relevant to the present study are N. R. Petersen, *The Gospel of John and the Sociology of Light. Language and Characterization in the Fourth Gospel* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1993); A. Fehribach, *The Women in the Life of the Bridegroom: A Feminist Historical-Literary Analysis of the Female Characters in the Fourth Gospel* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1998); M. M. Beirne, *Women and Men in the Fourth Gospel. A Genuine Discipleship of Equals*, JSNTSup 242 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003); A. Marchadour, *Les personnages dans l'évangile de Jean: miroir pour une christologie narrative*, Lire la Bible 139 (Paris: Cerf, 2004); B. B. Blaine Jr., *Peter in the Gospel of John: The Making of an Authentic Disciple*, AcaBib 27 (Atlanta, GA: SBL, 2007).

It should also be added that two books were released after the completion of this monograph, so that interaction with them was impossible: Bennema's *Encountering Jesus*, and Hylen's *Imperfect Believers*.³³

In a narrative work, implied readers learn about characters primarily through discovering their role in the plot. In the fourth chapter of the study, on the basis of the conclusions reached in its two preceding chapters, the relationship between plot and characterisation will be discussed thoroughly, but at this point Abrams' definition of 'plot' may already prove useful. For Abrams, "the plot in a dramatic work is the structure of its actions, as these are ordered and rendered toward achieving particular emotional and artistic effects."³⁴ Consequently, characterisation emerges in the web of events and relationships that make up the plot. The implied author may reveal, define, and shape character by a variety of means that are best categorised as 'showing' and 'telling.' Within these categories, what characters do or what they say reflect the showing aspect, while comments made about them by the narrator (also called 'inside views'³⁵) or by other characters in the story reflect the telling aspect.³⁶ It follows that showing may be less precise or reliable than telling.³⁷

Most Johannine scholars agree that the narrator of the Fourth Gospel speaks from the ideological and temporal (in this case, retrospective) vantage point of the Johannine community, as evidenced through the use of "we" language in 1:14, 16 and 21:24. As such, his evaluative point of view is not impartial. In fact, it has been proposed that one of his roles in the narrative is to "prejudice the reader toward or away from certain characters, claims, or events and their implication."³⁸ Yet, such a narrator is clearly meant to be trusted for he "is established not only as omniscient and omniconnunicative but also entirely *reliable*."³⁹ The narrator generally speaks in the third person, which

³³ C. Bennema, *Encountering Jesus: Character Studies in the Gospel of John* (Milton Keynes/Colorado Springs, CO/Hyderabad: Paternoster, 2009); S. E. Hylen, *Imperfect Believers: Ambiguous Characters in the Gospel of John* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2009).

³⁴ M. H. Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 3rd ed. (New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1971), 127.

³⁵ Culpepper, *Anatomy*, 22–25, provides a list of these in the Fourth Gospel.

³⁶ On this terminology, see Booth, *Fiction*, 3–20; Powell, *Narrative Criticism*, 52–53.

³⁷ Powell, *Narrative Criticism*, 52: "The reader must work harder, collecting data from various sources and evaluating it in order to figure out the implied author's view of the character. One must consider the reliability of the character whose point of view is presented."

³⁸ Culpepper, *Anatomy*, 32.

³⁹ Culpepper, *Anatomy*, 32 (italics original). Culpepper further explains that "The reliability of the narrator (as defined by Booth and used as a technical term by literary critics) must be kept distinct from both the historical accuracy of the narrator's account and the 'truth' of his ideological point of view" (p. 32). A similar statement may be proposed regarding the vantage point of the so-called Johannine community. As used in a narrative analysis, such a designation does not refer to any historical community, but to a literary construct. On this aspect of the narrative, see also Davies, *Rhetoric*, 31–38.

emphasises the sense that he bears the voice of an observer, but as omniscient, he is able to give readers inside (or psychological) views of characters such as Jesus (6:61, 64; 13:11; 16:19), and the disciples (2:11; 2:17; 2:22; 12:16; 20:9; 21:4).⁴⁰ As the references just given illustrate, this omniscience is particularly important for the present study, which focuses on internal dispositions such as belief and understanding.⁴¹ Because of the narrator's ability to give inside views of characters, he does not have to suggest them merely from their actions and behaviour. His omniscience, moreover, is not limited to what characters could have known, and as such he is able to provide readers with what none of the characters in the story would have been able to convey. In this sense, he is "free to tell the reader whatever is vital for the progress of the story."⁴² Yet, part of the difficulty in the interpretative task is that "the narrator does not make profound or prolonged plunges into any of the characters."⁴³ Since he is not interested in exploring or detailing the exact state of mind or the psychological phenomena experienced by the characters, including Jesus' disciples, the present study's exegesis will necessarily entail many deductions and conjectures from the narrative's telling and showing aspects of the disciples' characterisation.

Such an observation should lead narrative analysts to humility in their task and in the conclusions they reach. Yet, the Fourth Gospel does not encourage bystanders but, in the words of O'Day, it invites "readers to enter into the revelatory dynamic themselves."⁴⁴ In fact, the narrative indicates that readers are being led to make a judgement of their own on the issues at stake in the narrative.⁴⁵ As such they are meant to be neither neutral nor detached observers, but have to make up their own minds while being involved, included, and guided, as they are, within the narrative. Regarding characterisation proper in the Fourth Gospel, Lincoln asserts that readers

[...] are judges who assess the attitudes and actions of all characters [...]. They are judges who are expected to be familiar with the basic facts of this case and to be in sympathy with the stance and witness of its main character.⁴⁶

⁴⁰ G. Genette, *Figures III* (Paris: Seuil, 1972), 203–211, speaks of "focalisation interne" (as opposed to "focalisation externe" and "focalisation zéro") when the narrator orientates readers to the internality of characters.

⁴¹ Culpepper, *Anatomy*, 23. It is also of interest for the present study that very few of these inside views are of *individual* disciples. Rather, with the exception of Judas (12:4, 6, 18:2) and the Beloved Disciple (20:8), these inside views are about the *group* of the disciples.

⁴² Culpepper, *Anatomy*, 26. See also Davies, *Rhetoric*, 31.

⁴³ Culpepper, *Anatomy*, 24, continues: "Most of the comments are aesthetically or rhetorically motivated; they involve disclosures which establish characters and explain responses."

⁴⁴ O'Day, *Revelation*, 95.

⁴⁵ A. T. Lincoln, *Truth on Trial: The Lawsuit Motif in the Fourth Gospel* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2000), 173, quotes Aristotle: "The object of rhetoric is judgment [κρίσις], and "he who has to be persuaded is a judge."

⁴⁶ Lincoln, *Truth*, 174.

This, in essence, is the genius of the Fourth Gospel's rhetoric: its readers are jurors who have already come to a basic conclusion on the issues at stake,⁴⁷ but who are invited to revisit the issues throughout the narrative, with the goal of confirming and strengthening their initial conclusion, all the while setting aside any potentially defective judgment.

The present study, then, is concerned with the manner in which the Fourth Gospel's implied author fashioned the characters of the disciples, focusing on the particular aspects of their portrayals that are their faith and understanding. What this study seeks to clarify is the implied author's ideological and temporal points of view on the disciples' faith and understanding. Further, it seeks to understand *why* the implied author chose to portray these features in the way he does, that is, what rhetorical strategy produced this characterisation. To put it another way: What are implied readers supposed to gain from interacting textually with the Fourth Gospel's disciples? To that end, the key questions this study seeks to address regarding the disciples' characterisation are the following:

- How does the implied author's evaluative point of view shape the presentation of the disciples' faith and understanding in the Fourth Gospel's narrative?
- How does the presentation of the disciples' faith and understanding function rhetorically within the narrative of the Fourth Gospel?
- How does the implied author's temporal perspective shape the presentation of the disciples' faith and understanding?

The study will proceed in the following manner. After this introductory chapter, the second and third chapters constitute the bulk of the study. They will approach the disciples' faith and understanding in two complementary ways. Chapter 2 will investigate the overall development of the faith of the disciples *as a group* in the sequence of the entire narrative. In turn, chapter 3 will sequentially analyse the faith and understanding of key *individual* disciples in the order in which they appear in the narrative: Peter, Judas, Thomas, the Beloved Disciple, and Mary Magdalene.

These two chapters will complement each other, as comparisons will be possible between the group of the disciples and key representatives of this group. For instance, such comparisons will demonstrate whether issues faced by individual disciples mirror the issues experienced by the group as a whole or whether they are unrelated. Inevitably, the group of the disciples reveal aspects of the faith and understanding that the entire group experienced and struggled with, while individual disciples display more personal aspects of experience and struggle. Thus, the group of disciples and individual disciples may not

⁴⁷ See chapter 4 for an expanded explanation of this statement.

function in the same way throughout the narrative. The manner in which implied readers are to respond to either the group or each of the individual disciples is not necessarily similar; different shades of responses may be expected from them.

The five individual disciples were selected because they appear at different times of the story, so that developments in their faith and understanding may potentially be noted. Moreover, they display particularly important aspects of faith and understanding, especially, though not exclusively, in relation to Jesus' resurrection. For instance, Thomas is well known for his reluctance to believe the testimony of his fellow disciples regarding Jesus' resurrection, and Peter for both his inspiring confession of faith in 6:69 and for his lapses, especially his threefold denial of Jesus, followed by his 'reinstatement' after the resurrection. In this light, the choice of Judas in a study related to issues of faith and understanding may appear odd. Though he appears several times in the course of the narrative, he is never said to believe, and indeed, disappears from the narrative before the resurrection. Yet, Judas is clearly identified as one of Jesus' disciples (6:70–71), and his characterisation will prove particularly helpful in illustrating the dramatic differences between his own experience and that of the disciples who do believe and seek to follow Jesus during his earthly ministry, albeit imperfectly. Likewise, Mary Magdalene is not always thought of as one of Jesus' disciples. But this common understanding of what is a disciple results more from a knowledge of the Synoptic tradition and its listings of the twelve male apostles than from the Fourth Gospel proper. As will be argued in the beginning of the first chapter, the title "the Twelve" appears only 4 times in the narrative of the Fourth Gospel and does not play a prominent role. The term "disciples" (μαθηταί), however, is used almost 60 times in the Gospel, so that the Twelve may be thought of as a group distinct from, but included in, the overall group of Jesus' disciples. Mary Magdalene is certainly to be considered a member of this larger group of disciples. Her encounter with the risen Jesus in the garden, moreover, will prove particularly beneficial in delineating issues of faith and understanding both before and after Jesus' resurrection. Surely, this is not an exclusive list: other characters in the story could have been studied as well. For instance, it might have been beneficial to analyse the characterisation of Nicodemus (3:1–21; 7:43–52; 19:38–42), the Samaritan woman (4:4–42), or the man born blind (9:1–38). Yet, these characters, who come to faith in Jesus in the story, can hardly be called "disciples" since they do not appear to follow Jesus during his earthly ministry. Moreover, the Samaritan woman and the man born blind receive significant narrative space, but their characterisation is each limited to only one section of the narrative, so that an analysis of the development of their faith and understanding throughout the narrative could not be undertaken. Finally, none of these characters appear after Jesus' resurrection, so that the impact the resurrection had upon their faith and understanding in the

story cannot be noticed. For these reasons, it was thought best to leave them out of the thorough analysis of individual characters.

To study the disciples' faith and understanding in the *sequence* of the narrative was considered necessary in order to note the development, changes, and struggles (e.g. misunderstandings, doubts) they experienced regarding the person of Jesus, his message and his mission.⁴⁸ Such analysis can be done on its own, but a study of the contrasts between the disciples' and other characters' attitudes towards Jesus will also prove useful. How do the disciples, as a group or as individuals, appear in relation to other characters in this or other scenes of the Gospel? The goal of this narrative analysis is to provide an overview of the author's treatment of the disciples' faith, and thus to clarify the nature of such a faith both leading up to Jesus' resurrection and following it. Therefore, in each of the episodes being analysed, an appreciation of the nature or state of the disciples' faith and understanding will be given, as well as an evaluation of the way their characterisation contributes to meaning in the narrative as a whole. Finally, focus will be maintained on potential patterns of presentation in the characterisation of the disciples' faith and understanding, since these patterns may prove relevant to an appreciation of the implied author's rhetorical intentions.

Following these two chapters, chapter 4 stands as an extended reflection on the issues raised by the findings of its two preceding chapters. It is in this chapter that answers to the three literary questions posed above will be proposed. Thus, based on the findings of chapters 2 and 3, chapter 4 will suggest first a way to understand the plot and the purpose of the Fourth Gospel's narrative, together with the manner in which the characterisation of the disciples fits and serves both the plot and the purpose. In turn, this will lead into a more precise formulation of the rhetorical function of the disciples' faith and understanding in the Fourth Gospel, and into a discussion on the temporality (narrative time) of this narrative.

Thus, the decision was made to deal with the narrative analysis of the text before laying down literary reflections regarding the relationship of the plot with characterisation, the rhetorical functions of characterisation, or aspects of temporality in narratives. Yet, although a narrative analysis is performed first in this study, this is neither the only way to proceed, nor does it reflect exactly how the reading of the Fourth Gospel's narrative advanced for this interpreter in the course of his research. This study does not make the claim to have come at the narrative by means of an objective critical description, and then to have moved

⁴⁸ In other words, this sequential analysis is not an attempt to read the text naïvely, as a first time reader. Arguably, such a naïve reading is impossible for those who have already read this Gospel numerous times. Thus, this study is a *critical* reading, an engagement with the text from a research standpoint, seeking deeper comprehension of the text. On the process of reading, see especially P. Ricoeur, *Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning* (Fort Worth, TX: Texas Christian University Press, 1976), 71–88.

on to the application of these findings. Rather, as research was conducted on the topic at hand, questions and prior research related to literary theory, characterisation theory, or narrative time were continually in the background and influenced in varied ways the findings of the second and third chapters. It is nonetheless preferable to await chapter 4 to draw conclusions related to these matters, since they will therefore benefit from the surer foundation of narrative analysis of the disciples' faith and understanding.

Finally, chapter 5 constitutes the conclusion of this study. It is an attempt to move from narrative analysis to more explicitly theological questions. Using Bultmann's numerous works on the Fourth Gospel, it will dialogue with his conclusions to answer the basic question: what is the relationship between faith and understanding according to the Fourth Gospel?