

THE STORY OF PETER

And

THE STORY OF RUTH

Aunt Hattie's Bible Stories

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by

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CHAPTER TWO

PETER AND HIS COMPANIONS LEAVE HOME

IT is probable that soon after this meeting with Jesus, James, John, Andrew and Peter went home to work again in the fishing boats of Galilee. But they were not as they had been before their trip down the Jordan River.

Their minds were filled with strange thoughts. They had looked into the face of Jesus Christ, the Messiah, the hope of Israel. No one, even today, can be the same after meeting the Lord Jesus.

Jesus, too, soon left the scenes of the Jordan and went back to His home in Nazareth where He was not only rejected but threatened with death. On His way to Capernaum He went to the synagogue where He healed a man of an unclean spirit.

No radios in those days, but even so the report of this miracle spread rapidly in all the country round about.

I think Simon Peter was in the service that Sabbath morning and as soon as the meeting was ended it was like him to invite Jesus home to dinner.

The Bible does say that He went to Simon's house and the Lord Jesus goes only where He is invited. But it was not a happy home that day for Simon Peter's wife's mother was ill of a great fever. As soon as those in the house recognized their distinguished guest they asked Him to do something for her.

Jesus went to where she lay and standing over the sick one told the fever to leave, and it did. Immediately the quiet, loving mother arose well and strong and busied herself in serving those around her.

By evening the news of the miracles of the day had spread throughout the city of Capernaum and all who had sick ones in their homes no matter what the trouble or disease, brought them to Jesus.

Peter had first met Jesus on the day that Andrew introduced him and he was greatly impressed then, I am sure; but now he is amazed at the things he has seen Him do.

Not many days after this Jesus came down to the shore of the Sea of Galilee and a great crowd followed Him to hear every precious word which He spoke. Anchored to the docks were two fishing boats and the fishermen nearby were washing their nets.

The Lord stepped into one of the boats which belonged to Peter and, as He did so, He called to Peter to come and row Him out a little from the shore. Then Jesus sat down in the boat and talked to the people on the shore, for in this way many could hear Him.

When He was through speaking He turned to Peter and said in a cordial way, "Now, Simon, we'll go fishing. Let's go out where the water is deep and let down the nets."

But Simon Peter, an expert fisherman, thought it of no use for he said, "Master, we have been out there all night and caught nothing."

Then, I believe, Peter looked into the face of Jesus and saw what made him think again of His amazing power, for he said: "But if You say so, we will do it."

Calling two or three others he told them to pick up the oars. With a few swift strokes they were soon in deep water. At Peter's word the nets were cast over the side of the boat and no sooner had they dipped them than they were filled with fishes. Heavier and heavier became the nets!

The men clinging to them with skillful hands heard the cracking and snapping of the strands of the nets. Oh, would they loose their catch? With their combined strength they pulled the nets in and emptied them into the bottom of the boat, and lo, the whole boat was full! Then they called to the fishermen in a nearby boat to come and help and soon their boat was full, too. Both boats had to pull hard to reach the shore.

Some folks tell us they think that Jesus never smiled. I never could believe that. I think of Him as enjoying every bit of that fishing experience. How He must have smiled as He looked into the faces of those fishermen as they tugged at the nets and saw how pleased and surprised they were!

Peter, poor astonished Peter, was overcome with the scenes before him! As soon as they got out of the boat he ran to Jesus and fell down at His feet and said, "**Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord.**"

To Peter this was the topnotch experience with this new Friend. I believe at that moment Peter saw in the Lord Jesus more than a miracle worker.

He saw His holiness and in the glory of that vision he also saw his own sinfulness. He felt how unworthy he was to be in so majestic a Presence.

Did Peter really want the Lord to go away from Him? No, that was the last thing he would have desired. I think it was another way of saying, "Cleanse me, O Lord, and forgive all of my sins so that I may be fitted to be with You."

Do you think that Peter was a desperately wicked man? No, he probably was a very fine, clean, moral man, but he had sin in his heart as we all have.

The Lord came to seek and to save the lost and Peter was one of them. That day Jesus said to Peter, "Do not be afraid. We had a good catch of fish today but from now on I'll teach you to catch men." That is to say, "I'll teach you to bring men to Me."

Not long afterward Jesus came down to the shores of Galilee where Peter and Andrew were fishing in a boat not far from land. I am sure that when they saw Him they were thrilled, more so when they heard Him call, "**Follow Me and I will make you fishers of men.**"

"And straightway they left their nets and followed Him."

Then Jesus walked a little farther to where James and John were in a boat with their father mending their nets. He called them just as He had the others to leave all and follow Him.

The Bible says, "**They immediately left their ship and their father and followed him.**"

What a wonderful beginning for these followers of the Lord Jesus! They left fishing boats, nets, their father, and all things, and they did it gladly. Why? Because Jesus called them.

Does the Lord Jesus ask everyone who believes upon Him as Saviour to leave all earthly business and become a minister or a missionary? No, by no means. All who are born again and love Him are set apart for His service, but more often than not that service is right where they live. God does call some to do His special work. He will let us know definitely if He wants us.

I am sure that the Lord had a reason for calling each one of His disciples, but it was not because they were perfect. It was because He saw in them that which He needed for His work.

Thus Simon Peter and his friends went everywhere with Jesus listening to Him, to His teachings and seeing His mighty miracles. Jesus called twelve to be with Him throughout His earthly ministry.

~ end of chapter 2 ~

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