

## **Chiasmus in the Gospel of John**

In recent years, scholars have rediscovered the importance of a “chiastic” analysis of biblical and other literature. P.F. Ellis and J. Gerhard have shown that the entire Gospel of John is structured according to an A:B:C:B’:A’ chiasm or pattern of concentric parallelism. The conceptual center or focus of the Gospel is chapter 6, which comprises a triptych, whose central panel is 6:16-21, the Walking on the Water that constitutes a New Exodus. Chiastic analysis of biblical texts serves multiple purposes. In the case of the Fourth Gospel, it demonstrates the integrity of the received text (over against various theories of displacement and interpolation); it explains certain “aporeiai” that have long troubled scholars; and it enables the reader to discern the “literal sense” of the Gospel, the meaning intended by the biblical author, in this case, eucharistic participation in Jesus’ flesh and blood as a means to eternal life.