

Loving God with Our Whole Heart

Series: First Love: Forming Our Love for God
Brad Bailey – April 2, 2023

[The following was not all stated when shared publicly due to the limits of both time and general nature of only developing notes as a form of preparation which I neither memorize nor read... but seek to follow in thought.]

INTRO

I am **especially glad** you're here today...or watching online.

This morning... God is placing the ultimate proposal before each of us. As we come to the conclusion of our series on forming our love for God as our "first love"...**I invite to hear the proposal Jesus makes** to his lead disciple Peter... and to know that **it is the proposal he says he has come to place before each of us.**

He asks the question: Do you love me?

Jesus said, "...Do you truly love me?" (John 21:16)

For some of us... you **may not be ready to respond... but** it is time to hear these words... and **understand the choice that is at hand.** For some... it is **time to hear these words and give your life** by saying 'yes.' For some... like Peter, these words **offer an opportunity to reaffirm and renew of vows.**

[**PRAYER: God, we want to open our hearts to your invitation today...**]

As we come to this climatic proposal from Jesus... I want to help us stand back for a moment and see the big picture of what is really at hand.

The whole of the Bible...particularly the New Testament... is not a set of religious rituals or rules...but the reality of lives meeting Jesus...and ultimately of humanity meeting with God...and being reconciled with God through Jesus.

The disciples were never choosing a religion in the way we often think of it. There were **plenty of religious** leaders and **Jesus certainly wasn't like one of them.** In fact, the very way which Jesus is experienced, was that he was spoke with an authority unlike any of the religious teachers. (Matthew 7:29, cf John 8:2, 14:10, 16:3) Along the way, Peter would be the one to say, 'where else can we go, you have the words of ETERNAL life.' (John 6:68)

The whole story that God reveals and is captured in the accounts of Scripture...begins by revealing that life as we know it has been separated from it's source... and what is involved in reaching that life again.

We've become characters outside the true story... each of our lives have a semblance of story but cut off from relationship to the real drama at hand.

We can study the stage... and try to figure out the story... but without the author and script... we have lost our place and purpose in existence. Jesus comes doing nothing less than restoring lives to life. This sense of being part of something more transcendent may be a rather **difficult thing to grasp** because **we simply can't easily grasp what is beyond us...** we are so cut off from the world of the author we left.

We chose to leave the story believing we could write our own... **only there is no other story...** and there is **no other author.**

Only he can work us back into the script. That is what Jesus comes to do. In this sense **Jesus comes as the author entering the set. He is the one who can call us from outside ourselves...and from outside the whole of this lost story.** That is why he enters the human story unlike any....

God begins to develop a story of redemption...of calling out a people to himself... and of the cost and sacrifice that such a process of redemption will involve...ultimately involving one who be sent like no other... not simply raised up from the created realm... but one coming from the heavenly eternal realm.

So **Jesus enters** as the **one sent from outside... as the prophets had told of...** and when the time comes he **begins to declare who the true Author is** and how He is working to restore lives into life.

He has come to bring that sovereign reigning power to bear... this is what he taught... this is what he enacted. Those first to follow... amazed... confounded... and then saw the sobering and sacrificial love that such redemption involves. They saw him overcome the separation between a world separated from it's eternal source... as he was crucified... and then rose to life.

Now he meets them to settle that calling to find life again in him... in following him. As we'll see... **he brings home what that means** for those who **first knew him...** and **for us.**

Why? Because it was time to settle their relationship.

Especially true for one whose name was Peter.

If you are less familiar Peter is.... the **very first disciple called on by Jesus**, followed closely by Peter's brother Andrew, then James and John.

John 1:41-42 (NLT)

⁴¹ **Andrew went to find his brother, Simon, and told him, “We have found the Messiah” (which means “Christ”).**

⁴² **Then Andrew brought Simon to meet Jesus. Looking intently at Simon, Jesus said, “Your name is Simon, son of John—but you will be called Cephas” (which means “Peter”)].**

[The names *Cephas* (from Aramaic) and *Peter* (from Greek) both mean “rock.”]

The passage above tells how Simon's journey began. When he first met Jesus, the Lord looked at Simon and called him by name. Jesus simply said, “*You are Simon son of John.*” This is the Lord telling Simon “*I know you.*”

Then Jesus did an amazing thing. He changed Simon's name. “*Today you are Simon,*” Jesus said, “*but someday you will be called Peter. You will be called a rock.*”

What Jesus was saying to Simon was this: “*I am calling you to follow me, to be one of my disciples, to follow the Way. And in the midst of this lifelong journey, you are going to change. You are going to transform. You are going to become a rock ... that which cannot be overcome... a foundation for others.*”

Peter was a strong man in many ways... a leader among his group of fishermen.

Peter is bold... there is a courage... that would jump out of a boatthat would answer the question when Jesus asked who do you think I am... he would be one of the closest three. But he was too proud of his own strength.

And when the final week in which Jesus was crucified came... Jesus speaks of how he will be taken and be abandoned... and as the Gospel describes...

“Peter declared, “Even if everyone else deserts you, I will never desert you.” - Matt. 26:33 (NLT)

We might assume that Jesus would welcome such words of loyalty...but Jesus knew that Peter's loyalty and love were being ruled by his pride.
Peter needed to be special...to be heroic.

So Jesus prepares him to face his own failure.
Jesus says that Peter will deny him three times before the rooster crows...that is...before the next morning. (Matthew 26:34, Mark 14:30, Luke 22:34, John 13:38)
And this prophetic word from Jesus comes true when Peter denies Him three times. (Matthew 26:69-75, Mark 14:66-72, Luke 22:55-60, John 18:16-27)

Jesus was crucified... and even after Jesus had risen... any begun to appear to his disciples...
Peter was still lost having failed to be the hero...he is left on the tragic sidelines of his own pride... a man without a story.

But Jesus isn't done.

Soon the power at work with Jesus proved even more amazing than they had thought. Jesus was alive. But **what about their relationship?**

They went to Galilee where Jesus had told them to wait for him after he was raised from the deadthe area where Jesus had first met them..

More than waiting... they have to be wondering... wondering if Jesus still has any interest in them. He had once called them to be disciples... a mutual commitment that would define their lives... but they had failed in many respects...especially Peter.

If we can grasp Peter's position... I think we can grasp our own.

Peter is like one who had fallen in love with a life beyond what they deserved... and then that life made a proposal to get married... they were destined for a life defining commitment... but then **they failed deeply.**

In their pride...they claimed to be more than they were... and they **failed to have the courage and character** that the other deserved. They **tried to take control of things**... only to realize how little they really control. When they finally meet on the other side of such unfaithfulness and foolishness... one can imagine the shame and loss at hand.

Peter had to wonder if Jesus would **still want anything to do with him....** what Jesus might say to him now that his sense of pride and control had been exposed. [1] [2]

When some **days had passed Peter announces... he's going fishing**... back to the way life had been. There was **nothing wrong in going fishing... but it seems to represent drifting away from the calling** of God upon their lives.

And **when they finally go out fishing**... they **fish through the entire night and catch nothing.** And when the light of morning comes... a voice calls out to them from the shoreline. He notes they have caught nothing... and tells them to throw their net on the other side. And when they do... the net is filled beyond belief.

The emptiness is filled...a sign of so much of what was at hand.

It was a **re-enacting** of what happened when they first recognized who Jesus was... and when he first called them to follow and told them he would make them fishers of men. Both occurred on the Sea of Galilee, both times Peter couldn't catch a thing, both times Jesus told him to throw his nets into the water and both times there is a miraculous catch.

Jesus shows them that what they had first experienced is still at hand.

Like a husband taking his wife back to when they first met... fell in love... when they first proposed. Maybe some of us need to go back to that place...and let Jesus show us that the call is the same even if our pride has proven a little vain and his **presence a little more mysterious and beyond our control.**

They **come to shore where he has a fire cooking a breakfast** meal prepared for them.

In this...

Jesus brings to bear the grand truth that HE IS STILL WITH THEM ...though not simply in the bodily existence he had before...he is still with them in a new way. Soon he will ascend to the Father in the eternal realm but as he has told them... another form of presence is being sent which will be better. The Spirit will be sent... and carry on with them what he has begun.

> What he had to settle that morning was the reality that he is still with them... just as he was when he first called them.

So don't go back... the way is forward.

That is the reality that many of us need to hear this morning.

We may have times when we feel adrift....floating back into the way things were.

Jesus says the calling that was still is... I'm still here.

I am still with you...just as I was when I first called you.

You can still follow me... but the way is forward.

Like Peter, **we can try to go back...** but **it's a myth.** It's going back to what you know was never really the home you long for.

But now Peter may wonder... what will Jesus say?

John 21:15-22

When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me more than these?" "Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my lambs." ¹⁶ Again Jesus said, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me?" He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep." ¹⁷ The third time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my sheep. ¹⁸ I tell you the truth, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go." ¹⁹ Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, "Follow me!" ²⁰ Peter turned and saw that the disciple whom Jesus loved was following them. (This was the one who had leaned back against Jesus at the supper and had said, "Lord, who is going to betray you?") ²¹ When Peter saw him, he asked, "Lord, what about him?" ²² Jesus answered, "If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you? You must follow me."

This is what Jesus does... **he makes the same proposal...** when he says... 'follow me;' he is offering the same calling ... the same life... the same commitment.

It is the **same call**...only this time it can be responded to by **one who has been sobered** from his **pride and presumption**.

And in **this exchange**... there are **three questions that unfold for us to answer**.

The central question Jesus asks Peter is **'Do you love me?'**

There are all kinds of questions Jesus might have asked Peter that day. He might have begun with, "Why did you deny me? What were you thinking? What do you have to say for yourself?" Jesus is not implying that Peter doesn't love Him. **He is bringing Peter to the heart** of what makes him tick. He is bringing him to an awareness of why he can and must serve. "Do you love me?" Nothing is more fundamental to who Peter is than that. No question is more defining. [3] [4] [4b]

What you love determines how you live. And everything flows from God's love... that is the center to which we return.

When asked how we can align our lives... Jesus said first and foremost...

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength." - Mark 12:30

Such love our true **"first love"**... and life's primary connection.

And such love is **what is to energize us... guide us**. You will never become who you are truly meant to be by guilt or duty. They may create the need...but it is **love that must fill us and form us**.

> And this calling also reminds us that our love for **God must be first and foremost... more deep and defining than any other love**.

To love God with ALL our heart...soul, mind and strength implies being... **recognizes that we need an undivided heart**.

You **can't halfway jump out of a plane... our halfway move to a new country... or halfway marry someone**. And we can't love God as God... with only a half of ourselves. **God is God... and if we love God as God...then He is first** and foremost..

Jesus knows how the human heart can be divided.

This Sunday is known as **Palm Sunday**.

It is called "Palm Sunday"... because it was on that Sunday that Christ entered Jerusalem... the masses had already filled the city for the coming religious feast of Passover.... when they remembered...

And the news spreads that Jesus was coming... and the crowds go out to welcome him... as he rides in upon a donkey....

They begin to lay down palm branches which were symbols of honor victory... and calling for him to save them... to rescue them..

They were welcoming Jesus as a king...perhaps the promised Messiah.

What would unfold **could shock anyone**.

Within just a few days... The authorities would plot to turn the people against him... Jesus would be arrested ...and the people would call for him to be crucified...**many of the same lives** which had cheered for him.

Those who **welcome** him as a triumphal king... one who would restore their national identity... would abandon him when their misguided expectations aren't met. Their great devotion is now lost in disappointment.

It is shocking to see such expressions turn...

But if we **look closely at Jesus**... we will see that **he had always seen this coming**. **What took place was tragic but not surprising.**

He sees what lies in human hearts.

Jesus spoke of God's loving reign being sown like seed... some of which fall on good soil that will deepen ...but others on that which would face weeds... some which would prove shallow...and be eaten by birds.

Our love for God dares to be different...dares to leave the common path for another.

As Jesus said [4c].

***"No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other."* - Matthew 6.24**

He is calling out the problem of trying to serve and satisfy both systems.

We want to think that we can have the best of both worlds....but in truth...it leads only to the becoming lost between two worlds.

We have a false sense that we can simply add a commitment to Jesus in our lives.

And Jesus knows... **God is not an "add on"** that exists in some type of **religious compartment.**

He is the master over all of life.

If we try to just "add on"...we're not "all in." [4d]

This is what is noted in a wedding when it is asked of each...'do you forsake giving your heart to all others?' It reflects a commitment to a devotion to make our deepest desire to please this person.

1. Do you truly love me? Do you embrace the power of a sacrificial love that serves others?

With every affirmation he called him to do what? To care sacrificially for others?

This is what Peter had held back.

Peter could not accept the need for Christ to suffer and die.

Peter had been called by the one he expected to be a winner... to rule like a king one day. Even at Jesus speaking of such a fate... Peter couldn't keep quiet.

Later, Peter even rebuked the Lord after He foretold of His death, saying,

***"Never, Lord... This shall never happen to you!"* - Matthew 16:22**

He would soon find himself utterly lost when Christ was arrested.

In fact he pulls out a knife and attacks a Roman soldier... and Jesus rebukes him...explaining that his kingdom is not one by the sword.

Peter still trusted in human force... even violence.

Peter trusted in the power to kill...more than the power to die.

Now Peter stood before the face of grace...and understood the power of grace... the power of sacrificial love.... which serves others. [5] [6]

Here is the encouraging thing. Anybody can love the Lord. You don't have to have a great, charismatic personality. You don't have to have a high IQ. You don't have to be a beauty queen or super stud. Everybody has the potential to answer the most important question they will ever be asked.

Will I follow Jesus into a life defined by the power of love... a love of God that will join God in serving who and what God loves?

Such love for God and love for others naturally involves giving up our right to ultimate control. It means I am no longer the central figure... and I'll have to surrender to that reality.

John 21:18-19

¹⁸ I tell you the truth, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go." ¹⁹ Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, "Follow me!"

This is a statement that should make anyone stop and consider what's at hand.

They are **spoken by one** who had just been bound and arrested... brutally beaten... and executed. They were being **spoken to one** who had **said he would follow no matter the cost... but found how hard it would be.** Jesus knew how hard it was to suffer...but he knew that his life was **rooted in what he and his Father were fulfilling...** and that when he took on the finiteness of human nature... he entrusted his life to the Father's leading. So he tells Peter...when you love God... and give your life to caring for these God loves... you **join the author who alone knows how to finish the story.** In Peter's case, serving such love will mean he will lose the freedom he has known in the past.

Eusebius, the historian tells us Peter was crucified by Nero in about 68AD. [7]

Peter needed to hear this. We need to hear this. Your calling may not lead to a martyr's death. But if you follow Jesus, it will lead to a death to the self life.

"For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it." - Matthew 16:25

To join his life is to surrender our illusion of sovereignty and control... and to align our will with His.

As Jesus offers his proposal to Peter again... **he brings home this fundamental truth. Because like the choice** one makes when they get married... when you enter such a commitment that **infuses your life with another... you cannot still live as your own.**

So the second question Jesus asks is,

2. Do you accept that such devotion involves letting go of your own ultimate sovereign control?

My final words when speaking at a wedding are often noting that love is an adventure. You may recall that the line used by the U.S. Marines to promote interest, states: "It's not just a job, it's an adventure." What's the difference.? In a job, all the expectations are defined ahead of time.... And two people enter a contract that is based on all those controllable factors. But in an adventure... we recognize that what we will face involves what unfolds. As life goes on... many of us recognize it is more an adventure. It brings turns and changes we never could have known. When we commit to the author of life, we accept that we don't write the final script.

Now there is one more fundamental aspect of this call by Jesus arises.

John 21:20-22

²⁰ Peter turned and saw that the disciple whom Jesus loved was following them. ... ²¹

When Peter saw him, he asked, "Lord, what about him?" ²² Jesus answered, "If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you? You must follow me."

When Peter looks over at John... and says "What about him?" he seems to be **doing what many of us can do...** faced with our own commitment, we might **want to know where everyone else stands.** It becomes a moment for Jesus to sharpen Peter's focus on the only relationship that is his to choose.

We can't be sure what might have been running through Peter's mind. We do know that **Peter and John were close friends.** He may have wondered if John's commitment would share a similar fate because that would be encouraging to own life. He might have wondered if Jesus was going to have special plans for John ... because there was some jealousy and comparison between them. What is clear is that Jesus uses this to clarify with Peter... that he must make his own decision.

In essence, the call of Jesus asks us,

3. Do you accept that such a choice must be your own... a commitment that is rooted in your own unique responsibility (ability to respond) and relationship?

When one commits their life... they are committing THEIR life....and that is a commitment that calls forth the deepest level of personal responsibility... of **embracing that this life is mine... and this choice is mine.**

There comes a choice that cannot be made by asking "What about my friends... family... husband or wife?"

Peter made his choice. The call of Jesus was alive and well

CLOSING

And today... it is alive and well for you.

It is the call of a lifetime... the author of life calling our lives back into the eternal story.

This morning Jesus extends his proposal to each of us.

> Jesus is standing on the shores of our lives... calling us to come ... to come to the face of one who still is calling us... to one who has still CHOSEN us.

Some of us need to hear him again... call our name... to clarify that we didn't choose him, but rather he chose us.

As we close... this proposal lies before us. I want to give an opportunity for us to respond. If you don't feel ready.... Don't be premature... but stop and recognize what is at hand. Maybe you realize you are ready. Maybe today is an opportunity to renew your vows.

PRAY

I want to add one final challenge as we close....

And after Jesus had ascended...and the Spirit came upon them....and they were surrounded by a crowd... whose voice spoke up? [8]

Peter who denied now declared

Peter's love for God became a shameless love.

Can be ashamed of what some may do.... But unashamed of Christ

And here is a challenge today, to embrace a shameless love.

A love that doesn't hide itself. A defining love is not one we hide... we are public.....in the right ways.

You would question the love I have for my wife if I never said I was married...never spoke of her... and you may question it...if I boasted about how much I love her more than showed it.

In fact... wedding is that point you make it communal.... The covenant is public.

It is the very nature of a wedding that I declare that my life commitment... that there is full clarity that my intent is to be faithful... faithfully wedded... forsaking all others.

Ask God for an opportunity to simply share something about your own genuine faith.

And if you have not publicly identified with Christ's love through baptism...I wanted to encourage you to explore the opportunity to be baptized next Sunday.

Resources: Richard Tow, John Hamby, Barry Robinson,

Notes:

1. As Richard Tow notes: "Sometimes we just need God to intervene and renew the call that He has on our lives. That happened to Moses. As a young prince in Egypt he knew God had called him to deliver Israel. He did his best to fulfill that calling. But nothing worked out. In fact, he had to flee Egypt and live as a fugitive of justice. After 40 years in the wilderness I suspect he had pretty well given up on ever being a great deliver. That's when the Lord intervened and he had his burning bush experience. God had not forgotten and God had not given up on His plan. Abraham got discouraged and God had to affirm His purposes for him. (Genesis 12:1-4; Genesis 15:1-6 .) There is Elijah, a great prophet of God, but when Jezebel threatened, he ran. There by the river he lay worn out, disillusioned, and discouraged. That's when God met with him and re-established him in his calling." (Tow notes I Kings 19; see also I Samuel 27:1 for David's experience and Acts 15:37-38 and 2Tim. 4:11 for Mark's experience.)

2. Some have considered that Jesus may have already engaged Peter privately based upon 1 Corinthians 15:4-5 ... "that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve." From this perspective what Jesus does at the shoreline in John 21 is to restore him publicly amidst the other disciples. While this is possible, it seems more likely that the reference in 1 Corinthians may refer to either Peter being the first to discover the resurrection or to some other way in which he first saw Jesus... and could even include that on this shoreline it was Peter who leapt from the boat and came to Jesus before the others.

3. The question "Do you truly love me more than these?" could refer to different things:
1.) Jesus could have been asking about the love that Peter had for his fellow apostles
2.) Jesus could have been asking if Peter loved Him more than any of the other apostles
3.) Jesus could have been asking if Peter loved Him more than these fish he had just caught... implying more than the occupation of fishing

The point is clear that there is indeed something creating a barrier in Peter's relationship with Christ.

I tend to think there is reason to presume he is referring to loving him more than the other disciples because that is what Peter claimed before in a spirit of pride.

Remember on the night before Jesus crucifixion how Peter had claimed a higher devotion to the Lord than the others. , "Even if all fall away on account of you, I never will." (Matthew 26:33) Now Jesus asks him, "Do you love me more than these?" This time Peter makes no comparisons. He has learned some lessons about the dangers inherent in that.

4. As Richard Tow describes:

"It is a common error made by sincere people. When we feel a zeal for the Lord we may be tempted to ask why others don't love God the way we do. I found out two things about that kind of thinking. First, they may love God more than I think. Who really knows what price someone else has paid? You may look at someone in ministry and say in your heart why him and not me? Sometimes the answer to that is simply, God is sovereign and has the right to make those decisions without answering to anyone. But there may be a history there that you don't know as well as you think. That person may have passed tests that you and I didn't even know exists. The other thing I have learned is what Peter learned in his experience. I may not know my own heart. I may not love God as much as I think. I may fail the next test that comes my way. "Let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall." (1 Corinthians 10:12.) Now Peter simply submits his answer to Christ's omniscience. ""Yes Lord you know that I love you." There is brokenness in his voice. There is tenderness. The tone is quite different from when he had boasted, "Even if all fall away on account of you, I never will." – From Richard Tow sermon "Ministry Essentials"

5. Love must be expressed. How will I express my love for the Lord? I will tend to that which He loves, His sheep. I can't climb up into heaven and hand him a drink of cool water. He needs nothing like that from me for He sits in glory at the right hand of the Father. But he has said, "Inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me." (Matt 25:40) The way I express my love to the Lord is found in the way I treat His people.

1 John 4:20 & 21

"If anyone says, "I love God," yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen. And he has given us

this command: Whoever loves God must also love his brother.”

How does our love for God affect our attitudes toward people? We grant them the same kind of favor God granted us. We care about them because they are valuable to Him—so valuable that he poured out his precious blood for their salvation. The only way I will treat people right is to place the same value on them as Jesus does. When I see people through Jesus eyes how will I see them? I will see them as sheep without a shepherd harassed by the enemy. I will have compassion upon them because that is Jesus’ heart toward them.[Mark 6:34; 1 Peter 3:8] I will sacrifice myself to shepherd them because that is what compassion demands. The natural response to loving the Lord is to feed his sheep.

With these words we are observing Peter’s ordination service and the questioning committee is one person, Jesus. He has but one question, “Do you love me?” Without that love and devotion all the training, and skills, and natural talents mean nothing. In fact, they could actually work against the purposes of God.

As Richard Tow notes: “Victor Frankel once said, “The more one forgets himself—by giving himself to a cause to serve or another person to love—the more human he is and the more he actualizes himself. Logotherapy deviates from psychoanalysis insofar as it considers a man a being whose main concern consists in fulfilling meaning rather than mere gratification...”[19] The person who lives his or her life for mere gratification will never shepherd other people regardless of what position or title that person may hold. It’s not about a title. It’s about a tug on the heart that says I must tend to that which my Lord cares about.”

6. Peter takes this instruction and passes it on to others in 1 Peter 5:1-4

“To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ's sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed: ² Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers--not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; ³ not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. ⁴ And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.” - 1 Peter 5:1-4 (NIV)

7. Regarding reference to Eusebius, Richard Tow cites: B. Van Elderen, “Peter Simon”, Merrill Tenney, ed. The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible Vol. Four (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976) pp.738-739

8. Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice, and proclaimed to them, “Fellow Jews and all you residents of Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and pay attention to my words. - Acts 2:14 (CSB)