

THE LAST WEEK OF THE LORD JESUS ON EARTH
IXe. PETER'S RESTORATION AND JESUS' SEARCHING
QUESTION 5 (cont.) Early Iyar (late April), A.D. 33

John 21:14-19

“¹⁴This is already ⁰third |time| /Jesus was-displayed to-His /disciples after-being-raised-up out-of ⁰dead-ones. ¹⁵Then when they-finished-eating-breakfast, /Jesus says to-the Simon Peter, Simon of-Jonah^[Yōnāhs], [§]Are-you-persistently-loving^[sovereignly preferring over self and others] Me more than-these^{[men or things (fish, nets, and boat) or both]?} He-says to-Him, Yes, Lord! Yourself, You-perceive^[are-aware] that I-am-persistently-fond-of^[tenderly-affectionate-toward] You[§]. He-says to-him, Persistently-feed the lambs of-Mine! ¹⁶He-says to-him again, ⁰second |time|, Simon of-Jonah^[Yōnāhs], [§]Are-you-persistently-loving^[sovereignly-preferring-over-self-and-others] Me? He-says to-Him, Yes, Lord! Yourself, You-perceive that I-am-persistently-fond-of^[with-tender-affection-toward] You[§]. He-says to-him, Persistently-shepherd the sheep[&] of-Mine! ¹⁷He-says to-him the third |time|, Simon of-Jonah^[Yōnāhs], [§]Are-you-persistently-fond-of^[with-tender-affection-toward] Me? /Peter ^[ingressive-aorist-passive]became-grieved because He-said to-him the third |time|, Are-you-persistently-fond-of^[with-tender-affection-toward] Me? And he-said to-Him, Lord, Yourself, You-are-persistently-perceiving all-things[~]. [§]You-know^[from-experience] that I-am-persistently-fond-of^[with-tender-affection-toward] You[§]. /Jesus says to-him, Persistently-feed the sheep[&] of-Mine! ¹⁸Amen, amen, I-am-saying to-you[§], When[§] you-were-younger, you-were-repeatedly-girding yourself[§]. And [§]you-were-repeatedly-walking where you-were-determinedly-willing. But whenever you-grow old, you-shall-extend the hands of-yours and another^[same-kind] shall-gird you[§] and he-shall-bring |you[§]| where yourself, you-are-determinedly-willing not |to-go|. ¹⁹Now He-said this, signifying by-what-kind-of death he-will-glorify[]] The God. And after-saying this, He-repeatedly-says to-him, Persistently-follow Me!” (John 21:14-19 APT).

Introduction: What question did The Resurrected Lord Jesus Christ ask Peter on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, which brought to his remembrance his boast and denial? How does this question pertain to us all today? What is the highest and most effective motivating force in human life? (*ἀγάπη*) **Ahgáhpay Love!**

After His Resurrection-Ascension during the following forty days, The Lord Jesus very specifically and deliberately took steps to restore Peter to fellowship and discipleship before He ascended to Heaven the second time after His Resurrection-Ascension, which occurred on the third day after crucifixion. Previously we considered Peter's Conversion and Restoration to discipleship

When professing believers in The Lord Jesus Christ seriously go astray from Him, they must go back to where they first started to follow Him as Peter did. Most often those, who seriously go astray and publicly deny The Lord Jesus Christ as Peter did, want to just pick up where they left off thinking they did accept Him once, but without seriously considering the consequences that their previous behavior invoked. Now they need to go back to where they first started to follow the Lord and be converted and regenerated as Peter did and this time the persistent following must not be a long interruption. But immediately an interruption takes place, repentance and confession must be forthcoming in order to be restored without delay.

After considering three facts in The Process of Peter's Restoration -

his Spiritual Conversion. Consider the Circumstances: 1. A Frustrating Morning in Galilee; 2. A Familiar Miracle: multiplication of fish; and 3. A Forceful Manifestation of Jesus' power and insight.

Then The Lord Jesus persisted with Peter until Peter recognized and confessed his lack of true love, sovereignly preferring The Lord Jesus Christ above all others (both people and things) and substituting the word meaning 'kind affection, fondness, or friendship' for '**ἀγάπη** (ahgáhpay) Love'.

We then considered The Lord's Confrontation with Peter and the question He asked three times, each of which He used to cause Peter to consider his need to 1. Recognize the Inadequacy of his Love, his self-denying, self-renouncing, self-surrendering, and self-sacrificing love; 2. Reverse his Indifference to the meaning of 'Love'; and 3. Reverse his Direction in love i.e. his affection, by insistently asking The Question that Searches: Sin, Stubbornness, and Selfishness within and calls for: Sacrifice, Surrender, and Complete Submission.

Then we considered the five results of The Searching Question that The Lord Jesus Christ asked of Peter (Jn. 21:15) the first of which question Searches the Depths of the Heart and Reveals the Inadequacy of Love. 'Loving' means 'persistently-sovereignly-preferring-over-self-and-others.' Jesus used this word which is the highest level of emotion in His question to Peter, but Peter answered Him with a word which is the next level lower than ahgáhpáhō or as it is recognized in English Ahgáhpay Love. This highest level of love has four aspects in order to identify it, all of which were prevalent in the Life of The Lord Jesus Christ in order to provide Salvation, Eternal Absolute Life, and the enabling power and ability to implement them in the regenerated human. Therefore The God expects these to be demonstrated in the life of those who appropriate His Salvation and Eternal Absolute Life in exchange for, and as a result of, receiving His gift of Ahgáhpay-Love. These four aspects are not produced by human effort but by appropriating them by faith even as Salvation and Eternal Absolute Life is appropriated. They are produced by The Holy Spirit in demonstrating gratitude that is motivated by Him. Then we considered the question that The Lord Jesus asked Peter, 'Do you persistently-love Me with **ἀγάπη** Love [sovereignly-preferring-over-self-and-others] more than these?'

- I. This question Searches The Depths of the Heart and Reveals the Inadequacy of Love in four aspects which are: self-denying, self-renouncing, self-surrendering of: will, emotions, and control, and self-sacrificing. The Lord Jesus Christ came to Earth out of **ἀγάπη** Love for the purpose of giving Himself as a sacrifice through an intense agonizing death on the cross of Calvary for you, for me, and for the whole world, including all of the sinful humanity of all time.
- II. This question Searches the Desires of the Heart and Reveals the Incongruity of Love, "Loving **Me**" in three aspects: Rejection of Truth Displayed; Erection of Building Desired; and Recognition Deprived.
- III. This question Searches the Delights of the Heart and Reveals the Intensity of Love. The pronoun 'these,' being in the genitive plural, indicates men or things or both i.e. disciples, fishing equipment, and fish, all were the delights of Peter's heart. What are the delights of your heart which draw you away from closely following Him? or of my heart which draw me away? In order for us to benefit from Peter's experience, we each must apply this question to our own hearts! There are three things that draw away from our intensity of **ἀγάπη** Love: Pride, Profession, and

Possessions, all three of which require our keen attention in order to prevent them from drawing away our hearts.

- IV. This question also Searches the Deceit of the Heart and Reveals the Inconsistency of Love in three areas: selfishness, stubbornness, and sinfulness which covers worldliness. Sinfulness is akin to worldliness because it satisfies the flesh. Worldliness is the quality of loving the world and that which pertains to it which results in Sinfulness and distracts from the *ἀγάπη* love for The Lord Jesus Christ. Worldliness involves preferring anything and everything ‘in-the-sphere-of-the-world,’ which includes: the passionate-lust of-the flesh, and the passionate-lust of-the eyes, and the arrogant-display of-the manner of life without consideration of The God!
- V. Lastly this question Searches the Devotion of the Heart and Reveals the Insincerity of one’s Love in four steps including: Surrender, Sacrifice, Submission, and Succeeding.
- A. Surrender all you are, all you have, all you will ever have, and all you hope to be to The Lord Jesus Christ permanently! Make an exchange of Masters from being a bonds slave to Satan, Sin, Disobedience, and Unrighteousness to The God, to The Lord Jesus Christ The Savior, to Obedience, and to Righteousness.
- B. Sacrifice your body, soul, spirit, and self and all you possesses to The Lord Jesus Christ (claiming nothing to be yours but all to be His!) now and forever.
- C. Submission (Heb. 5:9; 1 Pet. 1:22; 2 Cor. 10:3,5; Rom. 6:16,17; 6:6, 11-13; 6:18 1:Thes. 1:9; Jas. 4:7).

The word ‘submission’ is defined by Noah Webster in 1925 in Webster’s new International Dictionary and is gleaned and abridged here. Submission is: “1. . . the act of yielding to power or authority, surrender of a person to the control of another, . . . 2. compliant behavior, . . . obedience, compliance; . . . to present self in all submission and humility.” This meaning suggests at least three stages or phases which supplies three divisions for description: obedience, servitude, and yielding.

1. Obedience (Heb. 5:9; 1 Pet. 1:22)

The first stage and step toward *ἀγάπη* love for The Lord Jesus Christ is total and complete obedience to all and everything that has been stipulated in The God’s Holy Word, The Bible. Previously all our lives before being introduced to The Lord Jesus Christ and His Holy Word we have been influenced and enticed by Satan just as Eve was in the beginning, back in the Garden of Eden. And having their eyes opened to their sin Adam and Eve sought to cover their nakedness and hide their sin (Gen. 3:1-8). Ever since it has been that humans hide and desire not to acknowledge their sins and sinfulness of disobedience. However, The Lord Jesus Christ came as a substitute (one who serves for a short period of time) and suffered the torment of everlasting darkness for three hours on the cross of Calvary to pay the debt of Sin which it is impossible for every human to pay. He suffered the torment for us and as The Lamb of God, He shed His Precious, Sinless Blood in obedience to His Father, The God in order to wash away the sins of everyone who submits to becoming persistently obedient in every detail to His Son and His Word, The Bible. In this way He became Causer and Originator of Eternal Salvation (Heb. 5:9; 2:10; 12:2).

“⁹And being-made-perfect, He-became ⁰Causer⁺ of-Eternal Salvation to-all the-ones persistently-obeying Him” (Heb. 5:9).

And then those who are persistently-obeying are commanded to constantly love Him fervently with a clean heart.

“²²Since- the souls of-yours[&] -stand-purified [^{instrumental &v}]by-means-of-the obedience to-The Truth^[Lev. 11:44,45] through ⁰Spirit unto unhyprocritical brotherly-fondness, constantly-love ^[sovereignly-prefer-one- another-over-self-and-others] one-another fervently out-of a-clean heart!” (1Pet. 1:22 APT).

Can we be any less responsible than the Old Testament saints in the wilderness who were required by The LORD God to sanctify themselves and be pure, sanctified, and holy unto Him with clean heart (Lev. 11:44,45) especially since we have The Holy Spirit indwelling us to enable us be so?

“¹⁰For it-is-proper for-Him, for-the-sake-of Whom ^{|are|} the all-things and through Whom the all-things ^{|are-existing|}, to-lead many sons unto glory^[majestic-radiant-splendor], so-as-to-complete-perfectly The Originator of The Salvation of-ours by-means-of sufferings” (Heb. 2:10 APT).

Since we became aware of the work that Jesus accomplished on behalf of every human on Calvary, followed by His Resurrection-Ascension and High-Priestly ministry in applying His precious, sinless blood on The Mercyseat in Heaven, it behooves us to (we must needs) return our grateful thanks in like behavior of our Lord Jesus Christ in love for Him and therefore **yield our bodies, our souls, our all in sacrifice to The God and our Lord Jesus Christ and become His bondslaves.**

2. Servitude (Rom. 6:6,11-14; 16,17,18)

Servitude means Slavery or bondage i.e. bond-service as being bound to a master to whom the bondslave must obey all orders given by the master and be beholden to the master to have all physical needs met by the master. Paul clearly defined, in his Epistle to Romans, this relationship between all humans and Satan, Sin, Disobedience, and Unrighteousness until an exchange of masters takes place and the sinner commits persistent trust in The God and His Son, The Lord Jesus Christ. He or she is to be a bondslave to The God, to The Lord Jesus Christ, to Obedience, and to Righteousness to be one's own Master. Paul approached the subject from the time that the sinner has come to the place of exchanging masters and acknowledging that Truth. He or she must come to an end of serving Satan and render the tools (i.e. the members of the bodies as weapons) that he uses to control sinners and that he or she is crucified together with The Lord Jesus Christ. When, the sinner confesses that the crucifixion of The Lord Jesus Christ was for his or her Redemption and then begins to know from experience that the old human has died by being crucified together with The Lord Jesus, Who was crucified and lives again in himself or herself, at that time the body becomes ineffective for Sin and Satan no longer (Rom. 6:6,11-14).

“⁶Knowing^[from experience] this, that the old^[in-age] human of-ours is-crucified-together ^{|with-Him|} so-that the body belonging-to-the Sin become-ineffective^[negated] so-that we-continue-serving-as-bondslaves to-the-Sin no longer. . . . ¹¹[So]^[In-this-way] also yourselves, you-are-to-reckon yourselves! on-the-one-hand to-be dead-ones to-The Sin, but-on-the-other-hand Absolutely-Living-ones to-The God ^[locative &v]in-union-with-Christ Jesus, The Lord of-ours.

¹²Therefore The Sin is-to-stop-reigning in-the mortal. body of yours& [negative présent infinitive of result]in-order-to-stop-habitually-obeying it [loc. &v]in-the cravings of-it! ¹³In-fact-stop-habitually-offering[^{presenting}] the members of-yours& as-weapons[^{war-implements}] of-Unrighteousness for-the Sin! But-on-the-contrary [^{aorist imperative, technical term used: présent-alongside}]offer-at-once-as-sacrifices yourselves to-The God, as Absolutely-Living-ones out-of ⁰dead-ones and the members of-yours& as-weapons[^{war-implements}] of Righteousness for-The God! ¹⁴For ⁰Sin shall- not-exercise-lordship over-you&. For &you-are not under-[the-rule-of] ⁰Law but-on-the-contrary under-[the-rule-of] grace” (Rom. 6:6,11-14 APT).

Paul emphasized that Sin is to stop reigning over us so that we do not continue to obey the cravings in our minds and bodies which repeated sinning has produced and by such yielding our members are weapons that Satan uses in his warfare against. Recognizing this Truth should cause us to consider seriously the result and spiritual damage that our repeated yielding to satisfy the cravings that our previous disobedience has caused. But instead of yielding to the cravings of Sin, we should yield our bodies the the members thereof as sacrifices to The God. Then Paul reminded the Romans (6:16-18).

“¹⁶&You-are-aware, are-you-not? That to-whom you-yield[^{alternate use}] yourselves bondslaves unto obedience, you-are bondslaves to-whom you-are-habitually-obeying, either[^{restrictive, one of two; this, the first naturally}] to-Sin unto ⁰Death, or to-obedience unto Righteousness? ¹⁷But gratitude [be] to-The God! because &you-were-continually ⁰bondslaves to-the Sin, but &you-obeyed out-of ⁰heart in-regard-to which type of doctrine &you-were-delivered. ¹⁸Then [^{causative aorist substantive passive participle}]since-ones-being-freed-from-bondage away-from The-Sin, [^{ingressive aorist}]you-became-enslaved to-The Righteousness” (Rom. 6:16-18 APT).

Then to the Corinthians in the summer before, Paul wrote of this same warfare which Satan is raging against The God which attacks the souls and spirits of the saints as well as The God (2 Cor. 10:3-5).

“³For [^{concessive-participle}]although-continually-walking [^{locative &v}] in-flesh, we-are- not -continually-waging-war-of-ourselves according-to ⁰flesh. ⁴For the weapons of-our /warfare [are] not fleshly; but-on-the-contrary, powerful [^{intermediate agency}]by-The God to[the face of] ⁰vanquishment of-strongholds ⁵in-order-to-vanquish-repeatedly[^{telic-present-participle: to-demolish}]; calculations[^{reckonings}]; and every height that is elevating-itself against the knowledge of-The God; and persistently-bring-into-captivity every thought unto the obedience to-The Christ; ⁶and whenever the obedience of-yours& be-fully-fulfilled, persistently-hold in-the-state-of-being-in-readiness-to-avenge every [^{refusal or}]failure-to-hear-and-obey[^{disobedience-to-a-voice}]” (2 Cor. 10:3-5 APT).

Paul wrote of vanquishing strongholds so as to be able to vanquish repeatedly every height, calculation, and every thought unto obedience to The Christ not of ourselves or of our own ability but by His power in us. So when we succeed, through His enabling, to fully fulfill obedience to Him, then we are to avenge every failure to hear and heed His Word by obeying His still small voice, through which The Holy Spirit whispers to our subconscious mind The Scripture that He has planted, when we took time to study and memorize It. But if we delay, linger, or avoid spending time studying in The Word and failing to be disciplined, we have eliminated His ability to do so.

3. Yielding or Submission (James 4:7).

Finally we come to the secret of victory over Satan, Sin, and the cravings of the flesh. That is to yield or submit to The God in obedience to His Word. This is the only way to be sure to gain victory (Jas. 4:7).

“⁷Therefore submit-yourselves-at-once to-The God! [Byz. Mss. div.]
/Moreover\ withstand-at-once the Devil and of-himself, he-shall-successfully-flee away-from-you&. ⁸Draw-near-at-once to-The God!
and He-shall-draw-near to-you& (James 4:7 APT).

However the opposite of submission and yield insures defeat and separation from The God! Which shall it be for you, yielding and submission to The God or being perpetually separated from The God. The choice is yours! Until you yield and submit you are constantly separated from The God and persistently without Hope defiant to Him!

We must suspend the remainder of the searching question until next time.

Conclusion:

Today we began considering the fifth aspect of the searching question that The Lord Jesus asked Peter after He served the eight disciples on the shore of Galilee. After reviewing the first four aspects of the questions that The Resurrected Christ asked Peter which also pertain to us, we began considering the fifth aspect of the Searching Question. Do you **ἀγάπη** Love me more than these? We dealt with The matter of the first step to Salvation, Regeneration, and Eternal Absolute Life which is Repentance and Surrender to The Lord Jesus Christ as Savior, Lord, and Absolute Master of your life and all it entails and become His bondsman, no longer rendering bondservice to Satan. The next step is sacrifice. Paul referred to the members of the bodies of regenerated saints as weapons or implements of war in the spiritual battle that Satan and his bondsmen (unregenerated people) constantly rage against The God and His Christ. Paul made it clear that the members of the bodies of all people are used as war implements for God and beneficial good for Him or for Satan and to be war implements of evil for Satan's beneficial good to the detriment of The Gospel. He entreated the disciple-saints because of The God's compassions upon us that by standing alongside The Lord Jesus Christ, our Great High Priest, to offer as a living sacrifice our bodies as He offered His Perfect sinless Body for us on Calvary to return, in **ἀγάπη** Love, our bodies as sacrifices and then to stop fashioning together with the world and its sensual attire. Do you Love Him enough so that you will offer to The God and The Lord Jesus Christ your body to live for Him as Paul exhorted us all to do?

Application:

What will you do beginning today to properly respond to Paul's exhortation to offer as a sacrifice your body and its members to The God and The Lord Jesus Christ?

Dr. Fred Wittman

For next week: Read and meditate upon: concluding our study of the fifth aspect of searching question asked of Peter by The Lord Jesus Christ (Jn. 21:14-19).