

Jesus and the Passover:
A Narrative-Ideological Reading in John 6

I. Prologue

Jesus replaces old feasts: Jesus himself supersedes the Passover. Replacement claims are the central theme running through the entire chapter 6. The issue of replacement is demonstrated (6:1-21) and explained (6:22-71) in its integral unity and consistent narrative plot-line in John 6. John 6 is basically marked *inclusio* in its beginning and in its ending composed of two adverbial Johannine formula of transition, *meta; tau`ta* (6:1; 7:1). In John the discourse of the bread of life (6:22 - 71) has two miracle signs as an introduction. John 6 has its integral unity and consistent narrative plot - line and thought throughout the whole gospel of John. Among the two signs demonstrated as the issue of faith, in the feeding the multitude has the problem directly proposed to them after the introductory setting (6:1 - 4): The resources of the disciples cannot be equal to the need of the multitude. How can the disciples solve the problem? First it tested the personal reactions of the disciples. Later it also tested the response of the multitude. Having misunderstood the feeding sign, the huge crowd responded inappropriately and Jesus withdrew first into the mountains and then to the other side of the sea of Galilee. Then, the walking on the water is presented (6:16 - 21). The problem is stated: how can the disciples overcome their fear on the stormy sea? The reactions to Jesus' identity and mission are stressed in the two miracle episodes. The feeding and walking signs center on misunderstanding which is the response of the disciples and the crowd. The response of belief and disbelief toward Jesus' signs in the two miracles is stretched out in a more complex plot - line in Jesus' discourse (6:22 - 71).

Jesus' main mission is that he fulfills and transcends the Jewish Passover by replacing all the gifts from heaven, the manna of Moses tradition. The mission eventually creates an ideological conflict. The anti-Jewish ideology, as the supersession claims of Jewish feast, are anchored on Jesus' ideological pronouncement that he is the true bread of life who gives life through his self - giving for the world. Under the fire of this ideological conflict, the thesis is anchored at the issue of Jesus' replacement. The aim of the study is to investigate the replacement claims as ideological conflict through a critical narrative-ideological analysis¹ in John 6. The replacement is also related to the issue of the faith of the disciples and the crowd in Jesus' true identity² as the true bread of life coming from heaven. The study also explores the possibility of Korean community through the holistic and inclusive

¹ Ideology criticism is important in biblical study. Readers all read the texts with their own prejudices. It means that how anyone reads is always ideological. Ideology criticism is less a question of veracity, but of function or ethics.

² Robert Kysar, *Voyages with John: Charting the Fourth Gospel* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2005), 214, states that "Not accidentally, our passage [John 6:25-71] weaves the thread of faith into the fabric of Jesus' identity, for explication of that identity is whole cloth only with the inclusion of belief in that which transcends human experience. This is to say both that Christology evokes human response (belief or unbelief) and that Christology is in itself faith language-the assertion of faith."

perspective against the absolute exclusive ideology. The narrative dynamics and analysis will bring us the rhetorical impact of the narrative on the contemporary audience in social context.

II. Setting in the Narrative Plot

The occasion of the feeding miracle is a trip across the Sea of Galilee (6:4). The location is Galilee: first in the mountains (υ. 3) on the other side of the Sea of Galilee, of Tiberias then back in the city of Capernaum (υυ. 24, 59). The narrator gives an account of the passing of time by referring to the Passover (υ. 4). The miracle actions continue and take place during a day (υυ. 1 – 15), and a night (υυ. 16 – 21).

The narrator indicates a peculiar geographical designation to connect the episode not only with the region of Galilee but also with the major urban center of Tiberias along the lake. Tiberias is mentioned again in 6:23. The narrator gives its location in a transitional sense to trace the movement of the crowd in the story line. The typical character of the crowd is enhanced in story plot events by geographical location and movement in literary features. The spatial point of view of the Johannine narrator is omnipresent in that he does not define his geographical place.³ The narrator told and showed these geographical references by his or her narrative factors other than distance from the narrator. The geographical reference is a significant part of the narration.⁴ At the feeding miracle, Jesus goes to a mountain (ειj~ το; ο[ρο~) to serve and escape from the crowd. The article το; may mean that it was a specific mountain, but it is never named (6:3, 15). Though it is a typical setting, it signals two implications. First, that Jesus sat down with the disciples on the mountain is more than the traditional position of rabbis when teaching. It illustrates the authority of Jesus, who lifted up his eyes and looked down on a big crowd approaching him (υ. 5). Second, it recalls the mount of Sinai as the memory of Moses in a constant feature of Sinai tradition.⁵ The narrator does not report Jesus' role in this setting; whether as lawgiver or teacher or healer of the sick and helper. Rather, Jesus appears as the leader of the people, acting in the name of God and showing himself to be God's ambassador. With his authoritative action and position, he surpasses Moses and introduces the feeding event. How do the disciples and crowd respond to his feeding miracle?

For the miracle setting, the narrator notes the introduction of a new kind of miracle story in 6:1. Up to now the reader was informed that there were three miracle stories: the sign at Cana (2:1 – 11; 4:46 – 54) and the Jerusalem miracle (5:1 – 15). The Jerusalem – based sign is also later introduced in 9:1 – 41, where the miracle in Jerusalem evoke another controversy.⁶ The lake Galilee – based miracles besides the feeding of the five thousand, in John's story are those of the walking on the sea, and miraculous catch of fish (21:1 – 14).

³ A. Alan Culpepper, *The Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A Study in Literary Design* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983), 27.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ A. Schanckenburg, *The Gospel According to St. John* (London: Burns & Oates, 1982), 275.

⁶ Mark Stibbe, *John. Readings: A New Commentary* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), 82.

The narrator presents Jesus' moving back and forth between Judea and Galilee. The geographical settings in literary features develop John's plot line by putting them in different order. The reader will recall that Jesus is welcomed in Galilee (4:45) and after that he performs a second sign (4:46 – 54) which is the healing of the royal official's son. No token opposition is evident in the first four chapters. In the overall plot line of whole gospel, these chapters provide a powerful 'primacy effect,' that is, they firmly establish the reader or hearer's first response to Jesus' identity and mission.⁷ Jesus' opponents attack the origin of Jesus along with his identity. Even though the narrator tells his real origin (1:1 – 2), the opponents could not discern it.⁸ "The beginning" is the cosmological spatial construction where 'the Word', who is later identified as Jesus (1:29) was, and where 'the Word' virtually created all things that were created.⁹ As the creator of all things, Jesus is highly elevated to pre-existent time and place (see also 8:58; 17:5, 24). The narrator presents Jesus as the authorized divine figure with unlimited powers over the world. The ideological function of the spatial construction is attested in serving to legitimate a systematic subordination of all other cultural figures and practices that occupy the spaces of this world.¹⁰ When Nathanael asks, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" (1:46) the implied author smiles wryly, but it implies that Nathanael is still too immature to recognize what is behind that smile. As a limited character, Nathanael is confidently ignorant of Jesus' identity and mission along with the insignificant Galilean village he devalues by innuendo.¹¹ The question of Jesus' origin had depths he could not yet fathom. Nicodemus says "we know that you are a teacher come from God" (3:2), but they do not understand either his teaching or that he is the son of God. Nicodemus' use of the plural pronoun may point to him as a representative of the Judeans.¹² Meek says that Nicodemus "becomes the representative of those who Jews mentioned in 2:33ff., who 'believed in [Jesus']name because they saw the signs he did.' " ¹³ The crowd in John 6 assumes Joseph was his father (6:42) along with the implication of improper knowledge of Jesus' birth. Up to this point in John 6, no one can understand Jesus' identity and mission.

The feeding action takes place shortly before Passover (6:4). The narrator indicates a reference to a feast of the Judeans. Jesus stays in Galilee rather than Jerusalem at this second Passover. Three Passover festivals are referred to in John's gospel (2:13; 6:4; 13:1). The gospel, therefore, covers a period of about two and half years in twenty – one chapters in the narrative time, since the narrative includes the testimony of John and the gathering of disciples before the first Passover and the appearances

⁷ Culpepper, 91.

⁸ As the creator of all things, Jesus is highly elevated to pre-existent time and place (Jn. 8:58; 17:5, 24). The narrator presents Jesus as the authorized divine figure with unlimited powers over the world. The ideological function of the spatial construction is attested in serving to legitimate a systematic subordination of all other cultural figures and practices that occupy the spaces of this world. See Musa W. Dube, "Savior of the World but not of This World: A Post-Colonial Reading of Spatial Construction in John," in *The Postcolonial Bible*, edited by A.S. Sugirtharajah (England: Sheffield Press, 1995), 125.

⁹ Musa W. Dube, "Savior of the World but not of This World: A Post-Colonial Reading of Spatial Construction in John," in *The Postcolonial Bible*, edited by A.S. Sugirtharajah. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998, 125.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Culpepper, 170.

¹² F.J. Moloney, *The Gospel of John*, Sacra Pagina (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1998), 97; Wayne Meek, "The Man From Heaven in Johannine Sectarianism," *JBL* 91(1971), 55.

¹³ Meek, 55.

following the third Passover.¹⁴ It is at this time (6:1-15) when as surpassing Moses, Jesus, is with his disciples and is ready to reveal himself to that huge crowd was approaching him (v. 5a). The multitude is approaching Jesus instead of going up to Jerusalem at Passover. Hence, it signals prolepses of an alternative celebration in some sense. They are coming to Jesus to find in him the true meaning of Passover.¹⁵

The feeding action occurred during a day (vv. 1 – 15). The feeding of the multitude is simply narrated. As we know, the Passover feast was rapidly approaching (6:4), Jesus raises the question of feeding the crowd that was coming to him, but the omniscient narrator assures the reader that Jesus knew exactly what he would do.¹⁶ The only resource available is that brought by a lad who joined the multitude on the mountain: the five loaves of barley bread and two small fish. Those meager resources marvelously feed five thousand men alone on the grass, as the narrator tells us (6:10), and it takes twelve baskets to collect the fragments (kla,smata). The twelve baskets of kla,smata far outweigh the original meager morels.

The feasts of the Judeans were expressions of Jewish traditional worship in a social milieu. The narrator shows that Jesus fulfilled them in Himself and that He was greater than them. Jesus supersedes the Jewish feasts. It eventually creates a crucial conflict. How can the Judeans sense the supersession? Ironically the narrative mainly focuses on who the Jesus is. Without knowing the identity of Jesus, they cannot respond rightly to Jesus' mission. Also the implied author controls a narrative speed to involve the conflict. The people viewed him as an earthly prophet, one like Moses who was expected by some to be God's anointed and desired to make him king by force. Jesus withdraws to the mountains. Rather, the misunderstanding is continued. Faith is tested. Jesus reveals his identity in the sign, but it was not appreciated faithfully.

Now the implied author tries to disclose Jesus' identity and the disciples' response in a fifth sign (6:16 – 22). The action takes place during a night (6:16). In the walking scene (6:16 – 21) Jesus' identity faced a new development. Jesus' appearance to his disciples on the sea depicts another facet of his identity.¹⁷ When evening came, the disciples went down to the sea (6:16) while Jesus remained on the other side alone. It seems to be not so long a journey itself. The disciples had rowed for three or four miles but the narrator does not indicate whether this put them in the middle of the lake or near their destination (6:19a). In the midst of a heavy wind the disciples saw Jesus walking on the sea and were frightened. Koester points out that this episode should be understood as a sign, although so many elements in the story are remarkably muted.¹⁸ The narrator deliberately silenced the miraculous elements in this sign to emphasize Jesus' identity alone. Jesus is the divine 'I AM.' (vEgw eivmi). The disciples quickly reached the shore after seeing Jesus (6:21). The chaotic waters endanger the existence of his disciples, and they are in danger of being pulled into the chaos.¹⁹ But a simple 'I AM' from Jesus changes their fearful reaction into a wish to receive

¹⁴ Culpepper, 70.

¹⁵ Charles Talbert, *Reading John: A Literary and Theological Commentary on the Fourth Gospel and Johannine Epistle* (New York: Cross Road, 1992), 132.

¹⁶ Robert Kysar, *John's Story of Jesus* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), 40.

¹⁷ Craig Koester, *Symbolism in the Fourth Gospel: Meaning, Mystery, Community* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), 92.

¹⁸ Ibid., 93.

¹⁹ Kysar, *John's Story*, 40.

him. It assumes that Jesus did not get into the boat. The emphasis is on the wish. Jesus does not yet entrust himself to others. The boat comes safely and immediately to the shore.

The narrator sets the scene in the first part (6:22 – 25) for ‘related fact’ transition of the two miracles which leads into the discourse on the bread of life (6:26 – 71). The walking in the scene is a thematically organized ‘related fact,’ especially a spatial setting in the plot line. By suggesting a kind of ‘related fact’ the narrator wants his readers to know, before launching into the discourse, that Jesus stands as Lord over “the forces of chaos and that even the natural world responds to his presence.”²⁰ The setting evokes the reader response to Jesus’ true identity in the story line. In terms of logical or thematic transition, the Passover imagery might be the connection between crossing the Red sea and the gift of manna in the desert under the leadership of Moses.

The feeding event was near the time of Passover. Certainly the ‘grumbling’ of the crowd on the discourse (6:41, 60) evokes the complaints of the people of Israel against Moses as they wandered in the desert (Ex. 16). Kysar states, “Could the stilling of the waters and the miraculous landing be intended to arouse memories of that wondrous escape from Egypt by the people of Israel?”²¹ The mysterious landing triggers the reader to want more information about Jesus’ identity. The narrator provides the reader a comparative foreground for the Passover typology: the comparison between Moses/manna and Jesus/living bread.²² The Passover setting must not be neglected. As we know, Jesus’ discourse is held in the Passover context. As once Israel ate of the manna in the wilderness and was nourished by the Law, so now all humanity is summoned to accept the new revelation of God in Jesus. On the occasion of celebrating Passover, Jesus announces that the Jewish Passover festival and all former gifts from heaven are perfected and surpassed.²³ The Passover setting for Jesus’ discourse on the bread underlines the quality of God’s life-giving purposes as saving the world and the consequences of belief and unbelief. The narrator closes Jesus’ discourse (6:59) on the bread of life with a comment for the benefit of the readers. The narrator leads the readers to appreciate Jesus’ movements and actions during the Passover.

III. Characterization in the narrative plot

Characterization is a distinct literary device in which a character is depicted in the episode, not with the historical person. Characters are understood in his or her role in a significant plot – line in the story.²⁴ We evaluate various characters from what the narrator

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid., 41.

²² D.A. Lee, *The Symbolic Narratives of the Fourth Gospel: The Interplay of Form and Meaning* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994), 135.

²³ Moloney, *The Gospel*, 223.

²⁴ Characters and Plots “are inseparably bound up in the reading experience, if not always in critical thought. Each works to produce the other. Characters are defined in and through the plot, by what they do and by what they say. The plot in turn comes into view as characters act and interact” (see S. Moore, *Literary Criticism of the Gospels* [New Haven, Conn: Yale University Press, 1989], 5). For helpful discussion of characterization including narrative criticism, see Culpepper, 99–148; Stibbe, 5–31; S. Chatman, *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Narrative and Film* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1978); Warren Carter, *John: Storyteller, Interpreter, Evangelist* (Peabody, Mass: Hendrickson Publisher,

says about them, particularly when introducing them, what they say, what they do, and how other characters talk about them or how other characters react to them.²⁵

Jesus' characterization is a predominant feature in the whole gospel, because virtually all of John's gospel is devoted to what Jesus says and how others react to him. Only the distinct or dominant features of his characterization are disclosed for emphasis in the story plot line in John 6. Jesus is a ruling key character in John 6. Jesus is the central character in both miracle actions. In the feeding episode, Jesus is the protagonist. Narrator reveals much about the character of the Jesus of John's gospel. The Jesus of John's plot shows his elusiveness.²⁶ His elusive and secret character is closely related to the plot of John's story. Before chapter 5, John's Jesus says or reacts to others without any controversy. However, the dispute over the Sabbath in 5:9b – 18 provides the first scene of actual hostility in the plot of John's story. After this controversy, Jesus' characterization is shown as evasive and secretive.²⁷ Jesus states that "the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing" (5:19). His defenses and movements are those of 'the hidden Messiah.' His interaction is characterized by a discontinuity which totally mystifies his hearers.²⁸ His elusiveness is progressively and/or correctively reflected to his identity and mission that defines his relationship to the Father and discloses the blindness of others. Jesus' dialogue and movement in his characterization show his dependence on the Father in a consistent way.²⁹ The elusiveness is evoked by Jesus' abrupt movements from Jerusalem in chapter 5 to the far shore of the Sea of Galilee in chapter 6. His supernatural movement (see 6:16-21) rather emphasizes his elusive character. His deliberate evasiveness reinforces his identity and mission.

1). The Scene of the Feeding the multitude

6:2-3 introduces to the reader the crowds and the disciples close to Jesus. A great crowd was following (h_jvkolouvqei) Jesus as a response of his shmei`a and the disciples are seated with (meta;) their master. Jesus went up; his disciples are seated; the disciples are moving toward Jesus. The crowds' moving and the disciples' readiness signal and reinforce their faith and discipleship respectively. Jesus' initiative is promoted, showing his concern that a huge multitude be fed (6:5). The narrator shares his omniscient knowledge with the readers to understand Jesus' actions, by indicating "he knew what he was about to do" (6:6).

Jesus points to Philip, who came from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter (1:44) and asks, "where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?" (v.5). Philip reveals his misunderstanding or poor faith by the significance of Jesus' challenge:

2006); D. Rhoads and K. Syreeni, eds., *Characterization in the Gospel: Reconceiving Narrative Criticism* (JSNTSup 184; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999); Moon Hyun Kim, *Healing Hurts: John's Portrayals of the Persons in Healing Episode* (Seoul: KCU Press, 2005).

²⁵ David Rhoads, "Jesus and the Syrophenicain Woman in Mark," *JAAA* 62(1994), 417; Culpepper, 107.

²⁶ Stibbe, 83.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Culpepper, 108.

"Eight months' wages would not buy enough bread for each one to have a bite!" (v.7). Jesus perceived the immediate need of the crowds who were coming to him and was concerned to feed them. The narrator shows the actions of Jesus: Jesus lifted up his eyes and saw the crowd approaching him. These requests and responses are echoes of the disciples' experience in 4:31 – 42. As at 4:31 – 34, they do not discern the symbolic significance of food: "Their response is off the mark because they have not discerned what is true but does not appear so about Jesus: namely that Jesus' words are food (6:63) and that what appears to be food is not."³⁰ At 4:35, Jesus tells his disciples, "lift up your eyes and see the fields that are ripe for harvest." The disciples in this episode cannot raise their eyes and discern the symbolical significance. Both are concerned with food as a symbol of life in a different context.³¹ Andrew's response (vv. 8 – 9), like Philip's failure of Jesus' test, is as an example of misunderstanding. They did not find the deep meaning of why Jesus says and does miracles even if they had been with Jesus from the first days (see 1:43). They are material and superficial observers. When Jesus tests and challenges the personal faith of his disciples, they, as represented in Philip and Andrew, reveal inadequate response and poor faith. In the last scene of the episode, faith and discipleship is again challenged and a different response evoked in the response and confession of Simon Peter (vv. 68 – 69).³²

How about the crowd? Even though Jesus crossed the lake, a great crowd follows him (6:1 – 3); they are simply following Jesus because of the miraculous signs (4:48; also see 6:26 – 27). Jesus seems to be trying to avoid the crowd. It is a huge crowd. They are looking for someone who can do such a great thing. Despite the miraculous feeding, they have not progressed in discerning the true meaning of the sign. They are searching people. They are searching the scriptures to find the way of eternal life. But they did not find the real matter to which the writings point. They could not find Jesus and God who directed Moses in the salvation history. Even the meaning of the sign was not appreciated in its true character. The Judeans' blindness of not discerning a spiritual meaning of Jesus' sign is attested to. They viewed Jesus as an earthly prophet: "he really is the prophet who is to come into the world" (6:14). The title, *o' profh,thj* is similar to that used by the Samaritan woman as she responded to Jesus' challenge (4:19). The notion of *o' profhvth~* recalled a reference to Moses, as the leader and miracle performer for their ancestors as well as the eschatological prophet (see Deut. 18:15, 18 – 19). It was the peak of Jesus' popularity, as seen by the desire of the people to "seize him king by force" (6:15). While attempting to crown him king (v. 15a), Jesus escapes them and retreats (v. 15b). They may reason that "such a man can feed a huge army and attack our enemy and deliver us from them."

The ideology of the crowd "in the world," is that, by interpreting the sign-miracles of Jesus and encoding their world view, Jesus claimed to be king of Israel. In light of this notion, they tend to interpret correctly Jesus' feeding miracle as his credentials by acclaiming him as a prophet or a king.³³ Jesus' feeding miracle attests that Jesus is a holy figure sent to shepherd them as their covenant leaders and as a king. Kings have total control of

³⁰ J.A. Phillip, " 'This is a Hard Saying. Who Can Be Listener to it?' : Creating a Reader in John 6," *Semeia* 26(1983), 48.

³¹ Lee, *Symbolic Narratives*, 138.

³² Ibid.

³³ Jerome Neyrey, *An Ideology of Revolt* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976), 126.

and power over their subjects; they are expected to secure them with product, properties, peace, and abundance.³⁴ The kingship as a political ideology could only lead to destruction of the people and their chief priests. It would also destroy their existing institutional arrangements with the Romans. “Israel” was the in-group name for Judeans, Galileans, Pereans, and their colonials alike. But from the perspective of a Roman, all Israelites were Judeans, since the central temple city of this collectivity was Jerusalem in Judea.

Kingship is a significant motif in the later Johannine passion narrative in 18:28-19:26. In 18:36 Jesus insists that his kingship is not of this world (not over Israel), that is, not of Israelite origin. Obviously the ideology of the kingship the crowd seeks to force upon him here is challenged and misplaced.³⁵ For those who believe in Jesus, Jesus is a truthful witness attesting to what he saw and heard before he was born “into the world” of Israel. Those who hear and understand what he says are those who are “of the truth.” Obviously, then, the kingship the crowd seeks to force upon him here is misplaced.

2). The Scene of the Walking on the Water

A crowd wanted to make Jesus king forcibly after he fed them with bread and fish; but Jesus fled from them. Again, Jesus’ elusiveness is clearly portrayed. From 6:15 until 6:25, a plotted-game of hide-and-seek is played out.³⁶ Jesus interacts with only his disciples in the walking scene. Jesus’ sudden encounter with the disciples on the water underscores his awesome elusiveness. He also played in an elusive way to the crowd who sought him out the next day, but he rebuked them for having eaten their fill while utterly failing to understand what the sign indicated (6:26).³⁷ The narrator emphasized his elusiveness, by introducing a bewildering question, “Rabbi, when did you come here?” (6:25). The crowd is also elusive in perceiving Jesus himself.

Jesus’ abrupt appearance on the water during the night tests the faith of the disciples.³⁸ It is an epiphanic setting which can evidence the revelation of the presence of God. The symbolic overtones of the scene relate to the faith of the disciples.³⁹ Jesus’ encounter on the water (6:19), his revelatory speech and reassurance (6:20) and safe landing on the shore (6:21), are directed symbolically towards “developing the faith and understanding of the disciples.”⁴⁰ The disciples’ initial response (v. 19b) demonstrates a characteristic lack of understanding of Jesus’ identity. They do not perceive the one who crosses the water and who offers the life – giving and saving presence of God.⁴¹ The narrator provides the disciples a deeper level to perceive Jesus’ identity when their fear is overcome.

³⁴ Bruce Malina and Richard Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science Commentary on the Gospel of John* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998), 126.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Stibbe, 84. It is even more interesting when one considers the fact that the first words that come out of Jesus’ mouth in John are “what are you seeking” (1:38), and that this question is repeated twice in the arrest and the resurrection scene in John 18:4, 7 and 20:15. Painter has identified it as a part of ‘quest stories’ (see John Painter, *The Quest for the Messiah: The History, Literature, and Theology of the Johannine Community* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993). For a brief illustration of quest stories, see Carter, 27-28.

³⁷ Koester, 75.

³⁸ Lee, 140.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid

The revelatory appellation emphasizes the divine authority of the figure of Jesus.⁴² Jesus reveals his true divine identity to his disciples by speaking his Father's name: I AM. The revelatory name, 'I AM' appears elsewhere in John's Gospel, all of which can impart divine significance. The revelatory significance in the divine name 'I AM' is scarcely audible when Jesus speaks to the Samaritan woman (4:26), but it crescendos in his revelatory words to the disciples on the sea (6:20) and in a statement like "I am the bread of life" (6:35, 48).⁴³ By the end of chapter 8, the divine connotation erupts when Jesus says flatly, "before Abraham was, I Am" (8:58). Koester well points out that, "The disciples who wanted to 'receive' Jesus after hearing him speak his Father's name (cf. 5:43) responded appropriately to his signs; the crowd that tried to make Jesus a king did not. The conversations and discourse in the remainder of the chapter will elaborate the meaning of signs in order that the readers - - - like the disciples - - - may respond positively to Jesus."⁴⁴

3). The Discourse of the Bread from Heaven

6:22 - 24 shows the second introduction to facilitate the discourse on the bread of life (6:25 - 59). The narrator places the second introduction (6:22 - 24) with the first introduction (6:1 - 4), indicating that Jesus, the disciples, the people who remained on the other side, who had eaten the bread, are rejoined at Capernaum. The crowd is still seeking for a sign: Will he perform another miracle? From 6:25 onward, speech or dialogue replaces action as the primary means of identifying the traits of character. Jesus' elusiveness is indicated by his technique of discontinuous dialogue.⁴⁵ Jesus does not give a straight answer. His interchanges with other characters often 'provoke rejection.'⁴⁶ When the crowd asks why he came to Capernaum, he says, "You seek me, not because you saw signs but because you ate of the bread, and you were filled" (6:26).

The question put to Jesus in v. 25: "Rabbi, when did you come here?" refers to *double entendre*-meaning question characteristic of John's anti-language.⁴⁷ An antilanguage is "a metaphor" for the common language of society at large.⁴⁸ Like language itself, antilanguage as the bearer of social reality derives from antisociety that is established with another society. Malina and Rohrbaugh state that "It lives only among the genuinely estranged who are in conflict with the values or the society rooted in a form of social conflict carried on by dissociated persons living in a hollowed-out social sphere within the dominant social order."⁴⁹ In John's gospel, Jesus' characterization and that of his in-group or co-group always manifest the ideological values that derives from the attitudes and behaviors of those not of this world, not of Israelite society as it is continued. On the other hand, the crowds as well as Jesus' in-group have all the features of Israelite society at large, of Judeans in particular.

⁴² Kysar, *John's Story*, 40.

⁴³ Koester, 93.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 94.

⁴⁵ Stibbe, 87.

⁴⁶ Culpepper, 112.

⁴⁷ Malina and Rohrbaugh, 129.

⁴⁸ Bruce J. Malina, "John's: The Maverick Christian Group: the Evidence of Sociolinguistics," *Biblical Theological Bulletin* 24(1995): 177.

⁴⁹ Malina and Rohrbaugh, 46.

Jesus interacts with his listeners about the centrality of faith that was introduced at the beginning of the discourse on the bread of life. The faith of the listeners is tested as Jesus interacts with them to give them a new understanding of their action in seeking him (6:26 – 31). When the crowd asked, “what should we do, that we may work the works of God,” Jesus answered, “this is the work of God, that you believe in the one whom he sent” (6:28 – 29). A new level of understanding is elevated for the listeners. Against the old gift, the manna of law, of Moses tradition, Jesus now identified himself as the bread of life, and he said that, “whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall not ever thirst” (6:35). When the question of Jesus’ origin is presented, the crowd (οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι) suddenly appeared as the Judeans (6:41). The Judeans (οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι) grumbled against Jesus’ claims and origins (6:41, 42). Personal identity here is established by where Jesus is from. Once more, the issue of origin along with the Jesus’ claim, “I am the bread from heaven” can be supported by his origins: “a descent from his father.”⁵⁰ The narrator already and evidently reported in the prologue: Jesus was *pro. j. to. n. qeo. n* (1:1) and God endowed him with a unique authority in the world.

The two core elements of the narrative, the feeding element and the image of bread, illustrate “the close relationship between christology and faith, revelation and response.”⁵¹ Jesus promises that, “everyone who sees the son and believes in him has eternal life, and I will raise him on the last day” (6:40; 47). ‘To eat’ means ‘to believe.’ And Jesus repeated the same idea when he said, “He who consumes my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day” (6:54). The listeners are not yet ready to partake of the crucified Jesus through faith. “To partake of Jesus as the bread of life is to believe that the crucified Messiah is the source of eternal life with God.”⁵²

Often Jesus’ words are the offense to the people. They again misunderstand: How can this man give us his flesh to eat? Jesus discloses the hardness and faithlessness of the crowd: “It is a ‘hard saying.’ Who can hear it?” (6:60). So far, the disciples have heard what Jesus said. It is the time to reach a crucial determination. The disciples have enjoyed their privilege of experiencing Jesus’ self – revelatory name, ‘I AM’ on the chaotic water. How about their response? Misunderstanding and doubt is the enemy of a faithful response. The right understandings regarding the identity and origin of Jesus bring the right expression of faith. Many of his disciples went back and walked no more with him (6:66). Jesus asks his twelve: “You do not want to go away also, do you?” (6:67). The question is heart – searching. Belief and disbelief is always a source of tension among the disciples. Peter shows a sturdy faith: “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life” (6:68). Kysar comments that, “Peter makes his bold statement of faith on behalf of the others (vs. 68–69). Faith is possible! One can will (exercise volition) to believe in the face of the difficulties of the words of this puzzling Jesus!”⁵³ The Journey is not finished. Simon Peter’s response and faith are great so far. Can this sturdy confession of faith endure in the difficult world that will bring this journey to an

⁵⁰ F. Moloney, *Signs and Shadows: Reading John 5-12* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), 217.

⁵¹ Lee, *Symbolic Narratives*, 145.

⁵² Koester, 99.

⁵³ Kysar, *Voyages*, 204.

end? How can the believers make a Spirit – filled response to a dark reference to the Son of Man being lifted up (3:14) that will provide the true bread of life that will endure to eternal life (6:12 – 13, 27, 35, 51, 53 – 54)?

IV. Conflict in the Narrative Plot

As the gospel unfolds, the voice of the narrator introduces many narrative elements in the story world; its characters, settings, points of views, conflict and events. These constitute the plot of the story.⁵⁴ Clearly, conflict derives or motivates the plot of the story. Conflict analysis weighs the circumstances of the conflict in the narrative plot; “what or who initiates the conflict, how it escalates, what the complications are, and what the resolution is.”⁵⁵ To analyze the conflict in chapter 6, we need to know the origin of the conflict that has been built up to now. The immediate context in chapter 5 brought a fresh development of the conflict over Jesus’ identity.⁵⁶ At first, the first issue of the conflict is what is “the location of revelation – Jesus or the Law.” The conflict is intensified and elaborated sharply. The biggest stumbling block for those who hold to the absolute authority of the Torah is Jesus’ declaration: “The Father and the Son are one.” Jesus testifies to his claims by citing four witnesses in 5:30 – 40: John the Baptist (vv. 33 – 35); the works the Father gave to Jesus (v. 36); the Father himself (vv. 37 – 38); and the Scripture (vv. 39 – 40). The nature of the conflict over Jesus’ identity and mission newly triggers the issue of faith as a misunderstanding of Jesus’ true identity. In other words, ‘the conflict with unbelief’ escalates in chapter 6.⁵⁷

The conflict in chapter 6 is initiated by Jesus. Jesus’ question to Philip is based on the multitude who need food. The problem is clearly stated. Their resources cannot be equal to the need of the multitude. How can the disciples solve the problem? Philip declares: I cannot handle the problem. It is an impossible task. Philip stresses hopelessness. Andrew volunteered what information he had and emphasizes the meagerness of their resources. His faith was wavering. The miracle is performed. Jesus feeds the multitude abundantly and lavishly. The miracle draws a response. The crowd responds by declaring Jesus to be a prophet (6:14). People probably recall this sign as fulfilling Moses and the ‘manna’ sent from heaven (6:31). Having not understood the true meaning of the feeding sign, the crowd responds inappropriately to Jesus’ power and identity. Even the feeding miracle did not advance the crowd’s understanding of Jesus (cf. 6:2, 14 – 15). But Jesus’ self – revelation helps the disciples overcome the great fear on stormy water, the false messianic assumptions of the crowd (6:14 – 15) have been challenged or corrected by Jesus’ revelatory identity (6:20).

What is the real nature of the conflict? The crowd assumes that, since Moses gave them bread, ‘from heaven,’ anyone claiming to represent God should perform a similar confirming sign (see Ps. 78:24). In other words, they demand that, “if you challenge the unique authority of Moses and Torah, you must perform a sign. However, we demand a sign greater than that of

⁵⁴ Moloney, *The Gospel*, 4.

⁵⁵ Rhoads, “Syrophoenician Women,” 358.

⁵⁶ Culpepper, 91

⁵⁷ Ibid.

Moses when he gave us bread of heaven.”⁵⁸ Their demand also refers to their lack of memory and misunderstanding of the feeding sign. They may argue that, “you gave us earthly bread which you made from five barley loaves and two dried fish, but Moses gave us bread: bread straight out of heaven!”

Despite Jesus’ admonition (6:25 – 29), the people try to force Jesus into their Mosaic tradition: “Moses, the manna, and Torah give life to Israel.”⁵⁹ Their assumption is corrected by Jesus’ stern reply. The Father in heaven (cf 5:17) was and still is the real giver, and Moses is simply God’s agent who gave directions concerning the manna. The bread (manna) that was given then was not true bread; rather my father now gives you the ‘true’ bread from heaven (6:32). John’s formulaic use of the term ‘true’ helps evaluate certain characters and actions affirming what is genuine and authentic in contradiction to what is obsolete or false. The readers are informed that Jesus himself is the ‘true’ light (1:9), the ‘true’ bread (6:32), and the true vine (15:1). Unlike Moses, who gave Israel “the old and obsolete mode of relating to God, the law,”⁶⁰ Jesus himself gives grace and truth (1:14, 17) as an authentic figure coming from heaven. Jesus says that the bread of God comes down from heaven and gives life to the world (6:33).

Now, the True Bread is Jesus. Like the manna, Jesus has come down from heaven. Both contrast and continuation are juxtaposed here. Once it was God who gave the bread, not Moses (cf 6:32), now this same God, the Father of Jesus (cf. 5:17), gives the true living bread from heaven. The Mosaic manna provided nourishment for Israel in the wilderness; the true bread from heaven gives life to all humanity.⁶¹ Jesus’ authority is emphatically elevated over all other historical and cultural figures and their worldly spaces of authority by emphasizing the spatial origins of Jesus as ‘from above’, ‘from heaven’, and by indicating that ‘no-one’ has ever ‘seen’ or ‘heard’ God except Jesus who came down from the Father/Heaven.⁶² But the people do not understand the nature of the bread and ask Jesus to give the bread from heaven always (6:34). Jesus responds by identifying himself “with the once – and – for – all gift of the bread.”⁶³ Moses, the manna, can no longer give sufficient nourishment for humanity. Jesus, the bread of life (6:35a) will provide the deepest needs of all hunger and thirst (6:35b).⁶⁴ Jesus appeals to the crowd for belief: “I am the Bread of Life Why do you not believe? You have seen Me” (6:35 – 36).

Again, the discourse (6:25 – 59) claims that Jesus is the true bread from heaven, superseding the former gifts from heaven, the manna of the Torah. People who want to experience eternal life must accept the revelation of God by eating and drinking Jesus’ broken body and spilled blood, a never – perishing nourishment (6:35) that the Son of Man will give (6:27).⁶⁵ In terms of

⁵⁸ Edwin Freed, *Old Testament Quotations in the Gospel of John* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1965), 118.

⁵⁹ Moloney, *The Gospel*, 212.

⁶⁰ Neyrey, 131.

⁶¹ Ibid. 213.

⁶² Dube, 127.

⁶³ Ibid. 214.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid. 223.

the insinuation of eucharistic language⁶⁶ in 6:51c – 58, we may experience the revelation of God in the flesh and blood of the Son of Man in the eucharistic celebration in a Christian community. Behind the eucharistic implication, the word *klavsmata* in 6:12 – 13 is revoked. The use of the term, *klavsmata* which is collected so that nothing is lost conspired by Jesus to his disciples, has provided foreground for experiencing the eucharistic celebration. The Passover context, social location, synagogue at Capernaum, and eucharistic insinuation is a very important setting to apprehend where we encounter God's revelation of Jesus' salvific mission. We need to go further, how can we experience or encounter Jesus' crucified broken body and spilled blood? We can partake of the crucified Jesus through faith in the present setting.

The narrative discloses the symbolic meaning of both miracle signs and the image of the bread of life by presenting that Jesus is not only the giver but also the gift itself.⁶⁷ But the Judeans react to Jesus' speech and teaching with discord and contention (vv. 41 – 59). At first the Judeans grumble (v. 41). Later they quarrel with one another (v. 52). Jesus' reply to their grumbling and his challenge to them implied that their reaction came from their ignorance. The division or disturbance among the Judeans expands to the disciples as well.⁶⁸ Many of his disciples begin to grumble (vv. 60 – 61). One will betray him (v. 64), and some of them turned back in unbelief (v. 66). Many of his disciples went back and walked no more from that moment (v. 66). Jesus asks if the Twelve will go away, suggesting that the twelve are distinguished from other disciples who have just joined the Judeans in being offended by the word of Jesus.⁶⁹ Jesus discloses a disturbing truth concerning the certainty of the twelve (6:66 – 71).

As Jesus' replacement claims of Jewish feast develop, the correct rite of boundaries distinguishing insides from outsides in Johannine community is established. Only those who practice Jesus' authentic rituals share true solidarity in God's covenant community.⁷⁰

Unless you are born of water and the spirit, you cannot enter the kingdom(3:5)

Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, you have no life in you(6:53)

The replacement strategy clearly defines a sharp boundary between insiders and outsiders for the Johannine community. The new ritual practice provides sharper criteria for authentic membership. However, the material boundary rituals lose their value and normative status as authentic membership criteria because dropouts, who had been reborn (3:5) and eaten the bread of life (6:53), left the group. As a result, "a new antisacramental stance emerges." The new rituals oppose previous rites: "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and

⁶⁶ John's gospel does not provide explicit sacramental accounts (the institution of baptism and the Eucharist or the Last Supper) as do the synoptic gospels. For much debated arguments of the celebration of sacraments in John, see D. Aensberger, *Johannine Faith and Liberating Community* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1988), 64–86.

⁶⁷ Lee, *Symbolic Narratives*, 145.

⁶⁸ Culpepper, 92.

⁶⁹ Kysar, *Voyages*, 204.

⁷⁰ Neyrey, 138.

are life” (6:63). It is a celebration of spirit over matter. The notion stresses different, spiritual criteria for true membership in God’s covenant community as is indicated later:

Unless you believe that ‘I AM’ you will die in your sins (8:24)

Unless I wash you, you have no part with me (13:8)

With this notion, the external or material rituals (see 3:5; 6:53), are rejected and replaced by spiritual and internal activities. The ideological implications of spirit over material rituals, Jewish purity, and required behavior hinges on the articulation that Jesus is equal to God. Jesus’ superior authority is always based on his spatial origins; thus, the function of heavenly authority is to provide superior water and bread which, unlike that given by any other cultural figure among the Jews or in the world, leads to eternal life.⁷¹

V. The Standard of Ideological Judgment

Standards of Judgment are those norms (beliefs, attitudes, values, and actions) embedded in a narrative by which the readers or listeners are led to evaluate the characters and their actions.⁷² The standards of judgment are closely related to the purpose of John’s story of Jesus in the narrative world. The standard of judgment in John’s story reflects moral dualism in which there are two views, each of which symbolizes the other as its opposite. John’s plot and characters provoke the ideological conflict in Jesus’ ministry and mission. Jesus’ ministry in John 6 eventually brings a crisis of decision for the characters. Characters and the gospel’s readers must decide whether to believe Jesus’ claims in two distinct and contrasting realities. These two bipolar views are identified in the narrative plot line as the Mosaic gift of the bread and the true bread from heaven as the objective of faith. Jesus does not deny the Mosaic gift or the Jewish festival. Jesus supersedes and fulfills the Jewish Passover. The key features of each view in John 6 can be set out as follows:

Ideology: The Mosaic Gift of the Bread

Moses,
The ascent of the traditional revealers
Revealing nourishment of the Torah
God’s revelation in the Torah

Ideology: The True Bread From Heaven

The person of Jesus
The Son of Man being lifted up
The true bread of life from heaven
God’s revelation in Jesus

⁷¹ Dube, 129.

⁷² Rhoads, “Syrophoenician Woman” , 365.

Torah or Law	Spirit and life
Temporal	Eternal
Perishable	Not perishable
Physical nourishment	Giving life
Moses was merely God' s agent	The Father was and still is the Real Giver
The bread (manna)	The True Bread
Earthly realm	Spiritual realm
Grumbling	Challenging/Receiving
Keeping Torah	Partaking broken body and spilled blood
Physical hunger and thirst	Spiritual hunger and thirst
Earthly King or prophet	The only begotten Son of God
Once/past	Now/present
Israel	All humanity
Flesh	Spirit

When we look at the characters: Jesus, the disciples, the crowd or the Judeans in John 6, we see that they embody one choice or the other. The ideological bipolar views have emerged from a social – cultural situation in the Passover context. Ideology becomes understood as socially relevant. Ideology can produce and reproduce reality in specific social milieu. Jesus declares the living bread of life coming down from heaven and embodies the features of it, while the Judeans embody the features of the Mosaic tradition. Many disciples vacillate between the two views, for they do not understand Jesus' signs and identity and, rather, want to conform to the Jewish Passover tradition. In the walking scene only the disciples have been told by Jesus: "I AM; Do not be afraid" (v. 20). They have witnessed and experienced two miracle scenes (6:5 – 13, 16 – 21) and told in the discourse of the bread of life (6:25 – 59) who it is who speaks to them. But the critical disciples blame Jesus' teaching as the 'hard saying' (6:60). For them Jesus' discourse is unacceptable, harsh, and even offensive. They do not trust that Jesus is the fulfillment of the Jewish traditions, of the Mosaic gift of the bread, that Jesus is the true living bread from heaven. Rather, they have had Jesus conform to the Mosaic tradition of a heavenly revealer (cf 6:62).⁷³ The internal tension of both belief and disbelief are brought together in the Johannine disciples. The believing group is both strong and weak, life – filled and fragile.⁷⁴ Despite Peter' s determined confession of faith, the fragility of the human response is evoked. More than Peter' s confession of faith is called for, because he may not be immune to be betrayed under some circumstances. If there is a betrayer in the community, then there will be betrayal.⁷⁵ Hold firmly that Jesus is the true bread of your life in your journey of faith.

⁷³ Moloney, *Signs and Shadows*, 63.

⁷⁴ T.L. Brodie, *The Gospel According to John: A Literary and Theological Commentary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 288.

⁷⁵ Moloney, *Signs and Shadows*, 63.

VI. Jesus and the Jewish Community

Jesus senses a great human need and satisfied it with a miraculous feeding miracle. Jesus takes a poor quantity of five barley loaves and two tiny fish and feeds the people who suffered various forms of poverty and weakness. Human' willingness and God - like providence are well matched at the Passover season. Bread is indispensable for life. All people want bread. They fight for bread. People need to fight for the right food. We need someone who can provide food for living. With the physical bread all humanity will die. In this sense we all are hungry and thirsty. Jesus fed them abundantly and lavishly. He also saved the *klavsmata* that they may be available for later generations. The *klavsmata* were twelve baskets. The *klavsmata* outweighed barely five loaves and two small fish in quality and quantity. People' s hunger cannot be satisfied by a one - time feeding. They want another, more fantastic miracle. Jesus revealed himself by the miraculous feeding of a huge crowd among a great feast of Passover. They have seen Jesus' miracle, but they do not believe him.

People have been welcomed as divinely chosen hearers or readers of Jesus' teaching on the bread of life during their feast, Passover. Jesus presented himself as the true bread from heaven, replacing the former bread from heaven in the wilderness, the manna of the Law. Jesus transcended the Jewish Passover. Recipients who took the bread and experienced the feeding sign in the mountain during the day at Passover had to accept the revelation of God in Jesus that will take place in the broken flesh and spilled blood. The body and the blood is a never - failing nourishment that the Son of Man will give. The bread is living bread from heaven because Christ is life itself. The one who eats the heavenly bread receives eternal life now. Their lack of faith and misunderstanding of Jesus' identity and teaching could not transcend their Jewish tradition. Rather they wanted to reinforce their tradition against Jesus' hard, offensive teaching. People were enclosed in their social - cultural traditions of their rigid Mosaic system. How could they see beyond their cultural - social boundary during their traditional Passover. As Jesus' unfinished question, "What then if you see the son of humanity going up where he was before (6:62)?" The answer is also our response. How would you satisfy your doubt and misunderstanding? It is a highly rhetorical question. The answer at stake is already presented in 3:13: "No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven - - the Son of Man." Again, Jesus' unfinished question, "Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, Do you want the Son of Man to be lifted up?" The rhetorical question is very significant in recognition of the limit of the people' s social - cultural boundary. Jesus transcends the cosmological and ontological space. Jesus supersedes the time, boundary, and space of the Mosaic system.

VII. Jesus' Faith Community and Korean Community

At this point, how can we relate Jesus' faith community to Korean community in particular? How can the people transcend a cultural-social boundary? Generally the world can be just, so that one's fate is responsible for his actions or choices (see John 5:14). God's ideological point of view is reliable and authentic. Personal's choice and actions are determined by God's ideological or evaluative system, so accepting or rejecting God's prophet

or agent is a matter of life and death.⁷⁶ Socially Jesus stands within traditional Judaism, accepting the God of Israel and the Scriptures. Yet politically he stands outside of mainstream power and legitimation, claiming to be God's divine ambassador as a reforming reader of the covenant people.⁷⁷

The narrative in John 6 is developed into a formal posture of withdrawal from and revolt against the structures and symbols of all Jewish rituals and systems. In other words, the reform is recalled by revolt against the world and all that is from below, whatever that entails. The saying of Jesus becomes the dominant slogan: "The Spirit gives life; the flesh is of no avail" (6:63). In terms of this slogan, Jesus no longer takes a journey of replacing of temple, feast, and cult but the heavenly figure who is equal to God but not of this world. This would imply a focus no longer turned outward toward group boundaries, precise criteria for membership, and mission. The anti-Jewish custom or anti-rituals characterizes the new social community which is summed up in Jesus' above statement (6:63). Jesus' community embraces the new social community with the inclusive ideology.

The struggle for power is undoubtedly between local groups among the disciples of Jesus. They both have an ideological standard to justify their truth and claim allegiance to the same cultural and historical subjects. And thus their ideology can reflect a part of the whole truth. Before God, then, Jew and Christian both deal with power relation and expansion. The problem is not absolutely ideology but exclusive ideology. Christ is the essence of truth. His claims are truth. However, the exclusiveness is often only one way of thinking. The exclusive ideology, 'an either-or approach,' identify truth by excluding others, but the inclusive ideology, 'both-and perspective', explains it by including them. Lee in his book, *Korean Preaching*, argues that, "Either-or-thinking is closely akin to the Western way of thinking is a holistic approach and very natural to Korean indigenous thinking, which is different from the traditional 'either-or' thinking in the West. The Korean people have long used the both-and way of thinking symbolized in yin and yang, the symbols of Tae-guk, the emblem of the national flag. It is therefore, natural for the Korean people to change from an exclusive to an inclusive way of thinking about God."⁷⁸ Ideology is needed to be ritually lived out, or ritually productive. The ideological conflict which recurs throughout John's gospel, representing two opposing polarities, needs to face with its sharp opposition through the holistic and inclusive way of thinking by prosing an alternative, coexistent community without sacrificing the ultimate commitment to Christ as truth.

VIII. Epilogue

For coexistent and spiritual community, ironically, Jesus demolished the boundary of doubt, misunderstanding, and disbelief by lifting himself up. Jesus' broken body and spilled blood is the true bread coming down from heaven. He will be lifted up for us. Then Jesus will draw all people to himself (12:32). How can we experience the crucified Jesus? Again, 'to eat' is 'to believe.' By

⁷⁶ Neyrey, 130.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Jung Young Lee, *Korean Preaching: An Interpretation* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1997), 131.

faith we experience Jesus. As Peter enters the new holy realm of God by a confession of faith, we experience eternal life from God. More than a confession of faith is needed for us. There are many people in John's story who search for signs and shadows to believe in Jesus, and yet they may not experience eternal life. They did not go further to express a commitment to Jesus through a positive encounter with Jesus.⁷⁹

Paradoxically, we are situated in the more limited space of the church as the disciples were in the boat. As on that evening of the miracle of the bread, the disciples were going by sea to Capernaum. The tension and the fragility of belief and disbelief are going together. Our journey is not finished. How can they survive during a severe difficulty coming to them? How about your journey of faith for a transformed alternative, coexistent community?

<Abstract>

How can John's gospel deal with ideological issues on the replacement claims as an ideological conflict between Jesus and the Mosaic system? The crucial mission of Jesus is that Jesus fulfils and transcends the Jewish Passover by replacing all Jewish rituals and systems. The mission creates an ideological conflict as the supercession of Jewish feast. Ideology is not as epistemologically negative, but as socially relative. Ideology is just a set of opinions, beliefs, or attitudes that are different in different societies. Ideology as a "world view" of different people is neutral. The article investigates the ideological issues on the replacement or the supercession of Jewish systems through a critical narrative criticism of John 6.

The article shows that the anti-Jewish custom characterizes the alternative community which is summed up in Jesus' statement in 6:63. Jesus is no longer the replacement of the Passover, and ritual cult but the heavenly figure who is equal to God but not of this world. Jesus' alternative community eventually brings the transformation from an exclusive to an inclusive way of understanding God. The inclusive ideology, 'both-and perspective' is a holistic approach by suggesting an alternative, coexistent community not in the expense of the ultimate commitment to Christ as truth. John 6 is a helpful and legitimate narrative of transformation for the truth of God as a source of belief. The article explores the possibility of Korean community as coexistent and spiritual through the holistic and inclusive way of thinking against the absolute exclusive ideology.

Key Words:

Narrative Analysis, Ideology, John's Gospel, Faith, Inclusive and Exclusive Community, Korean Community

⁷⁹ David Rhoads, *The Challenge of Diversity* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), 129.

