but not invariably, attached to our Lord.  
I believe that the disciple whom Jesus  
loved was in His company during the  
whole of the events in John ii. iii. iv. and  
v., and on His return from Judea with His  
disciples, John having for a time returned  
to his business, as our Lord was now resident in Capernaum, received, as here related, this more solemn and final call. We  
must remember, that the disciples would  
naturally have gone up to Jerusalem at  
the Passover, John ii. 23, *without a call  
from the Lord*, and by what they saw  
there would become more firmly attached  
to him. The circumstance related in John  
xxi, that even after they were assured of  
the Resurrection, the Apostles *returned to  
their occupation* as fishermen, gives additional probability to the usual nation  
of the call in our text.

**20. left their nets, and followed him**] i.e. *from this  
time they were constant followers* of the  
Lord. But when He happened to be in  
the neighbourhood of their homes, they  
resumed their fishing; cf. Luke v. 1–11,  
which occurrence was, in my belief, different from, and later than the one related  
in our text. See notes there.

**23—25.**] HE MAKES A CIRCUIT OF GALILEE. (Mark i. 89: Luke iv. 44, ordinarily: but qu.? There is no necessity for believing this circuit of Galilee to  
be identical with those, even if we read  
*Galilee* in the passage in Luke. Our  
Lord made *many such circuits*.)

**23. synagogues**] These were the places  
of religious assembly among the Jews  
after the return from the captivity. Tradition, and the Targums, ascribe a very  
early origin to synagogues: and Deut.  
xxxi. 11, and Ps. lxxiv. 8, are cited as  
testimonies of it. But the former passage does not necessarily imply it: and it  
is doubtful whether that Psalm was not  
itself written after the captivity. They  
are generally supposed to have originated  
in Babylon, and thence to have been  
brought, at the return, into the mother  
land. See Neh. viii. 1–8. At the Christian era there were synagogues in every  
town, and in some larger towns several.  
See Acts ix. 2,20. In Jerusalem, according to the Rabbinical writings, there were  
upwards of 450. (See Acts vi. 9, and  
note.) The people assembled in them on  
sabbath and festival days, and in later  
times also on the second and fifth days of  
each week, for public prayer and the hearing of portions of Scripture. See Luke iv.  
16: Acts xiii, 15. The officers of the  
synagogues were (1) *the ruler of the synagogue*, Luke viii. 49; xiii, 14: Acts xviii. 8, 17, who had the care of public order,  
and the arrangement of the service;  
(2) the Elders, Luke vii. 3: Mark v. 22:  
Acts xiii. 15, who seem to have formed a  
sort of council under the presidency of the  
Ruler; (3) the *legate* or *angel of the assembly*, who was the reader of prayers, and  
also secretary and messenger of the synagogues; (4) the *minister* (Luke iv. 20), or  
chapel clerk, whose office was to prepare  
the books for reading, to sweep, open, and  
shut the synagogue. Besides these, there  
appear to have been alms-gatherers. The  
synagogue was fitted up with seats, of  
which the first row were an object of  
ambition with the scribes (ch. xxiii. 6).  
A pulpit for the reader, lamps, and a chest,  
for keeping the sacred books, appear to  
complete the furniture of the ancient  
synagogue. Punishments, e.g. scourging,  
were inflicted in the synagogues. (See  
ch. x. 17; xxiii. 34: Luke ix. 49: Acts  
xxii. 19; xxvi.11.) The catechizing also  
of children seems to have taken place  
there, as also disputations on religious  
questions.—Our Lord was allowed to read  
and teach in the synagogues, although of  
mean extraction according to the flesh,  
because of His miracles, and His supposed  
character as the professed leader and  
teacher of a religious sect.

**preaching the gospel**] For the exact meaning of