PART II. THE GROUND OF EASTER FAITH ACCORDING TO THE TESTIMONY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

As indicated at the beginning, Verweyen bases his position concerning the decisive ground for Easter faith on systematic and biblical foundations. The systematic foundation has been investigated in Part I. The biblical foundation will be examined in Part II. In establishing the biblical foundation of his position, Verweyen is not concerned with the historical question of the origin of Easter faith. He focuses on the central question of fundamental theology concerning "the decisive ground for faith in the 'once for all' of Jesus as presented in the testimony of the New Testament authors."123 What do the New Testament authors affirm concerning the foundation of Easter faith? Verweyen contends that none of the evangelists affirm that the confession of the exaltation or divine sonship of Jesus was first made possible through appearances of the Risen One.124 He appeals to Matthew, Luke, John, Mark and Paul as the biblical foundation of his thesis.

A. MATTHEW

Verweyen contends that if the first Gospel is approached from the perspective of the paradigm of the "Easter ditch," one is surprised to see that here there is no sharp break between Good

Friday and Easter. “Rather, by means of redactional interventions Matthew underlines the close connection between crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus.” The epiphany motif of the earthquake, which introduces the events of Easter morning (28:2), is also present in the narrative relating the disturbances in nature at the death of Jesus (27:51; compare Mk 15:38). Matthew narrates that already on Good Friday: “The tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised” (27:52). “When Matthew then continues: ‘After his resurrection they came out of the tombs and entered the holy city and appeared to many’ (v. 53), then this waiting for the ‘first fruits of those who have fallen asleep’ is to be understood from the chronology of the ‘three days’ already firmly anchored in the tradition (and in the context of the narrative of the tomb of Jesus necessary for the establishment of the real death).”

In the narrative of the women at the tomb, Matthew transforms Mark’s reproachful message of the angel into a word of comfort which explicitly refers to Jesus’ prophecy of his resurrection (28:5f.). Their commission is now explicitly related to the announcement of the resurrection and is to be carried out “quickly” (28:7; contrast Mk 16:7). As the women, “with great joy,” are on their way to “quickly” fulfill their commission, Jesus himself appears before them (28:8-10; contrast Mk 16:7). Verweyen contends that this transformation of the scene corresponds to Matthew’s alteration of the Markan reproach of unbelief into a reproach of little faith, as is found in his redaction of Mark’s miracle stories. “There as here, in the appearance before the women, the fundamental theme is not the documentation of power, but the strengthening of the faith of the Church.”

The finale of Matthew’s Gospel, the appearance of Jesus on the mountain in Galilee, “also does not serve exhibition of the resurrected reality of Jesus, is not conceived as an occurrence, which ‘first bridges over the Easter ditch’.” Verweyen observes

that in contrast to the "worship" and confession of faith in the scene of the walking on the water (14:33), the notice of homage in 28:17 appears rather reserved and is also qualified further by the reference to the doubt of some disciples. He contends that here there cannot be question of the description of the primary locus of the definitive evidence concerning Jesus' exalted status. "Rather, with his concluding appearance 'on the mountain' (28:16), Jesus places his last seal on that which had already during his earthly life revealed him as Son of God: his world transforming word (cf. 5:1)." 128

CRITIQUE OF A. MATTHEW

Verweyen argues that close examination reveals that the New Testament as a whole underlines in various ways the unity of death and resurrection and does not witness that appearances of the Risen One were necessary de jure in order to furnish the adequate foundation for faith in Jesus as the definitive Word of God, the divine Son of God. At most it presents the appearances as provoking the de facto recognition of what ought to have been known without them. Is this correct?

In Matthew's Gospel the epiphany motif of the earthquake at the crucifixion (27:51) and the raising on Good Friday of the bodies of those who had fallen asleep (27:52) cannot be appealed to as indicating the absence of a "caesura between Good Friday and Easter," as Verweyen does. 129 Rather, they are elements of a Jewish-Apocalyptic text concerning the end-time resurrection of the dead, which Matthew has "Christianized" by making use of them here to express the salvific significance of the death of Jesus; just as he made use of another element of the same pre-Christian text (the appearance of the raised dead to many in the Holy City) to express the salvific significance of Jesus' resurrection. Matthew was concerned "to show death and resurrection of Jesus as the fundamental factors of our salvation as the source

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128. Verweyen, Gottes letztes Wort, 453-54; "Die Ostererscheinungen," 441-42.

129. Verweyen, Gottes letztes Wort, 452.
of the new life.”

The tomb scene in its Matthean redaction (28:1-8) and the account of the appearance of Jesus to the women (28:9-10) provide no evidence for or against Verweyen’s thesis. The explicit reference to Jesus’ announcement of the resurrection (28:6: “as he said”) is Matthew’s editorial connection with the post-Easter formulation of the resurrection predictions which he had used previously in his Gospel (16:21; 17:22; 20:19). Since this editorial addition is a literary device for reminding the reader of what he had seen previously, it may not be pressed as Matthew’s affirmation that the women themselves should have known this.

What about the account of Jesus’ appearance on the mountain in Galilee (28:16-20)? This belongs to the type of appearance narrative called commission narratives. The latter presuppose an appearance of Jesus in basically recognizable form. “The encounter with the Risen One forms the centerpiece of these narratives, but they originally find their goal in Jesus’ words of commission (Mt 28:16-20; Lk 24:36-49; Jn 20:19-23; compare 21:15ff.). The motif of mission dominates the scene.” Kessler points out that the confessional formula in 1 Cor 15:5f.7f. already presupposes as common primitive tradition that the mission of the disciples was grounded by the encounter with the Risen One in the appearances. In the commission narratives this primitive Christian tradition was elucidated. In Mt 28:16-20 Matthew “is concerned above all with the constitution of the new community of disciples by the Lord, who promises it his permanent presence, and with its obligation to the world-spanning claim and permanently valid way of the earthly Jesus.”

J. Gnilka finds that Matthew, in this editing of the scene from a traditional narrative, has — in accord with his practise elsewhere — reduced the introductory narrative part and expanded the discourse. Further, the motif of doubt (v. 17b) appears to have been re-interpreted by Matthew’s redaction. The motif

132. Ibid. 130-31.
133. Gnilka comments: “One misses a clear description of the appearance of Jesus (cf. Jn 20:19 f., 26 f.); the express statement that the disciples recognized Jesus (cf. Lk 24:31; Jn 21:12)” (Das Matthäusevangelium, II. Teil, 504).
of doubt usually introduces a proof of identity of the Risen One but here the latter is missing. This suggests that Matthew’s redaction has given the motif of doubt another function. Gnilka claims that it introduces a different kind of assurance, which occurs “through the word, the commission, the kerygma.” He concludes that the verse reflects a later level of reflection, where the remembrance of the seeing was in need of complementation. “Here the powerful word of the Risen One also proves the validity of his new life. The ōrama, the vision, is taken up into the kerygma and guaranteed by the latter. Therefore Matthew can be brief in his description of the ōrama in the opening verses” (vv. 16-17).  

Redactional interests arising from the needs of Matthew’s situation, not absence of appreciation for the decisive importance of the appearances for Easter faith, determine the formulation of the narrative.

Decisive for the interpretation of the narrative in its relation to Easter faith is the first part of the word of commission: “all power in heaven and on earth has been given to me” (v. 18b). Here Jesus speaks of the power and authority handed over to him. This handing over occurred in the past. It “is to be conceived as standing in connection with the resurrection” and is the presupposition for the commission which stands at the center. “The power is a comprehensive power in an intensive (pâsa) and extensive sense (in heaven and on earth). Heaven and earth describe creation as a unity. The Risen One received full share in the unlimited power of God the Creator.” The content of this power includes what was revealed in experiencing the earthly Jesus: a power of teaching (7:29), of forgiving (9:6), of healing (9:8; 10:1). But now there is a new dimension — “the sharing of the divine creative power.” The revelation of the Easter appearances, therefore, does add new content to the revelation communicated by the earthly Jesus (contrary to what Verweyden affirms). Consequently, Matthew does portray Jesus’ resurrection appearances as “the primary locus of the definitive evidence concerning Jesus’ exalted status.”

134. Ibid. 507.  
135. Ibid.  
136. Ibid. 508.  
An implication of this exalted status is explicitated in the concluding promise: “I am with you always to the end of the age” (v. 20b). In the Old Testament Yahweh promised to be with individuals or all of Israel (Gn 26:24, Ex 3:12, Deut 20:1.4; 31:6; Josh 1:9; Judg 6:12.16; Is 41:10; 43:5). “Here Jesus also takes the place of Yahweh and takes over his office with regard to the new people of God.”

The two elements of the word of commission examined above (vv. 18b.20b) confirm the judgement of A. Vögtle: “According to the firm conviction of the apostles, this history (of Jesus) began anew through a new revelatory deed of God’s power on a different level than that of the earthly Jesus and continued in the activity of the exalted Lord in his Church.” The implication of these two verses (vv. 18b.20b) is that the life and death of Jesus alone did not provide the de jure evidence for Easter faith as Verweyen claims. A. Vögtle is surely correct when he says: “According to the unanimous witness of the New Testament, on the basis of the self-manifestation of the Appearing One the disciples gained the firm conviction that God answered the intended annihilation of Jesus with the resurrection of Jesus understood as pure miracle, through it confirmed his eschatological mission claim and exalted him out of death into a divine heavenly position of power.”

B. LUKE

In Acts 1:3 the third evangelist characterizes the appearances of the risen Jesus “during forty days” as “convincing proofs” of the life of Jesus after his death (cf. 10:40; 13:30). But Verweyen cautions against drawing the overhasty conclusion — as has frequently been done in the history of theology — that such appearances were necessary for the grounding of the Easter faith. “It may not be overlooked that according to Luke those self-manifestations, it is true, de facto first evoked the Easter faith,

140. Ibid.
but did not *de jure* constitute necessary evidence for faith in the resurrection of Jesus." This is suggested by Luke in three passages. Alone among the Synoptics, Luke has the angel greet the women at the tomb with the reproach, "Why do you look for the living among the dead?" (24:5). Later the risen Jesus — even before he reveals himself to them — sharply rebukes the disciples on the way to Emmaus for their lack of understanding and slowness of heart because, despite the prophecies of Moses and the prophets, they did not believe that the Messiah had to first suffer "and then enter into his glory" (24:25-27). Finally Jesus' words on the cross, "Truly, I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise" (Lk 23:43), imply that faith in the exaltation of Jesus was possible and demanded already on Good Friday.\(^{141}\)

But Verweyen asks how this differentiated perspective of the third evangelist is compatible with the "apologetic intention," which is manifestly pursued in the pericope 24:36-43.\(^{142}\) He responds that, similarly as in the redaction of the miracle stories, here also the distinction between the theological statement of Luke and the original narrative intention of the appearance story which he received from the tradition (cf. Jn 20:9-20) must be considered. "One must proceed from the compositional unity of the Easter occurrence reported in Luke 24, more exactly: from the whole occurrence which Luke (thus approaching the concept of 'exaltation' in John) designated as 'éxsodos' (9:31) or 'departure' (9:51: 'análēmpsis) and which in his understanding embraced death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus — and in fact also Pentecost, as beginning of Jesus' 'moving on' from Jerusalem in the testimony of the Apostles (compare 24:47-49 with 4:30)." Verweyen claims that there is general agreement that the perspective for the interpretation of this entire context is provided by the Emmaus story (24:13-35) which was in great part freely fashioned by Luke. "From the mode and manner in which Luke here presents the Easter presence of the Lord in word and deed and points forward and backward to it, one could speak

\(^{141}\) Verweyen, *Gottes letztes Wort*, 454; "Die Ostererscheinungen," 439.

\(^{142}\) Ibid., referring to J. Ernst, *Das Evangelium nach Lukas* (Regensburg: Pustet, 1977) 666.
of the center of the whole two-volume work.”

Verweyen gives a few indications. The formulation “The day was drawing to a close” (9:12; different Mk 6:35) closely connects the narrative of the feeding of the five thousand (9:10-17) with the meal at Emmaus (24:29). The preaching of the word and “breaking of bread” belong to the prominent features of the early post-Easter community (Acts 2:42). Very pointedly Luke has made use of the motifs, which recall the permanent presence of the Lord in the (word and) breaking of bread, in his account of the end of the Pauline mission, for example, in the story of the reawakening of Eutychus (Acts 20:7-12, esp. v. 11), which is to be seen in close connection with the farewell of Paul from the elders of Ephesus (Acts 20:17-38, esp. v. 28). Here belongs, likewise, the remembrance of the feeding narratives which Luke has woven into the narrative of the passage over to Rome (Acts 27:33-38).

Verweyen explains that if one considers these interconnections, then in the eating of the broiled fish (Lk 24:42f.) one will not only see the demonstration motif that originally dominated the appearance narrative, but will perceive at the same time, that with the mention of bread (24:30) and fish the recollection of the feeding narrative (9:10-17) is first completed. “But, above all, this ‘demonstration’ may not be detached from the following instruction (24:44ff.), through which Jesus first opens the minds of the disciples for the correct understanding of Scripture (especially the connection of suffering and resurrection) (vv. 45-47). Only from here does the meaning of verses 36-43 become clear as the Emmaus story proves.”

In evaluating the status of the appearances, Verweyen observes that one must also bear in mind that according to Luke the Easter faith of the disciples before Pentecost, despite appear-


ances and Easter instruction of Jesus, still remains inadequate. “Immediately before the Ascension of Jesus the gathered disciples ask him: ‘Lord, is this the time when you will restore the Kingdom to Israel?’ (Acts 1:6) and prove by that that in essentials they have not yet transcended the horizon of understanding expressed before the Easter events (Lk 11:19).” They still look for an apocalyptic manifestation of the Messiah “from above,” instead of understanding that the locus of the new presence of Jesus will be the testimony of the Church made in the power of his Spirit. 

CRITIQUE OF B. LUKE

The three main passages of Luke’s resurrection narratives which, according to Verweyen, indicate that the appearances are not the de jure basis of the Easter faith, now require examination.

1) Lk 24:5-7: Verse 5b is not accurately characterized as a “reproach.” Such an interpretation is tendentious. Verse 5 is a proverb-like question which is related to the previously noted circumstance that the women “did not find the body” (v. 3) and contains a first answer to their perplexity (v. 4): he lives and therefore is no longer “among the dead.” This is then explicitly stated with the praeconion paschale: “He is not here but has been raised” (v. 5c).

However, verses 6-7 would appear to be a more serious confirmation of Verweyen’s interpretation: “Remember how he told you, while you were still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again.” This is Luke’s rephrasing of the messenger’s words (v. 5) on the basis of the passion and resurrection predictions, recorded earlier in the Gospel (Lk 9:22; 18:32-33). Only in the Lucan resurrection narrative is reference made to the predictions of Jesus’ death and resurrection. “Here we meet one of the distinctive elements of the Lukan resurrection accounts, the way they recapitulate the earlier story and how Jesus’

147. Verweyen, Gottes letztes Wort, 454.
words have been fulfilled.” Luke invites the reader to remember the course of Jesus’ ministry and from his own words hear the authoritative interpretation of the enigmatic disappearance of Jesus’ body. J. Kremer concludes that Luke’s narrative of the empty tomb intends to show the reader the way to faith in and understanding of the Easter message by means of the example of the women. “According to genera, it is to be considered as an Easter story serving the Church’s instruction.” Consequently, Luke’s primary intention in making the redactional intervention in verses 6-7 was not to make a statement concerning the de jure evidence for the resurrection faith of Jesus’ original followers, but to enable the reader to understand the meaning of the empty tomb in the light of the previous story.

But the question arises: Did Jesus actually announce his resurrection in the clear manner reported by Luke in 24:7 (referring back to 9:22 and 18:32-33) so that no further Easter revelation was de jure necessary to effect faith in Jesus’ resurrection? Should the women (and the apostles) have already come to Easter faith, as the messenger’s words seem to imply?

Jesus’ announcement of his passion and resurrection in Luke 9:22 is dependent on Mark 8:31. But the latter’s close contacts in language and content with Mark 9:31 and 10:33f.: the naming of the Jewish authorities responsible for Jesus’ death, the phrase “be killed” and the statement concerning resurrection after three days, betray the influence of “the theological reflection and language of the primitive Christian preaching.” This does not deny that his conflict with the leaders of Palestinian Judaism led him to perceive the violent fate that threatened him and to express his conviction in probably less explicit terms than the Synoptic passion predictions suggest. J. Ernst points out that for the reconstruction of the “original form,” a pattern is provided by the Old Testament theme of the suffering of the just man and his vindication by God, which finds its clearest expression in the diptych Wisdom 2:12-20; 5:1-7 and which is reflected in the passion narrative of Mark. “Possibly there lies at the basis

150. Kremer, Lukasevangelium, 239.
of our text (Mk 8:31) a combination of Ps 34:19 and Ps 86:13 with the hypothetical wording: ‘I, the just one, must suffer many things but God will rescue me from the depths of the underworld (Sheol).’ An ‘announcement’ of this kind leaves the details open.” This prophetic saying of Jesus, expressed in the Old Testament — Jewish language of prayer, was subsequently filled out and concretized in the light of the actual passion and resurrection.\(^{152}\)

In his life-time, then, Jesus sowed the seeds for the faith in his resurrection. He gave veiled hints of a vindication by God which could only be understood in their concrete reality by the new revelatory impulse of the encounters with him in his risen reality, i.e., in the light of the actual resurrection. Therefore, when Luke, on the basis of the later, explicitated form of the passion and resurrection announcements, emphasizes that Jesus himself had already announced his resurrection to his followers (Lk 24:5-7), this is true in the sense that he gave it veiled expression, not in the sense that the light of the Easter revelation was de jure unnecessary for the full understanding of its enigmatic meaning.

2) Luke 24:25-27; 44-47: The intention of these verses is to emphasize that “the Risen One first and alone opened up to the disciples the meaning of Scripture until then hidden from them and with it also the meaning of his earthly way of the cross.”\(^{153}\)

J. Ernst points out that behind the emphasis on the conformity of the Messiah’s suffering to Scripture is visible a concentrated apologetic effort of the young community to defend the apparently senseless way of Jesus to the cross, not only before Jewish opponents but also before the Christian brethren. This is done “with the help of that divine ‘must’ which has determined the ways of Jesus up to his passion but also until his entrance into his glory.”\(^{154}\) Both the Emmaus narrative (Lk 24:13-35) and the narrative of the appearance to the Eleven (Lk 24:36-49) present the Risen One as the interpreter of Scripture who stands at the origin of this Christian understanding of Scripture. The Old Testament Scriptures, then, can only be understood in their Christian meaning in the light of the resurrection. The rebuke

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152. Ibid. 237.
of the disciples on the way to Emmaus, then, is a Lucan interpretation in the light of the resurrection, in order to impress upon the Christian community that Christ's passion and death is the fulfillment of the salvific plan of God revealed in the Old Testament Scriptures as illuminated by Christ's resurrection. It is not a witness to the presence before Easter of the evidence de jure necessary for Easter faith.

3) Luke 23:43: With this episode Luke intends to present "the salvific aspect of Jesus' death: the regal status that he will achieve, once he has entered 'his glory' (24:26) and been exalted (Acts 24:32-36) will not be without saving effects on suffering human beings, even crucified criminals. This sums up the Lucan theologia crucis."\(^{155}\) This is Luke's primary affirmation. It is by no means clear that in Luke's intention Jesus' words on the cross (23:43) imply "that faith in the exaltation of Jesus was possible and demanded already on Good Friday" as Verweyen claims.\(^ {156}\)

C. JOHN

In Verweyen's judgement, the most impressive presentation of the unity of Good Friday and Easter is the work of the fourth evangelist. His message is that on the cross the glorification of the Father and Son is accomplished: the cross is exaltation "in the most fleshly" and "in the most spiritual sense" (cf. 3:14, 8:28; 12:32.34); Jesus' hour of death is the climax of the Son of Man's glorification of the Father (cf. 7:39; 12:16.23-24: 13:31-32 with 2:11). "Not — as in Mark — a foreign captain, but the mother of Jesus and 'the disciple, whom Jesus loved', are understanding witnesses that in this surrender of the spirit the work commissioned by the Father was completed."\(^ {157}\) In treating Luke, Verweyen had already pointed out the terminological summary of cross and resurrection of Jesus in the concept "exaltation" in the fourth Gospel (cf. 3:14; 8:28; 12:32.34), which has a parallel with Luke in the use of the words ἐξσώδος and ἀνάλεμφσις. But Verweyen also finds similarities between John and Luke in their theological

evaluation of the appearance tradition. "According to John also, the appearances of the Risen One lead to Easter faith de facto, but they are not regarded as necessary for that de jure." That is made clear by the insertion of the running match between Peter and "the other disciple" (20:3-10) into the traditional material concerning Mary Magdalene at the tomb. "The beloved disciple in face of the empty tomb already comes to faith in the resurrection according to Scripture, which the disciples had not yet understood (20:8f.) — whereby the empty grave as such provided no 'basis of proof', as v. 15 shows."\(^{158}\)

Verweyen observes that the description of how the others came to Easter faith is clearly distinguished from the faith of the "beloved disciple." In dependence on the traditional material, John has Mary Magdalene and the gathered disciples come to faith through respective appearances of Jesus. "Mary still stands at the level of a 'natural' explanation of the empty tomb. Her eyes are similarly 'held' as those of the Emmaus disciples in Luke. She has not yet grasped the twofold meaning of the raising up of Jesus. The going of Jesus to the Father must once more be announced to her as to the other disciples."\(^{159}\)

But Verweyen finds that the clearest opposition to the seeing of the beloved disciple is given in the account of the appearance to Thomas. This includes a criticism of those who demand a seeing of this kind. Verweyen claims that this saying does not recommend belief without seeing, for that would contradict the rest of the Gospel. Rather, the seeing of Jesus’ glory is completed on the cross, and a seeing of the Risen One is simply a concession to defective understanding.\(^{160}\)

**CRITIQUE OF C. JOHN**

In general it must be said that Verweyen’s interpretation of John’s Gospel does not do justice to the unity of cross, resurrection and ascension in Jesus’ work of revealing and glorifying the Father’s name. Nor does he perceive that the

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"hour" of Jesus as the hour of his return to the Father (13:1) is "accomplished in passion, death and resurrection; it stretches from Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday." 161 Verweyen's overemphasis of the cross to the exclusion of the resurrection does not accurately represent the Johannine view of the glorification of the Father and revelation. John's message is not adequately summarized as the message "that on the cross the glorification of the Father and the Son is accomplished." 162 For "the glorification of the Father (and the Son) was scarcely completed before the hour of the death, resurrection and ascension. . . . stretching from Chapter 13 to Chapter 20." 163

W. Thüsing affirms that Jesus' "taking up" of his life in the resurrection also belongs to the ἐντόλη (command) the Father gave to Jesus (cf. 10:18). Accordingly, the resurrection as well as the death on the cross belongs to the work of Jesus. Both the laying down and the taking up of life are an exercise of the ἐξουσία (power) which Jesus received along with the ἐντόλη of the Father. "Through the exercise of two fold ἐξουσία Jesus ascends to the Father, i.e., assumes his throne." And because both the laying down of his life on the cross and the taking it up again in the resurrection are the necessary foundation of the giving of the Spirit and eternal life to believers, the tetélestai ("It is finished") of 19:30 comprehends the fulfillment of the two-fold ἐντόλη of 10:18 (therefore, also the resurrection). "First the Risen One could properly speak the tetélestai; if the Crucified says it, he does that from the knowledge that the resurrection will be united with this death — only in this way is the death 'exaltation'." The taking up of his life again (the resurrection) "belongs to the glorification of his person for which he prays in 17:5." 164 R. Schnackenburg explains that the double affirmation of 10:18 emphasizes the idea "that death and resurrection of Jesus belong indissolubly together and are a single occurrence

162. Verweyen, "Die Ostererscheinungen," 442.
over which the Son disposes.” R. E. Brown emphasizes that in New Testament thought the resurrection is not a circumstance that follows the death of Jesus but the essential completion of the death of Jesus. “In Johannine thought, in particular, the passion, death, resurrection and ascension constitute the one, indissoluble salvific event of return to the Father.”

Consequently, the work of Jesus, the glorification of the Father, the fulfillment of the ἐντολή of the Father which is at the same time the glorification of the Son, comprises not only the life work and the obedient death of Jesus on the cross, but also the resurrection which is its essential component. “Only together with resurrection and the ascent to the Father is the death on the cross completion of the earthly work.”

In view of this it cannot be said that for the original disciples, “the seeing of Jesus’ glory is completed on the cross and a seeing of the Risen One after his departure on the cross is simply a concession to defective understanding.” In the high-priestly prayer, Jesus looks back on his work on earth and says, “I glorified you on earth” (17:4). That means, “in his obedient work in accordance with the Father’s command, he has revealed the glory of God. The real, full glorification however, takes place in Jesus’ hour’ (12:33; cf. 7:39; 12:16), a mutual glorification of the Son and the Father (cf. 13:31).” This is the ‘hour’ toward which all Jesus’ activity was moving, “the hour of his crucifixion and glorification and of his passing over to the Father (13:1).” Passion, resurrection and heavenly exaltation belong to the same hour. This hour in which the Son of Man “glorifies” God and is glorified by him (13:31) is the full revelation of the glory of

God. In this hour the Son’s revelatory mission attains its climax and the Father’s entôle is fulfilled.

In John’s theology of revelation, therefore, the revelation which is the foundation of Easter faith is not adequately given in the earthly life of Jesus inclusive of his dying. That “the seeing of the Risen One after his departure on the cross” is not “simply a concession to defective understanding” but is an integral part of the foundational revelatory mission of the Son is confirmed by Jesus’ announcements in John 1:51 and 6:62 and their fulfillment in John 20:19-23.

John’s Gospel contains a number of Son of Man sayings (1:51; 3:13; 6:62; 8:28) which point to something greater to come and in doing so, allude to Jesus’ death and return to the Father.

1) John 3:13 is clearly related to 3:12 in which Jesus says to Nicodemus, “If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things?” The “earthly things” refer to Jesus’ words to Nicodemus about being born of the Spirit (3:3-8). What are the “heavenly things”? The clue is provided by the following verses: “No one has ascended into heaven, except the one who has descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, so that all who believe may have eternal life in him” (3:13-15). Verse 13 is making the claim that the true source of revelation, of “heavenly things” is the one who descended from heaven and has ascended to heaven. “The ‘heavenly things’ are different from the word already being brought to Nicodemus by Jesus, the ‘earthly things’, inasmuch as they include now the message of Jesus’ death and return to the Father as the exalted, glorified, ascended One and its fruit,” the sending of the Spirit. 171

This understanding of 3:13 is confirmed by 3:14-15 which interpret the event of the Son of Man’s ascent. Here we encounter for the first time the language of “lifting up,” which is used with

under the sign of the resurrection; in the passion John already contemplates the Glorified One.

a double meaning. The Son of Man will be seen lifted up on the cross; “but believers will know that through this he is lifted up and exalted in heaven.” As a result of his exaltation, he will give life to all who believe. “The implication is that in 3:12 the ‘heavenly things’ which are greater than the ‘earthly things’ relate to the ascension and exaltation of the Son of Man and its benefits.”

2) In 8:28 the idea of something greater to come is the foundation for the promise of a new understanding of Jesus. “When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will realize that I am he” (8:28). That means, “when Jesus himself is lifted up in crucifixion, resurrection and ascension . . . , it will be clear to those who have the eyes of faith that he truly bears the divine name (‘I AM’).”

The two remaining texts both speak of “seeing” something greater in the future.

3) 1:51 promises that Nathaniel and the disciples will see the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man, i.e., the vision of “Jesus, the Son of Man, exalted and glorified through his death and ascent to the Father.” The imagery of angels ascending and descending to serve him is used to portray the exalted and glorified state of the Son of Man. The disciples will see Jesus in his glory.

4) In 6:62 Jesus speaks of “the Son of Man ascending to where he was before.” “The ὧπου ἐν τῷ πρῶτερον shows that ἀναβάïnein does not only mean the crucifixion but the going to the Father.” The ascent is characterized as a return to the true home of the Son of Man. The “seeing” referred to is a seeing in faith. “The present participle (ἀναβάïnonta) must mean that not only the effect but the process of the ascending itself is to be ‘seen’, i.e., known in faith. But what is this process?” Thüsing explains that the parallels in John 3:13-14 (with their parallelism of ἀναβάïnein and huphsôthênaï indicate that the crucifixion is also included. However, it is not only the crucifixion that will be seen but, in keeping with the double meaning of the Johannine language of

172. Ibid. 264.
175. Thüsing, Die Erhöhung und Verherrlichung Jesu, 262.
'lifting up,' the total process of the return to the Father right up to its goal.\textsuperscript{176}

We may expect to receive further light concerning this "seeing" of Jesus ascent to the Father in Chapter 20, where the verb \textit{\'anabáinein} is used twice. The risen Jesus tells Mary: "Do not hold me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brethren and say to them, I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God" (20:17). By means of this formulation of verse 17a and c in terms of ascent, the evangelist is interpreting the tradition of Jesus' resurrection in terms of his theology of Jesus' return to the Father by explaining that resurrection is part of ascension."\textsuperscript{177} In verse 17 we are brought right into the middle of a process. Jesus is, as the Risen One, already in the course of ascending: for \textit{\'anabánō}. . . . must be understood as an already begun and continuing process."\textsuperscript{178}

In this saying (20:17) of the Risen One to Mary communicating a message for the disciples, the verb \textit{\'anabáinein} is used to express that "now is the hour of Jesus' ascent to the Father."\textsuperscript{179} W. Thüsing affirms that the message of Mary is to be understood as a preparation for the appearance before the disciples (20:19-23). As we have seen, in 6:62 Jesus had intimated to his disciples that they would once see him "ascending where he was before." "Thus we may presuppose that the \textit{\'anabáinein} of 20:17 refers to 6:62 and that this reference was also clear for the 'brothers' of Jesus, his disciples." Thüsing maintains that the saying of 6:62 was spoken in a situation of separation between faith and unbelief so significant for the disciples, that we can assume (and in the mind of the evangelist should assume) that the disciples on hearing the message of Mary immediately recalled the "what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending. . . ." and knew: now this event is present (or near); now every thing, which was obscure and puzzling in the words of the Master, will become

\textsuperscript{176} Ibid. 262-63.

\textsuperscript{177} Brown, \textit{The Gospel According to John (xiii-xxi)}, 1014.

\textsuperscript{178} "'Continuous' form of action. Cf. Blass-Debrunner, No. 318; 312, 3" (Schnackenburg, \textit{The Gospel According to St. John}, 3:470, n. 56). W. Thüsing comments: "The . . . (oúpo) \textit{\'anábēbeka} does not contradict this; the perfect with the negation only says that the process of the ascent is not yet finished. Therefore it can be in progress" (\textit{Die Erhöhung und Verherrlichung Jesu}, 270, n. 29).

clear. The message, then, means: the ἀναβάïnein, of which I spoke in Capernaum, is now in process. "It appears, therefore, that the disciples are meant to understand: 'you can now see the ἀναβάïnein' or more correctly: 'you are now able to see me as the Ascending One'." 180

Thüsing correctly affirms that one might expect the message to contain the announcement: "He is risen," as in Mt 28:7. But as we have seen above, the evangelist's formulation in terms of ascent to the Father implies that resurrection is included in ascension. 181

The message Mary is to bring to the disciples does not contain an announcement of the appearance of the risen Jesus to the disciples as in Mt 28:7.10. However, v. 19 is closely connected with the preceding pericope and Mary's message by an οὖν: "accordingly the appearance before the disciples (20:19-23) is conceived as something consequentially connected to the message. Therefore the latter is not only intended to refer to the seeing of the ἀναβάïnein in faith but to a seeing of the Risen One himself and, indeed, with the eyes of the body." 182

But when one sees the Risen One, one sees the ἀναβάïnein (or the ἀναβάïnon). "The vision of faith to which 6:62 refers must be related to a process which lays the foundation for the promised giving of life (6:63)." This must be the process of the return to the Father as a whole. 183 "The Johannine concept 'ascent' (like 'going to the Father') summarizes the end-events of the life of Jesus (death, resurrection, ascension) and orientates them to the terminus ad quem, the Father." 184 The disciples' experience the fulfillment of the promise of 6:62 and see the ἀναβάïnein as total process, when they see the Risen One in 20:19-23. Thüsing explains that this is possible because the evangelist conceives the event of 20:19-23 as a theological image. "The Risen One bears in himself the signs of the salvific facts of the total process: . . . . first he bears the scars of his death, second

180. Thüsing, Die Erhöhung und Verherrlichung Jesu, 269-70.
182. Thüsing, Die Erhöhung und Verherrlichung Jesu, 270.
183. Ibid. 271-72.
184. Ibid. 272.
he appears in his new life and third he performs the real sign of the giving of the Spirit.”

Thüsing concludes that whoever sees him, “beholds” likewise the laying down as well as the taking up again of life of John 10:17f. and also the endpoint of the ascent, the enthronement with the Father whence the Son is sent. “When the disciples see Jesus with the ‘signs’ of these salvific facts, i.e., when they view in faith the new life and life-giving power of the crucified, they see him as the ‘Ascending One’; they ‘see the Son of Man ascending’ (6:62) and believe in his ascension to his throne.”

This meaning given to the resurrection appearances in the structure of the fourth Gospel manifests the indispensable function which the resurrection of Jesus has in John’s Gospel as the completion of the definitive revelation and as constitutive of the adequate ground of Easter faith. “Through it, it becomes clear that the way of the Crucified out of this world really goes to the Father.”

According to John’s Gospel, Jesus’ “work” of revelation as fulfillment of the command of the Father is not complete until the disciples see him in his resurrection glory. “The seeing of Jesus’ glory” is not “completed on the cross.” When the disciples see the Risen One in his ascent to the Father in 20:19-23, they see “the entire process of the glorification,” for “the ‘ascent’ embraces the glorification of the cross and the glorification with the Father — therefore that of 13:31 together with that of 13:32 (or 17:5).”

W. Thüsing draws the conclusion that in the fourth Gospel the resurrection of Jesus is indispensable motive of faith in Jesus. In other words, Jesus is object of faith only as the Living

185. Ibid. 273. Thüsing comments: “It is noteworthy that already in 6:62 f. the pneuma is spoken of in connection with the ascent, as in 20:17 ff. a communication of the Spirit follows upon the saying concerning ἄναβαινειν” (ibid., n. 41).
186. Ibid. 273-74.
187. Ibid. 274.
189. Thüsing, Die Erhöhung und Verherrlichung Jesu, 274-75; cf. 238-39. That it is self-evident for John’s Gospel that the resurrection pertains to the glorification of Jesus is to be seen from the correspondence between 12:16 and 2:22 where “when Jesus was glorified” (12:16) is completely parallel to “when he was raised from the dead” (2:22) (ibid. 279).
One, and he is that through his resurrection. Without the resurrection the Johannine concept "exaltation" is unthinkable. "The resurrection appearances attest that the crucifixion of Jesus may and must be understood as exaltation; that, therefore, the 'Exalted One' can truly 'draw all to himself' (12:32), or that from the wounds of his side in 19:34 life can truly stream forth, because it belongs to the Living One." 190 Thüsing correctly observes that in the fourth Gospel the resurrection has already been projected into the image of the Crucified. Faith in the Son of Man lifted up on the cross (3:14) is already faith in the Risen One. "When from the wound in the side of the Crucified, the streams of life flow, then (seen conceptually) the Risen One is included in this theological statement, even though the image which is viewed is only the Crucified One (19:34.37)." The looking upon the One lifted up of 3:14 or 19:34.37 is the same as the faith of 20:29 in which the one bearing the marks of the nails lives and is the Giver of life. 191

The fourth Gospel's emphasis on the Incarnation does not mean that in the view of the evangelist the definitive revelation of God was completed in his earthly existence, inclusive of his dying. "His death is for Christ the way which, in the glorification, terminates in the fullness of the Incarnation" and of the revelation. "The Incarnation remains the central mystery, but to exercise its power, it must flower in glory by way of the death" and resurrection. 192

That the resurrection is central to the revelation of the incarnate Son is confirmed by the evangelist's presentation of faith. In John's Gospel the disciples are not portrayed as attaining full faith independently of the resurrection. A careful reading of the Gospel reveals that in the Johannine presentation of Jesus' earthly life, up to and including the cross, Jesus' revelation in word and deed did not receive a truly adequate response of faith unless the evangelist is writing from a post-resurrection perspective. "The disciples will see Jesus' glory to the full only when they have seen the final 'great thing', the supreme work of the

190. Ibid. 287.
191. Ibid. 282.
death and resurrection and ascension, and it is only then that they will fully believe.”

The faith of Nathaniel (1:50) is an initial faith in Jesus’ word which is destined to grow. Throughout the Gospel the disciples’ lack of understanding is spoken of: 2:22 (implicit; only after the resurrection can faith be spoken of); 4:31-38; 6:7.9; 11:8.11-16; 12:5f.16 (compare with 2:22); 13:6-11.36-38; 14:5.8. Where we are told that “many believed in him” (2:23; 7:31; 8:30f.), “it soon becomes clear that this was not true faith (2:24f.; 8:40.47.59).” That is evident in the case of the many Jews in 8:30ff. They scarcely begin to believe when they take offence and turn against Jesus.

The case would appear to be different in respect to the Twelve. When “Jesus asked them: ‘Do you also wish to go away?’ Simon Peter answered him: ‘Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God’ (6:67-69).” But even this good will of the Twelve does not terminate in genuine faith: they do not really know him. Just before the passion, at the Last Supper Jesus says to them: “Now you know the Father and have seen him” (14:7). But Philip shows his lack of understanding with the request: “Lord, show us the Father and we will be satisfied” (14:8). Jesus betrays his disappointment with the complaint: “Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me?. . . . Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me?” (14:9-10). Still later, when the disciples assure Jesus that they now truly believe that he came from God, he replies without illusion: “Do you now believe? The hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, each one to his home, and you will leave me alone” (16:30-32).

E. Haenchen asks: “Why have even the disciples not yet attained true faith?” He replies that John has clearly given the

196. Ibid.
reason in 7:39 (cf. 16:7): “for as yet there was no Spirit, because Jesus was not yet glorified.” Only after his departure from them will he send the Holy Spirit: “on that day you will ask nothing of me” (16:23). “Only when the Risen One breathes on them — as God did once on Adam at creation — only then do they receive the Holy Spirit and by that become capable of true faith (20:22).”

The objection will be raised that this analysis does not include 2:11 which affirms: “Jesus did this, the first of his signs in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory. And his disciples believed in him.” But it is precisely the absolute and unreserved nature of this affirmation which indicates that this statement is made from a post-Easter perspective concerning the total revelatory work of Jesus and the post-Easter response of the Church. B. Olsson has shown that the author of the fourth Gospel has a post-resurrection point of view which shapes the manner of his presentation. “He allows the reader to see the events from a later perspective and not from inside the situation at the time they happened” in order to present the true meaning of Jesus’ work(s). This is also true of the events that took place at Cana.

Olsson’s analysis established how strongly verse 11 links the narrative with the whole Gospel and interprets it in its entirety. He concludes that “when the author focuses on Jesus’ action at Cana, seeing in it a symbolic meaning bound up with Jesus’ doxa, he is probably thinking of Jesus’ work in general, his ergon, i.e., of God’s revealing acts, his mission and his saving works in Jesus Christ, covering the time before and after Jesus’ hour.”

M. Theobald observes that such an absolute statement (v. 11) about the unreserved revelation of Jesus and about the unlimited faith of the circle of disciples in Jesus does not have its equal in the Gospel. “Therefore, Olsson. . . . rightly relates v. 11 to the entire work of Jesus.”

199. Ibid. 63-77.
200. Ibid. 99.
Jesus “revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him” (2:11), he is not speaking of the event of Cana as an isolated occurrence. “We are to think of v. 11. . . . as being part of the capsulizing of the training of the disciples where their whole career, including their sight of the glory of the resurrected Jesus, is foreshadowed.”  

202 R. E. Brown affirms that the disciples will see Jesus’ glory to the full, only when they have seen the final “great thing,” the supreme work of the death, resurrection and ascension, and that it is only then that they will fully believe.  

203 “It is not the very event of Cana as an isolated occurrence but that which it symbolizes, the deeper meaning so to speak, which really reveals Jesus’ doxa” and effects full faith. “The disciples first comprehended the reality of the event after Jesus’ death in the light of his glorification and ascension,” as the evangelist’s treatment of the disciples’ faith elsewhere in the Gospel confirms.  

204 In conclusion to this analysis of John’s theology of revelation and of the relation of the revelation of Jesus up to and including his death to the Easter revelation, a final observation is extremely important. According to 16:25, “the whole of Jesus’ earthly work of revelation is designated paroimía, i.e., it is seen as something mysterious and not wholly intelligible.” Not until after the resurrection and “until Jesus speaks through the Paraclete, have we a discourse ἐν παρρῆσίᾳ, namely in terms which the disciples completely understand.” B. Olsson comments that this reading of 16:25 closely agrees with what can be gathered from 2:17.21f.; 12:16 and 7:39. “The eyes of the disciples were opened to Jesus’ identity” only after the resurrection and the sending of the Paraclete. “As is clear from the farewell discourse and from the immediate context, 16:16ff., the meaning of Jesus’ departure


203. Brown, The Gospel According to John (i-xii), 88. He refers to 5:20-21 and 14:12 which tie in the resurrection with the theme of “greater things.”

204. Olsson, Structure and Meaning in the Fourth Gospel, 72. However, “the faith of the disciples of John 2:11 is not only projection of the post-Easter faith into the pre-Easter time, but as incipient faith represents the reaction to a reality, i.e., to a genuine revelation of doxa. . . . It is seed for a development still to come” (Thüising, Die Erhöhung und Verherrlichung Jesu [2nd ed.; 1970] 322; cf. 226, n. 16).
(death and resurrection) is the point at issue. On this point the mystery thickens and a discourse ἐν παρρήσιᾳ is particularly necessary." 205 Contrary to the contention of Verweyen, John does not agree "that on the cross the glorification of the Father and the Son is accomplished." 206

The investigation now turns to the particular passages of John’s resurrection narratives which Verweyen claims favor his position.

1) John 20:1-10: In this narrative “the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved” (v. 2), came to faith “on the basis of what he saw in the tomb prior to any appearance of Jesus and/or angelic interpretation.” 207 In the construction of this narrative, the evangelist had a source at his disposal which spoke of Peter and Mary Magdalene setting out for the tomb (v. 3), Peter’s inspection of the tomb (vv. 6b-7) and his reaction, perhaps similar to Lk 24:12: “He wondered to himself” (repressed by the present v. 8). This was followed by v. 9, giving the reason why Peter (and Mary) did not think of Jesus’ resurrection, and v. 10 in which Peter alone returned home. The evangelist transformed this narrative by inserting the beloved disciple in vv. 2 and 3, adding the “race” between the disciples (vv. 4-5) and emphasizing “the other disciple’s” faith: “he saw and believed” (v. 8). 208 R. Schnackenburg comments that according to the context “the other disciple” without doubt came to full faith in Jesus’ resurrection. “The point of the story lies in the clear and strong faith of the beloved disciple.” 209

This transfer of the rise of the first apostolic faith in the resurrection from the appearance of the risen Jesus to the discernment of the contents of the empty tomb “represents the most advanced development of the Easter narratives in the New Testament.” 210 The careful description of the contents of the

209. Ibid. 312.
tomb: the linen wrappings that had enveloped the body of Jesus and the face cloth rolled up and lying in a particular place (vv. 6-7) was an answer to the suspicion expressed by Mary that the tomb had been robbed (v. 2). “The empty tomb, which cannot be any direct evidence for Jesus’ resurrection, but is open to the suspicion that the body was somehow removed,”211 has now become a “sign,” a perceptible reality in itself ambiguous, which discloses the resurrection of Jesus.212

The beloved disciple’s role in v. 8 is functionally the same as the role of the angel interpreter in the story of the women’s visit to the tomb (in the Synoptic Gospels), namely, “he is the one who indicates what the empty tomb means, for he sees the burial clothes and he believes in the risen Jesus.”213 He is the ideal disciple with an exemplary faith who can discern in the contents of the bodyless tomb a sign of the resurrection of his Lord. R. E. Brown observes that some fit this praise of the beloved disciple into their thesis that the real purpose of the Johannine writer was to deemphasize the appearances of Jesus and to devalue faith that stemmed from such appearances. He “questions this entire line of exegesis.”214

But what is the evangelist’s intention in narrating this story? “The faith of the beloved disciple does not lead to any special consequences; he does not even go and tell the other disciples and when they assemble in verses 19ff., there is no reference to the fact that one of their number had already come to believe in the resurrection. The whole story is thus short-circuited. . . .”215

Schnackenburg observes that the faith of that disciple on Easter morning is improbable (“Why did he not attest it to the other disciples?”). He proposes that this story idealizes and illustrates the truly exalted faith of the man from whom his

214. Ibid. 1005.
disciples and friends received many traditions and insights. In affirming "he saw and believed" in verse 8, the evangelist is less concerned with historical accuracy "than with dramatizing for the reader what is the proper, adequate response to the details recounted in the preceding verses": faith in Jesus' resurrection. The tomb with its contents arranged in this significant manner is a sign for whoever is a beloved disciple. For everything is illuminated by the understanding of love. "The justifying v. 9 is not intended to express the imperfection of this faith, but its independence from the understanding of Scripture. According to the fourth evangelist, the latter is first possible after the glorification of Jesus — according to v. 17b, that is not yet concluded." B. Rigaux emphasizes the central role that faith plays in the fourth Gospel. "The signs reported 'are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name' (20:31)."

In the light of these considerations, this narrative is not qualified to support Verweyten's thesis that Easter faith was de jure adequately grounded during the earthly life of Jesus, inclusive of his dying. Nor can it be used to show that "according to John. . . . the appearances of the Risen One. . . . are not regarded as necessary for that (Easter faith) de jure." The fourth evangelist sketches this picture of the faith of the beloved disciple to interpret for the reader the true meaning of the "sign," not to affirm that this faith was possible without the appearances of the risen Jesus.

2) John 20:29: Contrary to the interpretation of Verweyten, the statement of Jesus in verse 29: "Because you have seen me, you believe; blessed are those who have not seen and yet

217. Mahoney, Two Disciples at the Tomb, 269.
218. X. Leon Dufour, Résurrection de Jésus et message pascale (Paris: du Seuil, 1971) 244.
220. B. Rigaux, Dieu l'a ressuscité (Gembloux: J. Duculot, 1973) 212.
221. Verweyten, Gottes letztes Wort, 457.
believe," does not contain a critique of Thomas. Nor does it imply that the appearances were only a concession to an imperfect understanding which should have believed on the basis of the glory revealed on the cross. "The intention of John is in no way to devalue the apparitions," 223 nor to "discredit Thomas' faith or any faith which relies upon the resurrection appearances." 224 Rather, "the two lines of verse 29. . . . are a contrast between two situations: the situation of seeing Jesus and that of not seeing Jesus." In both situations the important thing — as both lines of verse 29 attest — is that one believes, whether that faith arises from seeing Jesus or not. 225

In v. 29a "Jesus recognizes that Thomas has authentically come to faith. . . . He congratulates him without, however, binding faith to the vision that Thomas has just received." 226 R. E. Brown points out that although v. 29a has no formal beatitude and does not call "happy" those who see and believe, their joy is presumed from v. 20. "They are those whom Jesus has come back to see again, bringing a joy that no one can take from them (16:22)." Consequently, Brown interprets the contrast in verse 29 as existing between two types of blessedness, not between blessedness (29b) and inferior state (29a). He maintains that whatever there is of the adversative in 29b is by way of contradicting the idea that the eyewitnesses alone or in a markedly higher way possessed the joy and blessings of the risen Jesus. "The evangelist wants to emphasize that despite what one might imagine, those who do not see are equal in God's estimation with those who did see and are even, in a certain way, nobler." 227

223. Leon Dufour, Résurrection de Jésus et message pascale, 244.
224. Fuller, The Formation of the Resurrection Narratives, 145. It "does not . . . mean that the faith of the eyewitness would be diminished in value" (Thüsing, Die Erhöhung und Verherrlichung Jesu, 266, n. 4).
226. Leon Dufour, Résurrection de Jésus et message pascale, 244.
227. Brown, The Gospel According to John (xiii-xxi), 1049. Schnackenburg claims that in v. 29 Jesus accepts Thomas' confession but does not spare him from the accusation that he came to believe only after an assurance through seeing (The Gospel According to St. John, 3:533). He calls v. 29a a "criticism of Thomas . . . constructed with a view to the subsequent blessing" (ibid. 534). This interpretation does not give sufficient weight to the Gospel context in which the verse stands (16:22; 20:20). Consequently the contrast between v. 29a and v. 29b is not properly evaluated.
Brown has also emphasized that the Johannine attitude toward the value of signs and their relation to faith was complex. The seeing of signs can lead to two different reactions and both are called belief. “One type of belief is inadequate, for the ‘believer’ is superficially impressed by the marvelous. . . . The other type of belief is adequate, for it sees a heavenly reality behind the miraculous, namely, what Jesus reveals about God and himself.”228

In this narrative (20:26-29) Thomas exemplifies both types successively. In verse 25 he represents the first attitude: he will only believe if he has tangible proofs. But in verse 28 he has advanced to the second stage of faith: through the visible sign, he attains the heavenly reality, the revelation of Jesus as his Lord and God. “As long as Jesus stood among men, one had to come to faith through the visible. Now, at the end of the Gospel, another attitude becomes possible and necessary. This is the era of the Spirit or the invisible presence of Jesus (14:17).” But the implication of the movement from 29a to 29b “is not merely that one era precedes the other, but that one leads to the other.”229 As C. K. Barrett formulates it: “But for the fact that Thomas and the other disciples saw the incarnate Christ, there would have been no Christian faith at all.”230 In the context this includes the risen incarnate Christ.

Verweyen cannot legitimately appeal to the fourth Gospel for the confirmation of his thesis.

229. Ibid.

(The discussion of Mark and Paul as well as the conclusion to the study of Verweyen’s thesis will appear in the next issue.)