

1 PETER 1:8 “DO YOU LOVE ME?”

⁸ *Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy,*

“Do you love me?” That was the question the resurrected Jesus asked Peter on the beach in Galilee. As distressing as it was for Peter to hear that question three times in such close proximity to his denials of his Lord the night of Jesus’ trial, the recent event of Jesus’ chastisement of Thomas surely also had an effect on Peter. We read in John 20:29, *Then Jesus told [Thomas], “Because you have seen me, you have believed, blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”* Belief is a result of love that is manifested as obedience to the object of that love, especially when the object is not present. The author of the Letter to the Hebrews put it this way: *...faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.* He goes on to explain that *this is what the ancients were commended for* (Hebrews 11:1-2).

In all of history there have been only a tiny number of people who actually saw the incarnate Christ. The rest of us are left with only the experience of the demonstration of his glory through the Word of God, the cross and the Holy Spirit. How wonderfully other-worldly it is to be blessed for *NOT* seeing Jesus, but believing in him anyway. And how great is God’s gift of faith through which we come to know Jesus, to love Jesus and to enter into the presence of Jesus.

Jesus you have declared as blessed those who believe even though they have not seen you. Thank you for not limiting your saving grace to a handful of special saints, but have designed the way of salvation with the multitude of the faithful in mind. I am one who has not seen you in the flesh. Give me the faith that I might truly believe in you. Through that faith guide me into a life of loving obedience. Amen.