

I say, Rejoice. 1 THESSALONIANS 5:16 Rejoice evermore. 1 THESSALONIANS 5:18 In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

Paul and Barnabas return to Antioch, Syria

Having gone aside from our lesson in the above section we now perhaps have a better understanding of what it means to go on with the Lord, and so we find it no surprise that Paul and Barnabas turned around after visiting Derbe, and returned unto the very places that they had faced such persecution. ACTS 14:21 *And when they had preached the gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and Antioch, 22 Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.* Note that their teaching to the saints was in agreement with the last few pages of these notes: *...to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.* Note also, though unstated here, their tremendous love for the saints. Several times in later epistles the Apostle Paul makes reference as to his deep concern for the saints, including those whom he has seen, and those whom he hasn't seen. Note Paul's heart felt attitude toward the saints in these following statements from his epistles. 1 THESSALONIANS 2:8 *So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us.* 1 THESSALONIANS 2:17 *But we, brethren, being taken from you for a short time in presence, not in heart, endeavoured the more abundantly to see your face with great desire.* Certainly that was Paul's desire also here in ACTS 14:21 & 22, to see again the faces of the believers in Lystra and Iconium, and Antioch in Pisidia. Again in ROMANS 1:11 Paul expresses his concern for the saints, stating: *For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established;...* ROMANS 15:24 *Whensoever I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you: for I trust to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, if first I be somewhat filled with your company.* PHILIPPIANS 1:8 *For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ.* These are just a few of the many references Paul has in his epistles as to his deep love and concern for the saints. It was because of their love of Jesus, and their wanting these new Christians to be established in the truth that Paul and Barnabas returned unto these cities where they had faced such persecution before.

However on their return, their mission was a little different, for they didn't go unto the synagogues, but rather unto the disciples, the new born Christians of these different cities. Seeing again these saints no doubt brought great joy and rejoicing into the hearts of Paul and Barnabas, not to mention the great emotion that must have been felt by the saints of these cities. ACTS 14:22 states, in part, the reason that they returned to these cities: *Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith,...* The Greek word translated "confirming" here is 1991 in the Strong's Concordance is a verb, and is only used by Luke (4 times) all in the book of ACTS. (There is one other word in the New Testament translated into our English "confirming," but it is a different word, a noun, found in MARK 16:20, and it's usage there is different from our text in that it validates the authority that the Lord had given unto the kingdom apostles. MARK 16:20 reads: *And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.*) The word "confirming" used here in ACTS 14:22 is a verb meaning -- to establish besides; to make to lean upon; to strengthen as in to strengthen upon by use of a prop or support, the result being to strengthen more; to render more firm; to confirm. Luke also uses this same word in the following scriptures: ACTS 15:32 *And Judas and Silas, being prophets also themselves, exhorted the brethren with many words, and confirmed <1991> them.* ACTS 15:41 *And he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming <1991> the churches.* ACTS 18:23 *And after he had spent some time there, he departed, and went over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening <1991> all the disciples.* The thought of "confirming" here then is to give additional spiritual strength to the saints, the disciples of these cities, and this additional spiritual strength came by Paul and Barnabas in the form of additional instruction in the truth and faith of the gospel. Keep in mind

that when Paul and Barnabas first left these cities under persecution, those new born saints in order to grow needed proper instruction in the gospel. The Holy Ghost was imperative in their lives and in their assemblies, for He is the agency of the trinity left to them (and to us) for the purpose of teaching them (us) all things pertaining to a spiritual nature; to guide them (us) into all the truth, and to shew the truth to them (us). {See JOHN 14:26 and 16:13-15}. Paul and Barnabas were inspired tools of God with the power of the Holy Ghost resting upon their lives to encourage and instruct these young saints in the proper direction that their lives must take in order to continue in the new found faith that they had.

The second part of this strengthening process that Paul and Barnabas brought to these new born saints is found in this statement of our text of ACTS 14:22 *...exhorting them to continue in the faith,...*. The word "exhorting" is a verb used 109 times in New Testament scripture, and translates into our English beseech, besought, comfort, exhort, desire, pray, and intreat. In our text of ACTS 14:22 "exhorting" means to urge one to pursue some course of conduct with the prospect of always looking to the future. Barnabas was good at "exhorting" as is noted of him in ACTS 11:23 & 24: *Who, when he (Barnabas) came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord. 24 For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord.* Recall in ACTS 4:36 that Barnabas was called "*The son of consolation,*" meaning (in part) the son of exhortation. {See 3874 in the Greek in the Strong's Concordance}. So Barnabas was good at encouraging saints *...with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord.* Note in 1 THESSALONIANS 4 how the Apostle Paul "exhorts" in this next statement. 1 THESSALONIANS 4:14 *For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. 15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent (precede) them which are asleep. 16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: 17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. 18 Wherefore comfort (exhort) one another with these words.* So then these were the kinds of "exhorting" forward and upward looking words Paul and Barnabas would use in the encouragement of these new saints. Note also in our text of ACTS 14:22 *...exhorting them to continue in the faith,...* the phrase "to continue in the faith." The word "continue" means to remain in; to hold fast, to be true to, abide by, keep. This same thought of continuing is found in the following verses: 1 CORINTHIANS 15:1 *Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; 2 By which also ye are saved, if ye keep {hold fast, "continue"} in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. 1 THESSALONIANS 5:21 Prove all things; hold fast {"continue"} that which is good. 2 TIMOTHY 1:13 Hold fast {"continue"} the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.* (These words written unto Timothy may have first been heard by him in the time frame of ACTS 14:20-23.) HEBREWS 10:23 *Let us hold fast {"continue"} the profession of our faith without wavering;...* And what were these new saints encouraged to "continue in?" They were being encouraged to *...continue in the faith,...*. Paul in his own words encouraged those at Colosse to *...continue in the faith,...* in this statement found in COLOSSIANS 1:23 *...continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;...*. COLOSSIANS 2 goes on to show how Paul encouraged saints. COLOSSIANS 2:4 *And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words. 5 For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the stedfastness of your faith in Christ. 6 As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: 7 Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. 8 Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.*

ACTS 14:23 *And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed. If we*

could come up with one word that would describe what is being defined in verse 23, it would be the word "helpers." Every assembly, every teacher, every pastor, every evangelist, every prophet, every apostle, they all needed "helpers." Even Jesus had His twelve disciples who were supposed to be His "helpers," and they were truly His "helpers" after reaching the point in time when the power of the Holy Ghost came upon them. As we examine the thought of "helpers" note the qualities of the full overcomer.

The word "helpers" is found seven times in scripture. Seven we know is the number having to do with SPIRITUAL PERFECTION, or SPIRITUAL COMPLETION. So we see that the word "helpers" points us towards those interested in having God's best in their lives, that is it points us towards those interested in SPIRITUAL PERFECTION, or SPIRITUAL COMPLETION. In the Old Testament "helpers" is defined as to help, to succour, to support. In the New Testament the word "helpers" is further refined to mean a companion in work, a fellow worker, a fellowlabourer, a helper, a fellowhelper, fellowworkers, a workfellow, a labourer together with, and a companion in labour. We first find mention of the word "helpers" in 1 CHRONICLES 12:1, which reads: *Now these are they that came to David to Ziklag, while he yet kept himself close because of Saul the son of Kish: and they were among the mighty men, helpers of the war.* David's mighty men are listed for us in 2 SAMUEL 23, and 1 CHRONICLES 11. David's mighty men are famous for their faithfulness to David before he was king, and they went with him into battle where ever he went, and decided that their destinies were with him. David's mighty men are typical of the followers of Jesus Christ today. There are those who follow Jesus' leading no matter where it leads them. Like David's mighty men they are willing to suffer reproach with Him, because they know who He is, even though He has not yet taken His throne. David's might men came to him while David was in exile. This event is recorded for us in 1 SAMUEL 22: 1 & 2. 1 SAMUEL 22:1 *David therefore departed thence, and escaped to the cave Adullam: and when his brethren and all his father's house heard it, they went down thither to him. 2 And every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him; and he became a captain over them: and there were with him about four hundred men.* Brother Copley and Sister Bodie call this group the "D. D.'s" -- "the Distressed, those in Debt, the Discontented, -- and none of them appear to have anything to lose. They had no honor, nor prestige, nor reknown to give up, and yet their following David unto exile is counted as sacrifice and is greatly rewarded." These mighty men essentially ruled and reigned with David as noted in this statement from 1 CHRONICLES 11:10 *....the mighty men whom David had,... ..strengthened themselves with him in his kingdom,... ..to make him king, according to the word of the LORD concerning Israel.* Brother Copley and Sister Bodie go on to note that "Jesus has some followers, even today, who recognize the fact that He will reign. They have purposed to follow Him, no matter where it leads them. They have chosen to suffer reproach with Him, because they know who He is. Their eyes have been enlightened, and they want nothing else but to be close to their Captain. Jesus seems to attract the same kind of people that David did. We are His "D. D.'s." (End of quote from Brother Copley and Sister Bodie). Note in 1 CHRONICLES 12:1 that these "helpers" were ... *helpers of the war...* a quality or trait of a full overcomer, for these are the ones who have actively put on the whole armour of God as described for us in EPHESIANS 6:10-18.

The second time we find the word "helpers" in scripture is also in 1 CHRONICLES 12. 1 CHRONICLES 12:16 *And there came of the children of Benjamin and Judah to the hold unto David. 17 And David went out to meet them, and answered and said unto them, If ye be come peaceably unto me to help me, mine heart shall be knit unto you: but if ye be come to betray me to mine enemies, seeing there is no wrong in mine hands, the God of our fathers look thereon, and rebuke it. 18 Then the spirit came upon Amasai, who was chief of the captains, and he said, Thine are we, David, and on thy side, thou son of Jesse: peace, peace be unto thee, and peace be to thine helpers; for thy God helpeth thee. Then David received them, and made them captains of the band.* We see in this scripture the heart felt attitude that a true "helper" must have: "Thine are we King Jesus, and on Thy side are we."

The third and final reference that we will make to the seven times in scripture the word "helpers" is used takes us to ROMANS 16. ROMANS 16:3 *Greet Priscilla and*

Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus: 4 Who have for my life laid down their own necks: unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles. 5 Likewise greet the church that is in their house. Note that Priscilla and Aquila “laid down their own necks” like David’s mighty men did. Obviously Priscilla and Aquila were “mighty men” in their own right, fighting the good fight of faith right along with the Apostle Paul. True race course runners they were with their attitude toward Jesus being: “Thine are we King Jesus, and on Thy side are we.” Even their names point us to qualities that will be found in the Bride of Christ. Priscilla (once called in scripture by the Latin name Prisca in 2 TIMOTHY 4:19), her name means “ancient.” Priscilla points us to the Ancient of days, who in our thinking is God the Son. DANIEL 7:9 *...the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire.* {compare with REVELATION 1:14}. Priscilla in laying down her neck for the Apostle Paul, was in reality laying down her neck for the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, who was the one who was first in her life. And the same can be said for Aquila, Priscilla’s husband, who is always mentioned with her in scripture. Aquila’s name means “an eagle.” The eagle is the king of birds, and portrays in type Christ as the eternal majestic heavenly one. The Bride of Christ too is a heavenly being, with heavenly characteristics, and Ezekiel and John both saw her heavenly face, *...the face of an eagle.* The full overcomer has an upward heavenly look, a look ascending far above the heights of the cares of this world, always looking unto Jesus. Isaiah stated it this way in ISAIAH 40:31 *But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.* So we see that Aquila and Priscilla, Paul’s *...helpers in Christ Jesus...*, point us to qualities that will be found in the Bride of Christ. Further note that Aquila and Priscilla had a church in their house. No doubt this was typical of many places like Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch in Pisidia, where the churches were, at the first, just simple assemblies in the houses of devoted Saints.

One more thought concerning “helpers” takes us back to the story of Adam and Eve in GENESIS 2. GENESIS 2:18 *And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet {“helper”} for him. 19 And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. 20 And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet {“Helper”} for him. 21 And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; 22 And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. 23 And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.* Thank God that we have been taught, and know some typical teaching that has revealed so much to us even in this simple portion of scripture! Adam and his bride Eve are a type of Christ and his Bride. There will be a rib portion company of people (the Bride of Christ) taken out of the body of Christ (the church) which will be “helpers” to their heavenly Bridegroom, Jesus Christ.

ACTS 14:23 *And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed.* Having noted in the above portion that there were “helpers” needed in every church, we find in this text how these “helpers” were obtained. We find this by examining certain words of this verse. The first word of this verse that we will examine is the word “ordained.” More properly the words that we should think of in this particular text instead of “ordained” is the words “appoint, select, or chose.” It was common in the Athenian legislative assembly to cast a vote by the stretching forth of the hands. Perhaps by this method did the Apostles appoint, select, or choose certain persons to a position, or an office. In this verse the office created was that of an “elder.” Obviously in these new found assemblies we can not call the new converts “elders” in the sense that we have come to know them, especially from Old Testament teaching. In the Old Testament an elder was one of the old people from a family having years of experience under his belt. In our text an “elder” is chosen after prayer and fasting to watch over a particular

assembly. Obviously Paul and Barnabas would of had to spend more than a little time at each of these assemblies in order to know who was established enough in the faith to be qualified as an "elder." Just because someone wants to be a helper doesn't necessarily qualify them to be an "elder," though an "elder" would be one of those "helpers" mentioned above. Those qualified as an "elder" would have been the ones who showed the most devotion to the Lord; the ones who had taken in the most, and thus would have had learned the most, and yielded the most unto the teaching of the Holy Ghost as inspired in the teachings of the Apostles Paul and Barnabas. These appointed persons were then to watch over and instruct the rest of these small assemblies, having themselves the most experience in the faith when compared to the others of their particular assembly. In short those found qualified to be an "elder" would have been found to show the greatest devotion to the Lord. In ACTS 17:11 we read of the Berean saints who are famous in scripture for being more noble than those saints in Thessalonica, in that they received the word of God with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily to see for themselves whether or not those things taught by Paul were true or not. It was this kind of zeal that Paul and Barnabas would look for in an "elder." The thing about the Berean saints was that the Apostle Paul was only there a short period of time, maybe as little as six weeks, yet the Bereans were fervently seeking God's best.

Obviously there is a lot that we are not told here in scripture concerning the ordaining of "elders" by Paul and Barnabas, but we do know that this was an important part of this portion of their missionary journey. They had established some churches, and now were placing some order to these new found assemblies. We have other scripture left for us with instructions for the appointment of "elders." In TITUS 1:5-9 we find one such place. TITUS 1:5 *For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee:* {Note that Titus had been "appointed" or "ordained" by Paul as an "elder" himself} 6 *If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly.* 7 *For a bishop* {the superintendent, elder, or overseer of a Christian church, charged with the duty of seeing that things to be done by others are done rightly} *must be blameless, as the steward* {a steward being a manager of the monetary affairs of an assembly} *of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, {bruiser, ready for a blow, contentious, quarrelsome person} not given to filthy lucre; {greedy for money}* 8 *But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate;* 9 *Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.* {Gainsayers are those who speak against or contradict another}. These very same qualifying principles are again mentioned by Paul in his first letter to Timothy. 1 TIMOTHY 3:1 *This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.* 2 *A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;* 3 *Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;* 4 *One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;* 5 *(For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)* 6 *Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.* 7 *Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.* 8 *Likewise must the deacons be grave, not doubletongued, {saying one thing with one person and another thing with another person (with the intent to deceive)} not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre;* 9 *Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.* 10 *And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless.* 11 *Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things.* 12 *Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.* 13 *For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.* Note in the above passage in verse 6 the mention of a novice, which is to say one who has recently become a Christian. Yet in ACTS 14:23 it appears that the "elders" being appointed or ordained are just that, ones who have recently become a Christian. On the surface it also appears that when Paul chose Timothy to go with him in ACTS 16:1-3, that Timothy himself was a novice, yet not long after this Timothy is called

an Apostle. A close examination of ACTS 16:2 tells us that Timothy *...was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium.* Obviously this statement summarizes the qualities of an "elder" mentioned above, that is they must be well reported of by the brethren or disciples.

What then is the difference in qualification between an elder and a novice? The novice doesn't really know anything, and this can be true of someone who has been saved fifty years! Note in the above passages of scripture from TITUS and 1 TIMOTHY that the "elder" or "bishop" must be apt to teach, holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience, and having great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus. In other words these "elder" candidates were not really novices, but had already stepped out in faith taking a hold of the deeper things of God. Their appointment as "elders" came after being raised up and properly qualified by the Holy Spirit. Note also that there were to be more than one "elder" in every church mentioned in the above passages. In ACTS 20 we read again of some "elders" called "overseers," and the instructions that the Apostle Paul left them, which helps us further understand the office of an "elder." ACTS 20:28 *Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. 29 For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. 30 Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. 31 Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. 32 And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified. ...35 I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive. Pay close attention to what is said here in verse 35, *...that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus,...* this in a nutshell is what it means to be an "elder." Notice also here in ACTS 20:32 that Paul "commended" these "overseers," these "elders" unto God, and to the word of His grace. The same thought is expressed concerning the "elders" in our text of ACTS 14:23 where we find Paul and Barnabas after fasting and prayer *...commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed.* This thought of "commending" is committing or entrusting the keeping into the omniscient hands of God. Possibly Paul and Barnabas may have left these churches with words similar to those of Moses found in DEUTERONOMY 31:6 *Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the LORD thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. 7 And Moses called unto Joshua, and said unto him in the sight of all Israel, Be strong and of a good courage: for thou must go with this people unto the land which the LORD hath sworn unto their fathers to give them; and thou shalt cause them to inherit it. 8 And the LORD, he it is that doth go before thee; he will be with thee, he will not fail thee, neither forsake thee: fear not, neither be dismayed.**

This whole process of ordaining elders in every church that Paul and Barnabas had recently established is then covered by the umbrella of the Lord, on whom they believed. While it may seem on the surface that men were left in charge of these churches, the reality was that it was the Lord on whom they believed who was left in charge. Oh that this were true in the majority of the churches today! Today, however it is a fact that men, and ungodly men at that, who are in charge of the churches. We went over this fact somewhat when we did our study on THRONES. In that study we noted this statement from REVELATION 2:13 written unto the church at Pergamos: *I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is...*, which could be read like this: *I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's throne is....* . We pointed out in that study how so many churches today have subtly allowed Satan to be in charge of their assembly, have given him the chief seat or throne behind the pulpit! We further pointed out that Satan is very subtle, and as such is very capable of having his throne subtly disguised where the spiritually unenlightened will not notice, which is right behind the pulpit. We also pointed out in our THRONES study that Satan is well acquainted with the word of God, and even tempted Jesus by quoting scripture! Satan

quoted from PSALMS 91:11 & 12, saying to Jesus in MATTHEW 4:6 and LUKE 4:10 & 11; *If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.* Satan, of course, doesn't rightfully divide the word of truth, but rather sees to it that the word of truth is wrongfully divided, for, after all, that is his job, and he is really good at his job, which is ...to steal, and to kill, and to destroy... {see JOHN 10:10}. Thus the Apostle Paul having his spiritual eyes wide open unto the subtleties of Satan wrote these warning words found in 2 THESSALONIANS 2:1 *Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, 2 That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. 3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; 4 Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. 5 Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?* Again in COLOSSIANS 2:8 the Apostle Paul warns: *Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.* We also noted in our THRONES study that the Apostle Paul also wrote encouraging words to the different churches*commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed*: statements like those found in the following scriptures: 1 CORINTHIANS 11:1 *Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.* PHILIPPIANS 3:17 *Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.* 2 CORINTHIANS 4:5 *For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. 6 For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. 7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.* 1 CORINTHIANS 15:1 *Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; 2 By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.* The Apostle Paul concludes that 15th chapter of 1 CORINTHIANS by stating in verse 58: *Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.*

So we see once again that these churches that Paul and Barnabas established were left in an orderly fashion under the ultimate shadow and care of the Lord, on whom they believed. ACTS 14:23 *And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed.* 1 CORINTHIANS 9:14 sheds more light on what kind of men were ordained in these churches, stating: *Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.* Again the emphasis is on the Lord and into His hands that the care of these churches fell. Think about this for a moment: since arriving at Antioch in Pisidia, what person (other than Paul or Barnabas) has been mentioned by name on this missionary journey? Not one man. Why was no one mentioned by name in this first missionary journey? Obviously Paul and Barnabas had met many. Many had become believers on this journey. Many were healed. Churches were established. Yet not one man or woman (other than Paul or Barnabas) is mentioned by name on this journey. Why? The answer is at least two fold. First Luke, the author of the book of ACTS, did not join Paul until the time frame of ACTS 16:10, after which we are introduced to different characters. These different characters were important in the life of Luke, for he got to know them individually. Secondly, the reason that only Paul and Barnabas are mentioned since the time frame of Antioch in Pisidia, is that the emphasis is being placed on the working of the Lord through the power of the Holy Ghost as manifest by the hands of the Apostles Paul and Barnabas. In other words the focus is upon the Lord. That is properly where our focus ought to be also, that is, on the Lord. *And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them (names unknown) to the Lord, on whom they believed.* {ACTS 14:23}.

Since we in this study are studying a little about the testimony of the Apostle Paul, let's consider these two things about him; he couldn't hardly say hello without

mentioning something about the Lord Jesus Christ, and he couldn't say good-bye without mentioning something about the Lord Jesus Christ. So we know that the Lord was first place in the life of the Apostle Paul, thus upon revisiting each assembly on this missionary journey, Paul and Barnabas would leave them pointed towards the Lord. Let's just quickly notice how this is in Paul's epistles by looking at the first and last sentence of his epistles and noting how often the Lord is mentioned and in many different ways.

ROMANS 1:1 Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, 2 (Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,) 3 Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; 4 And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead: 5 By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name: 6 Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ: 7 To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. ...16:27 To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen. 1 CORINTHIANS 1:1 Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother, 2 Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours: 3 Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. ...16:24 My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen. 2 CORINTHIANS 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, unto the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints which are in all Achaia: 2 Grace be to you and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. ...13:14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen. GALATIANS 1:1 Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead;) 2 And all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches of Galatia: 3 Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, 4 Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father: 5 To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. ...6:18 Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. EPHESIANS 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus: 2 Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. ...6:24 Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen. PHILIPPIANS 1:1 Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons: 2 Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. ...4:23 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen. COLOSSIANS 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timotheus our brother, 2 To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ...4:18 The salutation by the hand of me Paul. Remember my bonds. Grace be with you. Amen. 1 THESSALONIANS 1:1 Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. ...5:28 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen. 2 THESSALONIANS 1:1 Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: 2 Grace unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ...3:18 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen. 1 TIMOTHY 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God our Saviour, and Lord Jesus Christ, which is our hope; 2 Unto Timothy, my own son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord. ...6:21 ...Grace be with thee. Amen. 2 TIMOTHY 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus, 2 To Timothy, my dearly beloved son: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord. ...4:22 The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit. Grace be with you. Amen. TITUS 1:1 Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness; 2 In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began; 3 But hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is

committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour; 4 To Titus, mine own son after the common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour. ...3:15 All that are with me salute thee. Greet them that love us in the faith. Grace be with you all. Amen. PHILEMON 1:1 Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ, and Timothy our brother, unto Philemon our dearly beloved, and fellowlabourer, 2 And to our beloved Apphia, and Archippus our fellowsoldier, and to the church in thy house: 3 Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ...25 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. HEBREWS 1:1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, 2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; 3 Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; 4 Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. ...13:25 Grace be with you all. Amen. So when they (Paul and Barnabas) commend someone to the Lord, it is because their whole lives were committed unto the Lord from "hello" to "good-bye." Perhaps this gives us better insight to ACTS 14:23, which again reads: *And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed.*

Having now established some order in the churches in these places where they had spent much time, Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch in Pisidia, Paul and Barnabas now resume their journey back toward Antioch in Syria, to the church there from whence this missionary journey had started some nearly two years earlier. We read this account in ACTS 14:24-26. ACTS 14:24 *And after they had passed throughout Pisidia, they came to Pamphylia. 25 And when they had preached the word in Perga, they went down into Attalia: 26 And thence sailed to Antioch, from whence they had been recommended to the grace of God for the work which they fulfilled.* Pisidia is a Province of Asia Minor north of Pamphylia, Pamphylia is a province of Asia Minor just South of Pisidia, and Perga is a city of Pamphylia most famous in scripture for being the place where John Mark left Paul and Barnabas and returned to Jerusalem {see ACTS 13:13}. Recall that Pisidia was generally a mountainous region, and that it was with much trial and effort that Paul and Barnabas came to Antioch in Pisidia. These trials are briefly mentioned in 2 CORINTHIANS 11:26 by the Apostle Paul when he notes that he was in "perils of waters" (rivers), and in "perils of robbers," both of which took place, no doubt, on the journey from Perga to Antioch, and now the same sort of tests will again be faced coming down the mountains from Antioch in Pisidia unto Perga. When we followed Paul and Barnabas on their journey up the mountains to Antioch in Pisidia we didn't give the meaning of Pisidia. Pisida has two meanings: "pitchy" and "persuasion of right." "Pitchy" means black, very dark, and spiritually speaking black and very dark was found the condition of men's souls when Paul and Barnabas first arrived at Antioch in Pisidia. Paul preached that famous sermon to those at Antioch in Pisidia in ACTS 13:16-41 persuading those in attendance to do the right thing, and turn their lives over to Jesus. This "persuasion of right" is talked about in ACTS 13:43 after Paul's sermon at Antioch in Pisidia: *Now when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas: who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God.* ACTS 14:24 now tells us: *And after they had passed throughout Pisidia, they came to Pamphylia.* Pamphylia we learned earlier means: "of every tribe, or all sorts, or all tribes." Jews from Pamphylia were at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, and were noted as being "confounded" and "amazed" and "marvelled" that they heard Galileans speaking "the wonderful works of God" in the native tongue of the Pamphylian's. ACTS 2:1 *And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. 2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. 3 And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. 5 And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. 6 Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his*

own language. 7 And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans? 8 And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? 9 Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, 10 Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, 11 Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God. 12 And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this?

Now back in ACTS 14:25 we find that Paul and Barnabas preached the word in Perga for the first time. Recall in ACTS 13 when Paul and Barnabas got to Perga no mention is made of them preaching there, most likely because everyone from that city had gone up to the high country where it was much cooler. Perga means: "earthy, much earth, or very earthy." So as we noted earlier in this study Perga was made up of earthy men and women from all over the world. No doubt the people to whom Paul and Barnabas were now preaching had already heard Paul and Barnabas preach at Antioch in Pisidia, or one of the other cities of the high country where Paul and Barnabas had just been. No mention is ever made again in scripture of Perga.

ACTS 14:25 *And when they had preached the word in Perga, they went down into Attalia:...* . From Perga Paul and Barnabas went to Attalia, a walking distance of about 15 miles south southwest of Perga. Attalia (gentle father) was a maritime city and seaport at the mouth of the river Catarrhactes. Attalia got its name from Attalus Philadelphus, king of Pergamus. Attalia was in Paul's day the chief residence of high ranking Roman magistrates and military officials. The only reason that Attalia is mentioned this one time in scripture is because it was the seaport that Paul and Barnabas used to catch a ship back to their "home" port of Antioch in Syria.

ACTS 14:26 *And thence sailed to Antioch, from whence they had been recommended to the grace of God for the work which they fulfilled.* At first glance it doesn't appear that there is much said in this verse. That's because we have learned much of Paul and Barnabas since they first left Antioch in Syria. Recall back in ACTS 13:1 that Paul and Barnabas were called by the names of Saul and Barnabas, and they were known as "prophets and teachers." As "prophets and teachers" they were separated unto the work of the Lord by the Holy Ghost in ACTS 13:2. Even though the term "missionaries" or "missionary" is not found in scripture, Paul and Barnabas were true "missionaries." That is they went to foreign fields preaching the good news of the gospel, not as a job, but rather as a calling. The church at Antioch in Syria sent them away after much prayer and fasting, and now after fulfilling their "missionary" journey Paul and Barnabas return to the church at Antioch in Syria. This "missionary" journey was an educational experience for Paul and Barnabas, and now to the church of Antioch in Syria, Paul and Barnabas will share their educational experiences. First of all we must note that Paul returns to Antioch in Syria with a name change from Saul to Paul. We pointed this out earlier in this study when we covered ACTS 13:9 for from that point on in scripture Saul of Tarsus is called by the gentile name of Paul. Paul means "little." As Saul of Tarsus, Paul was a big man in this world; a leader in the persecution of Christians, and one looked up to among the Jews of Jerusalem. As Paul, Paul was "little" in the sight of worldly men, but in the sight of God Paul's "little strength" was made perfect in his own weakness. Paul even said in 2 CORINTHIANS 12:9 *...for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.* Paul goes on to state in 2 CORINTHIANS 12:10 *...for when I am weak, then am I strong...*, meaning that his "little" strength comes from the Lord. Paul years later even wrote of this again in EPHESIANS 6:10 stating: *Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.* The "power of His might" is manifest through Christians that are filled with the Holy Ghost. Thus Paul the "little," a man full of the Holy Ghost, is the perfect example of the Philadelphian full overcomer that is noted in REVELATION 3:8 of whom the Lord says: *I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.* Secondly we must note that Paul and Barnabas return to Antioch in Syria not just as "missionaries" who had fulfilled their calling, but rather they return having been promoted to the level of "apostles" by the Holy Ghost! When did this promotion to

"apostles" happen? The answer to this question lies in ACTS 14:26 when we see who it was that "recommended" Paul and Barnabas "to the grace of God for the work" whereunto they were called. Who was it that called Paul and Barnabas to the work? ACTS 13:2 tells us it was the Holy Ghost, who called them. In other words it was the Holy Ghost who "recommended" Paul and Barnabas "to the grace of God for the work" whereunto they were called. ROMANS 1:1 and 1 CORINTHIANS 1:1 both agree with this statement. ROMANS 1:1 *Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called [to be] an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God,...* . 1 CORINTHIANS 1:1 *Paul, called [to be] an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God,...* . And so we see the "prophets and teachers" Saul and Barnabas returning to Antioch in Syria as "apostles" now forever to be known as Paul and Barnabas.

ACTS 14:26 *And thence sailed to Antioch, from whence they had been recommended to the grace of God for the work which they fulfilled.* This word "recommended" found in verse 26 is an interesting word full of meaning. In our text "recommended" means to commit or commend servants of God to Him. In our text it means to give into the hands of the Holy Ghost, or to give over into The Holy Ghost's power or use. This same word is translated "hazarded" in ACTS 15:26 *Men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.* The commitment part of this definition means a whole hearted life time loving commitment unto the Lord. Jesus Christ Himself had such a "recommended" commitment to us, and this same Greek word that translates to "recommended" in our text of ACTS 14:26, also translates into "hath given" and "gave" in the following two texts from EPHESIANS 5. EPHESIANS 5:2 *And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.* EPHESIANS 5:25 *Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; {for her}.* In other words the kind of commitment that we should see here is the positive commitment found in a true loving marriage relationship. That is the kind of commitment or recommendation that will be found in those qualifying to be in the Bride of Christ.

In ACTS 14:26 we again find that phrase "the grace of God." We have already commented on this phrase earlier in this study. However we could never say enough about "the grace of God." The phrase "the grace of God" is one of those phrases that we can attribute to the Apostle Paul as being his. Luke, one of Paul's closest followers, no doubt picked up this phrase from Paul. Of the 21 times we read this phrase "the grace of God," 15 are written by Paul, and 6 by Luke. Of the six times Luke uses the phrase "the grace of God," one is in reference to Jesus (LUKE 2:40), one is in exclusive reference to Barnabas (ACTS 11:23), and the other four are in reference, at least in part, to Paul. Here in ACTS 14:26 the reference is to Paul and Barnabas returning to Antioch in Syria *...from whence they had been recommended to the grace of God for the work which they fulfilled.* Previously in ACTS 13:43 it was Paul and Barnabas encouraging and persuading those of Antioch in Pisidia *...to continue in the grace of God.* Had it not been for "the grace of God" none of us would have ever been saved. Had it not been for "the grace of God" that old persecutor of the church of God, Saul of Tarsus would have never been saved. But thank God for "the grace of God" that Saul of Tarsus did get saved on that road to Damascus, and in the process learned "the grace of God," so that in a future time he could write to us: TITUS 2:11 *For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, 12 Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; 13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; 14 Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.* Paul wrote also that his ministry was because of "the grace of God," stating it like this in EPHESIANS 3:7 *Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power.* So we see that by "the grace of God" Paul and Barnabas return to Antioch in Syria, full of "the grace of God," and share with them their manifold experiences of "the grace of God" that they were eye witnesses to, and a part of on this missionary journey.

This brings us to "the work" which they fulfilled. "The work" which they fulfilled was not a man's work, but rather "the work" of the Lord as manifest through

the Holy Spirit by the hands of Paul and Barnabas, men full of the Holy Ghost. In EXODUS 32:16 we read of "the work" of God in the two tables of stone: *And the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables.* This writing of God was the law of Moses, which no man was able to keep. ROMANS 3:20 *Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.* Furthermore 2 CORINTHIANS 3:6 tells us that the law (letter) killeth! Again thank God for "the grace of God" that bringeth salvation, which has appeared to all men. "The work" which Paul and Barnabas had fulfilled on this missionary journey had exposed men and women to "the grace of God," ...*and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.* (ROMANS 5:15). The gift that Paul mentions in ROMANS 5:15 is eternal life, as explained in ROMANS 6:23 ...*the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.* JOHN 6:29 in part states: ...*This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.* The Apostle Paul makes reference to EXODUS 32:16 and the hand writing of God in 2 CORINTHIANS 3:2 & 3, which reads: *Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men: 3 Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.* In 2 CORINTHIANS 3:3, which we just read, we see "the work" of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of men. The whole book of The Acts of the Apostles is really a book that would more properly be entitled The Acts of the Holy Ghost. All throughout the book of ACTS we see "the work" of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of men. We see "the work" of the Holy Ghost also in the following two portions of scripture. PHILIPPIANS 2:13 *For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.* HEBREWS 13:20 *Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, 21 Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.* The "God of peace" that makes ...*you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight,*... is really a reference to the Holy Ghost. ROMANS 8:11 helps clarify this fact to the believer, stating (Conybeare translation): *Yea, if the Spirit of Him who raised Christ from the dead be dwelling in you, He who raised Christ from the dead shall endow with life also your dying bodies by His Spirit which dwells within you.* The following verses from JOHN 14 further clarify who is ...*His Spirit which dwells within you.* {ROMANS 8:11}. JOHN 14:16 *And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; 17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.* ...26 *But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. 27 Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.* The Apostle Paul writes in 1 CORINTHIANS 6:19 *What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?* Again ROMANS 8:11 *But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.* So we see that the "God of peace" (the Holy Ghost) that makes ...*you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight,*... was the agency of the trinity which accomplished "...the work" which they {Paul and Barnabas} fulfilled... on this missionary journey.

The Apostle Paul is the only writer to refer to the "God of peace," and he does so in the following five scriptures: ROMANS 15:33; ROMANS 16:20; PHILIPPIANS 4:9; 1 THESSALONIANS 5:23; and HEBREWS 13:20. I want to briefly look at these scriptures in the chronological order that they were written by the Apostle Paul. 1 THESSALONIANS 5:23 would have been written first: *And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.* The word "sanctify" here means the setting apart of the

believer for God, as is also noted in ACTS 20:32 *And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.* Note that the one who sanctifies us is *...the very God of peace...* found mentioned in our text of 1 THESSALONIANS 5:23. Note also how Paul mentions the order in which the Holy Spirit is to work: *...spirit and soul and body.* This is exactly opposite to the way Satan operates. In GENESIS 3 we read of the temptation of Eve, of which the Apostle Paul comments in 1 TIMOTHY 2:14 *And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.* GENESIS 3:1 *Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? 2 And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: 3 But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. 4 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: 5 For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.* GENESIS 3:6 reads: *And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, (this shows first the desire of the body) and that it was pleasant to the eyes, (this shows the desire of the soul) and a tree to be desired to make one wise, (this shows the desire of the spirit) she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.* So we see in GENESIS 3:6 that Satan tempted Eve in every part of her being, body, soul and spirit. That is the way Satan works in the body, and soul, and spirit of a man. The Apostle Paul acknowledges this fact in EPHESIANS 2:2 *Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: 3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.* The *...children of disobedience...* are found mentioned in EPHESIANS 2:2; 5:6 and COLOSSIANS 3:6, and follow *...according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in...* them, which is the spirit of Satan, to whom they have yielded their body, soul, and spirit. *...Because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience...* according to EPHESIANS 5:6 and COLOSSIANS 3:6. The *...wrath of God...* will never come upon a son of God. JOHN 3:36 tells us: *He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.* Further ROMANS 5:8 & 9 tells us: *But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.* Brother Copley notes this of the children of disobedience: “for them, there is no salvation. They have grown in their surrender to Satan and become his sons. What a terribly solemn fact is this. All of us who are saved were once “by nature children of wrath;” but not children of the devil; much less sons. Thank God, by the new birth, we became children of God (GALATIANS 3:26); now it is our privilege to “grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord” (2 PETER 3:18), and thus become sons of God “led by the Spirit of God” (ROMANS 8:14)”. {End of quote from Brother Copley}. ROMANS 8:16 goes on to state: *The Spirit itself (Himself) beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:...* . Paul’s prayer again expressed in 1 THESSALONIANS 5:23 states: *And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.* This whole thought of *...your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ...* may seem impossible until we realize the facts of another prayer of the Apostle Paul found in EPHESIANS 3:20. EPHESIANS 3:20 *Now unto him (God the Father) that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power (The Holy Spirit) that worketh in us, 21 Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.*

The second time in chronological order that the Apostle Paul used the phrase “the God of peace” is at the real conclusion of the book of ROMANS, which is ROMANS 15:33. ROMANS 15:33 *Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.* The third time that the Apostle Paul used the phrase “the God of peace” is also found in our Bible in ROMANS 16:20. Brother Copley in his study book on EPHESIANS gives several reasons why the

first 20 verse of ROMANS 16 belong properly with epistle to the EPHESIANS rather than in ROMANS. One of the evidences that Brother Copley used was ROMANS 16:20, which reads: *And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.* REVELATION 12:9 and 20:2 plainly state that that old serpent who first beguiled Eve was none other than the Devil and Satan, to whom the Apostle Paul referred to as *...the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience...* in EPHESIANS 2:2. To these Ephesian Saints Paul wrote concerning the warfare of the believer in EPHESIANS 6:10-18, and mentioned the battle that is waged *...against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.* (EPHESIANS 6:12). It is to these Ephesian Saints after explaining this heavenly conflict that Paul appropriately addresses these concluding words recorded for us in ROMANS 16:20 *And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly...* for the Ephesian Saints were now properly equipped by the power of the Holy Spirit *...to stand against the wiles of the devil.* (EPHESIANS 6:11).

Probably PHILIPPIANS was written before HEBREWS, and if so then PHILIPPIANS 4:9 would be the forth time the Apostle Paul used the phrase "the God of peace." PHILIPPIANS 4:9 *Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.* What Paul writes just prior to this 9th verse is the things which a believer full of the Holy Ghost properly focuses on. PHILIPPIANS 4:6 *Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.* 7 *And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.* 8 *Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.* PHILIPPIANS 4:9 *Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.*

The fifth time the Apostle Paul used the phrase "the God of peace" is in the text we commented on above found in HEBREWS 13:20. HEBREWS 13:20 *Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, 21 Make you (your whole spirit and soul and body) perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

These five texts which we have made reference to once again manifest the fact that the number five points us to GRACE. It is the grace of God that we have been sent the Holy Spirit to teach us (JOHN 14:26), and to guide us (JOHN 16:13) into all truth. We need the Power of the Holy Ghost in our lives. No wonder then that the Apostle Paul writes in ROMANS 15:33 *Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.* And in PHILIPPIANS 4:9 *Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.*

ACTS 14:26 *And thence sailed to Antioch, from whence they had been recommended to the grace of God for the work which they fulfilled.* The word "fulfilled" here simply means completed, that is to carry through to the end, to accomplish, to carry out. Paul and Barnabas completed their missionary journey by returning to Antioch in Syria. Part of this completion process is giving their testimony of what has happened unto them during this journey, and this they did in verse 27, which we will get to shortly. The other part of this completion process concerns those of the church at Antioch in Syria, who daily were praying for the safe keeping of Paul and Barnabas, and that the Lord would have his way with them on this missionary journey. So now Paul and Barnabas will give a report to their sponsors, so to speak, when they truly fulfill their missionary journey with their word of mouth testimony unto the assembly at Antioch in Syria as to the workings of the Lord since they had departed from Antioch. (It is quit possible that the author of the book of ACTS, Luke, may have heard the account of this first missionary journey at this time. Later in ACTS 16:10

when Luke joins up with the Apostle Paul on his second missionary journey, Luke seems to be an old acquaintance of Paul's, whom he no doubt met at Antioch in Syria.)

ACTS 14:27 tells us of Paul and Barnabas report to the church at Antioch. ACTS 14:27 *And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles.* In reality ACTS 13 & 14 is our introduction to the teachings and preaching of the Apostle Paul, and how it was that the gospel of the grace of God and the door of faith was in the beginning of his ministry opened up especially unto the Gentiles. The assembly at Antioch in Syria was primarily an assembly of Gentiles as indicated in ACTS 13:1; GALATIANS 2:11 & 12; and ACTS 15. Again we are reminded of the facts that were presented by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ unto Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus, expounded for us in ACTS 26:15-18, which again reads: *And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. 16 But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; 17 Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, 18 To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.* The facts were that Paul was to be the one to "open the door of faith unto the Gentiles," for that is the way the Lord ordained it. ACTS 10 & 11 gives the Apostle Peter an introduction also to the fact that the Lord was opening "the door of faith unto the Gentiles," a fact that many of the Jews of Jerusalem had a hard time believing until after the conference of ACTS 15, and even then they still had a hard time receiving the Gentiles. We pointed out earlier in this study how that the door of faith that had been opened unto the Gentiles was unlocked in the sermon at Antioch in Pisidia with these statements, which are from the translation of Conybeare and Howson: ACTS 13:16 *Men of Israel, and ye, proselytes of the Gentiles, who worship the God of Abraham, give audience. And ACTS 13:26 Men and Brethren, whether ye be children of the stock of Abraham, or proselytes of the Gentiles, to you have been sent the tidings of this salvation.* We also noted in ACTS 13 after Paul's second sermon how it was that the Lord further "opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles." ACTS 13:46 & 47 records: *Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you (the Jew): but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. 47 For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.* Primarily after that turning point in time, Paul and Barnabas spent the majority of their time preaching unto the Gentiles while on this first missionary journey. In later years the Apostle Paul would write reminders in his letters as to whom it was that he was sent. Recall the following New Testament scriptures written by Paul: ROMANS 11:13 *For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office:* ROMANS 15:16 *That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost. 2 TIMOTHY 1:11 Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.* So we note with the same joy that was experienced by those in Antioch in Syria how that the Lord "...had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles..." and that He had done so by the hands of the new Apostles Paul and Barnabas.

Let us take further note of this "door of faith" that the Lord open up unto the Gentiles, meaning you and me, nearly two thousand years ago. Have you opened the door of faith unto the Lord? Brother Fuller, whom I had the privilege of hearing preach several times, usually ended his sermon to the boys at the correctional institute up in Golden Gate Canyon by quoting REVELATION 3:20. REVELATION 3:20 reads: *Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.* To my recollection nearly 200 boys asked Jesus into their hearts as their personal Saviour after hearing this verse. They opened the door of faith and let Jesus come into their heart. I hope all who hear this and read this have also opened the door of faith of their heart unto the Lord. The full overcomers

mentioned in REVELATION 3:8 from the church of Philadelphia certainly have opened the “door of faith” of their hearts unto the Lord. REVELATION 3:8 reads: *I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.* Because of these facts the Lord is able to record in REVELATION 3:21 this fact: *To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.* All of this is possible to the son of God, both Gentile and Jew, male or female, because that individual opened the door of faith to let Jesus come into his heart. Now in REVELATION 3:8 Jesus states that to the sons of God he has *...set before thee an open door... , which ...no man can shut.* It is important to note that *...no man can shut...* this open door of opportunity, which is set before we sons of God. Brother Copley notes that “Jesus opens a “door in heaven,” that the full overcomers may enter in; for they shall reign con-jointly with Christ after they likewise with Him judged Christendom, the world and angels --{study 1 CORINTHIANS 6}. They entered the open door of privilege on earth, accepting all the truth and walking in all the light, constantly looking for more and engaged in the divinely ordained good works” [End of quote from Brother Copley].

The Apostle Paul in his writings makes reference to the metaphor of a “door” in the following three scriptures, perhaps as a reminder of events that took place on this first missionary journey when the “door of faith” was opened unto the Gentiles. 1 CORINTHIANS 16:9 *For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries.* 2 CORINTHIANS 2:12 *Furthermore, when I came to Troas to preach Christ's gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord,... .* COLOSSIANS 4:3 *Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds:...*

Let's again read ACTS 14:27 -- *And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles.* This gathering of the assembly together was no small event in itself, but was probably a little easier to do in Paul's day than in our day when there are so many other distractions available unto us. Once the assembly at Antioch in Syria was gathered together, they were in for a long treat from the Lord, for it says that Paul and Barnabas “rehearsed all that God had done with them.” It has taken us nearly a year of Sunday School lessons to cover what the Lord had done with Paul and Barnabas on this missionary journey. How would you have liked to have heard their account first hand from the mouths Paul and Barnabas themselves? It would have been edge-of-the-seat exciting to hear them tell first hand what the Lord had done on this journey. And I am sure that it took at least a couple of hours, if not more, for Paul and Barnabas to rehearse all that God through the power of the Holy Ghost had done with them on this missionary journey.

The Greek word translated “rehearsed” in ACTS 14:27 is found 20 (REDEMPTION) times in the New Testament. It means: to tell, to show, to declare, to rehearse, to speak, a report to announce, to make known, to report, or to bring back tidings. In one respect the word “rehearsed” here points us to the Holy Ghost. The following scriptures bare this out. JOHN 16:13 *Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew (rehearse) you things to come.* 14 *He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew (rehearse) it unto you.* 15 *All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew (rehearse) it unto you.* ACTS 20:20 *And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed (rehearse) you, and have taught you publickly, and from house to house,... .* ACTS 20:27 *For I have not shunned to declare (rehearse) unto you all the counsel of God.*

ACTS 14:28 *And there they abode long time with the disciples.* This statement tells us that Paul and Barnabas were at Antioch in Syria a long time with the disciples, or Christians in that assembly. This statement of a long time is indeed vague. “Long time” in NUMBERS 20:15 refers to 400 plus years of bondage that the children of Israel faced in the land of Egypt. Paul and Barnabas were already a “long time” in Iconium in ACTS 14:3. The fact of the matter is that we don't know how long this “long time” period was.

In fact there are a lot of things that we don't really know concerning the Apostle Paul that we would like to know. And the reason that we don't know these things is because the Holy Ghost didn't want us to know certain things, or we would have been told in scripture. Some of the things that we don't know for sure about the Apostle Paul is when he went to Illyricum, but ROMANS 15:19 tells us that he went there, stating: *Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.* Some think that Paul may have visited Illyricum during this "long time" mentioned in ACTS 14:28. Scripture doesn't say, so we can't say.

Paul's third visit back to Jerusalem after being Saved

We come to ACTS 15. Brother Copley correctly notes that "there is scarcely a more important portion of Scripture than this chapter. The only general council recorded in the New Testament met to settle questions which have disturbed the peace of saints in this age. If the teachings of that council were really believed and practiced, there would be no need of many convocations today." (End of quote from Brother Copley).

Understanding the teaching of ACTS 15 really takes the guidance of the Holy Ghost. In this chapter we truly find the difference between "grace" and "legality."

Three authors of scripture use the phrase "grace of God" in their writings: Luke, Paul and Peter. Luke learned the teaching of the "grace of God" from the Apostle Paul himself. Peter learned the teaching of the "grace of God" from the Lord Himself, from the Holy Ghost, and also from the Apostle Paul himself, of whom Peter even wrote: *"...even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood,..."* {2 PETER 3:15 & 16}. The Apostle Paul learned the teaching of the "grace of God" by "the revelation of Jesus Christ" as he noted in GALATIANS 1:12.

Before we move on let's define as best we can "legality," and "grace." "Legality" can be summed up by noting that it is a term applied to those who follow some kind of works, usually the works of the law of Moses. The law of Moses was given only to the children of Israel to follow, which is to say the law of Moses was only given to the Jews! Gentiles have no business trying to follow the law of Moses. If ever a man could follow every letter of the law it was Saul of Tarsus. Paul wrote about himself concerning the law this way in PHILIPPIANS 3:4-6: *Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: 5 Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; 6 Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.* Note that Paul said that concerning touching the righteousness which is in the law he was blameless. Paul spends several chapters explaining facts concerning the law. In ROMANS 3:19 & 20 we read: *Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. 20 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.* Often times in his writing Paul references the law of Moses by calling it "the letter." Saul of Tarsus knew and followed every letter of the law, but all this ever did for him was to make him chiefest of sinners, as he noted in 1 TIMOTHY 1:15. In 2 CORINTHIANS 3:6 Paul notes that the law (the letter) killeth, and he stated it like this: *Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.* And so we note that the legalist who follow some kind of works in order to be saved, or keep saved really frustrates the grace of God. Paul again wrote in GALATIANS 2:21 *I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.*

Now to define "grace." "Grace" is a gift of God. A gift that is freely given apart from any works a man can do. ROMANS 11:6 explains: *And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.* Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD GENESIS 6:8 tells us, and any person who ever got saved also found grace in the eyes of