

FORTY DAYS AFTER THE RESURRECTION

that He will gladly live in your heart—if you will let Him.

“Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee,
How great thou art, How great thou art!”

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(21) “Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week” reads R.S.V. in Matt. 28:1. The text seemingly says that the women came on early Sunday morning. However, the Greek word translated “after” (opse) can also mean “late” as is patently evident in Mk. 11:11, 19; 13:35, which we give in part for study.

Mk. 11:11 “as it was already late (opse)”

Mk. 11:19 “and when evening (opse) came”

Mk. 13:35 “in the evening (opse), or at midnight”

Hence the text may be understood as affirming that “late on the Sabbath” the women came to the tomb, just to see it, with the “ending” of the Sabbath and the “dawning” of Sunday imminent. There was no particular reason why such a visit could not be made. Consider that Mk. 16:1 may be describing part of their activity on (our) Saturday evening, which could have been done while going or coming from the tomb. It is fair to say, however, that this position makes the word “dawning” refer to the beginning of the day, not to the rising of the sun, as is our usage. Thus the text may be understood by some one way and by some another.

We should note that Matthew’s account does not say 1) that the earthquake occurred when anyone was present except the guard, nor 2) that the stone was rolled back to let Jesus out, nor 3) that the soldiers did/did not see

Jesus, nor 4) that the women saw the angel descend and/or roll the stone back. The text does mention that the angel anticipated their (women) fear and sought to allay it. The guards were greatly afraid (the Greek word describing their alarm is the same as in 27:51 describing the earthquake). We wonder in passing how Matthew found out all these things—did God reveal them to him?

As you think now about the resurrection of Jesus, consider that the resurrection means more than spring-time (God ordained seasons in Gen. 8:22, long before any resurrection occurred) and new flowers. It is not simply a symbolic way of talking about immortality (the disciples were not persecuted for believing/preaching in that!). It was not something done in a corner somewhere, unprovable by human methods. Rather, we are to remember "Jesus Christ, risen from the dead" II Tim. 2:8; and glory in the "power of His resurrection" Phil. 3:10; knowing that our preaching is with the power of God in an endless life, Acts 2:29-36; II Tim. 4:1-5; Heb. 7:15-28. It is the surety of judgment and life Jn. 5:28-29; Acts 17:30-31; Rom. 6:1-8; and that which makes our baptism valid, I Cor. 15:19; I Pet. 3:21. It verifies that Jesus is the Master of all, including the sentence of physical death through Adam, I Cor. 15:24-26, 51-57; Rev. 1:17-18; 5:6-14; 22:20. If you can (as suggested in our introduction, either buy a Gospel harmony or make yourself-one), study the following sections together: Matt. 28:2-8; Mk. 16:1-8; Lk. 24:1-11 and Jn. 20:1-10. These are four separate testimonies to the resurrection. Each varies from the others in some respects, though all testify to an tomb empty because of the bodily resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God. No account denies what another affirms, though each relates some events omitted or described differently by others. As examples of what we mean:

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- 1) Mark names three women who came, Matthew names two though not denying others went along, Luke names three and mentions others (see v. 22 also), while Mary Magdalene implies more than herself in Jn. 20:2.
- 2) Matthew does not say when the women came or when the earthquake occurred, Mark says that the women went "very early", the sun having risen, Luke has "early dawn" while John says "early, while it was yet dark." All could be true depending upon the particular time in mind by the writer.
- 3) If we decide that Matt. 28:1 refers to the Sunday morning visit, the women came to see the tomb, though Luke says that the visit was to finish what Nicodemus and Joseph had begun: anointing Jesus' body. The women had bought spices for this very thing. John's account does not specify any purpose, yet no account denies what the other affirms.
- 4) The women do not know how the stone was to be rolled back, but discover that they need not worry, because when they get close enough to see, the stone is already rolled back. We are not told why they were worried about this fact. The question may center around permission to get it rolled back (remember the Roman seal?) rather than who had the physical strength to do so.
- 5) The accounts differ as to exactly what the women did when they arrived at the tomb, Mary Magdalene not being with them because she had left to get Peter and John. Matthew does not affirm or deny entry into the tomb, though the angel told them to "Come and see where Jesus had been lying." Both Mark and Luke affirm entry. Then John, describing only Mary Magdalene's return, relates that she stooped to look in, but does not say she went in. She had not gone up to the tomb on the first visit, but

had turned and ran away to tell Peter and John what she incorrectly assumed when she saw the stone rolled away: the body had been taken.

6) Remembering that Mary Magdalene did not complete the trip to the tomb the first time though later returning after the other women had left (as well as Peter and John having arrived and left), the women saw an angel outside the tomb per Matthew. He does not say anything about angels being inside the tomb. Being instructed by the angel on the outside to "see" for themselves, Luke tells us that the women entered the sepulchre and saw two angels inside (though Mark does not specifically mention but one "young man," he does not deny what the others affirm). John mentions that Mary Magdalene saw two angels when she looked in, though Peter and John did not have angels appear to them. Again, no account denies what the others affirm as true.

7) The women, minus Mary Magdalene, are told approximately the same message by the angel outside and those inside, according to Matthew and Mark, though Luke's account adds the fact that the angels said Jesus had told them of His approaching death, burial and resurrection. John's account only has the angels asking Mary a question. Which denies what the others affirm?

8) When the women, yet minus Mary Magdalene, leave, they are instructed to tell the disciples of Jesus, both by the angels and by Christ Himself, Who met them on their way back. Some have thought there is a contradiction between the accounts, however, for Mk. 16:8 affirms they said nothing to anyone. We might wonder if they disobeyed the message, but Luke vs. 8 and vs. 22-24 flatly say they obeyed exactly. We thus can understand Mark to specifically say that the women told only those whom

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they were to tell, and no one else but. John vs. 18 likewise affirms that Mary Magdalene told the disciples, but does not say she told anyone else.

9) Some find problems with the command by the angels to the women to the effect that they were to go to Galilee where Jesus would meet them. As a matter of fact, the message of the women was not believed, though Peter and John saw the tomb empty. No one really began to accept the truth of Jesus' resurrection until that evening when the testimony of the women, Peter, the two men on the Emmaus road, plus the personal appearance of Jesus convinced them. As a second matter of fact, the disciples did go to Galilee, and Jesus did meet them there, Matt. 28:16-20; Jn. 21:1ff., (which, by the way, is the reason they were there. They did not lose faith in Jesus and decide to go back to the fishing business, etc., as some suggest. But see Jn. 21).

10) The appearance of Jesus to the women on their way back to their homes (or wherever they were going—we do not know where the "disciples" lived whom they were to tell) and the later appearance to Mary Magdalene in the garden have caused some a problem in this way: Matthew vs. 9 relates that the women "took hold of the feet of Jesus." However, this is thought to contradict Jn. 20:17 where, according to the King James version, Jesus told Mary to "not touch Him." The problem is exclusively with the poor translation in John found in the King James version. The reader must remember that 1) the King James version is in English, not in the original language of Greek, and was not translated into English from Greek until 16 centuries *after* the accounts were written in Greek, and 2) *no translation is inspired*. Only the original manuscripts were inspired as they were written by Matthew the apostle, etc. The Greek of Jn. 20:17

has a verb which has various shades of meaning (as do *all* words, to a greater or lesser extent). Consider the following occurrences, with the word italicized translating the Greek word, *haptō*:

Mt. 9:21 "If I only *touch* his garment"

Mk. 10:13 "that He might *touch* them" (note in vs. 16 that Jesus holds them)

Lk. 8:16 "no one who *lights* a light"

Acts 28:2 "They *kindled* a fire"

I Cor. 7:1 "It is allright for a man not to *touch* woman" (the context obviously has in mind a sex relationship)

The basic meaning is to "lay hold of" or "grasp onto," (consider Matt. 8:15 and Mk. 1:31) hence metaphorically to pick up and light a candle or build a fire from wood, or take a partner in marriage. The tense (a present imperative form) in Jn. 20:17 is important to understanding what Jesus said and in understanding the meaning of this word. Mary had grasped Him and was continuing to do so. He told her to "Quit holding on." Likewise in I Cor. 7:1, Paul used a present infinitive to show that marriage was a constant "holding on," i.e. possession of someone.

No account contradicts the other, anyway, even if the translation in the King James were correct, which it is not. Jesus could have had a reason for allowing the women to touch Him while forbidding Mary Magdalene to do so. The women left, both fearful and joyful (note Lk. 24:41), with news they could scarcely believe. We can but wonder with what amazement the disciples whom they contacted listened, doubtless greatly interested but also unbelieving. Have you ever tried to convince someone who refuses to accept that which you know assuredly to be true? Lk. 24:11 has a word translated "idle" in

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R.S.V. that meant something akin to nonsense, wild hysterical talk. That is how it seemed to be. The accounts do not say anything, but one can but wonder what Peter and John said to those whom they saw, especially if they contacted the women or others who had heard the women's story. What effect did Mary Magdalene's story have do you suppose? We are likewise not told when Jesus appeared to Peter (did you note Mk. 16:7?), whether during the morning or later in the day. Perhaps they all did not get together until the meeting in the evening, since Sunday would be a day of work for some, despite the Passover feast. Perhaps the great multitude at the feast prevented the contact with but a few (have you ever tried to find someone at a large gathering?), even if no work was done. Remember: fear of the Jewish hierarchy might have slowed down efforts to reach others until darkness set in, permitting easier movement.

Leaving the accounts of the appearances for a moment, note Matt. 28:11-15. The guards would normally have been put to death (see Acts 12:18-19) for allowing such to happen, or falling asleep on duty. Yet the story they were instructed to tell was exactly that: "We fell asleep, and the disciples (how would they know who it was if they were asleep?) stole Jesus' body while we were asleep."

Incredible! Besides, why steal the body? They had not any reason to do so, nor had the governor said they never could have the body. Who wanted it anyway? And for what purpose would they steal it? Who among the unbelieving disciples would conjure up such a story as they later told, and gave their lives for it?

Treachery — illegality — slander — bribery: but truth would not down! But some closed their eyes and ears, lest seeing and hearing they would believe and be healed, Matt. 13:15. Jesus often wept over the people in Jerusalem because they willed not to receive Him, Lk. 19:41-

44, and challenged them to figure out how they could escape judgment to hell, Matt. 23:33. Yet others were like good soil, and turned the world "rightside up" because of a firm conviction about a resurrected Jesus of Nazareth, God's Messiah.

A chronological outline has been provided in the front of the book. It differs in only one respect from those commonly presented in that Jesus is presented as appearing to the women before the appearance to Mary Magdalene. As a point of discussion, Jesus appeared to Peter, and He may have done so before either of the two appearances in question. The texts do not say one way or the other.

Should the reader be unaware of the textual problem about Mk. 16:9-20, a brief discussion is in order. The student who wishes to really pursue the matter should consult some detailed study like that of Kenyon in his *Handbook to the Textual Criticism of the New Testament*, Lightfoot in *How We Got Our Bible*, the commentary on Mark by Gould or Swete, others of like nature, books on N.T. Introduction, or critical notes in some Greek N.T.

For those who use only the translation known as the King James version, or have a translation that gives only the longer ending of 12 verses, we hereby give the short summary text which some Greek manuscripts have in lieu of the longer text (as in R.S.V.):

"But they reported briefly to Peter and those with him all that they had been told. And after this, Jesus himself sent out by means of them, from east to west, the sacred and imperishable proclamation of eternal salvation."

The problem is many sided, and probably impossible to decide beyond any doubt. The text has been the subject of textual discussions since the second century A.D. We do not suppose we can settle it now. The Greek

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text we use to translate our English N.T. is a result of many men's labors over centuries. There are many copies of Mark's Gospel among the 5,000 Greek manuscripts of our N.T., not to mention the copies in Latin manuscripts, Egyptian, etc. Though the greater part agree together about the rest of Mark, 16:9-20 is not so agreed upon. The manuscripts variously present 1) a short summary ending, 2) a longer ending as is found in the common versions, 3) both endings with indications of uncertainty about which is right if either, 4) neither ending, though some indicate that the person copying the text knew of other endings than that of 16:1-8. Quotations and/or remarks about this portion of Mark by Christian writers of the first 400 years are generally against the genuineness of this text. Thus, *external evidence* for these 12 verses is not very good at all.

Internal evidence is that which deals with what the writer would have (probably) written. Like external evidence, it is subjective, not objective. So no one can say conclusively what the truth is. Internally, the passage of 16:9-20 is:

- 1) in a different style than the rest of Mark,
 - 2) uses words in different ways than in the main text,
- and
- 3) uses words not contained in the main text.

Yet such arguments as these can be countered with the statements that:

- 1) Mark simply quit the more detailed narration and summed up the rest as in the opening verses of chapter 1, or that,
- 2) since the subject matter is different, a. words would be used in somewhat different ways, or b. even new words used (as is the case with Lk. 24 compared to

the rest of Luke) which were not needed before. Thus, the case stands.

We think that the evidence for exclusion is rather more than that for inclusion. No doctrine is lost that is not basically taught other places. No resurrection appearance is found which is not elsewhere.

In regard to the statement that Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene first, we reply, ahead of whom? The mention of the appearance to the other women is left out entirely, as is that to Peter. The appearance to the eleven is not located as to day or time. Mary Magdalene simply is first in the appearances Mark gives.

Consider this idea: The women were close enough to see that the rock that closed the tomb entrance had been rolled back. Mary Magdalene, as the rest, assumed the body had been taken. She turned and left to go find Peter and John. The rest of the women went to the tomb, where they saw the angels, and viewed the empty sepulchre. They left (the text says "ran") with the news of Jesus' resurrection. Mary Magdalene had not yet returned, nor had Peter and John arrived when the women left. They met Jesus on the way back into the city. If they traveled the same road back to the city which Peter and John used to come to the tomb, they met Jesus but did not meet Peter and John, nor Mary Magdalene, since these three did not hear about the resurrection until they had been to the tomb or had left the tomb. Peter and John arrived and left before Mary Magdalene arrived (whether they passed on the way or not is debatable, as are many other things left unsaid). We think because of the time element and the distance involved, Jesus met the group of women going back to the city before Peter and John or Mary Magdalene ever got out of the city coming to the tomb. The only evidence that Jesus appeared first to Mary Magdalene is the statement in Mark, which is questionable

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for several reasons, not only for the integrity of the text itself but also from the nature of the appearances listed. However, no one's salvation depends on the solution to this issue, or to the inclusion or exclusion of Mk. 16:9-20.

Jn. 20:11-18 relates the appearance of Jesus to Mary Magdalene. She arrived at the tomb but no one else was around (as mentioned above, whether or not she met Peter and John on her way back to town is unsaid, but doubtful). Just why the vision of the angels inside the sepulchre made no impression on her is unsaid. Maybe she did not see them well enough to tell that they were angels. Perhaps they did not appear as angels (remember Abraham in Gen. 18)? just then. Who really knows? We are not even sure why she did not recognize Jesus but rather assumed He was the gardner (but the two men on the way to Emmaus did not recognize Him either, and the case may have been with her as with them). Perhaps she was looking for something rather than someone. Often we see in life what we want to see, and do not see what we wish not to see.

Though she neither recognized Jesus' form (did He appear so "human" that nothing noticeable was present?) nor voice the first time, when He spoke again (calling her name) she then realized the person was Jesus. He then forbade her to detain Him, and sent her to the brethren with the message of His ascension. Of course, the fact of His resurrection is also evident, and she added her testimony to that of the other women.

Just what Jesus meant by His expression "My God—your God," "My Father—your father" is in doubt. Perhaps it was His way of differentiating the specific relationships that existed for Him with God, contrasted to the rest, or maybe to impress her with the fact that all sustained similar relationships with the divine being, Who was both *God* and *Father* (remember the instructions in the model

prayers—Matt. 6; Lk. 11?). For us, the passages in Acts 2:36; Eph. 4:8-12; Phil. 2:9-11; and Heb. 6:19-20 come to mind.

Likewise, the second coming as seen in Acts 1:6-11; Col. 3:4; II Thess. 1:5-10 and other passages is also brought to mind.

Trip to Emmaus—Lk. 24:13-35

Great crowds thronged the sacred city, surging up and down the narrow streets and through the temple grounds. Emotions were at a high level because of renewal of friendships, and/or of the religious festivities. Yet among the hundreds of thousands of people in and around the city of peace, some few were in a chaotic state of mind. It was heart-rending enough to watch in unexplainable horror and fascination as the hopes and dreams of a lifetime were rudely pinned to a cross. It was yet more emotionally draining to have some women, joy and fear alternating in their voices and on their faces, to come and insistently affirm that same Jesus Who had died on that cross was not wrapped in myrrh and spices inside a tomb but rather clothed with life, a walking, talking reality.

So Luke brings into the range of our vision "two of them" (of the group in v. 9?), Cleopas and a companion winding their way toward Emmaus. The sun was on its way down, westward over the Mediterranean Sea, as they walked and talked, their destination some 7 miles north west of Jerusalem.

Doubtless many were coming and going, but one of those, for some unknown reason, drew near and posed a question: "Would you mind telling me about this 'what-ever-it-is' you're discussing?" (The Greek term translated "discussing" conveys the idea of lively conversation, debate or dispute. Jesus used a word that would bring to mind

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two boys tossing a ball back and forth as He asked about the ideas and questions the two men were tossing back and forth.)

The two men stopped by Jesus' "a penny for your thoughts" question, looked very downcast (The Greek term "skuthros" indicates gloomy or disheartened in countenance). Cleopas asked, "Are you the only stranger around who is ignorant of what has happened lately?" "(I guess so)—What happened?" So the two assumed that the stranger was not aware of their present distress, and picking up their feet as well as the story so vivid on their minds, they shared the events about Jesus as they headed homeward.

The pieces just would not fit, as they saw it. All square blocks for round holes it seemed. To compound the enigma, the empty tomb and the incredible story of Jesus being alive was thrown into the seething mass of information. Peter and John verified the empty tomb, the neatly folded grave clothes and head covering, but that was all. Could the facts be fitted in? And so they talked.

Hopes cherished so long ("we had been hoping," v. 21) were tough to throw away. The action of their rulers in condemning Jesus to death (the present day decision to exonerate the Jewish hierarchy notwithstanding) was simply incomprehensible—and then came Sunday's news: worse and more of it! Jesus had been so mighty (the Greek word is "dunamis," as in Rom. 1:16) in both actions and speech—"Well, it does not make sense, sir!"

God makes things meaningful—He puts the pieces all together, and makes things complete. And so He did for these two men. He knew they were simply ignorant of the facts (or the relationship of facts to other facts) and He also knew why: their dull perception through unbelief (note Eph. 4:17-19). It seems so impossible that

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these men, with the rest, could have missed so greatly, could have really missed the most important parts of God's word to them. But we know by experience, vicarious and/or personal, just how easy that is, do we not?

Jesus presented the men with the secret of their puzzle: a suffering Messiah, (note Jn. 12:34). The thing that bothered them the most was the most important thing! God was to be manifest in the flesh, and give men a chance for life through His death (John 12:24-26), and then arise to live evermore in glory (see Jn. 17:5, 24; Acts 2:36; Phil. 2:9; Col. 1:27). He was to produce new life through His death, to bring men alive unto a living hope by means of His resurrection, I Pet. 1:3.

Norman Geisler and William Nix in *A General Introduction to the Bible*, page 18, have an excellent chart presenting some ideas about Christ that we need to see, perhaps as much as the two men in our text:

In the O.T. Christ is:	In the N.T. Christ is:
in shadow	in substance
in pictures	in person
in type	in truth
in ritual	in reality
latent	patent
prophesied	present
implicitly revealed	explicitly revealed

The men were so engrossed in the "new slant" of the knowledgeable stranger that the distance to Emmaus was soon covered. The men, unwilling to allow the man to part from them, invited him to linger for the evening meal. Perhaps the demeanor of the man made it a natural, or out of courtesy, the two men had their visitor give thanks for the food. As he began to break the bread, they saw for the first time beyond that which was being given to him who was giving it—the man was Jesus! At

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the moment of recognition, He became invisible. The Greek term means hidden, unseeable or something of the nature. Texts such as Mt. 6:19 in regard to the results of moths and rust; Heb. 8:13 referring to the old covenant; or James 4:14 about the vanishing life, have this word.

The text does not really state if the Lord supernaturally caused the men not to recognize Himself for a while, or if He simply was not recognized because of their preoccupation, or what the reason was. The case of Mary Magdalene is akin to this as well as that of Lydia in Acts 16. There would be no particular problem if He did however.

Doubtless the two men, their lives once sad and thoughts strangely accusing, traversed the intervening distance to Jerusalem in short order. Arriving in great haste, they discovered that their good fortune was also that of Peter. With voices understandably excited, talking all at once, the "eleven" (Thomas was absent, Judas dead, so actually only 10) plus Cleopas and his companion, plus some women, exchanged the news, so unbelievable and yet so certain. How very thrilling to "see" the truth at last, and to enjoy fellowship with others who were of the same mind.

Jerusalem—Lk. 24:38-43; Jn. 20:19-35

"Disfellowship them"—Thus was the decision of the Sanhedrin for anyone who confessed Jesus as the Christ, Jn. 9:22; 12:42-43. However, the decision implied perhaps more than mere ostracism from the synagogue—and the disciples so understood, Jn. 11:16. Hence, we may perceive the reason for the closed doors of the room in which the jubilant disciples were meeting.

Both accounts seem to imply that Jesus as suddenly appeared within the room as He disappeared in the room

at Emmaus. We do not see any reason whatsoever for supposing that His body was any different than it was before the resurrection. Walking on water is not any more humanly possible than materializing within a room. People looked at Jesus and thought He was human. He says as much Himself in our text, and eats food to convince any skeptic. The idea some present that Jesus had a different body after the resurrection than before has no basis in the texts. The converse is true, if anything. Thus He could show His nail-pierced hands, feet and side as evidence that the body was identical to the one the disciples knew. His power and usage of the fleshly body was self-limited as He chose. It is interesting to consider that Jesus did not and does not ask for blind faith, with no evidences for faith. In His infinite wisdom, He has given enough evidence to bring us to a position of faith, if we are willing to consider it.

Having given the disciples ample reason to joyously believe (at first, it was too good to be true apparently, Lk. v. 41), and bestowed upon them His very own peace, He breathed upon them (remember that the disciples were Hebrews, and the Hebrew word for wind, breath and/or spirit of God was the same, as is true for the Greek word *pneuma*. Hence, this had much more meaning for them than us, to whom it seems a bit odd) and instructed them to receive the Holy Spirit Who was to come to them with power, Acts 1:8. We assume the actual reception was some 50 days later on Pentecost, as recorded in Acts 2.

We remarked under Matt. 16:18-19 about the role of the disciples in regard to the revelation from God which they were to proclaim. God was going to reveal through them what no eye had seen, nor ear heard, nor man imagined, I Cor. 2:6-13, which explicitly teaches that the new covenant was a revealed covenant from God.

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It was given to all men through the apostles and completed within their lifetime. No new revelation from God was to be or is to be expected from that day until Jesus returns. The whole text in I Cor. 1:18-3:23 is about this very point. The text in I Cor. 2:14-16 is an affirmation of one fact, and one fact only: the message came by Spirit-directed men, not otherwise. These men, revealing the mind of Christ (Jn. 16:14 declares that the Spirit will take what belonged to Christ and give it to the disciples), stated for all time the will of God for all men everywhere. As Paul says, the apostles taught the message as directed by the Holy Spirit, 2:8-13. Thus did Jesus teach in Matt. 16:19; 18:18 and Jn. 20:23.

If you read the texts just mentioned in Matthew and John rightly, they will say what the Greek says. However most people do not do so, thus we give a translation of the Greek text for help in understanding, both of Matt. 16:19 and John 20:23: 16:19 "Whatever you make binding (Greek: *deō*) upon earth has already been made binding in heaven. Whatever you make free upon earth has already been freed in heaven."

The disciples simply were instruments through whom God spoke to men, either giving direction for obedience or releasing from obligation. The Greek word (*luō*) translated "make free" or "has already been freed" means to unloose, untie, or release. The expression "has already been freed" translates a Greek perfect, which carries the idea of something already done and remaining done up to the point of speaking. God had planned to save men from sin through the new covenant, had so prophesied, and now was revealing that plan. 20:23 "If you extend forgiveness of sins to any man, those sins have already been forgiven. If you do not extend forgiveness for anyone's sins, such sins have not been forgiven."

The idea in this verse is that the apostles were to preach conditions (terms) of forgiveness for sins (as in Acts 2:38; 13:39). However, by the same token, such proclamation would exclude any other way of forgiveness for sins, God expressing His will through their preaching. Now read Acts 4:12 in this light. God had already decided that Jesus was the means to forgiveness. The apostles so preached, extending salvation from sin through Christ alone (Rom. 5:1; 8:1). Any other "way" was a false way. And no sins would be forgiven through such ways.

The Greek word translated with the idea of forgiveness is variously translated as "let go," "send away," "abandon," "divorce," etc. (It is *aphiēmi*.) The Greek word translated "do not extend forgiveness" conveys the idea of "arrest," "retain," "grasp," etc. (It is *krateō*.) If the listener did not accept the terms of pardon, his sins were still charged to his account, and he was still in the grasp of sin.

Thomas the doubter—history has so dubbed this disciple of Jesus. We do not think the title is very well given. The account in Jn. 20:24-25 has Thomas refusing to believe unless and until he could verify the man was really Jesus. The reader may well recall that the rest of the disciples did not believe, either, until Jesus personally appeared to them—and even then He had to eat food in their presence, and show them His hands, feet and side! Another item of interest: Thomas was a twin (King James "didymus")—he might well have known how very easily people mistake one person for another.

Jerusalem—Jn. 20:26-31

Eight days later (the following Sunday evening—note the inclusive way of counting time) Jesus again

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appeared to the men in the same way as the first time. Thomas received his request, as Jesus offered to show him the pierced hands and side. Each demand of Thomas received attention from Christ. His confession was immediately forthcoming, but it would have been better to have accepted the testimony of the others. However, Jesus definitely was alive, the same Jesus who had been crucified and buried. The men were completely convinced by adequate testimony that Jesus was alive. How firm is the foundation of faith—God does not make unbelief a mark of intellectual inability, but rather of volitional refusal to accept the evidence.

The exclamation of Thomas is most interesting insofar as it would not have been uttered by any Jew, ordinarily. To be persuaded that a human could also be deity was a tremendous step for any Jew. Of course, this very idea that Jesus was both divine and human was the charge leveled against Him at the Jewish trials, and for which He died. Like Peter and the others in Matt. 16, Thomas had accepted the revelation of God through Jesus as to the actual identity of Jesus: He was the Messiah (Christ) of God.

Yet we are not treated to all the evidence Jesus gave the disciples after the resurrection and before the ascension. Jn. 20:30-31 teaches that the 40 day period was given over to teaching and convincing the men about Himself (see Acts 1:1-11). However, by means of inspiration John tells us that the information contained in his book is adequate to bring a person to faith in Jesus, and that faithfulness to the point of death is the key to life here and hereafter. The Greek text of v. 31 tells us that 1) we can come to a personal faith in Christ, thus committing our lives into His care, and 2) as long as we keep on trusting (the Greek participle "pisteuontes" is in the

present tense, normally implying a constant state) we keep on having (echête) life, even as I John 5:11-12 teaches: "God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son (ho echōn ton huion echei tēn zoēn) has life; he who has not the Son of God (ho mē echōn ton huion tou theou tēn zoēn ouk echei) has not life" (RSV).

Galilee—John 21:25

"Let's go fishing." "Okay, let's go." Seven men, including Peter, James, John, Thomas and Nathanael, were in Galilee (as were other disciples of Jesus) *at Christ's command*, Matt. 28:7, 10; Mk. 16:7. While awaiting His appearance, these men decided to spend a night fishing, likely to catch enough fish to provide income for their families. The night passed, though, and the nets repeatedly were empty. Fishing is often work, and to toil all night and catch nothing makes the "sport" even more work.

Faint steaks of dawn had given way to the dawn's light when a voice came winging its way into the disciple's attention: "Children, you do not have any fish, do you?" (N.A.S.). Expecting a negative response because He knew they had caught nothing, Jesus instructed the men to try the right side again. Obedient, even if they did not know who the person was, the net they cast enclosed 153 large fish (John remembered that for a long time!)! The text does not say, but we assume the catch of fish was miraculous. The disciples seemed to react the way they did because they so thought. We believe that the catch of fish was more than a lucky guess. However, Jesus might simply have supernaturally known that the fish were there rather than creating them and putting them there.

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Whether all thought the same thing at the same time or not, John put the voice (and probably the catch of fish in Luke 5) and this catch together, and came up with Jesus. Peter, hearing John's exclamation, threw on an outer garment of some variety (he had removed his outer clothing for ease in fishing) and leaped overboard heading for shore. The rest of the men followed in the boat, bringing along the fish in the net, which was rather remarkably still intact.

"Let's eat" was the cheery greeting they heard from Jesus, and "Bring some of those fish." The Lord always provides, but expects us to do our part! The men, as did John, knew their host was Jesus—who else?

John remarks that this visit of Jesus with His disciples was the third. We understand this remark to refer to the appearances recorded only in his Gospel. This would be a natural statement, since at the time of writing, the Gospel was not "published" with Matthew, Mark or Luke—just by itself.

Their overnight fast broken, the conversation between Jesus and Peter began. Whether by design or not, Jesus asked Peter three times concerning their relationship, and each time gave Peter a command in response to Peter's reply. The New American Standard gives the commands as:

- v. 15 "Tend My lambs."
- v. 16 "Shepherd My sheep."
- v. 17 "Tend My sheep."

R.S.V. translates:

- v. 15 "Feed my lambs."
- v. 16 "Tend my sheep."
- v. 17 "Feed my sheep."

For those of you who would be interested in the Greek terms used here, the following is submitted:

- v. 15 Boske ta arnia mou.
- v. 16 Poimaine to probata mou.
- v. 17 Boske to probata mou.

Each time, the verb form is imperative and of continual force. Jesus meant a lifetime occupation, a daily concern for the nurture of Christians anywhere and everywhere. All the apostles caught the idea, even Paul, as is seen in Acts 20:31 and II Cor. 12:28. One of the reasons was that they recognized the fact that the devil "prowls around like a . . . lion, seeking someone to devour," I Pet. 5:8. The devil is not particular: any lamb or sheep will do. Hence, the imperative to feed and care for every one in Christ, to build them up in the "most holy faith," Jude v. 20. The work of the whole church is to do this, Eph. 4:10-16.

Comments about the relationship between Jesus and Peter will follow, but we wonder what the antecedent of the word "these" in v. 15 is. Jesus does not say specifically what He had in mind, the other men as a group or individually, either in their love for Jesus or Peter's love for Jesus as compared to theirs, or even Peter's love for them as compared to Peter's love for Jesus. It may be that the word refers to the fish, or the boat representing the fishing business, etc. Perhaps Jesus gestured so that Peter knew what was meant. Considering the total idea, however, Jesus may well have meant this: "Peter, is there anything or anyone in your life more important to you than I am?" Actually, as in Matt. 10:34-39 and Luke 14:25-35, Jesus must of necessity be first. Nothing less will do, either that we might please Him or supply sufficient motivation that implicit obedience to His commands will be forthcoming. If we love Jesus, self must go (Luke 9:23) and His tasks done. Our total desire will be for Him (Phil. 3:10) and to please Him (II Cor. 5:9). Only in so living will we find self and save self, Lk. 9:24. Thus, when affairs of life turn against us, Jn. vv. 18-19, or even when we do not under-

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stand why others are seemingly treated "better" by the Lord, vv. 20-22, we will not hesitate even for a moment, but will go on trusting in the Master, the Great Shepherd of the sheep, Heb. 13:20.

We note in passing that the writer John was intently "eavesdropping" as Jesus and Peter talked. The verses in 23-24 are interesting in that the common (?) idea later held was that John was to outlive Peter. As nearly as we can tell, he did do so, even if Jesus did not really say what (John records that) some thought Jesus said. The Bible does not record the death of either man. Various traditions are around, yet none are very helpful. Common tradition has Peter dying in Rome, crucified head down. This is without any basis in fact, and hardly worth mentioning. John seemingly lived until the close of the century, and wrote his five books much later than the rest of the men whose books are in the N.T.

The discussion of Jesus and Peter is valuable for many things. The fact that two different Greek words are used for love is of abiding interest. The two words overlap to some degree as can be seen in the fact that both involve will, reason and emotion, the characteristics that are inherent in every spirit (person), God included. Yet, like all synonyms, complete overlap does not exist,

The Greek language had at least four words for love which had some things common among them. One of these is the word which comes into English in the adjective form "erotic." This word does not appear in the N.T. The second of the four words only appears once, Rom. 12:10, with the idea of affection or love. This word in the literature of the day carried the idea of affection for family, but also for one's nation, etc.

The other two Greek words appear numerous times in the N.T., and these are the focus of discussion. The

English transliteration of these two is *philia* and *agapē* as they are in the noun forms. In the conversation recorded between Jesus and Peter, the word *philia* (in the verb form) is used by Peter each time he answered Jesus. He did not use the word *agapē*. Jesus used *agapē* (in verb form) in the first two questions to Peter, *philia* (in verb form) in the third question. This presents the problem: What do the words mean? Why did the two men use different terms if they meant the same? If they did not mean the same, what was the essential difference? To this we now attend.

The words in the literature of the day show some difference. *Philia* was often used of one's feelings for husband or wife, for those close and precious. It is said of Antony in regard to Cæsar, "You loved (*philia*) him like a father, and also regarded him as a benefactor (*agapē*)."
Agapē rarely appears except in religious literature, but was used in Classical Greek with the idea of greeting with affection. It also was used with the idea of contentment with something, as one's satisfaction for a precious stone, etc. It carries the general impression of the set of the mind towards something, or someone. A desire for the good of that object but not with selfish motives or a desire to possess the object is conveyed. An attitude of real concern, no ill-will or pettiness, but of invincible good will is characteristic of *agapē*.

The N.T. presents a somewhat varied usage as could be expected. (All words have various shades of meaning.) Consider that *agapē* is used of God's love for the world (Jn. 3:16), for Jesus (Jn. 15:9), for the disciples who love Jesus and keep His words (Jn. 14:23). We are to love one another this same way (I Jn. 4:11-12) and God (I Jn. 5:1) but not the world (I Jn. 2:15). Many other relationships could be given, and references multiplied in this way. But the story is not all told yet.

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Philia is used in the following ways in the N.T., and some of the references are worth considering with Peter and Jesus in mind. Philia often occurs in names, such as Philadelphia, Philemon, Philippians, Theophilus. Then, to facilitate study, we list the following:

Love what is good—Titus 1:8

Love one's husband, and children—Titus 2:4

Love for mankind, hospitable, benevolent—Titus 3:4 and
as in Acts 27:3; 28:2; Rom. 12:13; I Tim. 3:2; Heb.
13:1

Love one's brother and sister—I Pet. 3:8

Love of money (avarice)—I Tim. 6:10; Luke 16:14

Loving oneself—John 12:25; II Tim. 3:2

Love (friendship) of the world, not God—II Tim. 3:14;
James 4:4; and Rev. 22:15

Love of wisdom (philosophy)—Acts 17:18; Col. 2:8

Love of dispute, strife—Luke 22:24; I Cor. 11:16; III Jn: 9

Ambition or aspiration—Rom. 15:20; II Cor. 5:9

Devotion or kindly disposed—Mt. 11:19; Lk. 7:6; 11:6,
8; 15:9; and Acts 19:31

Love for family or God—Mt. 10:37

Paul's love for brethren—Rom. 16:22; Titus 3:15

A kiss—Mt. 26:48, etc.

God for people—Rev. 3:19

God for Jesus—Jn. 5:20

God for disciples—Jn. 16:27

Disciples for Jesus—Jn. 16:27

Jesus for Lazarus—Jn. 11:3, 36

Jesus for John—Jn. 20:2

These references out of the N.T. are enlightening when we consider Peter and Jesus. Peter could hardly be expected to use *agapē* when responding to Jesus. Of course, he had his mind set of Jesus' good! Over and over he had demonstrated that. He went far beyond that stage; for

he was emotionally involved. His whole being was involved! No wonder he responded as he did. Do you think Peter could be detached from Jesus? Aloof? Unemotional?

Perhaps we will be a bit more careful in holding up *agapē* as the love God has for all. That is true, but it is a long way from all the truth. The N.T. certainly expects us to get "attached" to husband, wife, each other, and "un-attached" to self, material things, etc. It is likewise interesting to note that the translation of the Hebrew O.T. into Greek (the Septuagint) uses both of the words of God's love for mankind. The Syriac version makes no distinction. How do you think Peter loved Jesus?

The last two verses are somewhat of an enigma. The use of the plural pronoun "we" in v. 24 seems to imply someone else other than John the apostle and writer. Yet v. 25 reverts back to the singular "I." A comparison with the epistle of John's, I John, reveals a similar usage of pronouns in ch. 1 and ch. 2. Whether this was John's custom in writing is debatable. There is somewhat of a problem anyway in the attempt to write in third person as is the case in the Gospel. We may simply have the testimony of others to John's integrity in v. 24, while the rest of the book is John's.

The statement in v. 25 about the things which could be written, which would inundate the world, may be thought exaggerated. It is often considered a hyperbole for the sake of emphasis. Yet to write all the things about Jesus' life and teaching, with the application to life, might well be a mammoth undertaking, especially so if one attempted to adequately describe the basis upon which such saying and doings were founded: the Incarnate Word.

Galilee—Matt. 28:16-20

Matthew 28:16-20 records another appearance of Jesus in Galilee, probably the one Paul mentions in I Cor. 15:6.

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Many were convinced of the resurrection of Jesus, and that even to the cost of their well-being and/or earthly existence, Acts 4, 5, 6-7. Others then, as now, were not so convinced and wondered. Matthew does not say whether or not the group to whom Jesus appeared had both believers and doubters in it, or this was just a general description of the people then living. We assume the latter to be true.

The assertion of Jesus in v. 18 is of great importance: it provides the necessary foundation for obedience of His commands. Authority gave Jesus the right to command men to go, to preach, to immerse, to teach—as well as to expect the promise He made to be kept. Yet to say that Jesus did not have this authority prior to the resurrection is a doubtful assertion. No text so says. Conversely, His whole ministry hinges upon such authority, and runs the gamut from authority expressed in the physical realm to the material realm to the spiritual realm. No area of life is left untouched by Jesus' authority. We are inclined to think that He is simply asserting what had always been true, and after the resurrection was convincingly so, that He was deity in the flesh.

This commissioning of the disciples then present is interesting in another aspect: the possibility that more than the eleven were present to hear and receive it. The commission in Luke 24:44-53; John 20:19-23 and Acts 1:1-11 was given only to the eleven men who had accompanied Jesus. However, this one may well have included more than these eleven. The early church understood the general imperatives to go, to preach, to immerse and to teach as inclusive of all disciples anytime—and so they went. Obviously they were correct in their understanding. The church would have died out in one generation otherwise, if only the 12 apostles and those specially chosen by Jesus were to do the evangelizing. Christianity was meant to be a missionary (this word does not occur in the Bible,

however) religion, one that was to be militant and aggressive. Jesus expected results, though having no money, army, state, schools, prestige or degrees. The good news was backed by *the power of God* and that was quite sufficient. Anything and everything could be utilized in making people learners, as long as the ones doing so recognized the power was from God and not within themselves, I Cor. 1:18-2:5. People were not to be coerced but convinced, not compelled but convicted. The disciple was to be one who loved people for what they are: ones for whom Christ died.

The commission here written down has some marvelous ideas in it: such as the three personalities of the Godhead, the idea of evangelism, the work of the disciple: discipling others, the all-encompassing salvation offered: everybody can be saved, the ethics of Christ, His companionship, and His second coming. Someone as suggested the text contains the ideas of a great purpose, plan, power and presence.

The imperatives given are four in number, and each is to be seen as binding upon every disciple. The promise of Jesus' presence is contingent upon the obedience to the commands.

The text is quite correctly translated by the King James, Am. Standard, R.S.V. and N.A.S. The "going," "baptizing" and "teaching" are as mandatory as in the "make disciples." The lack of backbone in these versions (as in others) to translate the Greek term baptizō as "immerse" rather than "baptize" is as contemptable as the rest is commendable. The Greek term meant then and still does "plunge under" or "encompass" an object with another substance, literally or figuratively. Had Jesus wanted to command the use of water without specifying the mode, He could have done so. If He wanted to use a word meaning either sprinkle or pour, He could have done so (see John 2:15 and Heb. 9:19 as examples of the last two Greek terms). There is no good excuse for culpableness in this

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regard. The unwillingness to translate properly the Greek term dates all the way back to Tyndale's English translation in 1525, but basically stems from the practice of the Roman Catholic church centuries before Tyndale. Hence, religious error has stayed with us for centuries in this respect.

Some may be also interested in the words used by Christ carrying the ideas of "go," etc. The Greek text for these four words reads as follows in English transliteration (remember: transliteration is *not* translation, by any means): poreuthentes . . . mathēteusate . . . baptizontes . . . didaskontes. The first, third and fourth words are participles, the second an imperative form. However, none are optional. Participles are not optional thus used. Jesus did not intend for the "going" to be optional, anymore than the "immersing" or "teaching" was to be. The N.T. used participles as coordinate with verbs in several places (Greek grammarians label them as "attendant circumstantial" but the participle has equal force with the verb). The Greek language had this idiomatic way of using a participle and a verb, normally in that order, to express two equal and/or imperative ideas. Consider Mt. 20:8; Mk. 6:11; Lk. 19:6; Acts 10:13; 22:16 in this light. The Greek student will know that infinitives and participles are both used for the giving of commands, as in Rom. 12:9ff. The expression in v. 20 "to observe" as a present infinitive "tērein" meaning a constant observance of Jesus' commands.

One popular song carries the idea of never being lonely again since Jesus has been found. This passage so well reiterates for every disciple what Christ promised to the apostles in Jn. 14:18, "I will not leave you orphans."

Luke 24:44-53 brings us to the last appearance of Jesus to His apostles. Luke takes up the thread of thought in his second book, Acts, and goes on with the record in that book, a record of obedience to the commands from Jesus.

We turn our attention just now to the final words to the eleven men, given somewhere close to Bethany.

That a problem exists in the text of Luke is evident, but a decisive solution is not available. The problem is this: Jesus appears to the assembled group on Sunday evening of the day of resurrection. He finally convinces those present that He is the same person that was crucified on Friday previous. This account takes us to v. 43. The verses from 44-53 seemingly present Jesus' last instructions and His ascension some 40 days later than the activity up to v. 43. Perhaps the discussion in the room in Jerusalem on the first resurrection day continues until v. 49, with vv. 50-53 describing the events 40 days later. As stated, no definite decision can be made, and we chose to place vv. 44-49 on the last day of Jesus' life on this earth.

This is the third commission given to the disciples, and if not the same as the one in Acts ch. 1, Jesus gave four separate charges to His followers: John 20; Matt. 28; Luke 24 and Acts 1.

The text of v. 44 is interesting in regard to the three-fold division of the Jewish O.T. The Jews divided their Bible somewhat differently than we do. Their division was that of 1) law, 2) prophets and 3) writings. The division was changed somewhat in the Greek version of the O.T. called the Septuagint. This version was made around 275 B.C. It made a four-fold division (law, history, poetry, prophecy) which was carried over into the Latin Vulgate of Jerome, A.D. 385-405, and into our English Bibles.

The Hebrew Bible probably was first divided into two divisions: law and prophets. This became a three-fold division which still exists in Hebrew Bibles today. The first division called "law" was also referred to as "Moses," since he authored the books so designated. The third division called "writings" was referred to as "Psalms," since this book headed the list, and was the largest of those so desig-

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nated. The three divisions and the books included is as follows:

<i>Law</i>	<i>Prophets</i>	<i>Writings</i>
1. Genesis	1. Former Prophets	1. Poetical Books
2. Exodus	a. Joshua	a. Psalms
3. Leviticus	b. Judges	b. Proverbs
4. Numbers	c. Samuel	c. Job
5. Deuteronomy	(I & II)	
	d. Kings (I & II)	2. Five Rolls
	2. Latter Prophets	a. Song of Songs
	a. Isaiah	b. Ruth
	b. Jeremiah	c. Lamentations
	c. Ezekiel	d. Esther
	d. Hosea	e. Ecclesiastes
	e. Joel	3. Historical Books
	f. Amos	a. Daniel
	g. Obadiah	b. Ezra-Nehemiah
	h. Jonah	c. Chronicles (I & II)
	i. Micah	
	j. Nahum	
	k. Habakkuk	
	l. Zephaniah	
	m. Haggai	
	n. Zechariah	
	o. Malachi	

The expression in v. 45, "He opened their minds" (R.S.V.) is akin to that of Acts 16:14 about Lydia. The identical Greek word is found in Luke 24:31 referring to the eyes of the two disciples. The puzzler: was the mind of all supernaturally opened, or not? Could this have simply been a description of the effect of Jesus' teaching? Have you never exclaimed, after someone explained something to you, "Oh, I see!"? As before remarked, the key to understanding the O.T. was suffering Messiah (Christ).

NEW TESTAMENT HISTORY: THE CHRIST

Given this key for interpretation, things readily fell into place that heretofore had escaped the disciples' understanding.

A change of mind and a change of state were the basis of the message the men were to preach, and this proclamation was by the authority of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. To do something in the name of someone is to do it by their authority, as in Acts 3:6; 16:18; 19:13. Some make the statement of Peter in Acts 4:12 to say that one is to be saved in the name of Jesus only, not that of God or the Holy Spirit. Such arguments are rather specious at best, and without foundation at worst. The disciples did not disobey Jesus in what He commanded, Mt. 28:18-20, nor can the three personalities in the Godhead be separated in such a way, as Mt. 10:40; Lk. 10:16; Jn. 12:44-50 and I John 2:22-23 clearly show.

The authority was given, the command issued, and with the coming of the Holy Spirit only 10 days hence, the new covenant was all but proclaimed. The word translated "clothed" (K.J. "endued") is one that means "get into" or "enter in" as a person putting on clothing. (See Mark 1:6; Lk. 8:27; II Cor. 5:3). The men then would preach to a world sitting in "darkness and the shadow of death" (N.A.S.) the way of peace and the good pleasure of God unto each one. All who would see with their eyes and hear with their ears would be saved from the power of sin and the grasp of that old deceiver, Satan, translated out of the devil's kingdom of darkness to God's kingdom of light, Acts 26:18; II Pet. 1:1-4. May the God of all grace help each of us who read this book to proclaim the same good news, that accepted saves us and keeps us saved as long as we keep believing it: "You (Jesus) are the Christ (Messiah), the Son of the living God."