Scripture: John 21.

Subject: Meeting Jesus

There is so much in this chapter that can be considered, and some lessons learned as a result. The chapter features Jesus and some of his disciples who were at the sea of Tiberius. The chapter can be divided into four parts, the first is the disciples fishing, the second is Jesus directing them where to fish. The third is the invitation of Jesus to dine with him. The fourth is Jesus challenging Peter regarding his love, and feeding the flock of God.

I want to begin with what I call.

1. The Action of Peter. Verse 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."*

When Jesus chose Peter and others to be a disciple, he said follow me and I will make you a fisher of men.

Jesus never intended that any of these disciples should go back to be fishermen, being fishermen was in the past, Jesus' future task first them was that they be his witnesses. However here by the sea of Tiberius we find a group of these disciples they were probably feeling a down in spirit because of the events surrounding what happened to Jesus.

It was whilst he and the other disciples were by the sea that Peter makes his statement, I go a fishing, Peter's action here implies he was leaning towards his former life, which was not good, Jesus had called him away from natural fishing to spiritually fishing for the souls of people.

I would like us to note that Peter is remembered for the action he took on various occasions. After Jesus spoke about being the bread which came down from heaven some of his followers could not understand what he said and stopped following him.

Jesus turns his attention then to the disciples and says will you also go away. Peter takes action said in John 6 v 68 Peter said *"Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life."*

In Mathew 16 when Jesus asked who do men say I am, it was Peter who took action and said *"you are the Christs the Son of the Living God.*

It was Peter who took action with John in Acts 3 when they met a man who was disabled sitting at the beautiful gate of the Temple, and said to him *"Silver and gold have we none but such as we have, we give to you, in the name of Jesus rise up and walk."*

There are more instances involving Peter where he is involved in the action in the N.T. some of these were quite negative, for instance when in Mark 9 v 31 & 32 we read "*And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. And he spake that saying openly. And Peter took him and began to rebuke him."*

This was unwise act by Peter further in Matt 26 v 69 to 73. After Jesus was betrayed, we see the unwise answer Peter gave to those who questioned him if he knew Jesus and if he was a disciple, which he denied, three times he denied he had anything to do with Jesus. His Action referred to by Paul in Galatian's 2 v 11 to 15 was because he had acted wrongly and needed correcting.

What this point on the action of Peter teaches us is that we need to make sure our action meets with the Lords approval and not disapproval.

2. The Appearance of Jesus.

After the disciples went fishing, they toiled all night and caught nothing.
John 21 4 v & 5, *'But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore: but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus. Then Jesus saith unto them, Children, have ye any meat? They answered him, No."*

John 21 v 6 & 7, *"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. 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."*

This are a number of post resurrection appearances of Jesus, this being one of them, he showed himself to Mary Magdalene, to the two on the road to Emmaus, and to the disciples three times.

It was John who recognized that it was Jesus only Jesus could cause such a miracle to take place. These were experience fishermen but never caught a fish this night, it all changed when Jesus told them where to fish.

Next, we see.

3. The Application of Jesus' word.

What I want you to see here is the importance of listening and applying the word of Jesus. The disciples were told to cast the net on the right side of the ship, their step of faith in believing the word of Jesus had a positive outcome.

Matthew 6 v 33. Jesus, *"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."*

In chapter 7 v 24 to 27 he says, *"Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And everyone that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it."*

Listening and then obeying the word of Jesus will always have a positive outcome. We only have to look at other instances in the N.T. to see the benefits to those who obeyed the his word. In Matthew 9 we read of four men of faith took tiles off a roof and lowered a man disabled at the feet of Jesus, some questioned the authority of Jesus because he said to the man on the porta bed, thy sins be forgiven thee. Jesus showed he had authority by saying to the man take up your bed and walk, the man obeyed and was healed.

In Acts 1 v 4 & 5 *"And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he,*

ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence."

For 9 days they met together to wait, there was an application of what Jesus told them, on the tenth day it was the day of Pentecost and as they gathered in an upper room 120 of them the Holy Spirit descended, the advent of the Holy Spirit had come. All the 120 were filled with the Holy Spirit. The Word of Jesus had been applied and there was a positive outcome.

4. The Amazing Catch.

In this story of the disciples catching the fish as a result of Jesus word, the catch was amazing, they were not able to draw in the net because there were so many, the actual number was 153, what a catch.

In conjunction with this when we consider the words of Peter I go a fishing, and the result of 153 fish bring caught. We read on the day of Pentecost it is Peter again who is the spokesman following the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, by reading his sermon and exaltation of Jesus we read of another amusing catch, three thousand souls are saved and added to the church.

5. The Act of Jesus.

The concluding verses of this chapter deal with the invitation of Jesus to come and dine. This invitation was leading up to the final act of Jesus in which he challenges Peter to feed the flock of God, Peter was to precede from being a fisherman to a feeding man.

In addressing Peter Jesus says to him. Peter, do you love me more than these, Jesus asked him this question three times, most think he said this because Peter had denied him three times, also when he said do you love me more than these, he was referring to his love of fishing.

This was a challenging word to Peter and can be applied to us, so my final word here is do you love the Lord, if so, you will be prepared to accept the challenge of Jesus and say I love you, Lord.