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In dealing with a problem of this nature, a variety of methods present themselves, but in any of them it is difficult to eliminate the personal equation. It is my intention to treat of it from the standpoint from which I view it, to examine the evidence not so much as to the amount, but as to its character.
Historical evidence: The apostle John's relation to Jewish Christianity was not such that it is impossible to suppose that he wrote the fourth Gospel, even at a late date. But the basal position of the Tubingen school is that John wrote the Apocalypse, the most Jewish book of the New Testament, so could not have written the fourth Gospel, so anti-Judaic in its teaching. This however is a very extreme view, as appears on its face, and finds its basis not so much in the Gospel itself, but rather in the false interpretation . Again it is asserted that the Acts and Galations stand in opposition to the theological tenets of John, but so far as we ksow, there is nothing which would have prevented John from writing such a book twenty years after the destruction of Jerusalem. Neither is there any weight to be attached to the argument against the Johannine authorship on the basis of its supposed entangled history. We must admit that in its general outline, it coincides with the history of the Synoptic Gospels.

As to the date assigned the Gospel by Baur and Schwegler, A.D. 160-170, there is no ground upon which the supposition can rest, as will be later pointed out. Zeller reverts back to A.D.150, as the most probable date, while Hilgenfeld prefers the dates A.D 130-140, and willingly admits the use of the Fourth Gospel by Justin Martyr. Renan assumes the Gospel to have been written between 125 and 130. Even so conservative a critic as Keim states in one work that there is every reason to believe that the Gospel may have been written between 100 and 117. But later discovering the inevitable and fatal result of such a position, when one attempts to maintain the Gospel as written by another, soon reverted to 130. In direct proof against this position, tradition has it that John lived to a very old age, spending the latter portion of his life in Asia Minor, dying about the year 100. The question, then, immediately follows, how could a spurious Gospel, so

unique in character, so different from the other Gospels, secure such general recognition? Or how can we suppose that it originated twentyfive or even fifty years after John's death, when so many were still living, who must have known John personally, and been familiar with what he wrote?

External evidence: Among the strongest attestations of the genuineness of the fourth Gospel, is the general reception accorded it by the Christians in the latter portion of the second century. The four Gospels with no other additions, were accepted by the great majority of Christians as genuine. In support of this, we find the writings of Irenaeus giving testimony on this very point. Inasmuch as he was born between the years 125-130, and spent his youth in Asia Minor, later becoming Bishop of Lyons, his testimony is not without effect. Clement of the school of Alexandria, also bears similar witness, and recognizes the four Gospels as having existed in the first quarter of the second century. His testimony at least overthrows the contention that the fourth Gospel did not appear until the latter portion of the second century, for he lived about the year 190, travelling constantly in the search of religious information. Again we have the evidence of Tertullian, of northern Africa, who had attained the summit of his power during the latter portion of the same century. In addition to this, the four Gospels were found in the ancient Syriac version of the New Testament, which made its appearance in the second century, which omits the second and third epistles of John, as well as the Apocalypse, for the authorship of the latter was disputed in the early church. Agreeing with this, they were found in the old Latin version, which appeared in northern Africa, during the second century. It is attested to, by the Muratonian canon, written c170 A.D. and is the oldest list of canonical books which has been handed down to us.

The worth of the argument based on the general acceptation, appears in that they must have existed long before this, in order to gain such universal recognition. The whole body of Christians seemed united upon this, and especially the authorship of the fourth Gospel, holding tenaciously to their position enduring the scorn of their fellows, their hatred, and even suffering martyrdom. The argument on the basis of the great difference between

the fourth Gospel and the other three, is rather in support of the Johannine authorship, than opposed to it, for the differences would be but the greater and make its general acceptance the more difficult, unless we accept the position that from the first, it was handed down as genuine..

The "Supernatural Religion" takes the basis that in the first half of the second century, a large number of spurios gospels and religious writings appeared, with the names of certain of the apostles and various others attached, and that thus there is room for the belief that the fourth Gospel was but one of these. In the second place it claims that we have a right to expect great accuracy in the quotations from the Gospel by the Christian Fathers. But it is a fact beyond all dispute that the Fathers quoted without any hesitation in inserting or extracting whatever they desired, and this is to be explained on the basis that they quoted from memory. As to the first assertion of "Supernatural Religion", it is of great significance that all the spurious writings were eliminated while the four Gospels were retained. The only exception is the gospel to the Hebrews, which appeared in the time of Justin Martyr. There is also some objection because of the loose way in which the term "gospel" was used and that the term may have included others than the four Gospels. But these other writings made no pretension or any claim upon its readers, as did the four gospels. It is mainly, then, on the failure of exact quotations that the author of "Supernatural Religion" asserts that the book must have been written 150 years after Christ's death. He states further that it makes no difference if there be some accurate quotations of Christ's words, these came from the other Gospels. The question then arises if the four Gospels were universally received toward the close of the second century, can we not discover some trace of their previous existence? S.R. asserts there is no need of inquiring into this, whatever, this because it is contrary to the position of the author. Certainly there is some weight to be attached to the argument that the Christians over the whole world, of many different tongues tnd nationalities, should accept the four as genuine, use them at appointed times in their churches, and accept them as the Divine Word. To be sure there was some denial of the Gospel of John, in the latter portion

of the second century by some separate and obscure individuals, who afterwards were classified as Alogi. Their difficulty was a doctrinal one, ~~and~~ They also denied the Johannine authorship of the Apocalypse, and they assigned both to Cerinthus, which is evidence enough that they were prejudiced, and by no means critical, for he was a heretic. But even then, they admitted it as a work of the first century, Cerinthus being cotemporary with John. Thus we are led to admit the general acceptation of the Gospel as genuine in the latter part of the second century, almost without exception.

Ezra Abbot makes the inclusion of the fourth Gospel in the Apostolical "memoirs of Christ", appealed to by Justin Martyr, an argument of no small moment. The writings of Justin Martyr, consisted of two apologies, the first written c146 though some give the date, 138, while the other, a dialogue with Trypho, the Jew, was written somewhat later. In these, he quotes as the authority for his Christian teaching, the "Memorabilia" of Christ, and commonly speaks of them as memoirs by the apostles. In the first Apology, he gives evidence of the general use in Sabbath worship, of the writings of the prophets and these memoirs, showing the equal recognition of the latter with the former, and that both were used as a basis for religious instruction and teaching. With Origen, Clement, Irenaeous, et al, he has Trypho speak of the Gospel, meaning the particular four. S.R. takes exception to this, and asserts that it was a work by all the apostles, but this is superb nonsense, and absurd. The History of Christ, given by Justin, is too similar and too closely corresponds to the four Gospels, to admit of his use of any other work. The few discrepencies furnish no proof that the Gospels were not his main authority. Again there is substantial correspondence between the teaching of Christ, as given in the fourth Gospel, and that of Justin. Even Hilgenfeld and Keim admit that Justin used all our Gospels. As to the want of verbal correspondence in his use, it is to be noted that in all such cases, the meaning is essentially the same. Justin nowhere quotes the memoirs not substantially found in the four Gospels. Dr.Norton, claims that the manner of Justin evidences the indisputable character and authority of the books to which he appeals. The four Gospels were relied upon as primary and decisive evidence, and held as sacred books. The testimony of Irenaeus accords with this:"The four

Gospels, are four pillars of the church, the foundation of the Christian faith." Other books or writings of spurious origin, read in the churches, never received the same recognition or attained the standard as did Justin's memoirs. The books named in S.R. have no basis for ever supposing that they were given rank in the Christian church. They were simply read as letters for edification, or for admonition.

As to the use of John by Justin, there is no doubt that the apparent use is real. The memoirs used by him were sometimes called gospels by him, and the four he on occasion termed the Gospel, speaking of it as "composed by apostles of Christ, and their companions", and they were truly our four Gospels, writtenby two apostles, and two of their companions.

The brief mention of certain doctrinal teachings by Justin, which accord with those of John, furnishes reason for the belief that the former received his inspiration from the fourth Gospel while the more extended doctrine of the logos, though Alexandrian in type, can only be accounted for on the basis of the recapitulation of John's position, for Justin accepted the doctrine of the incarnation of the logos. One single expression stands in proof of this same point, "the only begotten son of God" is undoubtedly a quotation from John, as it is used by him alone. This is sufficient confirmation for us to believe that the four Gospels were the memoirs, used and mentioned by Justin.

One of the striking proofs of the genuineness of the Gospel in question, and John as its author is the fact that those diametrically opposed to the Christians and their teaching, accepted them as did the orthodox Christians. They were used by the Gnostics especially the fourth Gospel, which is strong and decisive evidence in favor of it. However, in order to make use of it, they were compelled to pervert its meaning, as it is thoroughly opposed to Gnosticism. Suppose it were spurious, and to have appeared about the middle of the second century, a book which the Gnostics flourishing ten to thirty years before never heard of, makes it impossible to believe, (since the Christians considered it their best weapon) that the Gnostic followers would have accepted it, and this without question or discussion. Suppose on the other hand that the Gnostics could pervert it so as to use it in support

of their position, how can we explain the ready acceptation of the fourth Gospel, with the later Christians who stood in bitter antagonism against Gnosticism? Both received it then, by 120-130A.D. It follows that the Gnostics were forced to receive it as genuine, otherwise they would have attempted to overthrow its authority, and would gladly destroy the work, if possible. Then too, Ephesus was a large and important city. Many hundreds were living who had known the apostle, and the fact of the acceptance of the Gospel at so early a date stands in proof of its genuineness, when we consider that both parties were ~~both~~ at variance with each other.

Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons, 140-202, in a letter to Florrinus, preserved by Eusebius, showed the four Gospels with the Old Testament, to have been regarded as the 'scriptures'. Further he refers to the four Gospels by name, specifying the author of each; makes frequent reference to John, by name, and at least gives 100 citations from the Gospel of John. The relation between Irenaeus and Polycarp, a disciple of the apostle John, should be taken account of. In this same letter to Florrinus, he accurately describes Polycarp, his bearing and personal appearance, and it is passing strange if the beloved teacher of Polycarp did not write the Gospel from which Irenaeus so often quoted. Otherwise Irenaeus would have learned the exact status from Polycarp. As an argument for the early existence of the fourth Gospel, we find the testimony of Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, who carries the evidence back to the life of John. In the same letter referred to above by Irenaeus, this point is evident: "The miracles and doctrine of the Lord were told by Polycarp in consistency with the Holy Scriptures, as he received them from the eye-witnesses of salvation." Polycarp was martyred in Rome, according to Waddington and Lightfoot the year 155A.D. at which time he exclaimed," "eighty and six years have I served Christ" This would make him thirty years of age before the death of John. Inexplicable is it then if Irenaeus, at the time of his sturdy manhood, failed to ascertain from Polycarp whether it was John himself, who had written the fourth Gospel, or some one else.

We find that the enemies of Christianity were familiar with the fourth Gospel: Celsus, who lived c178, Montanus, 148-180, Valentinus, 135-160, Basilides 117-138, all showed their familiarity with

the Gospel. Thus Keim was forced to admit that the evidence for the authorship of the Johannine authorship was as strong as for any other of the Gospels.

The attestation at the close of the Gospel was of early date, being found in all the copies, which we have received. In the closing words, then, we have a real or forged testimony concerning the truth and genuineness of the Gospel. If we suppose it written by an anonymous forger, he could have hoped to gain nothing by such a verification as this. A forger would have given the name of his pretended authority, and would have represented his attestation as formally given. Thus it is clear that the author of it was known to those who first received a copy of the Gospel. Norton claims that it may not have appeared until after John's death, being written at Ephesus , as supposed, where John was in charge of the church, it was read to the church only. After his death, the church sent it to the other churches, with the above addition or that of its elders.

The difficulty with Tayler, who reproduces the argument of Baur, assigning the work to c150, is that he makes John the Presbyter the author. But this according to Papias, who had conversed with John the Presbyter, and knew him to be a personal disciple of our Lord, makes it impossible that he should outlive John the apostle, and could not have lived toward the middle of the second century. Harnack meets with the same difficulty as he brings Presbyter John to the front, as the author. There are no proofs for this whatever. Early tradition is distinctly opposed to such a position, and there is no evidence that John the P. ever wrote a word. Papias cited in Eusebius the fact of his mere existence, but on this point there is some dispute. However he spoke of him as living at that time, while Harnack concludes that Papias wrote between the years 145-160. Thus John the P. lived at Ephesus at the time of Irenaeus and Polycrates, and we must suppose that they were dull enough to confuse John the P. with John the apostle, who died forty-five to fifty years before.

Internal Evidence: It is difficult to see why, when the early church so universally accepted John as the author of the fourth Gospel, that there should be in the last century more discussion than at any previous time. In fact, there was little controversy

until the last century. If John wrote the book, Peabody declares it passed immediately into circulation after his death. It is of no small importance that John's name does not appear in the Gospel. No one, save John would have omitted it. If the Gospel were written by another in all sincerity, he who cites more names than the Synoptists, would certainly have given the name of the disciple whom Jesus loved, while if it were fraudulent, the name and first person would have had frequent use, to do away with any suspicion that might arise.

We seek then, to make sure that the fourth Gospel was written by a native of Judea, a Hebrew, then out of Palestine, by a resident at Ephesus, about the close of the first Christian century, by one familiar with the events and their location of which he wrote, and when he was advanced in years. (a) The minuteness of local details: The intricate description is only possible to one with personal knowledge of the places, customs, and religious observances of the Jews. Explanations surrounding the event at the pool of Bethesda, the passover and the feast of the Jews, and the Jews feast of Tabernacles. The mention of distances, as Bethany, fifteen furlongs from Jerusalem, Special interpretation of words, with which the Jewish mind only would be familiar, employed in other portions of the New Testament without being interpreted, as Messiah, Cephas, Rabboni, Siloam. It was thus written among the Gentiles because this translation and use of the term Jews, the name which the Gentiles applied to the Hebrews. The language is not that of a Greek, but one a long time accustomed to think and speak in another tongue though proficient in the Greek. There is the Hebrew simplicity of style, all of which point to a Jewish author.

It seems to have been written at Ephesus, because of the frequent references to Gnosticism of the type which Cerinthus produced. Irenaeus states that in the Gospel there were special references to the heresies of Cerinthus, a Jew of Alexandria, who was opposed to Philo's teaching of the logos, and angelology. Early in the second century, the ideas of Gnosticism were far more advanced and more radical than in John's day, or those of Cerinthus; the author would thus not have omitted treating greater fallacies had they been in existence when he wrote. The quotations from the Old Testament also stand in proof of the Jewish authorship, as the translations

accord with the original Hebrew, rather than with any of the other versions.

The capacity of ~~the~~ authorship in the early Christian church was undoubtedly very limited, and we would have to go to the fourth century , to the time of Crysostom, and Augustine, to find one capable of writing a Gospel like John's. All of the writings of the Fathers were pietistic but were not of the deep philosophic type of John. Had one been able of doing so, at the end of the first or second century, his name would never have been lost, and such an one would never have cared to conceal his name. The objection that it is just as impossible to suppose that John wrote the Gospel, seeing that his father was a fisherman, is of no importance. There is no telling what development there may have been in John, from the year 30-90. Then, too, his father owned his fishing vessel and hired his crew. How much this meant in Gililee, we cannot say, but in New England, it meant a ~~division~~ distinction of rank. The mother evidently reserved to herself a certain position when she made demands upon Christ for her sons. The same fact is borne out by John's being able to take Peter into the palace, showing his acquaintance with the ~~the~~ high priest, which is evidence that he had higher social position than the other disciples. Thus it is not improbable that he had better opportunities for education than we generally allow. There is no explanation for genius and if we overthrew the authorship of John because of his antecedents, we must throw out as spurious many of our most classical writings. On the same theory, Bunyon never wrote Pilgrim's Progress nor Shakespeare his plays.

As to his old age, there are many evidences. There is something marvellous in an old man's memory; sights and scenes are brought to light, supposedly vanished forever, and these recurring with minute detail. We find numerous traces of such an old man's memory in the fourth Gospel. In the first chapter, he gives a series of interviews. The account of the marriage at Cana shows the same minuteness as is evidenced in the interviews. in treating of the customs, the number and use of the jars, their probable capacity, etc. The story of the man born blind, the raising of Lazarus, has the mark of one who was an eye and

ear witness.

The minor circumstances recorded in the fourth Gospel point to the author as one conversant with the scenes and events given. Though there is much discourse there is very much more detail, far more than in the Synoptics. He gives many minor attendant circumstances not necessary to the story of Christ's life, but adding very much interest. The oral Gospel from which the Synoptists drew, was very limited, as one drew from the other, all more or less comparing. There is no such limitation in the fourth Gospel. His scope was entirely outside of theirs, and to the objection that the description and detail is in excess of the other Gospels, that thus John could not have written it, writing at so much later date, it is nearer the truth that John with his greater capacity, his philosophic insight, his peculiar nearness to Christ, had more ample means of doing this and was better fitted to accurately record the deeper sayings of his Master. Another reason for the difference in the discourse, contents and style, elaborate composition, is that John was addressing a different type, from those found at Jerusalem. Christ had used keen intellect and skilled subtlety by the aid of logic in answering the more learned of his questioners, answers which some of his disciples may not have understood and thus not have remembered, while John having the greater intellect and spiritual receptivity, could the more accurately give in detail what was said, and use the same arguments in dealing with the people of his day. As a sole companion and closest friend of Christ, he was undoubtedly given opportunities that the other disciples never had, and these private conversations secured enduring lodgement in John's memory. We must be willing to admit that John may have acted the part of an editor, and that his discourses took the form in which he had been accustomed to give them to his church. He took the sayings of Christ and made them over into discourses of his own.

Then how shall we explain the silence of the fourth Gospel on the Episcopate if a product of the latter part of the second century, while it strenuously attacked current heresy? It certainly would not have left untouched a problem which was so agitating the minds of that day. In this relation the controversy as to the time of celebrating Easter, so thoroughly discussed in the

middle of the second century, finally settled in the fourth century, would have been dec ded by a forger of an entire Gospel, who would not have hesitated to set the matter at rest by a few strokes of his pen. Thus might we treat all the controversies of the second century, and observe how the author totally ignores them.

Thus we conclude that the fourth Gospel is the work of a remarkably gifted man, a Palestinian Jew, living at Ephesus, and at the close of the first Christian century, an eyewitness to that of which he wrote. It stands free from the other Gospels and possesses throughout a very unique character. The only question which really confronts us is whether the Gospel is an outline of the life of Christ, or the eloquent setting of the ideals which he presented. Have we an accurate report of the thoughts the impressions, of an intimate friend, of one whom he termed the eternal Word of God, or must we believe that it is the speculation of one who created his material, feigned the authorship, and invented the basis of his theology? The latter position we have seen to be untenable. Those who strenuously deny its historicity and repudiate its apostolic character, are ready to admit with Baur, Schenkel, Thoma, that the highest the truest revelation of the Son of Man and interpretation of the will of God are to be found in this record. Much which it contains has found substantial proof, and sufficient evidence in the later Christian mind, and has definitely enriched man's religious thought. A philosophy of the stamp of the fourth Gospel, dealing with the relation between man and his creator, that the Divine and human have not fixed between them an impassible gulf, goes to demonstrate the late origin of the fourth Gospel. The genuine correspondence of the teachings of the fourth Gospel and those of the Synoptics, and with the writings of Paul, affords a complete harmony, and from its early acceptance as the work of John, in Antioch, Lyons, Alexandria, Ephesus, and Rome, we are led to conclude that, while the Johannine authorship of the fourth Gospel is not indisputable, yet undoubted authority so stands in its favor, that we would commit a great affront to reason by so doing.