

Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. 51 And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. 52 And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy: 53 And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen.

One of the impressions we are left with after reading LUKE 24:49-53 is that Jesus disciples were a bunch of “happy campers” full of “great joy” during the next seven weeks. What we will find as we continue examining what took place during the next seven weeks before the day of Pentecost was fully come is that it took most of this time for Jesus disciples to get to the point that they could experience this “great joy.” The details of what happened to the disciples during the next seven weeks is not mentioned here in LUKE 24:49-53, for these verses are but a quick overview, and highlight the end result of these seven weeks. Our Brother Luke helps fill in some of the missing details of these seven weeks in ACTS 1. The Apostle John fills in some more details in JOHN 20 and 21. The Apostle Paul adds a couple more details of this time in 1 CORINTHIANS 15. MATTHEW 28 and MARK 16 also fill in some of these missing details. As we examine some of what took place during the next seven weeks before the day of Pentecost was fully come, we will find the source of their “great joy,” which can be summed up with the thought that they were no longer filled with doubt and unbelief, but their source of joy came from worshipping Him, and putting their faith and confidence in His word that they would soon *...be endued with power from on high*. The word “endued” found in LUKE 24:49 means to be clothed with. After they received the power of the Holy Ghost they would be empowered with His qualities, and abilities to fulfil their divinely ordered course, including what they were to say, where they were to go, and what they were to write concerning the things they were “**witnesses**” of during their time with Jesus. To be endued with power from on high was another gift of grace from God the Father. Interestingly the word “endued” is found exactly five times in our King James Version of the Bible, and five is the number of GRACE. Recall here also that Jesus disciples were first followers of John the Baptist, and all the gospel records tell how John the Baptist did baptize with water, and preached the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, and then he pointed them to the One who came after him, that shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost. The One that came after John the Baptist was Jesus Christ, and on the day of Pentecost Jesus Christ did indeed baptize them with the Holy Ghost. That was when they were *...endued with power from on high...* and baptized with the Holy Ghost. That day was the day of Pentecost, and the particulars of that day are recorded in ACTS 2, which we will get to a little later in this study, Lord willing.

As we begin looking at the scriptures that enlighten our eyes as to what took place these next seven weeks between Jesus resurrection, and the day of Pentecost, let’s start by unlocking a thought found in ACTS 1:3. In ACTS 1:3 Luke makes a statement about Christ Jesus, and His chosen Apostles that we spend little time considering, and that is: *To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.* The word “infallible” means: that from which something is surely and plainly known, or something that is impossible to dispute, or doubt as evidence, or proof. Thus we find here in ACTS 1:3 that during the next forty days after His resurrection that Jesus more than once, after His own passion, made several appearances proving beyond a shadow of a doubt that He was indeed risen from the dead, giving His disciples further impossible to doubt evidence that He was alive, and further instructions on the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. So what Luke is revealing to us here in ACTS 1:3 is that Jesus didn’t just appear unto His disciples two or three times during these next seven weeks, but probably didn’t miss a day during these forty days when He didn’t show Himself to someone, or a group of His disciples. ACTS 1:3 hints that there were forty days of “infallible proofs” of Jesus resurrection.

Recall forty is the number of PERFECT TESTING. One of the things you will notice as you carefully study the number forty is how time after time the number forty is used to prove that the Lord is the one magnified by His PERFECT TESTING. Note what is stated in DEUTERONOMY 8:2, one of the twenty-five scriptures where we find the word “prove.” DEUTERONOMY 8:2 *And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the*

wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no. The number forty points to His PERFECT TESTING, where with He proves Himself Faithful and True in all things. In ACTS 1:3 we don't find that Jesus shewed Himself alive off-and-on for forty days, but rather that He proved to His followers that He indeed was risen from the dead, and very much alive, ...*being seen of them forty days...* . ACTS 1:3 *To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.* By the day of Pentecost they all had seen Him at least once since His resurrection! We never really give this much thought. The Apostle Paul writes of this time in 1 CORINTHIANS 15:4-7, and notes in verse 6 that our resurrected Saviour ...*was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep.* How did Paul know this? Do you suppose Paul talked to many who were there? My answer to this question would be yes indeed. Perhaps some of these were the very ones Saul of Tarsus had himself persecuted! Obviously these above five hundred brethren were not in a room, but somewhere else. So how was it that Jesus had above five hundred brethren gather together at one place? Again we reference JOHN 20:30 & 31, which the Apostle John wrote after fifty-five years of thinking about it: JOHN 20:30 *And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: 31 But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.* The fact that our risen Saviour Jesus Christ appeared unto more than five hundred brethren at once after His resurrection is another of these “many infallible proofs” Luke wrote about in ACTS 1:3.

Consider this also as we study some of the events during these seven weeks between Jesus resurrection, and the day of Pentecost. During His earthly ministry it is not often that we find Jesus alone. He didn't go on vacation for two weeks, nor did He take a day off. He never does. We read in HEBREWS 13:5 *Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.* During Jesus earthly ministry when He was alone His disciples were always near by. So for three plus years during His earthly ministry we can make note that Jesus was with His disciples every day. They dwelt with Him, and He dwelt with them for these three years. And something else we seldom consider, but He provided their every need. PHILIPPIANS 4:19 is one of our go-to scriptures we often quote, which again reads: *But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.* Jesus disciples experienced this everyday for the three plus years they were with Him. And again we are pointing out the fact that Jesus was with His disciples every day during these three years of His earthly ministry. So during the forty days between His resurrection before Jesus ascended in ACTS 1:9, and a cloud received Him out of their sight, how many of these forty days do you think went by without our risen Saviour appearing unto someone? We just went over in the prior verses of LUKE 24 how Jesus made five appearances unto various disciples on the first day of His resurrection. What were these next thirty-nine days like? Not all of Jesus appearances during these forty days are recorded in scripture. There wouldn't be enough pages to record all of this as the Apostle John noted. But we do have the highlights recorded for us in scripture, and that is the record the Holy Ghost wants us to have. We must also note that all of Jesus appearances after His resurrection were important, and were for the purpose of being another of the “many infallible proofs” of His resurrection Luke wrote about in ACTS 1:3. Thus we must also realize that Jesus cherished His time in fellowship with His closest followers. Are you among His closest followers? Do you also cherish your time with Him? Do you too love His appearing?

We are considering the time between Jesus resurrection and Pentecost. Let's go back and look at something Jesus told His disciples on the night of the Last Supper. MATTHEW 26:30 *And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives. 31 Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad. 32 But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee. 33 Peter answered and said unto him, Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet*

will I never be offended. 34 Jesus said unto him, *Verily I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.* 35 Peter said unto him, *Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee.* Likewise also said all the disciples. Earlier in this study we spent much time covering Peter's three times denying Jesus before the rooster crowed early in the morning, and we are not going to revisit that now. But notice what Jesus said in verse 32, for it seems to be missed by Jesus disciples that night: But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee. We also just spend considerable time reviewing Jesus five appearances on the day of His resurrection, where He appeared in Judea where Jerusalem is located, and where Emmaus is located. Galilee lies about seventy miles north of Jerusalem, and Samaria separates Judea from Galilee. Judea, Samaria, and Galilee are like states in the country of Israel. So we must acknowledge that when Jesus said ...But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee... He didn't mean on the first day of His resurrection that He would go before them into Galilee, nor did He say that.

As we examine this story of Jesus telling His disciples that ...But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee... let's next read again what is stated in MATTHEW 28:1-10. MATTHEW 28:1 *In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre.* 2 *And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it.* 3 *His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow:* 4 *And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men.* 5 *And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified.* 6 *He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.* 7 *And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you.* (Note here again that the angel didn't say they would see Him today in Galilee, because as we learned above Galilee is seventy plus miles North of Jerusalem, and there wasn't a mode of transportation used by Jesus Disciples that could get them to Galilee that quickly.) 8 *And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word.* 9 *And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him.* 10 *Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me.* Again note that Jesus didn't say He would see them in Galilee later that day, but He did say that they would see Him in Galilee, and that they were to go there to see Him. However as we learned in LUKE 24, Jesus first appeared unto His disciples, ten of them, on the first day of His resurrection in Jerusalem. So they should also expect to see Him again when they travelled back to their country of residence, Galilee.

This event of Jesus appearing unto ten of His Disciples on the first day of His resurrection in Jerusalem is also recorded in JOHN 20. JOHN 20:19 *Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.* 20 *And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord.* 21 *Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.* 22 *And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost.* We have looked at these verses before, as well as the next verses, which tell of what happened one week later.

JOHN 20:24 *But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came.* 25 *The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.* 26 *And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you.* 27 *Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.* 28 *And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.* 29 *Jesus saith unto him, Thomas,*

because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed. We make the assumption that this event also occurred at Jerusalem, which it no doubt did.

Thus we find Jesus words spoken on the evening of the Last Supper in MATTHEW 26:32 were not yet fulfilled. MATTHEW 26:32 *But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee.* Yet we have found that by this time eight days later all eleven of the Apostles had seen our risen Saviour at least once since His resurrection; ten of them had seen Him at least twice; and Peter had seen him at least three times, twice on the first day of His resurrection. So what do we learn from this? I suppose the lessons are endless, however, for me, I get a glimpse into the deep, and never ending love our Saviour has for His own. His disciples were His closest followers here on earth, and for over three years He loved them, and taught them all that He knew they could take in. Jesus couldn't wait until the day ...*But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee...* to show Himself unto them, and if you study this statement closely, it doesn't say that this would be His only appearance unto them. As we go through these forty days before He was taken up in into heaven, I think we will find numerous appearance of Jesus in Galilee also.

For me, I see that He is with us all the time. We see Him by faith, but His disciples at this fragile time in their life needed a visual appearance, just Like Thomas noted above in JOHN 20:25 *Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.* We must again realize that for three plus years Jesus was with His disciples pretty much every day, and after His resurrection Jesus very much wished to continue having their fellowship as He encouraged them to receive the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost. Again as I noted above Jesus cherished His time in fellowship with His closest followers. And how much more does He cherish His time with His future Bride, who is to grow up into Him in all things as is stated in EPHESIANS 4:15. We learn about Him by studying The Word of God, who is Jesus Christ our Bridegroom, and by the guidance of the Holy Ghost, as we study and believe His Word is how this bridal growth is achieved. This too is how we walk with God, by faith.

Enoch of GENESIS 5 fame, the seventh generation from Adam, didn't have a Bible, yet he walked with God, and we are told twice in scripture that Enoch walked with God. {See GENESIS 5:22 & 24.} Since Enoch didn't have a Bible, or scriptures to learn from, how did Enoch walk with God? Again let's reference ROMANS 10:17 *So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.* The word of God is our scriptures, but since Enoch didn't have any scripture, any Bible to study, how did Enoch achieve HEBREWS 11 Old Testament worthy of faith status? The answer is Enoch walked with God, and he did so by faith. AMOS 3:3 tells us: *Can two walk together, except they be agreed?* Obviously Enoch was in agreement with God, and visa versa. In walking with God, Enoch talked with God, and God talked with Enoch, and told him some incredible stuff. Study the book of JUDE and see some of what God told Enoch. Enoch's faith came by hearing the word of God as Enoch daily walked, and talked with God. HEBREWS 11:5 & 6 tells Enoch's secret. HEBREWS 11:5 *By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.* 6 *But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.* We find in GENESIS 5:21 that Enoch was sixty-five years old when he begat Methuselah. JUDE 1:14 informs us that Enoch was a Prophet. Prophet Enoch gave his son Methuselah a prophetic name. One meaning of Methuselah's name signifies that when he dies there shall be a sending forth of waters upon the earth. Methuselah lived to be 969 years old, the oldest recorded man to live in scripture. If you take the time to do the math, and the scriptural research, you will find that Methuselah was 369 years old when Noah was born, and GENESIS 7:6 tells us that Noah was 600 years old when the flood waters were upon the earth. When Methuselah died the flood came just as Enoch prophesied.

How did we get off talking about Enoch? We were discussing how Jesus cherishes His time in fellowship with His closest followers, and certainly His closest followers during this church age will be those found to qualify to be in the Bride of Christ. The Bride of Christ will have the same pleasing to God characteristics that Enoch had, who by faith walked with God. HEBREWS 11

makes sixteen “by faith” statements, showing that the Old Testament worthies of faith lived their lives “by faith.” The New Testament full overcomers also will be worthies of faith who lived their lives “by faith” too. The New Testament worthies of faith will be the Bride of Christ. This is a small rib portion company taken out of the church, which is the body of Christ. The opportunity to be in the Bride of Christ is the “better thing” Paul mentions in the last verses of HEBREWS. HEBREWS 11:39 *And these all, (the Old Testament worthies of faith) having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: 40 God having provided some better thing for us, (the New Testament worthies of faith) that they without us should not be made perfect.*

Back to where we left off concerning this statement Jesus made to His disciples on the evening of the Last Supper, which account we will first read from The Gospel According to St. MARK: MARK 14:26 *And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives. 27 And Jesus saith unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered. 28 But after that I am risen, I will go before you into Galilee.* These same words are recorded in MATTHEW 26:32 *But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee.* On the day of His resurrection the angel of the Lord said unto the women at the empty tomb: MATTHEW 28:5 *And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. 6 He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. 7 And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you. ...9 And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him. 10 Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me.* Let’s make note here that Jesus made this appointment to meet with His remaining eleven disciples in Galilee after He was risen from the dead, and this record we have just read shows Jesus made this statement twice, which is SUFFICIENT WITNESS that He would go before them into Galilee, and that they would see Him there.

The scriptures we have looked at up to this point in time during the seven weeks between Jesus resurrection, and Pentecost have centered around Jesus appearing unto to many around Jerusalem, not in the region of Galilee some 75 miles to the north of Jerusalem. However we read in JOHN 21 that seven of Jesus disciples did go up to Galilee. Note here in JOHN 21 that not all of the remaining eleven of Jesus disciples are found mentioned in this chapter. Further as we read this chapter, realize that these seven Apostles didn’t go up to Galilee to see Jesus, rather they went up to Galilee to go fishing. However Jesus in JOHN 21 was true to His word, as he always is, and when they did go fishing in Galilee, they saw Jesus, much to their surprise. The Apostle John even makes note in JOHN 21:14 *This is now the third time that Jesus shewed himself to his disciples, after that he was risen from the dead.* All of what is recorded in JOHN 21 concerns this “third time Jesus shewed Himself to His disciples after He was risen from the dead.” The Apostle John, after thinking about this third appearance of Jesus Christ to His disciples, thinking about if for fifty-five or more years, felt it a highlight in his (John’s) own life. The Apostle John makes no other mention of Jesus promised appointment to meet with the eleven disciples in Galilee that both Matthew and Mark recorded in their gospel records, which we read above. MATTHEW 28:16 informs us: *Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them.* Lord willing we will discuss this separate event a little later in this study for it seems that this took place after the event recorded in JOHN 21. For now our attention will focus upon this third visit Jesus made unto seven of His disciples that is recorded in JOHN 21. We will examine some important background information first, which will help us better appreciate Jesus third visit unto His disciples after His resurrection in JOHN 21.

Let’s review a couple of points, one of which we have discussed previously in this study. It is interesting to note that we do not find in scripture Jesus disciples, that is those who were fishermen, ever catching any fish without the help of Jesus. Obviously they had made their living catching fish on the Sea of Galilee prior to following Jesus, so they did previously catch fish on their own.

However when Peter first met Jesus, the Lord had told Peter in LUKE 5:10 *And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men.* Every time we read of Peter, or the other disciples fishing after this, the end result was they caught nothing. When Jesus came on the scene and helped them, their results were exceeding, abundantly, above all that they could have asked for, or expected! We should then realize that the next three plus years that Peter followed Jesus he was in training for the time he would be equipped to catch men. Peter didn't "catch men," that is lead them to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ until he was filled with the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, which was fifty days after Jesus resurrection, and we haven't yet come to that point in time in our study.

The second thought that will help our understanding a little more before we read some of JOHN 21 takes us back to JOHN 6. JOHN 6 is a large chapter full of many memories of things that happened in Galilee for Jesus disciples, but let's first keep in mind what is said in JOHN 6:1. JOHN 6:1 *After these things Jesus went over the sea of Galilee, which is the sea of Tiberias.* We find the Sea of Galilee called by three names in scripture: the Sea of Galilee, the Sea of Tiberias, and in LUKE 5:1 the lake of Gennesaret. The Sea of Tiberias was the Roman name of the Sea of Galilee. The Sea of Galilee is the Jewish name. Galilee means: a circuit. Sister Bodie notes in her JOHN study book: "When the circuit has been run then He will return." She was making reference to the statements we are currently studying when after His resurrection Jesus would return and visit His disciples as noted in MATTHEW 28:16 & 20. And also Sister Bodie noted that Galilee also refers to the second coming of Christ: "When the circuit has been run then He will return." Gennesaret is the ancient name of the Sea of Galilee. Gennesaret means "harps," and Brother Hawkins notes that harps speaks of the Glad Tidings that bring music to the hearts of those who are willing to listen. Jesus spoke many Glad Tidings messages on, and near the Sea of Galilee, and His disciples heard Jesus words of instruction spoken many times here. The Sea of Galilee is sixteen miles long, and six miles wide. The Sea of Galilee is where Jesus disciples that were fishermen had their boats, and is where they made their living prior to following Jesus. The events we read about in JOHN 6 occurred in, and around the Sea of Galilee.

Another thing we find in JOHN 6, which will tie in with something said in JOHN 21, is this is where we read of the five thousand men, plus women and children being fed with the young man's lunch of five barley loaves, and two small fishes! There is so much said in the 71 verses of JOHN 6, but let's focus on some of the memories Jesus disciples had from this chapter. It was Jesus disciples here by the Sea of Galilee who dispersed this meal among this large crowd. How many truckloads would it take to feed this amount of people? Suffice it to say a lot more than Jesus disciples could carry. So when the twelve disciples passed out this food, how did that work? Reading the story you will find that when distribution was made, every one, all twenty plus thousand people got as "much as they would." Jesus disciples passed out this food, and no matter how much was taken, there was still more supply there!!! They didn't have to go back for refills because the loaves and fishes kept multiplying right before their eyes! The multitude couldn't exhaust Jesus bounty, and they had opportunity here to do so. When everyone's hunger was completely satisfied, the disciples took up twelve baskets full of the fragments left behind from the original two small fishes, and five barley loaves!!! All four gospel writers record this story, so, in my mind it would be hard for Jesus eleven remaining disciples to go to the Sea of Galilee without remembering what they previously witnessed here, for they were all a part of the small distribution team Jesus had assembled to feed the multitude. Each of the twelve disciples would have passed out this food to about two thousand people!!! Ponder that thought for a few minutes, and you will begin to visualize the magnitude of this event.

Some other things later noted in JOHN 6 is Jesus walking on the water of the Sea of Galilee, and so did Peter. Peter certainly never forgot this, and Jesus other disciples never forgot this either. The next day Jesus gave the great discourse on the bread of life saying in JOHN 6:47 & 48 -- *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. 48 I am that bread of life.* Study the succeeding verses and see how many of Jesus followers concluded that Jesus words were objectionable to them because they could not comprehend what Jesus was instructing them, therefore

they rejected Jesus teaching. We then read the following starting in JOHN 6:66 *From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. 67 Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? 68 Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. 69 And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.* We mention all of this from JOHN 6 because all of these events would be hard to forget, so next, as we go to JOHN 21, and find seven of Jesus disciples back at the Sea of Galilee where certainly what they had previously witnessed Jesus do there would be in the back of their mind. This also was the place where they had first met Jesus, so they had a lot of memories of being with Jesus on, and around the Sea of Galilee.

Again keep in mind that the Apostle John wrote The Gospel According to St. JOHN about fifty-five years after Jesus death and resurrection. This means he had fifty-five or so years to ponder these things in his mind. When the Holy Ghost finally inspired the Apostle John to write his twenty-one chapters, John wrote about a few the events he witnessed with his time with Jesus. In 1 JOHN 1 the Apostle John continued to try and express how it was being with Jesus Christ the Son of God for the three plus years he was privileged to follow Jesus as one of His closest disciples. Note these thoughts that were no doubt in his mind all the time even fifty-five plus years later as we read some verses from 1 JOHN 1. 1 JOHN 1:1 *That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; 2 (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) 3 That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. 4 And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.* John here was remembering how he personally saw Jesus, touched Jesus, felt His breath, and heard His heart beat as he laid his head upon Jesus breast (JOHN 13:25). It seems here that John was still pinching himself realizing the unique opportunity that was his to hang out with Jesus, The Word of Life, for over three years. John here was still enjoying Jesus fellowship, and encouraging us to also enjoy Jesus fellowship.

JOHN chapter 21 records an event after Jesus resurrection during the seven weeks before Pentecost, and deals in a large part how Jesus instructed Peter, but realize also that the other present Apostles here also learned much from this instruction. A few days earlier during His second appearance unto His disciples in JOHN 20:22, Jesus had encouraged them to receive the Holy Ghost, which would be sent unto them on the day of Pentecost. I know you all have read and studied JOHN 21 many times before. We are going to look at it again from a slightly different perspective, which will augment, and enhance what you have already learned about JOHN 21. When we get finished studying this chapter we will see that this day found in JOHN 21 was a turning point for Jesus disciples, especially Peter. Before this day they were loosing their focus on what was important, and what they were called to do in these days before Pentecost. Needless to say this day recorded in JOHN 21 was a day they never forgot.

JOHN 21:1 *After these things Jesus shewed himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias; and on this wise shewed he himself.* (We find the name "Jesus" sixteen times in this chapter. Sixteen is the number of LOVE, and this whole chapter highlights the agape love of God Jesus showed Peter, and the other six disciples in this chapter. Three times in this chapter Jesus asks Peter "...lovest thou me," and three times Peter answers "...thou knowest that I love thee." Each subsequent asking of this question took Peter into a deeper understanding of Jesus love. There are seven "He saith" statements made in JOHN 21, and five of these are Jesus words, and two are Peter's. Eight times in JOHN 21 Jesus is called "Lord." One of the meanings of the number eight is RESURRECTION, and we are discussing what is noted in JOHN 21:14 *This is now the third time that Jesus shewed himself to his disciples, after that he was risen from the dead.* Additionally there are six "me" statements made in reference to Jesus in this chapter; four of these statements are "lovest thou me," and two are "follow me," and "follow thou me." And there are several other mentions of "Jesus" in this chapter as: "He," "Himself," "His," "Him," and "thee." Thus we should realize the

focus of this chapter is upon Jesus, and how He continued to encourage His chosen Apostles to follow Him.)

JOHN 21:2 *There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples. (There are seven disciples of Jesus mentioned here, all were fishermen.)*

JOHN 21:3 *Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee.* (Note here that Peter was the spokesman here, and the one who had manifest himself as their ring leader. Six of Jesus disciples here followed Peter's leading. Whose leading are we to follow? David, who wrote the 23rd PSALM, knew that it was the Lord that leadeth him by the still waters, and leadeth him in the paths of righteousness. Jesus disciples weren't there yet. They had not yet fully embraced the teaching to one hundred percent following the leading of the Lord. We will see later in JOHN 21 how the Lord encouraged Peter, and thus the other disciples, to follow Jesus. Here in JOHN 21:3 we find that...) *...They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately; and that night they caught nothing.* (I encourage you to read Sister Bodie's commentary on JOHN as she presents some additional insights concerning this situation. One of the things she points out is how Jesus disciples had travelled with Jesus for the last three plus years, and Jesus had taken all the responsibility for their care upon Himself. They hadn't had to provide for themselves during this time. This is something we don't think much about, but truly Jesus had supplied their every need during their three plus years with Him. Now that Jesus was risen from the dead, and no longer physically traveling with them, they had come to the place where they needed to learn that they must believe God themselves for the needs of the day and hour. This is one of the things the Lord Jesus Christ Himself taught them when He gave an example how to pray, which many still recite as the Lord's Prayer. MATTHEW 6:11 is the verse I am referring to here, which states: *Give us this day our daily bread.* Millions will recite this every day, and still don't believe that He is the One who meets our needs.)

(Something else to notice here in verses 2 & 3. There is no mention of Jesus beyond "His disciples" in verse 2. How many of you do a task, or go to work, or go to the store, etc. without asking the Lord to prepare the way, and go with you, and before you; to help you through you day? We find no record here in verse 2 and 3 of Jesus own disciples asking the Lord to prepare their way, nor did they ask for His help here as they went fishing. We find no mention by them of Jesus here period. No wonder they caught nothing. What did Jesus tell His disciples on the night of the Last Supper? We read this in JOHN 15:5 *I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.* I believe they proved Jesus words to be true here in JOHN 21:3 for without Him *...they caught nothing.*)

JOHN 21:4 *But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore: but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus.* (Remember that Jesus had told His disciples on the night of the Last Supper in MATTHEW 26:32 *But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee.* But since Jesus had already made several appearances unto His disciples after His resurrection, it seems that they didn't expect to see Him here again. But they should have been looking for Jesus to appear unto them in Galilee, for as we noted earlier Jesus already made an appointment with them, to see them in Galilee, and He made this appointment on the day of His resurrection. We read this earlier in MATTHEW 28:7 *And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you.* ...9 *And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him. 10 Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me.* This statement of Jesus in MATTHEW 28:10 is an appointment is it not? Yet they weren't expecting to see Jesus when they went fishing up in Galilee. As noted earlier, we don't read of these disciples praying to the Lord asking for His help here either. It seems they were caught up so much with their own agenda that any thought of the Lord was the farthest thing from their mind. PSALMS 94:11 informs us: *The LORD knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity.* JEREMIAH 29:11 further explains the Lord's thinking: *For I know the thoughts that*

I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. So we find here in JOHN 21:4 that even though Jesus disciples here weren't looking for the Lord Jesus, nor looking for His help in the common everyday things of life, He was looking out for them. He always does.)

JOHN 21:5 *Then Jesus saith unto them, Children, have ye any meat?* (Note Jesus here addresses them as "children" in a similar fashion as He addressed them in JOHN 13:33. Next Jesus asked them like He did on the night of His resurrection: "*have ye any meat?*" Still it didn't register with them that it was Jesus on the shore asking these questions. Why didn't they know Him? We have already answered this question above; they didn't know Him because they were not expecting to see Him here even though He had already made an appointment on the day of His resurrection to meet them in Galilee. Where do you expect to see Jesus? The true racecourse runners are looking unto Jesus, and we see Jesus in everything, and every situation in our lives, knowing that He is the Author and Finisher of our faith, who before the foundation of the earth ordained our steps according to the good pleasure of His will. He enjoys looking out for us every second of every day of our life. Thus we too should see Jesus everyday, everywhere, even in the common things of life, and we see Him by faith, but someday soon we will see Him by sight! But it takes spiritual growth, and the power of the Holy Ghost in our own lives to get to this point where we see the Lord's hand in everything that comes our way.) ...5... *They answered him, No.*

JOHN 21:6 *And he said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find.* (Previously some three plus years earlier, in LUKE 5:4 & 5 we find Peter reluctant to let down his net again after another fruitless night of catching nothing. Here in JOHN 21:6 we find no such hesitation, and perhaps their thinking was, "what do we have to loose. We haven't caught nothing all night, so let's give it a shot.") ...6... *They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes.* (At this moment the Apostle John was the first to realize it was the Lord Jesus who had given these instructions.)

JOHN 21:7 *Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord.* (There are five "it is the Lord" statements in scripture, five being the number of GRACE. EPHESIANS 2:5 states: *...by grace are ye saved...* and EPHESIANS 2:8 further records: *For by grace are ye saved through faith.* The 1912 Weymouth New Testament version of JOHN 1:16 reads: "For He it is from whose fulness we have all received, and grace upon grace." *It is the Lord...* defines the Lord Jesus Christ, grace upon grace, who came to earth, and dwelt among us full of grace and truth according to JOHN 1:14 & 1:17. Interestingly we only read the word "grace" four times in the gospel of JOHN, and all for times are found between JOHN 1:14 to JOHN 1:17. But the Apostle John also knew, and wrote in JOHN 1:14 *And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.* JOHN 21:7 is the fifth time in scripture we read this statement: *It is the Lord...* a statement of GRACE! It was the Apostle John here in JOHN 21 that first recognized that it was Jesus, who was making His third appearance unto His disciples after His resurrection. The last recorded words of the Apostle Peter are found in 2 PETER 3:18 *But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.* This day recorded in JOHN 21 was a day in the life of Peter when he grew greatly in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ! Stated another way, Peter here in JOHN 21 received blessing after blessing, bounty upon bounty, grace upon grace, and so do we day after day! The King James Version of JOHN 1:16 also tells us this: *And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace...* or grace upon grace.)

JOHN 21:7 *Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his fisher's coat unto him, (for he was naked,) and did cast himself into the sea.* (Prior to this moment in time Peter had experienced several sleepless nights since the arrest of Jesus, and this fruitless night of fishing here in JOHN 21 was another sleepless night for Peter. Now that John had recognized, and announced, "It is the Lord," it seems here that Peter couldn't wait to see Jesus. We see here in JOHN 21:7 that there was no dress code on these fishing ships, so Peter put on his best available upper garment, the fisher's coat, and threw it over his waist cloth, and tucked it into his girdle in order to appear before the Lord

in the best clothes he had. Peter then did cast himself into the Sea of Galilee. Since the time of LUKE 22:61 & 62, when moments before Peter had denied the Lord Jesus Christ for the third time, and the cock crew, where we read: *And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. 62 And Peter went out, and wept bitterly.* Since that time until here in JOHN 21 Peter's emotional life had, as it were, sailed a tempestuous sea with many a sleepless night. Peter, no doubt, knew the facts of MICAH 7:18 & 19, which reads: *Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. 19 He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.* Peter also knew what was written in JEREMIAH 31:34, and the last part of this verse reads: *...Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.* Christ died for our sins on Calvary. Jesus had already forgiven Peter for this transgression, but Peter hadn't forgiven Peter, until now. So here in JOHN 21:7 Peter cast himself into the Sea of Galilee knowing full well that the Lord Jesus Christ had compassion upon him, and had cast all of his sins into the depths of the sea of forgetfulness never to be remembered anymore! By casting himself into the sea here Peter was leaving his old fisher's life behind, and was finally embracing what Jesus had first told him in LUKE 5:10 *...And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men.*)

(Sister Bodie here writes this concerning what is written in JOHN 21:7: "The ship was not fast enough for this exuberant, ecstatic soul. His Lord, for whom his heart had longed, was waiting yonder. That meeting is not described. We wish it were. Maybe it was too sacred, as Peter poured out his tale of repentance that he had not waited for the Master." {End of quoting Sister Bodie.} She makes mention of this for it was Peter's idea to go fishing here in JOHN 21, and the other six disciples followed Peter's leading. And keep in mind that this now was the fourth appearing unto Peter of Jesus since His resurrection. The Lord Jesus Christ knew the prominent place Peter would have among the Kingdom Apostles once endued with the power of the Holy Ghost, so we get a tiny glimpse as to how the Lord lovingly continued to encourage Peter after His resurrection. The whole chapter of JOHN 21 expresses the Lord's love, and encouragements to Peter to continue to follow the Lord. This would be the only way Peter would be able to catch men, but it would also take the enabling power of the Holy Ghost, which Peter would receive on the day of Pentecost. The whole chapter of JOHN 21 records the turning point for Peter, after which he fully followed the path the Lord had put him on back in LUKE 5:10.)

JOHN 21:8 *And the other disciples came in a little ship; (for they were not far from land, but as it were two hundred cubits,) dragging the net with fishes. 9 As soon then as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread.*

(The Lord had once again already provided a warm meal for His hungry disciples. This was going to be a breakfast like none other! Did Jesus disciples here recall the five thousand men, plus women and children being fed with the young man's lunch of five barley loaves, and two small fishes a few months before in the nearby by field of Galilee? Did Jesus disciples here wonder where these fish came from? Remember in verse 3 that they themselves had caught nothing. Did Jesus disciples here remember what Jesus taught them in JOHN 6:47 & 48? JOHN 6:47 & 48 -- *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. 48 I am that bread of life.*)

JOHN 21:10 *Jesus saith unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now caught.*

(Recall what Jesus said to His disciples the day the five thousand men, plus women and children were fed with the young man's lunch of five barley loaves, and two small fishes. MATTHEW 14:17 *And they say unto him, We have here but five loaves, and two fishes. 18 He said, Bring them hither to me.* Here in JOHN 21:10 did Jesus words trigger the memory of the multitude being fed? Why did Jesus say here in JOHN 21:10 *...Bring of the fish which ye have now caught... ?* We must realize that Jesus, the Master Teacher, was always teaching His disciples a spiritual lesson, and His focus wasn't upon earthly things, but rather upon heavenly things. He would use earthy

things to illustrate the heavenly. Here the fish, which were now caught were really the Lord's fish, which He allowed them to catch. They caught nothing without His help. These fish were really the gift of the Lord, which He allowed them to catch with His help. Jesus disciples certainly recognized this.)

JOHN 21:11 *Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to land full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three: and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken.*

(In LUKE 5:6 Peter had followed the Lord's command and caught a great multitude of fish, so much so that the net was being strained unto the breaking point. LUKE 5:6 & 7 *And when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake. And they beckoned unto their partners, which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink.* Obviously their net didn't break as we also noted above, otherwise they would have lost this multitude of fish. And their net was so full of fish that it filled two ships to the point that they were about to sink! Luke records this of Peter in LUKE 5:9 *For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken: 10 And so was also James, and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men. 11 And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him.* Now after Jesus resurrection we find here in JOHN 21 these same disciples, especially Peter, once again strongly encouraged to follow Jesus. Here in JOHN 21:11 we find one hundred fifty-three fish caught in the net, and special mention is made that the net wasn't broken. And it was ...*Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to land full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three: and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken.* Notice here that Peter drew the net full of one hundred three fish up to the shore, and the reason why only Peter was mentioned here is because it was Peter's fishing trip. Peter was the one who said in verse 3 "I go a fishing." The other six just joined Peter on Peter's fishing trip. Sweetly here after His resurrection Jesus by His actions reminds Peter of what he said in LUKE 5:10 -- ...*Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men.*)

(What is the lesson being taught in these two passages of scripture of LUKE 5, and JOHN 21? There are several lessons taught here, and one of them takes us back to the time when we did our meaning of the Bible numbers study so many years ago. There we found that the number one hundred fifty-three pointed us to the Apostle Peter in at least three ways. In the two portions of scriptures we have read here we find a net crammed full of fish. In ACTS 4:8 we read this statement: *Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost,...* . The thought expressed here is that Peter was filled, like a net crammed full, of the Holy Ghost.)

(Another lesson being taught in these two portions of scripture is that these fish were being used by Jesus to represent the men Peter, and the other Apostles would catch for the Lord. Not one fish is recorded as lost. When captured in the net of Jesus love, and salvation, none is lost. Jesus said in His Lord's prayer unto God the Father: JOHN 17:12 *While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled.*)

(Back here in JOHN 21 Peter was not yet fully equipped, or prepared to catch men, but was being encouraged by our risen Saviour on how to catch men. It would take the power of the Holy Ghost to equip Peter, and the other Kingdom Apostles with the boldness needed to proclaim: ...*Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost...* ACTS 2:38. Further here we must remember what Jesus told these very same disciples on the night of the Last Supper. JOHN 15:16 *Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.* Had Peter truly already embraced these most Holy words of Jesus, Peter would have asked God the Father in Jesus name to fill his nets with fish prior to going fishing here in JOHN 21, but no record is mentioned of Peter, or the other disciples doing this. Perhaps they did, and if so their request was answered, wasn't it? It was Jesus who filled their nets with fish. It is God the Father who gave us

Jesus who fills our all in all. EPHESIANS 1:22 & 23 says it like this: *And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, 23 Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.* Keep in mind Jesus had called, and appointed His disciples, these who went on to become Kingdom Apostles, to a life long task, and that task wasn't catching fish, but rather catching men. Here in JOHN 21 they were not yet equipped for the task of catching men, but upon the day of Pentecost, when they would be filled (like a net crammed full) with the Holy Ghost, then would they be able to catch men; that is adding daily to the church daily such as should be saved. When they got to this point they also knew it was the Lord who was doing the adding here. {Study ACTS 2:47.}

JOHN 21:12 *Jesus saith unto them, Come and dine. And none of the disciples durst ask him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord. 13 Jesus then cometh, and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise. 14 This is now the third time that Jesus shewed himself to his disciples, after that he was risen from the dead.*

(This was the third time Jesus appeared unto these disciples as a group, but on the day of His resurrection Thomas was there, so it would be the second appearance of Jesus unto Thomas since His resurrection. Also Peter was appeared to twice on the day of Jesus resurrection, so this would be appearance number four of Jesus unto Peter since the day of His resurrection, and as we progress with these seven weeks between Jesus resurrection, and Pentecost, we will see some further appearances by Jesus unto His disciples. But this third appearance in JOHN 21 unto Jesus disciples that the Apostle John records here was the one that got them re-focused as to what they were called unto. Again Jesus words of JOHN 15:16 come to mind: *Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.*)

(Let's discuss for a few moments these words red-letter words of Jesus JOHN 21:12 ...*Come and dine.* In simplest terms this means to take a meal, which in this case was breakfast. We find the word "dine" three times in scripture, and all three times point to a sumptuous meal, which satisfied hungry stomachs. How would you like to have a feast with the Lord of lords, King of kings, the blessed and only Potentate? Such a meal, and the close fellowship with Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour, would also satisfy a hungry soul, would it not? We have the opportunity feed our hungry soul daily by feeding upon The Word of God. *Come and dine!* Answer for yourself how often you have a feast with the Lord of lords, King of kings. We find in scripture those who feed upon milk, and those who feast upon the strong meat. The meat we are referencing here speaks of the richness of God's word, and ...*the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ...* spoken of in ROMANS 15:29. Paul's gospel also magnifies the depths of ...*the unsearchable riches of Christ...* (EPHESIANS 3:8). *Come and dine!* The Corinthian Saints were not ready to feed upon spiritual meat when Paul wrote to them in 1 CORINTHIANS 3:1 & 2 *And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. 2 I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.* Again in HEBREWS 5 Paul wrote: 12 *For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. 13 For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. 14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.* The Apostle Paul wrote the Apostle Timothy two letters that we have left for us in scripture, and encouraged his son in the faith, Timothy, to continually partake in a spiritual feast, writing in 2 TIMOTHY 2:15 *Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.* In simplest terms, the strong meat we find in scripture comes through the magnifying glass of Paul's gospel. *Come and dine!*)

(Let's examine another thought of feeding upon the word of God in a little more depth. The children of Israel wandering in the wilderness for forty years was allowed of God to teach us many practical lessons in trusting God. Had the children of Israel really believed God like they should,

their time wandering in the wilderness could have been reduced to just a few days. Yet for forty years God sustained them in the wilderness. He gave them food to eat, and specific instructions on when, and how to gather it. This food was called “manna.” Interestingly we find the word “manna” exactly nineteen times in scripture, and nineteen is the number pointing to FAITH. “Manna” is also a type to us of The Word of God, which is also another name for Jesus the true giver and sustainer of life. The word of God is our spiritual food. Of course the Apostle Paul knew the importance of feeding upon the word of God, for he wrote much about it, and noted this connection to FAITH in ROMANS 10:17 *So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. Come and dine!*)

(One more thought about this portion of JOHN 21:12 *...Come and dine...* brings us to the thought of **meditating** upon The Word of God. **Meditate** as I am using it here means to think upon, and really to think deeply upon; to reflect upon; to ponder; to consider; to muse, and of course we are talking about continually feasting upon The Word of God. The Lord spake unto Joshua (in JOSHUA 1:8) on what to **meditate** about. JOSHUA 1:8 *This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.* The book of the law was the only scripture Joshua had to follow as he led the children of Israel into the promised land of Israel. The Apostle Paul wrote Timothy, his son in the faith, and a fellow Church Apostle the following words of encouragement found in 1 TIMOTHY 4. 1 TIMOTHY 4:13 *Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. ...15 Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all.* These encouragements spoken unto Joshua by the Lord, and written unto Timothy by the Apostle Paul, are also encouragement to us on how to *...Come and dine!* Nine is the number that points to DIVINE COMPLETENESS, and nine times in the PSALMS we find the word **meditate**, which gives us nine more encouragements on how we can become a full overcomer, and the divinely completed Bride of Christ, who has spent many hours with Him answering His call to *...Come and dine!* PSALMS 1:1 *Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. 2 But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.* PSALMS 63:6 *When I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches.* PSALMS 77:12 *I will meditate also of all thy work, and talk of thy doings.* PSALMS 119:15 *I will meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways. ...23 Princes also did sit and speak against me: but thy servant did meditate in thy statutes. ...48 My hands also will I lift up unto thy commandments, which I have loved; and I will meditate in thy statutes. ...78 Let the proud be ashamed; for they dealt perversely with me without a cause: but I will meditate in thy precepts. ...148 Mine eyes prevent the night watches, that I might meditate in thy word.* PSALMS 143:5 *I remember the days of old; I meditate on all thy works; I muse on the work of thy hands.* Finally let's look at one more of the fourteen times where we find the word “**meditate**” in scripture. This takes us to GENESIS 24, and anytime we look at a verse in GENESIS 24 always remember the story in that chapter is about a bride for Isaac, which to us is a type, or a picture of the story of a Bride for Christ. GENESIS 24:63 *And Isaac went out to meditate in the field at the eventide: and he lifted up his eyes, and saw, and, behold, the camels were coming.* Our beloved Saviour, and soon coming Bridegroom, has been **meditating** for a long time on the joy that was set before Him as He endured the cross. In GENESIS 24:63 it was in the evening when Isaac saw the camel train coming bearing his wife Rebecca, who had made herself ready to be his wife. We are living in the closing evening hours of the Church Age when the Holy Ghost will have finished the work necessary for the Bride of Christ to make herself ready. She is making herself ready right now by yielding to the Holy Spirit's leading as she continually **mediates** up Christ Jesus, The Word of God.)

(Next in JOHN 21:15-19 we have probably the best discussion between Jesus, and one of His disciples ever recorded. That disciple is Peter, and these words changed the course Peter was on forever. For the typical teaching on this please read Sister Bodies study book on JOHN.)

JOHN 21:15 *So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto*

him, Feed my lambs. 16 He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. 17 He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

(You notice in this portion that the subject matter being discussed here is love, and what level of love Peter had for the Lord. The subject of love is expressed in degrees in these verses, and we have been taught much on this subject of love in numerous sermons. We are going to say quite a bit about these three verses, and the degrees of love found here, which are agape or agapao love, divine love in other words, and phileo love, which expresses a fondness, but not always an enduring love. With that in mind let's read again JOHN 21:15-17 noting the different Greek usages of "love" found in these three verses.)

JOHN 21:15 So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest (agapao) thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love (phileo) thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. 16 He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest (agapao) thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love (phileo) thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. 17 He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest (phileo) thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest (phileo) thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love (phileo) thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

(The deepest kind of love is agape love, or agapao love, which expresses the kind of love God the Father has for His Son Jesus Christ, and is the same love God also has for the human race in general. Agapao, and agape are numbers 25 and 26 respectively in The Strong's Greek Concordance, and have the same meaning we just defined. Sister Bodie notes that agapao love stands for love as a principle, a love guided by deliberate purpose and discrimination, a part of the essence of the life, not moved by whim, or caprice. Caprice means a sudden and unaccountable change of mood or behavior. Such is not the quality of full overcoming agapao, or agape love. This agapao love is what Jesus was asking Peter about when Jesus said in JOHN 21:15 *...lovest thou me more than these?* "More than these" what? "More than these" reference any of the other loves of our life. In other words Jesus was asking Peter, Simon, son of Jonas (a dove), *...lovest thou me more than...* your friends here; more than fishing; more than any of these?)

(We read in 1 JOHN 3:1 *Behold, what manner of love (agape) the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.* Can you truly find words to express what kind of love, what degree of love God the Father has bestowed upon us? Can you further imagine what kind of divine love, what degree of Divine love brought God the Father to the point that he could give His only begotten Son unto this sinful world, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life (JOHN 3:16)? And the answer to these questions is no, there is no way we can begin to fathom God's immeasurable love for us. The Apostle John is the one recording this conversation between our risen Saviour, and Peter, so he too thought a long time about this question of love. After years of pondering this question on *...lovest thou me more than these?* John wrote in 1 JOHN 4:8 *He that loveth (agapao) not knoweth not God; for God is love (agape).* ...16 *And we have known and believed the love (agape) that God hath to us. God is love; (agape) and he that dwelleth in love (agape) dwelleth in God, and God in him.)*

(There is further no way we can fully appreciate Christ's love of us either, and it was His deepest Divine love for us that brought Him to earth in the first place, to redeem us from our sins by dying the cruelest of death upon the cross of Calvary. To become a joint-heir with Christ we have to tap into this agape Divine love of God. You may think this is impossible, but the Apostle Paul tells us differently. We read in ROMANS 5:5 *...the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.* Paul is talking about agape love here. Agapao love is also found in many statements made by our Apostle Paul, such as is found in ROMANS 13:8 *Owe no man any thing, but to love (agapao) one another: for he that loveth (agapao) another hath fulfilled the law.* In

EPHESIANS 3 Paul prays for us that we may highly value, and show others this agapao love. EPHESIANS 3:14 *For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, 15 Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, 16 That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; 17 That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, (agape) 18 May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; 19 And to know the love (agape) of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.* In Jesus words to the church of Ephesus found in REVELATION 2 we read: REVELATION 2:4 *Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.* This first in value love expressed here is agape love, which the Ephesian church had once held in highest esteem, but had now left. They once had it, and left their agape love. Christ Jesus must become our first love; our first in value love; our love above all other loves. Stated another way, the Bride of Christ will have this kind of love for Jesus, and God the Father; an inexpressible love at a pinnacle far above all other loves. The Apostle Paul was moved of the Holy Ghost to express this highest pinnacle of love in the following words of COLOSSIANS 1. COLOSSIANS 1:18 speaks of Christ, saying: *And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.* That word “preeminence” here comes from the Greek word proteuo {prote-yoo’-o}, number 4409 in The Strong’s Greek Concordance, which is only used one time in scripture, and means: might be first in rank, dignity, honor, praise, and love. Christ is to thus have pre-eminence and first place in our hearts, in the thoughts and contemplations of our minds, in the desires of our souls, and in the highest praises of our lips. In short He is to be our first-love; first in everything love; ...*that in all things he might have the preeminence.* The Apostle Paul also wrote in 1 THESSALONIANS 5 how we can express our gratitude for such love: 1 THESSALONIANS 5:16 *Rejoice evermore. 17 Pray without ceasing. 18 In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.* With Christ Jesus foremost in his mind, the Apostle Paul also wrote another expression of pre-eminent love for Him with these words found in COLOSSIANS 3:17 *And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.* Stated another way, agape, and agapao pre-eminent love is never ceasing, never ending, unmovable, and always abounding with thanksgiving. One more scripture that Paul wrote to Timothy in 2 TIMOTHY 4 expresses this agapao love we have been talking about. 2 TIMOTHY 4:8 *Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that (agapao) love his appearing.* Yes we can have, and must have agape and agapao love in order to be in the Bride of Christ!)

(Realize also as we go through this portion of scripture in JOHN 21 that Peter, or any of the other Kingdom Apostles, were never offered the opportunity to be in the Bride of Christ! But thank God you and me have this opportunity, only if we follow Paul as he followed Christ. Only the Apostle Paul espoused you to one husband, Christ. Paul tells us this in 2 CORINTHIANS 11:2 *For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.* We are to follow Paul, not Peter. Again in ROMANS 7:4 it was our Apostle Paul who wrote: *Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.* Peter wasn’t revealed this bridal message, and Peter even wrote in 2 PETER 3:15 & 16 -- *And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; 16 As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood,...* . Peter’s gospel message was kingdom teaching, and so was Jesus gospel message! The Gospel of the Kingdom references the Jews line of thinking, and teaching, which were along the lines of the kingdom of God on earth, that is Christ’s reign with Israel over the nations. That will take place in the millennium, and kingdom teaching is exactly why these very same disciples of Jesus were found asking Him in ACTS 1:6 (about ten days before Pentecost) ...*Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?* What wasn’t manifest yet at that time was this Church Age we are now

living in. The Gospel of the Church was given unto the Apostle Paul to preach about the heavenly calling that we have in Christ Jesus. That is why only the Apostle Paul writes such statements as found in PHILIPPIANS 3:14 *I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus*. The high calling of God in Christ Jesus is not part of Kingdom teaching. The Apostle Paul *...expounded and testified the kingdom of God... ..Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence...* as ACTS 28:23 and 31 plainly tell us. But Paul's gospel message went way beyond preaching the kingdom of God on earth, for Paul also preached the of *...His heavenly kingdom...* in 2 TIMOTHY 4:18, and of *...the high calling of God in Christ Jesus...* in PHILIPPIANS 3:14, and he preached about the gospel of His glory in 2 CORINTHIANS 4:4, and 1 TIMOTHY 1:11. Paul preached about meeting the Lord in the air in 1 THESSALONIANS 4:17, and reigning with Him in 2 TIMOTHY 2:12; a sugkleronomos joint-heir with Christ in ROMANS 8:17. Where will the Bride of Christ be seated in heaven? EPHESIANS 2:6 states: *And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus*. Christ Jesus sits at the right hand of the throne of God, and His wife, who hath made herself ready by yielding to the divine guiding power of the Holy Ghost, will sit at Christ's right hand. What is expressed in COLOSSIANS 3:1 can be stated like this: *"Seeing then that ye are risen with Christ, and seated with Him in the heavenlies, we should focus upon, and seek those things which are above."* The Kingdom Apostles were not given this message to preach, but the Church Apostles were given Paul's gospel message to preach. Study the Gospel of the Kingdom tract on the Living Waters Tabernacle website, which was taken from the last pages of the ACTS study book written by Brother Copley, in order to learn the differences between what the Kingdom Apostles taught, and what Paul's gospel message teaches. Paul's gospel message tells us how to get ready to be in the Bride of Christ, Peter's doesn't. And since we are discussing the differences between what Paul taught, and what Peter, and the other Kingdom Apostles taught, what do the majority of Bible teaching churches teach, and preach today? I will give you a hint, they don't teach the bridal message that the Apostle Paul did. The whole church is not going to be in the Bride of Christ, and we have many times mentioned this previously. How many churches today preach, or teach ranks in the resurrection? Very few teach this, because they haven't been taught this, thus they do not know this, and they further do not know this because they fail to rightly divide the word of truth according to 2 TIMOTHY 2:15. Rightly dividing the word of truth is an individual effort. Here is what 2 TIMOTHY 2:15 *Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.* So many huge organized assemblies are governed by committee, or boards of out of state directors, whose goal is increased membership numbers to the intent of bringing in millions of dollars, and not to prepare a rib portion of Saints to be in the Bride of Christ. The majority of Christians from this Church Age will end up in the rank of the innumerable multitude mentioned in REVELATION 7:9-17. The whole church is not the Bride of Christ as the majority of Christians believe. There are ranks in the resurrection. Look also at the tract on our website entitled Ranks in the Resurrection for further information on this topic.)

(Back to JOHN 21:15-19, and the deep discussion between our risen Saviour Christ Jesus and Peter. Peter, and the other Kingdom Apostles already knew their place in eternity, for Jesus had told them in MATTHEW 19:27 & 28, and in LUKE 22:28-30 the following. LUKE 22:28 *Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. 29 And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; 30 That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.* The fact that Jesus Christ would have His Bride by then was a foreign concept to Peter, and the other eleven Kingdom Apostles.)

(We are not progressing very fast here in discussing this most important day in the life of these seven disciples recorded in JOHN 21, where Jesus once again appeared unto them after His resurrection. It took the Apostle John about 55 years to even write of this event, and he was the only disciple to do so, thus we must also realize that we should also spend some time reflecting upon the importance of this day. So as we put ourselves in their time frame let's remember that this particular appearance by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ recorded in JOHN 21 was about in the middle of an

eight-week span between the beginning of Passion Week, and the day of Pentecost. On the night of the Last Supper, less than twenty-four hours before Jesus was crucified, the following conversation took place between Jesus and Peter as we continue reading in LUKE 22. LUKE 22:31 *And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: 32 But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. 33 And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death. 34 And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me.* We discussed this passage at length earlier in this study, and noted that Jesus knew that Peter would be the leader among the Apostles after Jesus death, so the attack Peter faced from Satan would be the greatest for Peter out of all the Apostles. And we know that this was the case for Peter. The Lord told Peter in LUKE 22:31 *...Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat.* These loving words of our Saviour were spoken to Peter before Peter bragged on himself saying: *...Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death.* We know before the rooster crowed in the early morning, Peter did emphatically deny the Lord three times. (There are a lot of “threes” involving Peter, a point we will discuss further a little later in this study.) Peter had no idea as the Lord spoke these words *...Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat...* what Peter was capable of. Peter relying on Peter thought it impossible to deny the Lord three times before morning. Jesus was pointing out a spiritual lesson to Peter here, and emphasizing a point Jesus had just taught Peter, and His eleven disciples a couple of hours earlier, which is found in JOHN 15:5 *...for without me ye can do nothing.* Peter not only didn’t realize yet what Peter was capable of, but Peter didn’t know that Satan couldn’t do nothing to Peter without first getting permission from God the Father, just the same as it was for Job. We know Job to be a man of faith, an Old Testament hero of faith, and Job’s trial of faith lasted about a year. Peter wasn’t there yet, but God was going to allow Peter to be sifted as wheat to prove Peter, to bring Peter to the point that he would no longer depend upon Peter, but to put his one hundred percent confidence in the Lord. So as Brother Hawkins pointed out in his LUKE study book, “God will use Satan as an instrument to separate the flesh from the spirit.” Peter was sifted as wheat for several weeks. In today’s world we have a term that describes a little of what Peter went through after denying Jesus, and witnessing His crucifixion. We call it PTSD, post-traumatic stress disorder, which is triggered by a terrifying event, either experiencing it, or witnessing it. Deny Christ, and witnessing His death certainly put Peter in this frame of mind. Peter also knew the cure, for Jesus had told him in LUKE 22:32 *...But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.* Certainly it was comforting for Peter succeeding days to remember Jesus words spoken only to him: *But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren!* But up to this point in time in JOHN 21, Peter wasn’t yet able to strengthen the other disciples. We noted previously that the word “converted” here is not a reference to a sinner being converted, for as we have previously noted, Peter was already saved. The word “converted” as used here means: to turn around, to bring back, or to come back. It means that the Lord was praying that Peter would be turned from going his own way after having denied Jesus. This event recorded in JOHN 21 was the push Peter needed from Jesus so that Peter could strengthen the brethren. And remember also this was the fourth appearance Jesus had made to Peter after His resurrection. With these thoughts in mind we return to this turning point day in the life of Peter recorded in JOHN 21.)

JOHN 21:15 *So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. 16 He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. 17 He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.*

(During this breakfast meal do you suppose there was conversation between Jesus and these seven fishing disciples of His? We are not told one way or the other. It’s hard to eat a meal without

having fellowship. Jesus had spent the last three plus years of His life here on earth before being crucified having fellowship with these His closest followers. Certainly here at this breakfast He had prepared for them there were no complaints to be heard. Probably a lot of inward soul searching was taking place by these disciples at this point in time. Jesus always had a purpose in mind as He made His appearances after His resurrection. *So when they had dined...* Jesus attention turns to Peter as He begins to instruct Peter by asking Peter some deep soul searching questions. All in attendance also heard Jesus words to Peter. *Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?* In simple terms Jesus was getting Peter to realize who and what was first in his life. I wonder if Peter had ever spent much time considering this. Jesus knew exactly what was going on in Peter's heart, and perhaps Jesus was getting Peter to recall what he had expressed earlier in this Galilee region after the multitude was fed with the five loaves and two small fishes. We read this earlier in JOHN 6:66 *From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. 67 Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? 68 Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. 69 And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.* Here in JOHN 21 was Peter still thinking *...Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life... ?* Well Peter here in JOHN 21:15 was now considering this again, and he answered the Lord *...Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee.* The Greek word used here to express "love" by Peter is different than agapao, or agape, used by Jesus earlier in this verse. Here the Greek word Peter uses is phileo, number 5368 in The Strong's Greek Concordance, is to be distinguished from agapao, or agape in that phileo more nearly represents tender affection. According to Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words: phileo is never used in a command to men to love God; it does however suggest the love that values, and esteems, and according to Vine's is an unselfish love, ready to serve. There are degrees of phileo love, which was what Peter was realizing in his answers here in JOHN 21. When Peter answers here *...Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love (phileo) thee...* he was saying that he was sure he loved Christ heartily; but whether he loved Jesus more than the rest did, Peter chose not to say. Jesus told His disciples, Peter being present in JOHN 15:13 *Greater love (agape) hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.* That is the epitome of agape love!)

(Jesus, who is the Good Shepherd of JOHN 10 fame, who has now *...given His life for the sheep...* (JOHN 10:11) now begins to highlight in Peter's heart, a thought that would take Peter's mind off of fishing, and off of his fellow disciples, off of his own troubles, when Jesus says to Peter in JOHN 21:15 *...Feed my lambs.* Peter probably blinked a couple of times as Jesus tenderly put Peter back on the proper course for Peter's life. The tiniest of sheep, the newborns, are the lambs. They need tender loving care. New born-again believers are likened unto newborn sheep. To *...Feed my lambs...* here means to give nourishment from The Word of God. The Greek word translated "feed" here is bosko, number 1006 in The Strong's Greek Concordance. Obviously it would take the power of the Holy Ghost in Peter's life to provide the proper nourishment from The Word of God. Jesus here was assuring Peter that he was indeed called to the shepherding of Jesus sheep, which was the work to which Peter was first destined back in LUKE 5:10 when Jesus said unto Peter: *...Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men.* Starting in ACTS 2 Peter got to preach to a lot of lambs, and Lord willing we will get to that chapter as we continue examining what Luke wrote us in scripture.)

(Back here in JOHN 21 Jesus wasn't yet through with Peter, for Peter had a ways yet to go. Perhaps Peter here truly wished that he wasn't the one on the hot seat. But Peter was the one who had three times denied Jesus before the rooster crowed on the morning of Jesus crucifixion, so here Peter would be requested by our risen Saviour to answer the same thought provoking question three different times, and each time Jesus was probing a little deeper into the heart of Peter, and in turn Jesus questions to Peter also probed the hearts of His other disciples that were present, and intently listening to this conversation. So we read in JOHN 21:16 *He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest (agapao) thou me?* Basically this was the very same question Jesus had just asked in verse 15, but note the difference here, and how Jesus was narrowing down to the point

He was trying to make unto Peter. *Simon, son of Jonas, lovest (agapao) thou me?* Nothing else was mentioned to distract Peter's thinking here, for the Lord wanted Peter to only be thinking of Jesus, ...*lovest thou me?* No mention is made of more than these here. So Jesus was here asking Peter a more pointed question, yet Peter gives the exact same answer that he did in verse 15: ...*Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love (phileo) thee.* When Peter answers here ...*Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee...* he was saying that he was sure he loved Christ heartily, and had a strong personal affection for Jesus.)

(Jesus then instructs Peter here in JOHN 21:16 with a little stronger language: ...*He saith unto him, Feed my sheep.* In the previous verse Peter was told to ...*Feed my lambs...* but here the Greek word for "feed" is different than the word "feed" in the previous verse. Here the Greek word for "feed" is *poimaino* {Strong's Greek number 4165}, which means more than to just give nourishment from The Word of God to the lambs, but also to minister the care, guidance, and protection, which a shepherd extends to his flock. One commentator wrote: "by the use of both of these words," {*bosko* in verse 15, and *poimaino* in verse 16} "it is supposed that our Saviour intended that a shepherd was both to offer the proper food for his flock, and to govern it; in other words to exercise the office of a pastor. The expression is taken from the office of a shepherd, with which the office of a minister of the gospel is frequently compared. It means, as a good shepherd provides for the wants of his flock, so the pastor in the church is to furnish food for the soul, or so to exhibit truth that the faith of believers may be strengthened and their hope in Christ confirmed." The sheep speak of those more mature, more full grown, than just a tender little newborn lamb. Recall here also what Jesus told these very same disciples on the night of the Last Supper in the previous weeks, a statement, which is found in JOHN 15:16. Jesus said in JOHN 15:16 *Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.* The Greek word translated "ordained" here is *tithemi*, number 5087 in The Strong's Greek Concordance, which here in their case means: to appoint to the office of a Kingdom Apostle. We find the word "ordained" thirty-seven times in scripture, and thirty-seven is the number that is associated with THE WORD OF GOD. So we find here in JOHN 21:16 that Peter was being given a refresher course on what he was appointed to do; what he was ordained of God to be, and that is a Kingdom Apostle of Jesus Christ our Lord! His job going forward would include everything an Apostle, a shepherd, a pastor would be expected to do, that being ...*Feed my sheep.* Stated another way, a pastor is to ...*Feed my sheep...* with the spiritual food found in THE WORD OF GOD. By the time we get to ACTS 6, perhaps seven years after Pentecost, Peter was among the twelve Apostles who said, ...*it is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. 3 Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. 4 But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word...* ACTS 6:2-4. So we see that in order for an Apostle, or a pastor, or even a teacher to be able to properly feed the Lord's sheep, their food source must be THE WORD OF GOD.)

(And taking this one step further in Peter's life, we find near the end of his life Peter wrote ten times in his two epistles references to THE WORD OF GOD. Ten is the number of RESPONSIBILITY ACCORDING TO ABILITY, and we learned in studying about this number that our responsibility to believe God, to put our faith and trust in God, and it is God's responsibility to preform what He said according to His infinite, unlimited, above all that we could ask or think, ability. Here are a few of these ten statements Peter wrote about THE WORD OF GOD. 1 PETER 1:23 *Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. ...25 But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.* 1 PETER 2:2 *As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.* {This is indeed Peter answering Jesus instructions to him in JOHN 21:15 ...*Feed my lambs.*} 2 PETER 3:3 *Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, 4 And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. 5 For this*

they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: 6 Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: 7 But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. Thus we see that Peter did indeed heed Jesus instructions on how to feed the sheep. Now back to JOHN 21.)

JOHN 21:17 *He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.*

(This is the third time Jesus asked Peter, *...Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?* We noted previously that there are a lot of “three’s” associated with Peter. For starters Peter is found to have three names in scripture, and the most used name for Peter is Peter, which is found 162 times in scripture. His second most common name is Simon called Peter, or Simon Peter, or Simon, whose surname is Peter, or Simon the son of Jona, or Simon Barjona {MATTHEW 16:17}, and three times here in JOHN 16 Simon, son of Jonas. Simon means: the hearer. We noted earlier that Jonas means dove, the symbol associated with the Holy Spirit. Peter’s third name found six times in scripture is Cephas. Jesus gave Peter this name in JOHN 1:42, which reads: *And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone.* Let’s discuss this point of Peter being called “a stone” further.)

(There is a very important doctrinal point Jesus makes in MATTHEW 16, which is misunderstood by many concerning what Jesus told Peter about how Jesus was going to build His church. Brother Hill went over this in his last sermon of March 6, 2005. MATTHEW 16:16 *And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.* {This is Peter’s confession of faith accepting Jesus as his personal Saviour.} 17 *And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. 18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.* Was Peter called a rock, or a stone? 1 CORINTHIANS 10:4 explains a fact that DEUTERONOMY 32 expounds upon, and that is: *...that Rock was Christ.* Peter, a stone, knew that the Rock Jesus spoke about in MATTHEW 16:18 was Christ. Brother Hill explained it like this: “Peter you have just confessed me as your personal Saviour. On that testimony, on that statement I am going to build my church.” Peter understood what Jesus said, and what Jesus meant, and on the day of Pentecost began building that church, for after Peter’s sermon pointing the hearers to Christ the solid Rock, about three thousand souls were saved. {ACTS 2:41}. Study 1 PETER 2:6-8 and see that Peter writes of Christ being the chief corner stone, a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence.)

(So Peter has three names in scripture, and we know that on the night of Jesus betrayal three times Peter denied Jesus before the crowing of the rooster early in the morning. Another point of three associated with Peter is found in MATTHEW 17:1-5 where we read of Jesus transfiguration witnessed by Peter, James and John. Note what is said in MATTHEW 17:4 & 5 -- *Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. 5 While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.* Moses figured the law, Elias (Elijah) the prophets, and of course Jesus the Son of God was the Saviour, whose name is above all names, whom God here highlighted to Peter, James and John by saying *...hear ye him.* Stated another way, God here was instructing them that the Law pointed to Christ, the Prophets pointed to Christ, and you are to follow Jesus Christ: *...hear ye him.* Later in his life in ACTS 10 Peter was three times encouraged in a vision to realize “*what God hath cleansed, that call not thou common...*” ACTS 10:15 and 16. In the recent weeks before the events of JOHN 21, we read in the three chapters of JOHN 14, 15, and 16 Jesus encouraging His disciples concerning the importance of receiving the Holy Ghost. As we progress later in this study with what Luke wrote concerning Peter we find that he was imprisoned three times, which Luke notes in ACTS 4:3; ACTS 5:18; and ACTS 12:4. Associated with these

three imprisonments was the fact that the Lord also three times released Peter from prison. So we have noted there are a lot of three's associated with Peter. Now here in JOHN 21 we find Jesus asking Peter three times in three different sentences this same question: ...*Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?*)

(In JOHN 21:17 we find after being asked by Jesus ...*the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me?* Forty times in scripture we find the word "grieved," and we know the number forty points to PERFECT TESTING. Certainly our risen Saviour Jesus Christ was here putting Peter to the perfect test, and to be the Kingdom Apostle Peter would become, Peter had to pass the test. The Greek word translated "grieved" here in JOHN 21:17 is *lupeo*, number 3076 in the Strong's Greek Concordance, and here it seems to point out that it means Jesus third time asking the same question caused Peter to be affected with sadness, realizing he had before three times denied he knew Jesus. Recall also what we previously learned about the words "lovest" and "love" in this verse Jesus uses the same word that Peter has been using to express "love," which is *phileo* love, {number 5368 in the Strong's Greek} which expresses a fondness. God's love, and the love Jesus Christ has for us, that kind of love that brought Him to the cross to die for our sins is *agape* or *agapao* love, divine love in other words. But here in verse 17 Jesus says ...*the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest (phileo) thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest (phileo) thou me?* So did Peter ever get to the point he could experience, or express *agape*, or *agapao* divine love? We find the answer to this question in 1 PETER 1, which are Peter's own words, which it took the inspiration, and the power of the Holy Ghost prevalent in Peter's life for him to write the following: 1 PETER 1:3 *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. 6 Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: 7 That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: 8 Whom having not seen, ye love; (agapao) in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: 9 Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls. ...18 Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; 19 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: 20 Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, 21 Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God. 22 Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love (agapao) one another with a pure heart fervently: 23 Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.* Notice in this portion that we find Peter not only encourages the reader to embrace the *agapao* love of God, but also Peter here encourages the reader to live life's of faith, which is something Peter himself had not yet experienced in the time frame we are studying about in JOHN 21. It was the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and His sending the Holy Ghost fifty days later on the day of Pentecost that gave Peter the power in his life to express *agapao* love, and to fully embrace what it is to live by the faith of the Son of God. Truly this is a powerful portion of scripture that the Holy Ghost inspired Peter to write.)

(Back here in JOHN 21:17 during the time frame of the fifty days between Jesus resurrection, and Pentecost, *phileo* love was all Peter could express at this time, for it took the power of the Holy Ghost in Peter's life to bring out the *agapao*, *agape* divine love. JOHN 21:17 *He (Jesus) saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest (phileo) thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest (phileo) thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love (phileo) thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.* The Greek word

translated “feed” here is bosko, number 1006 in The Strong’s Greek Concordance, the same word translated “feed” in verse 15. Obviously it would take the power of the Holy Ghost in Peter’s life to provide the proper nourishment from The Word of God to feed Jesus’ sheep, just the same as to feed Jesus’ tender newborn lambs. At this particular point in time a few short weeks before Pentecost, Peter would not yet be filled with the power of the Holy Ghost, yet Jesus was instructing Peter here to use THE WORD OF GOD to feed His sheep, and we will find when we get to ACTS 1 that Peter, even before the day of Pentecost, was finally able to do this. It would take the power of the Holy Ghost in Peter’s life, and in all of the Apostles lives, to “feed” [poimaino {Strong’s Greek number 4165}, which is the Greek word used in JOHN 21:16], which means more than to just give nourishment from THE WORD OF GOD to the lambs, but also to minister the care, guidance, and protection, which a shepherd extends to his flock as we noted in our discussion above of verse 16. Thus the bottom line in Jesus using both bosko, {twice verses 15 & 17} and poimaino {in verse 16} in expressing the feeding of both the new born lambs, and the feeding of the more mature full grown sheep is this: both the newborn Christian lambs, and the full grown, and growing Christian sheep both need to feed upon the basics of THE WORD OF GOD, which is both necessary, and to be a constant, and to have the foremost place in both teaching, and preaching, and is how the Holy Spirit will cause learning to take place in the hearts of the hearers. Thus Jesus told Peter these three time to feed my lambs, feed my sheep, feed my sheep. Study the verses in ISAIAH 28:9-13 that expounds upon this same thought explaining how knowledge, and doctrine are learned summarized in: ISAIAH 28:10 *For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little.* This is how we grow in in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ that Peter himself wrote about in 2 PETER 3:18. We don’t learn it all in one day, or at one sitting, but we do learn one concept at a time, one precept at a time, precept built upon precept, line upon line; here a little, and there a little. And remember also that these very same disciples were also taught by Jesus that when the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, would come, which happened on the day of Pentecost, that he would teach them all things {JOHN 14:26}, and guide them into all truth {JOHN 15:13}, and the truth is THE WORD OF GOD, who is Jesus, who came to us full of grace and truth. We need THE WORD OF GOD in order to grow up into Him in all things as explained in EPHESIANS 4:15!)

(One more thought that emphasizes the importance of THE WORD OF GOD is the word “grow,” which is found in thirty-seven verses of scripture. Again thirty-seven is the number associated with THE WORD OF GOD. Paul writes the word “grow” once, which is found in EPHESIANS 4:15 *But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ.* Peter writes the word “grow” twice, which finishes the thirty-seven verses where we find the word “grow.” Remember as we read these next two verses that Peter wrote that in JOHN 21 it was our risen Saviour who instructed Peter to “feed my lambs” and to “feed my sheep.” Peter wrote in 1 PETER 2:2 *As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.* This is how to “feed my lambs.” Think of it like this: desire the sincere milk of THE WORD OF GOD that ye may grow spiritually thereby. Then in 2 PETER 3:18 Peter wrote how to “feed my sheep” when he wrote: *But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.*)

(As we read, and study the rest of JOHN 21, realize that as Jesus gave Peter these instructions of His, He was also instructing the other six disciples present, but again Peter was the one here in the hot seat, so to speak. And as was pointed out earlier by Jesus in LUKE 22:32, it was Peter whom the Lord would prominently use to strengthen the other Kingdom Apostles. LUKE 22:32 *...But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.* It’s been a while since we discussed the word “strengthen” here in LUKE 22:32, which comes from the Greek word sterizo {stay-rid'-zo}, number 4741 in The Strong’s Greek Concordance, and means: to stablish, to strengthen, to make firm, to make stable, to establish, to place firmly, to set fast, and to fix. In LUKE 22:32 Peter was instructed by the Lord Jesus to *...strengthen thy brethren.* Peter used this same word sterizo {stay-rid'-zo} in 1 PETER 5:10 where it is translated “stablish.” 1 PETER

5:10 *But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.* Interestingly Peter here also is inspired by the Holy Ghost to use another Greek word for “strengthen,” which is *sthenoo*, number 4599 in The Strong’s Greek Concordance, found only this one time in scripture, and speaks to the strengthening of one’s soul. The thought of how this can be accomplished is also expressed by our Apostle Paul in PHILIPPIANS 4:13 *I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.* Jesus Christ is indeed THE WORD OF GOD, thus we find how Peter also strengthened his brethren, and encouraged their soul’s, it was by pointing them also to THE WORD OF GOD, who is ...*Christ which strengtheneth...* His followers! And again as we progress through this time frame found in JOHN 21, Peter was not yet fully equipped to strengthen his brethren, for Peter was not yet filled with the Holy Ghost. But when Peter was full of the Holy Ghost he truly did strengthen his brethren. Peter then was able to “feed my lambs,” and “feed my sheep” by the leading power and guidance of the Holy Ghost.)

JOHN 21:18 *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. 19 This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me.*

(Here Jesus wasn’t yet finished bringing to Peter a remembrance of what Peter had said, and really bragged about concerning how Peter thought he was ready to die for the Lord. The statement Peter had made is found in LUKE 22:33, but let’s first read it in context. LUKE 22:31 *And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: 32 But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. 33 And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death. 34 And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me.* Peter was the one who proclaimed that he was ready ...*to go with thee, both into prison, and to death.* So here in JOHN 21:18 and 19 the Lord pulls back the curtain of Peter’s future for a moment ...*signifying by what death he should glorify God.* The Lord had told Peter here in JOHN 21:18 ...*but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not.* Peter is being told that when he is old he will die an unnatural death, be carried by force to a place he does not want to go, and die. Peter is not told how old he would be when this would happen. In JOHN 21:19 the Apostle John adds that Jesus spoke this ...*signifying by what death he should glorify God.* Since the Apostle John wrote this around 90 A.D. it seems to me that John would have heard how Peter died, as historians had Peter dying during the reign of Nero. Nero died in 68 A.D. so Peter died before Nero did, and history records that Peter died somewhere between the years of 64 A.D. - 68 A.D. Tradition claims that Peter died by crucifixion, and his cross was hung upside down. Whether this is true or not only God knows. History however verifies that the death of Peter certainly glorified God as Peter’s fame continues on today, and what he is famous for is being a witness of Jesus Christ as our risen Saviour had stated in LUKE 24:48 *And ye are witnesses of these things.* We must here also acknowledge what a tender loving Saviour we have, and did Peter here really appreciate being shown ...*by what death he should glorify God?* It seems this information passed right over Peter’s head at this moment in time, but in the days ahead, especially after being filled with the Holy Ghost, Peter embraced his foreordained path that he was to walk. And praise the Lord we too are benefiting from the lessons Peter learned, and the lessons Peter taught.)

(JOHN 21:19 ends with this specific encouragement stated unto Peter by our risen Saviour: ...*And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me.* We know Peter was the leader of the pack called the Kingdom Apostles, and if Peter followed Christ, the Lord knew the rest of them would also. Let’s go back three plus years in time to the point when Jesus first met Peter, a story that is recorded in MATTHEW 4:18-20. MATTHEW 4:18 *And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. 19 And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. 20 And they*

straightway left their nets, and followed him. We see here that Peter had been following Jesus since the day Peter had first met Jesus. Now here in JOHN 21:19 Jesus repeats this same encouragement: **...Follow me.** There are nineteen New Testament verses where we find the phrase **“follow me.”** Ten of these **“follow me”** statements are made by Jesus. Ten again is the number of RESPONSIBILITY ACCORDING TO ABILITY, and nineteen is the number associated with FAITH. We follow Jesus, we follow the leading of the Lord in other words, by faith. We know that the subject of faith is highlighted in HEBREWS 11, and in HEBREWS 11:6 we find this statement: *But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.* Here we find our instructions on how to become a New Testament full overcomer, which is our RESPONSIBILITY ACCORDING TO ABILITY to follow Christ, to diligently seek Him is how to follow after Christ by FAITH. Peter and the other Kingdom Apostles had for more than three years followed Jesus, step by step, in the flesh, but now here in JOHN 21:19 Jesus was emphasizing to Peter to continue to **“follow me!”** At this moment it had not yet dawned on Peter how he was going to continue to do this, to continue following Jesus, for now Jesus was no longer physically walking with them as He was now risen from the dead. In order for Peter to continue following Jesus he would have to do so by faith, and it would take the leading and guiding of the Holy Ghost for Peter, and the other Apostles to continue to **“follow me”** as Jesus instructed Peter here in JOHN 21:19. Peter and the other disciples had truly followed Jesus, and went ever where Jesus had gone during His earthly ministry, which was the unique opportunity they had these past three plus years of their lives. The Old Testament Saints walked with God by faith, but for Peter and his fellow disciples to continue to **“follow me”** as Jesus instructed from this point forward in their lives would be different for them. Nevertheless they were to continue to **“follow me”** as Jesus instructed. Our Brother in the Lord, Luke, documented in the first twelve chapters of ACTS how Peter, and the other Kingdom Apostles did follow Jesus, and once they received the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost the leading of the Lord by the power of the Holy Ghost was mighty in their lives. One scripture that backs up this fact is found in ACTS 4:33 *And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all.)*

(As for you and me, we are given the following instructions by our Apostle Paul, which truly align with Jesus instructions to Peter found here in JOHN 21:19. Paul writes in 1 CORINTHIANS 11:1 *Be ye **followers** of me, even as I also am of Christ.* Earlier in 1 CORINTHIANS 4:16 Paul stated: *Wherefore I beseech you, be ye **followers** of me.* In PHILIPPIANS 3:17 Paul encouraged the racecourse runners with these words: *Brethren, be **followers** together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.* In his very first epistle written unto those of the church of the Thessalonians Paul wrote the following: 1 THESSALONIANS 1:5 *For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake.* 6 *And ye became **followers** of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost:* 7 *So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia.* How did the Thessalonians follow Paul? They didn't literally follow him everywhere he went, but they followed his example of faith just as he wrote in HEBREWS 13:7. HEBREWS 13:7 *Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: **whose faith follow**, considering the end of their conversation.* In other words Paul is saying to be mindful of those who have been entrusted of the Lord to be your pastors, your shepherds. Their responsibility is to “feed my lambs; feed my sheep” just as the Lord instructed Peter in JOHN 21:15-17. Here in HEBREWS 13:7 Paul is writing to follow the faith of those who have presented unto you THE WORD OF GOD, like the Apostle Paul did unto every church he went. The Thessalonians only had Paul around for a short while, yet they became his followers, that is they followed his example of faith in following the Lord. Back in EPHESIANS 5:1 Paul wrote: *Be ye therefore **followers** of God, as dear children.* And one more encouragement that Paul wrote is found in HEBREWS 6:12 *That ye be not slothful, but **followers** of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.* Are you following the leading of the Lord in your life? If you are truly

following the instructions given us in THE WORD OF GOD, especially Paul gospel message, then you are following the Lord.)

We are not yet through examining this appearance by Jesus Christ unto seven of His disciples that the Apostle John wrote about in JOHN 21. Here is what the Apostle John wrote next after Peter was instructed by our risen Saviour to **“follow me.”** JOHN 21:20 *Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee? 21 Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? 22 Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me.*

(Let's notice something here in verse 20, and that being that John, the disciple whom Jesus loved is pointed out here to already be **following** Jesus. It seems that Jesus and Peter are now walking, and John is **following** them. The Greek word used in this portion of scripture translated both **“follow,”** and **“following”** is *akoloutheo* {ak-ol-oo-theh'-o}, number 190 in The Strong's Greek Concordance, which expresses both metaphorically, and literally an union of two or more going side by side down the same path together, thus it speaks to one going in accompaniment with the one who precedes him. As we have been discussing, we are to walk this path in **following** Christ, in **following** Paul as he **followed** Christ by faith. That is why the Holy Spirit left us nineteen **“follow me”** verses in scripture, nineteen being the number pointing to FAITH. JOHN 21:20 *Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following... .* Who was John **following**? Peter, or the Lord? I believe the answer is John was **following** Jesus. Jesus here was encouraging Peter to be this same kind of close follower of Christ as John was; to walk in unison with the Lord. And once again it takes the leading, and guiding of the Holy Spirit in our lives to make this happen.)

(JOHN 21:22 records the last red-letter words spoken by Jesus in the book of JOHN. Essentially these are Jesus last instructions spoken specifically unto Peter. In JOHN 21:19 Jesus had just told Peter to **“follow me.”** Peter, like all of us sometime do, then got distracted from what the Lord had just told him to do, and started asking questions about John, who wrote of himself as *...the disciple whom Jesus loved*. There are several lessons we can glean from these three verses of JOHN 21:20-22. Peter was just told by our risen Saviour to **“follow me,”** that is to follow Jesus, and immediately Peter asks Jesus, well what is John supposed to do? Realize that we can only walk with the Lord by ourselves. In other words we as individuals must make our own choice to follow Christ. Certainly we want all we know to join us, but the bottom line is that only we can make this choice to go on with the Lord for ourself. Yes Peter wanted to know what the Lord had in store for John, but that wasn't Peter's business; it was the Lord's business. We know John had to make his own choice to **“follow me,”** to follow Christ, and we know that he did so. But the Lord here was getting Peter to focus upon his Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to turn his life over to the leading of the Lord, and to **“follow me”** as Jesus had instructed him to do. Peter was going to be the leader among the Kingdom Apostles, and so was John, but each of them had to first follow Jesus, and His well designed plan for their individual lives. Peter and John went on to compliment each other in the ministry Jesus had appointed them to do, which was to catch men, to win souls for Christ. If Peter was going to focus upon what John was going to do, or John was going to focus upon Peter was going to do, both would have missed out on what God the Father wanted them to do, which was to follow Jesus! Both Peter and John would have already read what is stated in JEREMIAH 10:23, which reads: *O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.* Furthermore Peter and John would have also known what is stated in PROVERBS 3:5 & 6 -- *Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. 6 In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.*)

(The encouragement we should learn here is that we can't run someone else's race, and that there are many distractions out there in the world that can take our eyes off of following after God's best. And God's best for us is to win Christ as Bridegroom! We must see to it in our own lives that the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lust of other things, don't enter into our own hearts, and choke out THE WORD OF GOD, and we end up missing God's best. {Study MARK 4:1-20.} Peter here in our text of JOHN 21:20-22 was focusing on earthly things, and his

fellow man, so ...*Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me.* David was an Old Testament worthy of faith, whose Godly mother had taught him from an early age to follow the Lord, and to put his trust and confidence only in the Lord. David himself wrote much about this in the PSALMS. One PSALM that David certainly knew, and perhaps even wrote is PSALM 121. PSALM 121:1 *I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.* 2 *My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth.* 3 *He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber.* 4 *Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.* 5 *The LORD is thy keeper: the LORD is thy shade upon thy right hand.* 6 *The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night.* 7 *The LORD shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul.* 8 *The LORD shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore.* Peter also knew this PSALM, and as we just read in this PSALM is the instruction on how to follow the Lord from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord. David did write PSALM 34, another masterpiece on how to follow the Lord, and here is some of what he wrote in PSALM 34. PSALM 34:1 *I will bless the LORD at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth.* 2 *My soul shall make her boast in the LORD: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad.* 3 *O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together.* 4 *I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.* ...6 *This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.* 7 *The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.* 8 *O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him.* 9 *O fear the LORD, ye his saints: for there is no want to them that fear him.* ...15 *The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry.* ...18 *The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.* 19 *Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all.* 20 *He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken.* Certainly David knew how to follow the Lord, which is why he is listed among the Old Testament worthies of faith found in HEBREWS 11. If we are to be found among the New Testament worthies of faith discussed in HEBREWS 11:40 through HEBREWS 12:2 then we too must follow the leading of the Lord in our own lives; to do what Peter was instructed to do in JOHN 21:22 ...*follow thou me.* Paul wrote in HEBREWS 12:2 how to do this: *Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.)*

JOHN 21:23 *Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die: yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?* 24 *This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his testimony is true.* 25 *And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen.*

(It seems that the Apostle John out lived the other eleven of the Kingdom Apostles. It also seems that the Apostle John wrote his five New Testament books after 90 A.D. meaning he had thought for over fifty years about the privilege that was his to have been a disciple of Jesus for three plus years, and a follower of Christ for sixty some years before he wrote his scriptural records. John himself marveled at all he had witnessed, and expressed this in a portion we have read before in 1 JOHN 1. 1 JOHN 1:1 *That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life;* 2 *(For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;)* 3 *That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.* 4 *And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.* In JOHN 1:14 the Apostle John wrote: *And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.* It is like John these sixty some years later is still pinching himself realizing that he had handled the Word of Life, beheld the glory of the Son of God, had laid his own head upon the breast of the Lord Jesus, and

had truly seen all that he wrote about. Here in JOHN 21:24 John testifies that the testimony that he himself wrote of Christ is true. Perhaps none of the other disciples were alive to dispute John's words by the time he put them on paper in around 90 A.D. yet John wanted us all to know that his testimony was true. The Holy Ghost is witness to our own hearts that John's words are indeed truth. And just as John had wrote at the conclusion of JOHN 20, he again ends JOHN 21 stating that there is no way the world could contain the books that could be written of the many things Jesus did during His time here on earth, nor is there any way the Apostle John himself could write any more than he did even after thinking about it for over sixty years! No wonder then that our Apostle Paul wrote in EPHESIANS 2:8 how it would take the ages to come for God to show us the exceeding riches of His grace and kindness towards us through Christ Jesus. We have a lot to look forward to in eternity. But for right now while we are still on the earth, how much do we also treasure our time with Jesus? How many books of testimony could we write on what the Lord has done for each of us?)

We are still examining some thoughts about what happened during the fifty days between Jesus resurrection, and Pentecost. In ACTS 1 we read that Jesus made several appearances for the first forty of these fifty days. What we have just covered in JOHN 21 is one day of forty that our risen Saviour Jesus Christ shewed Himself alive after His own passion by many infallible, and undeniable proofs witnessed by more than five hundred plus people in these forty days. We also made mention that Jesus probably didn't miss a day during these forty days when He didn't show Himself to someone, or a group of His disciples but most of this is not covered in scripture, for again there wouldn't be enough room to contain all of this information in many books, thus we just have highlights from a few of these appearances. We haven't yet covered all of Jesus appearances after His resurrection that are recorded in scripture during these forty days. We did go over the five separate appearances Jesus made on the first day of His resurrection. And how He appeared eight days later to the eleven in JOHN 20:26-29. And in JOHN 21 how Jesus made this appearance unto seven of His disciples on the Sea of Galilee. This appearance was probably about two or three weeks after His resurrection because Galilee lies about seventy miles north of Jerusalem, and Samaria separates Judea from Galilee, and that Judea, Samaria, and Galilee are like states in the country of Israel, so it would take some travel time to get there, and the disciples did hang around Jerusalem for at least a week after Jesus resurrection according to what we have previously studied. Also recall that Jesus had told His disciples on the night of the Last Supper in MATTHEW 26:32 *But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee.* Here Jesus was speaking unto the eleven disciples present that night, but in JOHN 21, which we just studied, Jesus had appeared in Galilee to only seven of His disciples. So since Jesus always told the truth, we must expect to find that He would make another appearance unto the eleven disciples sometime in this forty day time frame when He showed Himself alive by many infallible proofs as is stated in ACTS 1:3. Remember also in MATTHEW 28 on the first day of His resurrection that we find the angel of the Lord telling the women who first came to the empty tomb these words recorded in MATTHEW 28:7 *And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you.* (Note that the angel didn't say they would see Him today in Galilee, because as we learned previously Galilee is seventy plus miles North of Jerusalem, at least a two days journey, if not more.) Thus we come to the last words recorded in MATTHEW, which reveal Jesus appearing in Galilee unto the eleven remaining disciples. Take note also in your own studies of MATTHEW, that Matthew, the writer of MATTHEW doesn't spend a lot of time going over the various appearances of Jesus after His resurrection, with the exception of His appearing first unto the women who came very early to the sepulchre. As we again read in the paragraph above, Matthew does go over one of the appearances Jesus made unto His disciples when they went back into Galilee.

MATTHEW 28:16 *Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. 17 And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted.*

Notice here that the eleven remaining disciples did go up to Galilee into a predetermined mountain Jesus had "appointed" to meet them. The Greek word translated "appointed" here is tasso, number 5021 in The Strong's Greek Concordance, and here means the place where Christ had

appointed a meeting with His disciples in Galilee after His resurrection. Jesus disciples knew where this mountain in Galilee was, and they knew when they were to meet Him there. Verse 17 notes that some doubted, however this doesn't mean some doubted of the eleven remaining disciples. There were always more than Jesus twelve disciples traveling with him, and quite often there would be a multitude following Jesus, and the word got out where in Galilee this mountain was where Jesus would appear until His disciples. It is thought that the statement Paul made in 1 CORINTHIANS 15:6 was a reference to Jesus being seen on this mountain in Galilee after his resurrection. 1 CORINTHIANS 15:6 *After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep.*

What Jesus said unto His disciples upon this mountain in Galilee is only recorded here in MATTHEW. And before we read these last red-letter words of Jesus recorded in MATTHEW, let's recall something. All for gospel records are divinely inspired by God according to 2 TIMOTHY 3:16 & 17, and it was under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost that all scripture is written. Recall also that the Holy Ghost inspired Matthew to paint a portrait in his gospel record of Christ as King. Sister Bodie entitled her commentary of MATTHEW as The Biography of The King. These last three verses of MATTHEW points to the time when Christ will reign as King. When will that time be? Christ will reign as King, King of kings, and Lord of lords, during the yet to come Kingdom Age, which is the Millennium. With this understanding that MATTHEW 28:18-20 speaks of the Kingdom message, let's now read these verses.

MATTHEW 28:18 *And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*

There is a lot of information conveyed in these three verses, and the majority of what Jesus said here is prophetic, and pertains unto the regathering of Israel from the world, and setting up Christ's Kingdom, which will happen in the Millennium, the coming Kingdom Age when Christ will reign as King of kings, and Lord of lords. Let me ask a couple of questions: Did Jesus eleven remaining Apostles teach all nations? The answer to this question is no they did not. Did Jesus eleven remaining Apostles baptize *...in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost...* ? Again the answer to this question is not they did not. Let's examine this point further.

The Kingdom Apostle's, Jesus eleven closest followers did baptize, mostly Jews, and certainly they didn't baptize all nations, and when they baptized, they baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. This started on the day of Pentecost mentioned first in ACTS 2. As you are aware Peter preached his first Holy Ghost inspired sermon on the day of Pentecost, and thousands of Jews from all over the world heard him. At the end of his sermon we read in ACTS 2:38 *Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.* Three verses later we read in ACTS 2:41 *Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.* Next let's go to ACTS 8 and find what was happening at Samaria about seven years later. ACTS 8:14 *Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: 15 Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: 16 (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) 17 Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.* Some time later in ACTS 10 we find Peter going to the house of a Gentile named Cornelius, where Peter first learned that God is no respecter of persons, (ACTS 10:34), and Peter then preached them a sermon. This is the only time in scripture that we read of Peter preaching to the Gentiles. We will pick up the story in ACTS 10:43 *To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins. 44 While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. 45 And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.* (How did they know these Gentiles

were filled with the Holy Ghost? Verse 46 answers this question.) *46 For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, 47 Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? 48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord.*

In all of these examples (and there are other examples we didn't look at) we find Jesus disciples baptizing in the name of the Lord Jesus, not baptizing *...in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost...* as is found in MATTHEW 28:19. The reason that they didn't baptize *...in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost...* is because they understood it wasn't yet the Lord's ordained time for nations to get saved, it was the time for individuals to get saved. Again Jesus words of MATTHEW 28:19 will happen after the Church Age is over, then MATTHEW 28:19 will be fulfilled -- *Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.* That will be in the Millennium, the Kingdom Age. If you study ACTS chapter 1:3-9 carefully, you will find Jesus instructing His disciples that the time of the Kingdom Age was in the hands of God the Father. ACTS 1:3 *To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God: 4 And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. 5 For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. 6 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? 7 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. (God the Father knows when the time of the Kingdom Age will begin, and that will be after the Church Age is over.) 8 *But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.* (No mention is made here to teaching all the nations is there? But they were to be witnesses to individuals unto the uttermost part of the earth.) 9 *And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.**

Jump ahead to ACTS 15 and find explained Peter's understanding of God's plan, and the message of God for dealing with Gentiles, the non-Jews, individuals from all nations during this Church Age. ACTS 15:7 *And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. (This was at the house of Cornelius in ACTS 10.) 8 And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; 9 And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. 10 Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? 11 But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they. 12 Then all the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul, declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them. 13 And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me: 14 Simeon hath declared how God at the first (for the first time) did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. (Look at this closely. God during this yet present Church Age is visiting the Gentiles, to take out of them a rib portion company that will forever be known as Mrs. Jesus, The Bride of Christ, The Lamb's Wife!!! Truly this is ...a people for his name. Pray that the Holy Ghost will reveal this to you own heart!) 15 *And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, 16 After this (after this Church Age is over, and the Bride of Christ is taken away) I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: (This will happen during the Millennium.) 17 That the residue of men (Israel) might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, (this speaks to Gentiles nationally, not literally to every individual) upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things. 18 Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.* Let me quote*

from Brother Copley's study book here: "Study closely Verses 14-18. People talk of converting the whole world today. They claim very religiously, a whole city for Christ. Despite all the headlines that the whole city turned to the Lord, there is no record of any entire city being saved. The nearest to such a victory was in Paul's time, when *"almost the whole city was gathered together to hear the Word of the Lord"* (ACTS 13:44). But, did all these people who were there believe? If they did, why did they expel the apostles from their midst a few weeks later? Bear in mind that God is only making a visit to the earth during this age, to gather out a Body of people and build a Bride for His Son. Men look in vain for a world-wide revival in view of ushering in a democratic millennium, and that, without Christ!"

We have used a lot of time explain what Jesus said unto His disciples in MATTHEW 28:19, after His resurrection on the mountain He appointed to meet them in Galilee, and what He said there speaks of a time yet future. Make a note in your Bible that MATTHEW 28:19 was never fulfilled, but will be after the tribulation. We explained why in the preceding paragraphs. The last words that are recorded in MATTHEW is this final statement Jesus made in His appearance to His disciples on the mountain in Galilee, which are *...and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen...* ...MATTHEW 28:20. These words were a promise to His disciples, and also a promise to all believers *...lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.* The Apostle Paul wrote this same thought in HEBREWS 13:5 *Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.* Paul here is quoting Old Testament scripture found in the following five verses spoken by three Old Testament worthies of faith. DEUTERONOMY 4:31 *(For the LORD thy God is a merciful God;) he will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers which he swore unto them.* 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.* ...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.* JOSHUA 1:5 *There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.* 1 CHRONICLES 28:20 *And David said to Solomon his son, Be strong and of good courage, and do it: fear not, nor be dismayed: for the LORD God, even my God, will be with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee, until thou hast finished all the work for the service of the house of the LORD.* When Jesus spoke these words in MATTHEW 28:20 *...lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world...* He was reminding His disciples, and us, that even though they would not see Him physically anymore here on earth, yet the fact remained that He was, and is with them (and us) *...unto the end of the world.* By that time we will be with Him forever anyway. So whether we can see Him or not, the fact remains the same as is recorded in HEBREWS 13:8 *Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.* And we do see Him with our eyes of faith because our Apostle Paul was sent to open our eyes according to ACTS 26:18, and he also prayed for us that the eyes of our understanding be enlightened to see Him, and to know Him, and to see our high calling of God in Christ Jesus. {Study EPHESIANS 1:18-21, and PHILIPPIANS 3:14.}

During these forty days of infallible proofs (proofs by which things can certainly be known) spoken of in ACTS 1:3, Jesus made an appearance unto His brother James, which is the same James that went on to be the Pastor of the church at Jerusalem. We know Jesus made a private appearance unto James His brother from what Paul said in I CORINTHIANS 15:7 *After that, he was seen of James...* . By the time the Apostle Paul wrote this he had interviewed James the Lord's brother, a fact he wrote about in GALATIANS 1:19 *But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother.* James the Lord brother, who also wrote the book of JAMES, was not a believer until after Jesus death, and resurrection. We discussed this fact much earlier in in this study {starting on page 42 of these notes} where we noted that while Jesus was dying on the cross he entrusted the care of His mother Mary to the disciple whom He loved, whom we know was the Apostle John. JOHN 19:25 *Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene.* 26 *When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing*

by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! 27 Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home. This transferring the care of His mother Mary to the Apostle John was no doubt a low blow to Jesus brothers, who should of had the care of their mother, but at the time of the crucifixion of Jesus they were not yet believers in Him, and Jesus wasn't about to turn the care of His own mother over to unbelievers. So after His resurrection Jesus appeared unto James His brother, as we read in 1 CORINTHIANS 15:7, and James became a believer in Jesus much the same way the Apostle Paul did. Furthermore Jesus other brothers became believers also, and ACTS 1:14 helps point this out. Starting in ACTS 1:9 *And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. 10 And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; 11 Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven. 12 Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey. 13 And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James.* (These mentioned in verse 13 were the remaining eleven Apostles of Jesus.) *14 These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.* The word "brethren" here in verse 14 means the children of the same mother, and the reference is to Jesus brothers, and no doubt His sisters. Note that they wanted to be with their mother, who happened to also be Mary the mother of Jesus. So Jesus brothers may not have been believers at the time of His crucifixion, but they certainly were by the time of Pentecost some fifty days later. And Jesus mother, and His brothers, and sisters were among the hundred and twenty who got filled with the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost. And after being filled with the Holy Ghost, Jesus then became the focal point, the very center of their lives too. Then they understood why when Jesus was alive that their mother Mary spent her time paying the closest attention to Jesus. And Jesus brothers and sisters went on to become prominent in the early church founded upon the day of Pentecost.

Jude was also one of Jesus brothers, who wasn't a believer until after Jesus death and resurrection. The record we have in scripture of Jesus making an appearance unto Jude after His resurrection, is the one we just read in ACTS 1:3 & 4, &14. ACTS 1:3 *To whom also he (our resurrected Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ) shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God: 4 And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. ... 14 These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.* We have mentioned in this study a couple of times before the remarkable story of how Jude came up with the information we read no where else in scripture. JUDE 1:1 *Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James,...* . This younger brother of Jesus, and James also wrote an epistle where some unique things are mentioned in this short book of 25 verses. Jude mentions in verse 9 of Michael the archangel contending with the devil as he disputed about the body of Moses. In verses 14 & 15 Jude writes: *And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, 15 To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.* Since we don't read these statements anywhere else in scripture, where do you suppose Jude came up with this information? Jesus when growing up with His brothers could have very easily revealed to His own brothers the words spoken by Enoch, and facts about Michael the archangel contending with the devil as he disputed about the body of Moses, even though at the time He made known these facts His brothers didn't believe in Him. Recall that part of the Holy Ghost's job is to *...bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.* These were Jesus

words according to JOHN 14:26. However Jesus knowing the end from the beginning, also knew that after His resurrection His brothers would become believers, and the Holy Ghost would remind them of the words they heard from Jesus as He carried on conversations with them during His many years growing up with them. I believe that is where Jude came up with the information he wrote in his little epistle of JUDE. Thus we find a very happy ending to our story of Jesus brothers reaffirming what is said in ISAIAH 55:11 *So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.*