

Mary and Peter

Part One: Mary

Introduction

Much has been written concerning the life of Jesus and deservedly so, this book however is a book about the life of Mary and teachings that have surfaced over the centuries concerning Mary the mother of Jesus.

Chapter One

The Life of Mary

Mary had the most unique experience any mother could have ever had by carrying the Son of God in her womb and then nurturing him and watching him grow.

Because of the one-of-a-kind circumstances surrounding the life of Mary, many erroneous teachings have been spread concerning her that must be measured with the scriptures as our only guide for ultimate truth.

Jesus had this to say concerning the Jews who had been taught to place the traditions of the Pharisees as more important than the commandments of God:

Mark 7:9 And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.

It was Jesus desire that all teachings were to be measured in the light of scripture alone, and any traditions that had no scriptural basis were to be rooted up by exposing them for what they were, lies.

Matthew 15:13 Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.

No Catholic or Protestant has anything to fear from reading this study. It is my sole desire to root out any false teachings that Satan has planted in us regardless of what Church we belong to or what Denomination we are from.

In order to approach a subject of such importance we must start at the beginning of Mary's life as told to us in the scriptures.

Mary's Birth

Catholics, Protestants and Baptist all agree that Luke's genealogy is that of Mary's family, while Matthew's belong to that of Joseph. This would make Mary the daughter of Heli:

Luke 3:23 "And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which was the son of Heli,"

The Catholic teaching surrounding Mary's birth is called the Immaculate Conception. It is a relatively new teaching (150 years old) that was not taught by the Catholic Church at its conception in 300 A.D. under Constantine some 1650 years ago:

"The Blessed Virgin Mary in the first instant of her conception... was preserved exempt from all stain of original sin." Pronounced by Pope Pius IX in 1854.

Where did this come from? We are not sure, but we know it has no foundation in Scripture or in the writings of the early church fathers.

What does it mean in regard to Mary and to the Church today? It implies that Mary was sinless. This is a contradiction of the Bible and of Mary herself, for the book of Romans says:

Romans 3:23 "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God"

Jesus is the only exception to that rule, that's why the virgin birth is so important. Romans also declares that we are all born sinners by our relationship to our first parents Adam and Eve.

Romans 5:12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

Although Mary was an astonishing woman, she admitted her sinfulness and her need for a Saviour to her Aunt Elisabeth when she went to help her during the last three months of her pregnancy:

Luke 1:47 "And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour."

Why did Mary acknowledge that God was her Saviour, if as many teach today that she was sinless? Because she knew she needed a Saviour just like everyone else.

Jesus' divinity came from his Heavenly Father, His humanity came from His earthly mother. Jesus is Immanuel: God with us. He is God in Human form.

1 Timothy 3:16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

Her Virginity

No sensible person disputes Mary's virginity up to the time of Jesus birth. Some however teach the perpetual virginity of Mary, i.e., that Mary remains a virgin until this day. The Bible however teaches that Mary was a virgin only until after Jesus was born:

Matthew 1:23-25 "Behold a virgin shall be with child and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name Jesus."

The context of this passage is very simple, it plainly states that Joseph and Mary did not **know** each other intimately until after Jesus was born.

The Bible is also very clear as to the fact that Mary had four other sons and at least three daughters that are mentioned numerous times in the Bible:

Matthew 13:55 & 56 Say, "Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? And his sisters, are they not all with us?"

This verse needs no commentary. God knew ahead of time that erroneous teachings would surface in regard to this subject, so God placed this Scripture here before hand to refute this false teaching.

I have read cleverly worded articles written to try to explain away these very plain portions of Scripture, but they only serve to further separate the writers from the truth. Another supporting portion of Scripture is:

Mark 3:31-35 Say, There came then his brethren and his mother, and, standing without, sent unto him, calling him. And the multitude sat about him, and they said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren without seek for thee. And he answered them, saying, Who is my mother, or my brethren? And he looked round about on them which sat about him, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother.

Jesus was not correcting someone who was mistaken about whether he had a mother or four brothers for if he was he would have just spoken plainly and said, I am the only begotten son of Mary.

Because that was not true he used these individuals' comments to address the teaching that was needed most by his hearers at that time which is:

For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother.

Jesus wanted this recorded in scripture so that the problem we are discussing now would never have to happen. It has happened however because people are ignorant of the scriptures and rely on their church traditions to take precedence over the word of God.

The Catholic teaching is that Mary was and still is a virgin today. The Council of Chalcedon 451 AD

Her Titles

"The Queen of Heaven"

The title "Queen of Heaven" is found in the Bible, but it is never attributed to Mary. It is attributed to a Pagan goddess during the days of Jeremiah:

"The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle fire, and the women knead their dough, to makes cakes to the queen of heaven,

and to pour out drink offerings unto other gods, that they may provoke me to anger." Jeremiah 7:18 see Jeremiah 44:16-25

Here God says that Israel was rebellious and had other gods to whom they offered sacrifices unto, namely the **queen of heaven**, and because of this God was provoked to anger.

The title Queen of Heaven implies both authority and rule in Heaven, it also implies that God the Father is her husband or even worse there is no Father at all, only Mary and her Son. Both possibilities are blasphemous!

"Blessed among women"

Notice it doesn't say, "**Blessed art thou above women**." "Mary was blessed because she was chosen to carry the Son of God. An even stronger statement was made about a woman in the Old Testament named Jael, but we don't worship her because of it:

Judges 5:24 "Blessed above women shall Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite be.."

Jael had helped the nation of Israel by killing one of their enemies during the time of the judges, but nobody attributed things to her that caused people to begin to worship her.

"The Mother of God"

* Nowhere in Scripture is Mary ever called the Mother of God! Nowhere! So where do we get this blasphemous title from? What title does scripture give unto Mary?

John 2:1 "And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee: and the mother of Jesus was there:"

Mary is called "**the mother of Jesus**" three times in Scripture. John 2:1, & 3, and Acts 1:14. Nowhere is anything ever hinted at that she might be more than that, but today unscriptural prayers are offered up to someone who cannot hear their prayers and even if she could she could do nothing about them.

Should Prayers be offered to Mary?

Nowhere in Scripture are we ever permitted to offer up prayers to anyone besides God! When someone prays the Rosary they pray to both Mary and to God the Father.

Prayers to Mary are offered **nine times more to Mary than they are to God the Father**. Nine "Hail Mary's" are offered to every "Our Father".

53 Hail Mary's to every 6 Our Fathers.

Rosary beads were adapted from the Muslims many centuries later to keep track of the prayers. The Church deemed them necessary to count prayers so that no Hail Mary's would be left out.

The Hail Mary:

"Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death, Amen." Originated in 1050 AD

The Catholic Church teaches that Mary is a Co-Mediator with Jesus, but the Bible says Jesus alone is our only Mediator!

1 Timothy 2:5 Says, "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus:"

One mediator! Not two! When I was in the sixth grade I was sent to live with my Aunt and Uncle and regularly attended services with them. I remember very vividly a discussion I had with a teacher at the Church.

She began to tell me about how that Jesus was like our Dad sometimes when we got in trouble and he wants to punish us when we sin. And Mary is like our mother when dad gets to angry and she steps in and says that's enough Jesus.

I could relate to that story as a kid who got into his share of trouble and had to be saved by my mother once or twice from a good licking but that didn't make what she said true. In fact it has no basis in truth. Jesus loved me more than Mary ever would or could because he is love.

Should we worship Mary?

* Nowhere in the Scripture is Mary ever worshipped! The Bible clearly teaches that God alone should be worshipped! In Matthew 2:11 Jesus alone was worshipped by the wise men:

"And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down and worshipped him:

Jesus even corrected a woman who tried to exalt Mary:

Matthew 11:27 & 28 Say, "And it came to pass, as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked. But he said, Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it."

Mary was a wonderful woman, but Jesus put Mary in her rightful place whenever someone started to exalt her just as he did with Peter when people started to exalt him.

Mary's Only Command in Scripture:

"His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it. John 2:5

Jesus said that he was the only way to heaven, not a way, or one of many ways or even the best way, but he was and is the only way to heaven!

John 14:6 Says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life, no man cometh unto the Father but by me."

Mary's Death:

* Nothing is said in Scripture about Mary's Death! The official Catholic teaching on Mary's death is called "**The Assumption of Mary**", which teaches that **on the third day after Mary died, when the Apostles gathered around her tomb, they found it empty." St. Bernard.**

Pope Pius XII in 1951 proclaimed that, "**Mary's body saw no corruption, but was taken to heaven.**"

Was there any record of this in the Scriptures? None! Since Mary most likely died prior to the writing of numerous New Testament books you would

think that something as miraculous as that would have been included but it was not.

Neither was any mention of it found in any of the writings of the early Church Fathers. So where did it come from? The same place all false doctrines originate, from the pen of Satan himself who will use whatever method he can to deceive people and to get them as far away from the truth as possible.

Mary's Motherhood

Matthew 1:16 And Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ. 17 So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon are fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ are fourteen generations.

Fourteen is a significant number in scripture in relating to different dispensations. It was no accident or coincidence that fourteen generations separated these major events.

God used that number as a time line if you will whereby the Nation of Israel could use it along with the prophecies of Daniel to stand watch for the coming of the Messiah.

The wise men were watching for His star but unfortunately none of the Sanhedrin were looking for it, for had they been, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory.

Luke 1:26 And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, 27 To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. 28 And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women.

The sixth month mentioned here meant the sixth month of Elisabeth's pregnancy. Why was it necessary to mention what month this event took place in?

Was it just something extra that Luke threw in to fill space? No! Every word in Scripture has a purpose and nothing is added just for filler.

These verses establish that John the Baptist was six months older than Jesus when he was born because we know that immediately after Mary received the Angelic message that she would have a son she immediately left to help her Aunt Elisabeth in the final three months of her pregnancy.

29 And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. 30 And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. 31 And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. 32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: 33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

Once again, the connection is made between Jesus and King David in that he is a direct descendant of the King and is the promised seed which shall reign over Israel for ever.

This is here to assist the Jew in recognizing the legality of the claim of Jesus to be the Messiah. Even his name in Hebrew which is Joshua, means Salvation.

34 Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? 35 And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. 36 And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. 37 For with God nothing shall be impossible.

How could Mary and Elisabeth be cousins if they were both from different tribes? Well first of all each member of an Israelite tribe is related as cousins to each other because they are all descendants from Jacob, howbeit, they may be distant cousins 28 generations removed.

This relationship was a lot closer than that according to Scripture, for while Elisabeth was of the daughters of Aaron which meant her father was a descendant of Aaron, her mother could be, and was a descendant from the tribe of Judah.

38 And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.

Notice the title Mary choose for herself, **the handmaid of the Lord**, She said, I am your willing servant girl. She wanted to do whatever God wanted her to do. She did not have her own agenda of self-exaltation as we see among many today in regard to her.

39 And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda; 40 And entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth. 41 And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost: 42 And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. 43 And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? 44 For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. 45 And blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord. 46 And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord, 47 And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. 48 For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.

Mary is called **the Mother of Elizabeth's Lord**, not the mother of God. Mary is the mother of the humanity of Jesus not the mother of his divinity. He was always the divine Son of God throughout eternity past!

Notice also how Mary testifies of her low estate as an undeserving servant. It is God that gets the glory from Mary here.

49 For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name. 50 And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation. 51 He hath shewed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their

hearts. 52 He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree. 53 He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away. 54 He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy; 55 As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever. 56 And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned to her own house.

The Birth of Jesus

18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. 19 Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a publick example, was minded to put her away privily.

The Law says that if a woman has played the Harlot she and the man should be stoned. Now we know that Mary was innocent of any wrong doing, but place yourself in Joseph's shoes for a moment. Would you have believed Mary's story if you were Joseph? No you wouldn't have.

Joseph was a kind and just man and was going to give her a divorce privately, so as not to bring any more perceive shame to his or her family.

20 But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. 21 And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.

Who your Father is and what your name is means something in the Scripture. The angel of the Lord called Joseph **the son of David** for a reason.

It was to testify to any Jew who would one day read these Scriptures that Joseph was a descendant of King David himself and should have been King at the time preceding Jesus birth instead of Herod.

Herod was himself an Edomite and had no claim to the throne of Israel. All Kings must come from the tribe of Judah as prophesied by Abraham in Genesis.

Herod was selected as King over the Land of Israel, but Jesus was born King of the Jews.

The Jews should have been paying attention to the descendants of King David because they knew that the Messiah must come from that line.

The people should have been in Bethlehem that night waiting for the Messiah's birth, but no one was waiting. And there was no room for them in the Inn. This signified that the Nation of Israel as a whole had no room for God in their hearts at this time.

The name Jesus is Yeshua in Hebrew, or Joshua as we call people today in English, and the name means Salvation.

22 Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, 23 Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. 24 Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: 25 And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS.

There is no excuse for those who claim they are looking for the Messiah because all they have to do is to take an honest look at the New Testament account of the Birth, Life, Death and Resurrection of Jesus and compare it with the Old Testament prophecies.

They plainly show that Jesus truly is the Messiah they have been waiting for. Sadly the Jews will follow the Anti-Christ during the first half of the seven-year tribulation period and believe him to be their Messiah until he commands them to worship an image.

It is then that they will flee into the wilderness and realize that they missed their Messiah by two thousand years, but the good news is that all the Jewish people alive at that time will be saved, because God promised it in his word.

MATTHEW CHAPTER 2

1 Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, 2 Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.

Wise men still seek him today, but these were not just some lucky travelers who just happened to come across a great event in human history.

These men were anxiously awaiting the appearing of the sign in the sky as foretold in Isaiah and in the book of numbers that would lead them to the very spot where the Saviour of the world would be born.

Isaiah 60:1 Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee. 2 For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. 3 And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.

Numbers 24:17 I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth.

The wise men were waiting but Herod was trembling because the very next verse in Numbers prophesied his doom. I think Herod was well aware of this prophesy and it explains why he acted the way he did in killing all the children under two years of age to try to prevent its fulfillment. But you can't stop God!

Numbers 24:18 And Edom shall be a possession, Seir also shall be a possession for his enemies; and Israel shall do valiantly. 19 Out of Jacob shall come he that shall have dominion, and shall destroy him that remaineth of the city.

Herod was an Edomite and the Edomites don't fare to well when the Messiah reigns, so Herod was nervous and rightfully so. He thought he was about to lose everything.

Too bad he didn't turn to Christ at that time but instead he became infamous because of his attempt to stay in power.

3 When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. 4 And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. 5 And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet, 6 And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel. (Micah 5:2)

This prophecy was written over 400 years before Jesus was born. The Jews reject Jesus as being their Messiah because they say he isn't ruling Israel today, so he must be an impostor.

They refuse to consider that Christ came the first time as their Saviour from their sins and that at the second coming he will rule and reign.

They don't believe they need salvation from their sin, so they are blinded in part. You must be saved from your sins before you can follow your King.

7 Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. 8 And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also. 9 When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. 10 When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. 11 And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. 12 And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way. 13 And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him. 14 When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night,

and departed into Egypt: 15 And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son.

This is a reference to something God said about Israel being in captivity in Egypt (a type of the world). God calls his Son out of Egypt just like He called Israel (also called his son) out of Egypt.

Hosea 11:1 When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt.

Numbers 24:8 God brought him forth out of Egypt; he hath as it were the strength of an unicorn: he shall eat up the nations his enemies, and shall break their bones, and pierce them through with his arrows.

All of these prophecies concerning Christ have not come to pass yet but they will during the Millennial Kingdom which immediately follows the seven-year tribulation period.

16 Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men. 17 Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, 18 In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not. 19 But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, 20 Saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead which sought the young child's life. 21 And he arose, and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel. 22 But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judaea in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither: notwithstanding, being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee: 23 And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.

Notice that not everything that was spoken by the prophets was written down in Scripture even though it was prophetic. For some reason known only to God certain portions of God's words were spoken and not written. This was one of those cases.

Luke Chapter 2

1 And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. 2 (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) 3 And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. 4 And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) 5 To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

What was Joseph doing in Nazareth in the first place? Most likely he was in hiding from Herod. Remember it was his family line that traces its lineage all the way back to King David.

Herod would have an eye on any family residing in Bethlehem making claims to the throne. Joseph's family was avoiding living in the land of his nativity for the preservation of his family.

Isn't it amazing how that God could speak to the heart of Caesar to make a law to tax the world in order to get one man, and one woman to return to the city of David's birth just in time for the Birth of the Saviour?

6 And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. 7 And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

Swaddling clothes were the wrapping cloth for a corpse. This signified that Jesus was born to die.

8 And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. 9 And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. 10 And the angel

said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. 11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. 12 And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. 13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, 14 Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. 15 And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. 16 And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. 17 And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. 18 And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.

These shepherds became the first evangelist even before John the Baptist came on the scene. Why people didn't follow the life of this young child seeing how miraculous his birth was and all the commotion surrounding it amazes me.

Their vivid memories probably began to wear off as time slipped by. Thank God that event that night did what it was intended to do by getting people ready for his arrival in their hearts not many years later.

19 But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart. 20 And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them. 21 And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called JESUS, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb. 22 And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord; 23 (As it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord;) 24 And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons. 25 And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him. 26 And it

was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ. 27 And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law, 28 Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, 29 Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: 30 For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, 31 Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; 32 A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel. 33 And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him. 34 And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against; 35 (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.

Nothing is said here to exalt Mary to the place many have placed her at today. She is not the one that is worshipped here by Simeon, Jesus is.

She is a chosen vessel and a wonderful woman but let's not ascribe unto her things which God and his Word do not.

36 And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity; 37 And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. 38 And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem. 39 And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth. 40 And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.

Notice that there is no mention of Joseph and Mary taking the child Jesus down to Egypt for two years. There is not a problem with this to the serious student of the word of God.

Luke's gospel emphasized different things than did Matthew, Mark and John. Luke was a Physician and the theme of his gospel was revealing Jesus as the Son of Man.

John's gospel reveals Jesus as the Son of God, while Matthews's gospel revealed Jesus as the King of the Jews. Matthews's gospel is placed first because as the Apostle Paul said:

Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

41 Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover. 42 And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast. 43 And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it. 44 But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day's journey; and they sought him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance. 45 And when they found him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him. 46 And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions. 47 And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers. 48 And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing. 49 And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business? 50 And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them.

Again Jesus in a conversation with his earthly mother corrects her for her misunderstanding and mistake. The sinless Son of God did not leave his parents and head off for a weekend of fun.

It was Joseph and Mary who were in the wrong. Jesus was right where they left him. He was about his Fathers business.

Mary played a vital role in the fulfilling of Bible prophecy and she is to be commended for her actions, but she was not perfect.

She had a sinful nature just like you and I, and because of it her body had to die because the Bible states that the wages of sin is death. Romans 6:23 But it also states that the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

51 And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart. 52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.

Mary and Jesus in Cana

John 2:1 And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there: 2 And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage. 3 And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine. 4 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come. 5 His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it. 6 And there were set there six waterpots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece. 7 Jesus saith unto them, Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim. 8 And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare it. 9 When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom, 10 And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now. 11 This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him. 12 After this he went down to Capernaum, he, and his mother, and his brethren, and his disciples: and they continued there not many days.

This portion of Scripture has been used for centuries to teach that Mary will intercede on your behalf with Jesus to get you the answers to your prayers.

Jesus is not some mean punisher in the sky who you should fear. You cannot go to Mary and ask her to pray for you because the Bible does not authorize her to do so.

Prayers are to be directed to our Heavenly Father in the name of Jesus. He alone is our mediator, not Mary.

If by reading this, you feel you must change your way of thinking and acting in regard to Mary and your relationship to her the book of second Corinthians has the answer you are looking for.

You need to make a drastic change and you don't need to put it off one minute longer. The Apostle Paul in the book of Corinthians tells us what we should do.

2 Corinthians 6:14 Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? 15 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? 16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, 18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

John also wrote in Revelations of an Apostate (False) Church that has deceived the Earth and warns us that are members in her to leave it immediately.

Get rid of your shrines to Mary for they are strictly forbidden in the Word of God and join a Church where the Bible is the sole authority for your faith and practices.

Exodus 20:4 Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: 5 Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me;

The last time Mary is mentioned in the Bible is in Acts 1:14-22 and she is merely a bystander at this event. No miracles were ever performed by her or attributed to her by any writer of scripture it isn't until many centuries later when people led mostly by the Jesuits began creating all sorts of new teachings concerning the life of Mary.

The End

Part Two: Peter

The Life of Peter

Much has been said and written concerning the Apostle Peter but unfortunately much of what is believed by many people has no Biblical support for it. Peter is referred to as the first Pope by the Catholic Church but the Bible says nothing of this exalted position.

He is however the leader of the other eleven Apostles and is given the keys to the Kingdom but most have no clue what that means so they either ignore it or teach their own erroneous thoughts on that. We will dive into that later on in this study. Be patient.

The title Pope literally means Father, so in essence what they are saying is that Peter is the Father of the Church. The Bible is clear that Jesus was the founder and chief cornerstone of the Kingdom Church in Jerusalem and that all of the twelve Apostles made up its foundation.

Ephesians 2:19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; 20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone; 21 In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: 22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

James (the Lord's half-brother) was actually the Pastor of the first Church at Jerusalem where Peter and the other eleven Apostles to the lost sheep of

Israel ministered at. (See Acts 15) In order to correctly understand Peter and his role in the Scriptures we must go to the Scriptures themselves.

We must go back to the very beginning and start there. We will look at every aspect of Peter's life and allow the Bible to determine what we believe in regard to him and not to any cunningly devised fables.

Peter's Birthplace

John 1:44 Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.

Bethsaida sits on the Northeast corner of the Sea of Galilee in what is now and has been since the end of the first century an uninhabited stretch of what the world would view as prime real estate. Mountains all around, the beautiful sea with its great fishing and its great beaches all uninhabited, but why? Because Jesus cursed it for its disbelief in spite of all the miracles that Jesus performed there and all the teachings which they received.

Luke 10:13 Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in you, they had a great while ago repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. 14 But it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment, than for you.

Peters Occupation

Peter was a fisherman prior to his calling by Jesus as a fisher of men, he was a very successful fisherman because Peter's house was right outside the Synagogue which meant he would have lived in the best area of the City.

Peter gladly gave up his business to follow the Lord without a moment's hesitation once he knew the truth. Would to God we would follow Christ when he calls us without always stopping to rationalize everything. What God authorizes he also subsidizes.

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.

His Name

He is first called Peter (Kepha in Hebrew and Cephas in Aramaic) in John 1:44. Much is said in regard to Peter and his name by Jesus himself and it was all for a very important reason.

Jesus knew there would be much confusion regarding Peter and so God in his wisdom was very specific about who Peter was and what his name meant and the role he was to play in the Church in Jerusalem.

This would help any confused student of Scripture the help they desire to be able to sort through all the fables that abound surrounding this great preacher.

John 1:42 And he brought him to JESUS. And when JESUS beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona:

* Simon is pronounced Shi-mon, as in Shimon Peres, Israel's former Prime Minister.

Matthew 16:13 When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? 14 And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. 15 He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? 16 And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. 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.

The name Peter is the same as the Greek word, Petra: a pebble stone (Feminine). The word rock in the Greek language is translated Petros: a firm foundation (Masculine).

Perhaps another reason but definitely not the main reason for Jesus giving Simon another name was also to keep people from confusing him with Jesus' half-brother Simon.

Jesus was telling Peter, thou art a pebble stone (Petra) and upon this firm foundation (Petros, or Rock) I will build my Church. Jesus was the Rock not

Peter! Peter statement that Jesus was the Christ is the testimony that all Jews needed to have to enter into the Kingdom.

Ephesians 2:20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, JESUS Christ himself being the chief corner stone;

The Bible teaches us here that Jesus is the Chief Corner Stone. Peter and the Apostles are the foundation of that Kingdom Church.

What does Jesus mean when he says the gates of Hell shall not prevail against His Church? Well first of all gates have never been known to attack anyone but these gates are literally the gates of where? Hell!

So, Jesus is informing Peter that the Church that he (Christ) will build will be surrounded by Hell itself and her gates will not prevail (be opened) against that Church.

And that Church is built upon Peter's recognition of who Jesus is: **The Christ, the Son of the living God**. Why is Christ's Church doing in Hell then? Christ is not saying that his Church is in purgatory or anything like that, it is not suffering for any past sins it has committed.

Hell, literally has two compartments, Paradise, or Abraham's Bosom and the other side were the Rich man was tormented in flames. There is a great gulf between the two so that no one could leave the one and enter the other and according to Christ's own words there are gates that are keeping people inside of at least one of the two compartments.

Those people that are assembled in Abraham's Bosom constitute a Church, like the church in the wilderness mentioned in Hebrews which was made up of Moses and the children of Israel. A church simply means a called out assembly.

When righteous people died under the Law they were immediately ushered into and became a part of the church that was in Abraham's Bosom which was in the abode of the dead also called Hell by some. It is important that you differentiate which part of the abode of the dead or Hell you are referring to because one part is Paradise and the other is Torment.

Jesus promised Peter that upon his declaration of Jesus being the Christ, the Son of the living God all who professed the same thing would be ushered

into this Church which would then wait for the return of Christ to set up his kingdom.

If they died they would go to Paradise where they would never have to worry about the gates of Hell bursting open and its inhabitants flooding into Abraham's Bosom to prevail against the Church assembled there.

Over and over Israel is told they must believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of the living God in order to have eternal life. All those that do will be resurrected at the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom to rule and reign with Christ on earth, while the Church which is Christ's body rules and reigns in the Heavens. We today have an heavenly destiny not an earthly one.

The Kingdom belongs to Israel not the Church which is his body. Yes, there is more than one assembly mentioned in the Bible as we have already shown you. Paul is the first to learn about the Church which is Christ's body.

The 12 Apostles will sit on 12 thrones judging the 12 tribes of Israel during the Millennial Kingdom when the Church that is presently in the heart of the earth is risen and restored. Shall these dead bones live? Yes, Israel will live again in the Kingdom. We are not Israel, we are the Church which is his body, Christ is our head, he is Israel's King in the Kingdom.

Peter's Family

Why a section on Peter's family? Does it really matter who his family members are? Yes, it does, because much has been claimed concerning Peter and whether or not he was married?

John 1:40 One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.

Of course we already know that Peter had a brother named Andrew and that his Father's name was Jona (Jonah in Hebrew), but is there any mention of Peter's other family members in Scripture?

Matthew 8:14 And when JESUS was come into Peter's house, he saw his wife's mother laid, and sick of a fever. 15 And he touched her hand, and the fever left her: and she arose, and ministered unto them.

1 Corinthians 9:5 Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas? (Cephas was the name given to Peter by Jesus)?

So, we see from these two Scriptures that Peter had a wife, which he led about on his journeys and that the Lord's half-brothers and many of the Apostles were married.

Where people and Churches get the teaching of the celibacy of the Priesthood is beyond me. They sure didn't get it from the Scriptural records. All Old Testament Priests were allowed to be married and all New Testament Pastors are allowed to be married. God warned us against those organizations which would forbid people from marrying.

1 Timothy 4:1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; 2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; 3 Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.

*** Back to the context:**

19 And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

The question we must ask ourselves is twofold. What are the keys of the kingdom and to whom are they given? Of course, the keys are going to be given to Peter just like it says, you don't have to be afraid of that verse and make it say something it does not because you don't understand it.

You need simply to know how to rightly divide scripture and the answer becomes plain. Peter along with the other eleven Apostles will rule sitting on 12 thrones in the kingdom when that which is done in heaven will be done on earth and the 12 will have the literal keys given to them then to bind and loose things during that time, not today.

20 Then charged he his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ. 21 From that time forth began Jesus to

shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. 22 Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee. 23 But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.

Why does Jesus here tell his disciples not to spread the news that he was indeed the Christ if that was what they needed as a nation to believe to gain entrance into the coming kingdom?

Because he had to die for their sins first! Every once and awhile the people would get excited about the miracles that Jesus was doing and they would try to make him king before he had gone to the cross for them.

Peter didn't want him to go to the cross but he could never have become his king and Saviour if he didn't. Jesus knew exactly what he was doing.

Once again Peter acted before he thought. Peter wanted Jesus to be King without having to be a suffering Saviour. Jesus had to express the necessity of his going to the cross to immediately dispel any of their false hopes that there could be some other way. There was no other way!

24 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. 25 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. 26 For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? 27 For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works. 28 Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.

Peter's Ministry

The Bible tells us that Peter visited Antioch and that he ministered in Samaria, Joppa, Caesarea, Jerusalem, and to Babylon but there is an erroneous teaching still prevalent today which says that Peter was the Bishop

of Rome for 40 years, even during the time when Jews were forbidden to be in Rome by Caesar himself.

In Acts 12 He was in Prison in Jerusalem in 44 AD. In Acts 15 He was at the Council in Jerusalem 52 AD. In Galatians 2:11 Paul joined him in Antioch in 53 AD.

In Romans chapter one Paul wrote to Rome and addressed twenty-seven people but not a word to Peter. It would have been an insult not to have addressed Peter if he was there in 58 AD. especially if he was the first Pope.

Acts 18:2 And found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla; (because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome:) and came unto them.

In Paul's last letter (2nd Timothy) written from his prison cell in Rome Peter is not mentioned as ever being in Rome.

2 Timothy 4:16 At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge.

2 Timothy 4:9 Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me: 10 Now Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia. 11 Only Luke is with me.

Peter possibly helped to start a Messianic Church but it was not in Rome, it was in Babylon! It was from there that Peter wrote his first of two Epistles.

1 Peter 5:12 By Silvanus, a faithful brother unto you, as I suppose, I have written briefly, exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand. 13 The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you;

Peters Position

Acts 10:25 And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him. 26 But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man.

Scripture absolutely forbids the worship of any man including Peter himself. This goes for Mary and the Pope as well. Jesus Christ alone is to be worshipped!

Galatians 2:8 (For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:) .., 10 Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do. 11 But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed.

* Peter was not the infallible head of the Church:

Ephesians 5:23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.

While Peter is not mentioned here, something very important is, The Bible says that JESUS is the Head of the Church not Peter!

In the book of Acts Peter is a prominent member of the Church in Jerusalem where James was the Pastor that sent Peter and John on a Mission Trip.

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:

He was an Apostle to the Jews:

Galatians 2:9 And when James, Cephas (Peter), and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen (Gentiles), and they unto the circumcision (Jews).

What port did Jonah sail from? Joppa. Which of the Apostles opened the door for the Gentiles to be saved? Peter.

Where was Peter when he was called to go to these Gentiles? Joppa. The Apostle Peter obeyed the second time but only after he was prodded by an angel of God to go these Gentiles.

He never again led another gentile to Christ according to the scriptures but he stayed working with the circumcision until his death and he and the Church recognized that God would now use Paul to go to the gentiles.

Jonah also refused to go to Nineveh until the second time that God got hold of him. Peter had just unlocked the door to the Gentiles in Acts chapter ten but only after God saved the Apostle to the Gentiles one chapter earlier, this was not a coincidence. Peter ended his ministry in Babylon where he wrote 2 Peter and was later martyred for his faith.

Matthew 17:24 And when they were come to Capernaum, they that received tribute money came to Peter, and said, Doth not your master pay tribute? 25 He saith, Yes. And when he was come into the house, Jesus prevented him, saying, What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers? 26 Peter saith unto him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free. 27 Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee.

Who better to send to catch a fish than Peter the fisherman, turned fisher of men, but it wasn't Peter's skills that Jesus was in need of. The miracle that was performed here was solely Christ's doing, Peter was just along for the ride.

Peter didn't have any foreknowledge that a fish had a piece of money in its mouth. It is Jesus Christ who is Omniscience (All Knowing). It wasn't by any power in Peter that commanded that particular fish to be the first fish to bite Peter's hook. It was Jesus Christ.

Peter was there to be an eyewitness of Christ's Majesty and Power. Peter was no more holy than any other Saint.

Luke 5:4 Now when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught. 5 And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net.

Here we see Simon (Peter) the professional fisherman informing Jesus that he and his fishing partners were unable to catch anything with all their training and experience.

Peter must have thought that this carpenter turned Rabbi must think he knows better than us fisherman how to catch fish. Peter eventually agrees to Jesus' request but as it appears he was only trying to appease Jesus. Peter didn't really expect to catch anything.

6 And when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake. 7 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. 8 When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord. 9 For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken:

Peter didn't get to say, I told you so instead he realized that there was a lot more to this Rabbi than he had originally given him credit for. In fact, he now recognized Jesus as his Lord.

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.

Peter was momentarily afraid when he finally realized who he was standing in front of and Jesus calmed his fears and redirected his life to a life of more than just a student of the word of God into one that was dedicated to preaching the word of God.

Many people that are called to preach refuse to forsake their livelihood in order to follow Christ because of fear and his reply to you is still the same as it was to Peter, **Fear not!**

Peter stuck with Jesus early on when many others left him because many of his teachings were hard to understand:

John 6:65 And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father. 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.

What a profoundly true statement that Peter makes. It is sad though, that a man who knew this could so easily file that truth away when persecution came knocking in the garden.

We are all capable of doing the same thing. In fact, many of us would have never pulled a sword out in the garden as Peter did because we would have ran at the first sight of any persecution.

Today we have our comfort zones so well protected that we wouldn't even dare do anything or say anything that would bring about any persecution. We have become experts at hiding our Christianity when it is the only hope others have of ever receiving Christ as their Saviour.

Let your light shine before others. Tell someone on a regular basis the gospel story. How many people have you led to Christ? 100?, 50?, 10?, 5?, 1?, 0? Are you waiting for a safer opportunity? If you are waiting for them to come to you it is not going to happen.

The Upper Room

John 13:1 Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end. 2 And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him; 3 Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God; 4 He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. 5 After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded. 6 Then cometh he to

Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet? 7 Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter. 8 Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. 9 Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. 10 Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all. 11 For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean. 12 So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? 13 Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. 14 If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. 15 For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. 16 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. 17 If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.

Here goes Peter again putting his foot in his mouth. Just as Jesus is about to teach his disciples a lesson on humility and service Peter shows everyone that he is the proudest one in the bunch by saying, I will not allow someone so holy to wash my feet because I am humble.

If he were truly as humble as he thought he was he would have allowed Jesus to finish his lesson and obeyed his teacher which obviously knew better than Peter.

I don't believe Peter meant to be full of pride here but that is what was revealed. I'm sure he thought after, what a fool I have made of myself again, but if the truth be told, many of us would have acted in much the same way as Peter did.

18 I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me. 19 Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he. 20 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me. 21 When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me.

22 Then the disciples looked one on another, doubting of whom he spake. 23 Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved. 24 Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, that he should ask who it should be of whom he spake. 25 He then lying on Jesus' breast saith unto him, Lord, who is it? 26 Jesus answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. 27 And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly. 28 Now no man at the table knew for what intent he spake this unto him. 29 For some of them thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy those things that we have need of against the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor. 30 He then having received the sop went immediately out: and it was night. 31 Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him. 32 If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him. 33 Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you. 34 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. 35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. 36 Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards. 37 Peter said unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake. 38 Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice.

Peter was unable to back up his boasting about his loyalty to Christ in the garden when he fled with the others but he became a very bold witness after he witnessed Christ's resurrection even to the point of being crucified himself.

While people are not crucified today as a form of persecution I wonder how many of us would run away as Peter did in the garden the first time and how many of us would gladly suffer with our Saviour as Peter did at the end of his life.

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.

Later that night

Mark 14:33 And he taketh with him Peter and James and John, and began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy; 34 And saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death: tarry ye here, and watch. 35 And he went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. 36 And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt. 37 And he cometh, and findeth them sleeping, and saith unto Peter, Simon, sleepest thou? couldest not thou watch one hour? 38 Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak.

I believe that Peter, James and John were in Christ's inner circle not because they were more holy than any of the other twelve, excluding Judas Iscariot of course, but they were there because they needed the most attention.

When we read of any disciples excluding Judas Iscariot getting in trouble it was always one of these three. Peter was always sticking his foot in his mouth and James and John both wanted to be first in Christ's Kingdom.

In these verses, it is the same three that could not even stay awake one hour to watch as Jesus had asked them to. It is what we do when no one is around that defines who we really are.

Another reason they were in Christ's inner circle is because if your will check and see they write almost all of the Hebrew Epistles that follow Paul's Epistles to the Gentiles in the body of Christ.

39 And again he went away, and prayed, and spake the same words. 40 And when he returned, he found them asleep again,

(for their eyes were heavy,) neither wist they what to answer him. **41 And he cometh the third time, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: it is enough, the hour is come; behold, the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. 42 Rise up, let us go; lo, he that betrayeth me is at hand. 43 And immediately, while he yet spake, cometh Judas, one of the twelve, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders. 44 And he that betrayed him had given them a token, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he; take him, and lead him away safely. 45 And as soon as he was come, he goeth straightway to him, and saith, Master, master; and kissed him. 46 And they laid their hands on him, and took him. 47 And one of them that stood by drew a sword, and smote a servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear.**

Once again Peter goes off halfcocked and tries to fight his way out of a mess. Jesus never resorted to violence. Peter had zeal, but zeal without knowledge will always lead to trouble.

Luckily Jesus was there to straighten out the mess Peter had made when he cut off the servant of the High Priest's ear. I believe God allowed this situation to transpire to plant a missionary in the High Priest's service.

I can't see how someone who had their ear chopped off by a disciple of Jesus and then was healed by the very person he was coming to arrest could have kept his mouth shut.

I believe that we will see this servant of the High Priest in Heaven one day. How could someone be healed by Jesus and then not become his disciple? I'll bet the High Priest had to get rid of him to avoid seeing a witness to the power of Christ on a daily basis.

48 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Are ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and with staves to take me? 49 I was daily with you in the temple teaching, and ye took me not: but the scriptures must be fulfilled. 50 And they all forsook him, and fled.

Peter no doubt was afraid and confused, why would Jesus just allow himself to be taken, "Was he just giving up? and so he ran just like everyone else.

He should have known better, he should have recalled the words that Jesus spoke to him earlier that night when he said, Strike the shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered, but he didn't. Peter was just like the rest of mankind, he was a man of great strength but he was just a man.

51 And there followed him a certain young man, having a linen cloth cast about his naked body; and the young men laid hold on him: 52 And he left the linen cloth, and fled from them naked. 53 And they led Jesus away to the high priest: and with him were assembled all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes. 54 And Peter followed him afar off, even into the palace of the high priest: and he sat with the servants, and warmed himself at the fire.

Here we see Peter following Jesus from a safe distance trying to see what would happen. With all that Peter had seen Jesus do over the past three years surely he must have thought Jesus would come out of this situation victoriously.

Peter however was only willing to follow Jesus at a safe distance. I wonder how close we are willing to follow Jesus when it gets hard because of persecution?

55 And the chief priests and all the council sought for witness against Jesus to put him to death; and found none. 56 For many bare false witness against him, but their witness agreed not together. 57 And there arose certain, and bare false witness against him, saying, 58 We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands. 59 But neither so did their witness agree together. 60 And the high priest stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus, saying, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee? 61 But he held his peace, and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? 62 And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. 63 Then the high priest rent his clothes, and saith, What need we any further witnesses? 64 Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned him to be guilty of death. 65 And some began to spit on him, and to cover his face, and to buffet him, and to say

unto him, Prophecy: and the servants did strike him with the palms of their hands. 66 And as Peter was beneath in the palace, there cometh one of the maids of the high priest: 67 And when she saw Peter warming himself, she looked upon him, and said, And thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth. 68 But he denied, saying, I know not, neither understand I what thou sayest. And he went out into the porch; and the cock crew. 69 And a maid saw him again, and began to say to them that stood by, This is one of them. 70 And he denied it again. And a little after, they that stood by said again to Peter, Surely thou art one of them: for thou art a Galilaean, and thy speech agreeth thereto. 71 But he began to curse and to swear, saying, I know not this man of whom ye speak. 72 And the second time the cock crew. And Peter called to mind the word that Jesus said unto him, Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. And when he thought thereon, he wept.

How could someone so close to Jesus for so long deny that he ever knew him? When it comes right down to it and we are faced with a life and death situation we find out what we are really made of.

Peter wasn't quite ready to be a leader of the Jews yet, at least he wasn't until after he saw the risen Christ. It is amazing the power connected with the resurrection of Christ.

Peter after Christ Resurrection

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. **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. **3** Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee. They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately; and that night they caught nothing.

Once again Peter returns to his fishing and just as the last time Peter toils all night and catches nothing. Remember, Peter is supposed to be a fisher of men now. What is he doing? Contemplating returning to the simpler life? No! He was simply working while he was awaiting further instructions.

4 But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore: but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus. 5 Then Jesus saith unto them, Children, have ye any meat? They answered him, No. 6 And he said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes. 7 Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. 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.

Was it Jesus that withheld the fish until this time? Absolutely! Without Christ, we can do nothing! Was he trying to help reassure those that may have been considering returning to their secular careers? Possibly.

Mainly what Jesus was doing was teaching his disciples that with my help, even though I am not in the boat with you physically, you will be able to do what I call you to do. God subsidizes whatever He authorizes.

Notice how that Peter gets convicted about his nakedness when he realizes that he is in the presence of Jesus just as Adam and Eve did when God showed up in the garden of Eden.

Even though Peter had some covering that was socially acceptable to his fellow fisherman he knew it was not enough to please God and he immediately covered up his nakedness.

Should we as Christian men show off our chest in public or was Peter just being legalistic here. I believe Peter had the right idea but unfortunately his conviction only appeared when Christ was around. We should we hold our convictions 24/7.

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

While they all sat around the fire eating fish Jesus asked Peter if he loved him more than these. People have debated what the **these** were but I think it is clear by the context that Jesus was taking about the fish and Peter's family fishing business. Hey Peter, why do you keep coming back to your family business?

Why did Jesus ask Peter three times if he loved him? I believe because Peter denied him three times. Jesus wanted Peter to say three times I love you more than the security that a life as a fisherman would provide.

Peters Death and Martyrdom:

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 we read the words of JESUS, which tell us that Peter would die by crucifixion. Peter did die a Martyr's death but his death had no atoning power associated with it as did Christ's.

Too much has been accredited to the life of Peter that has no biblical foundation or support behind it. The Bible must be our sole authority.

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. 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?

I hope it was someone other than Peter that started this rumor, and we don't see Peter trying to squelch this before it got out of control either.

Peter wasn't infallible as is taught today by many because the Bible is clear that there is only one perfect person.

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.

Much else could and should be written to clear up many of the misconceptions concerning Peter. The problem isn't a lack of materials but a lack of concern by those who place tradition above the word of God. I will leave you with the warning of Jesus on his subject:

Mark 7:9 And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.

My friend, I hope this study has been a blessing to you and that you to truly have built your faith not on the traditions of men but on God's word alone. God will richly bless you if you have.

The End