

TO: My student and my sister

FR: Teacher for online course Bible 101

SU: Final Exam paper *"Who's the guy on the left? – 'And it was night'"*

DA: September 14, 2017

Greetings!

As you two are the only ones so far to turn in an answer to the final exam question I would like to share a Johannine moment with you noting it came to me early this morning – the same week you both listed who you thought the "Beloved Disciple" or "the one who Jesus loved" was. You both picked someone different and you both get an A!

For 17 pages we went through scripture, paintings, poetry, and pain trying to determine who the person was next to Jesus; better who "was reclining on the bosom of Jesus." Of course, I was leading you down a path with the idea that this beardless young person could be a woman and hinted real early it was none other than Mary Magdalene...dang, if we just had a selfie!

So, from Leonardo, to Perugino, to Giampietrino, to de Boulogne, and to the cave by Dagnan-Bouveret we beat it from Cana to Magdala trying to determine who sat where and next to whom. I hope you all enjoyed the trek as much as I did because we all agree there is no way to prove any of this. We can just say what some of the possibilities are of who it could be.

I picked Mary Magdalene to help get us get out of the first century. To help us out of "what the Bible says" and *"it was not until this morning that it came to me"* to tell you both who that person is. Therefore the question is not what the Bible says but what it means. Kinda like the book of John. Kinda like reading the Fourth Gospel again and again and putting yourself into the stories. You should do that. Read about the woman at the well and be there. Read about being at the foot of the cross and be there. Read about the garden on Easter morning and be there...this is what John is telling us.

My moment came while reading Kysar – the Maverick book about John in Jaime's class – thinking about a blessing of Kazantzakis, and remembering the three letters SFT from "Seven Days in Utopia." Let me tell you I was swimming deep with the elephants when this came to me – my Johannine moment – and with tears in my eyes I share it now.

See His face	4:26	<i>"It is I."</i>
Feel his presence	19:27	<i>"Here is your mother."</i>
Trust his love	20:16	<i>"Rabbouni!"</i>

When you read and you can see Him at the well, and feel him calling out to you at the cross, and know who he is when He calls your name, you will have the blessing.

No, it was not Mary Magdalene. It was you. He called **you** by name.

Arise, and let us go hence!