

Rev. Paul A. Hottinger

Knowing God through Humanity Fourth Week of Easter Friday, May 16, 2014
8:15 AM Acts 13:26-33; **Jn 14:1-6** (Jesus' life is a living demonstration of what it means to be a child God.)

Each of the sacred authors, so to speak, including of course the authors of the epistles, each one has a very particular signature, a particular way of looking at the mystery of Christ. **St. Paul**, for example, is clearly taken up with the idea of God's mercy overcoming judgment, **God's mercy overcoming what is really his own just sentence on human life.** **The synoptics are interested in virtue**, which St. Paul might almost ignore. But the synoptics want to talk about how it's important that we express in our lives our faith through virtue. In fact, the virtue is more important than the faith. The faith might inspire it, but it's really feeding the hungry, and visiting the imprisoned, and sheltering the homeless—that's really what's important.

In John, no; John has a different signature. **John is about the personal, the mystical, relationship between the disciple and Jesus.** So here Jesus says, "You have faith in God; now have faith also in me." But the faith he is talking about is not simply the belief that Jesus is the Son of God or the belief that Jesus will come at the end of time to bring salvation for his people. It is really **a personal reliance upon, a dependence upon in one's daily life, and an utter confidence** that, although Jesus has departed from our physical presence, this departure is very temporary and that God is sending Jesus back soon; and Jesus will take us to the Father's presence, the heavenly place.

Jesus is not simply to be thought of in this gospel as the person Jesus, but really **Jesus as he identifies with others so that it is through his humanity and the humanity of the whole human race that we come to know something of God**, so very much the human and the humanity of Christ. That's the way we learn about God. This of course **dovetails with**

and complements the belief of the synoptics, but it says it in a very different way. “No one comes to the Father except through me.” Not necessarily through the actual name; we could explicitly know the name or not, but we come through his humanity, because “I am the way.” And **Jesus’ life is a living demonstration of what it means to be a child of God**. And it’s a living demonstration that **brings along with it the power to emulate, to imitate, to copy, to follow, to be like**. “And the truth”—Jesus is an expression of the truth that goes beyond words and catechisms and creeds. It is a living truth. **It is truth in action**. “And the life”—**Jesus is the life**, and although it seems in the drama of his passion and death, it seems to be taken away from him, it isn’t. **It’s offered up**; it’s offered up to the Father. It’s a gift. **It’s a sacrifice, and it’s for us**.