

TIMELY WORDS FROM VANCE HAVNER

Every Christian is a contradiction to this old world. He crosses it at every point. He goes against the grain from beginning to end. From the day that he is born again until the day that he goes on to be with the Lord, he must stand against the current of a world always going the other way. God expects him to be "beside himself," "a fool for Christ's sake," "drunk on new wine." If he allows it, men will tone him down, steal the joy of his salvation, and reduce him to the dreary level of the general average. If the devil cannot keep us from being saved, he next endeavors to make average Christians of us, and in this he usually succeeds. He tames the holy recklessness of God's dare-saints until they sink into the drab pattern of most of us, "faultily faultless, icily regular, splendidly dull." The devil does not mind our joining church if we behave like most of those who are already inside. But when a real, wide-awake Christian breezes along, taking the Gospel seriously, the devil grows alarmed and begins plotting his downfall. He gets plenty of assistance right in the church, for many church folk do not like to have their Laodicean complacency upset by these who turn the world upside down. So they conspire with Satan to turn the young Christian's fever into a chill. There are always plenty of human wet blankets to smother the zealot's flame, and they have put out more spiritual fires than have all the skeptics and infidels

We live in an hour when the foundations of civilization are crumbling, the night of apostasy is deepening, lawlessness runs wild to its awful climax, the powers of Anti-Christ increase and abound, and wars and rumors of wars belt the globe. Yet the Church of God, with the only hope and cure for mankind's sin and misery, rests, for the most part, at ease in Zion, and we who claim that Name above every name make mud pies and daisy chains and twiddle our thumbs while a world sweeps over the brink of disaster. We preach a Gospel that is God's dynamite and we live firecracker lives. We sing of showers of blessing and the old-time power and faith, the victory and higher ground, and then we leave it all in the hymn books and go home. We read that when our Lord held a service the congregation went home amazed and glorifying God and filled with fear and saying, "We have seen strange things today" (Luke 5:26). How many, do you think, go from our meetings today in such a frame of mind?

The subject of prophecy has, of course, held an attraction for a great many superficial souls with a flair for the spectacular. Gog and Magog, the 666, the beasts of Revelation, have, indeed, fallen into the hands of too many mere sensationalists who have ranged over the country with wild and weird charts of their own devising, setting dates almost as brazenly as ever the Millerites dared to do. But then any kind of light will attract a certain number of bugs.

Our Lord said, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." It is evident, then, that a true disciple is a soul-winner. It is possible to sit on the shore discussing the signs of the times when we ought to be driven by the signs of the times to launch out into the deep and let down our nets for a draught.

The Town of Fools and Fishermen

By Tom Adcock

There lived a group of people in the Town of Fools who called themselves fishermen. The fishermen lived by the sea and had raised support from the town for a great fleet of fishing boats. The fishermen spent much time discussing the best way to apply their calling. They formed committees, held seminars and even converted some Fools into joining their fishermen's club. Finally the fishermen selected a small boy to fish. Because of all the disagreement between the fools and the fishermen, the boy finally left alone in his own small boat. Some fools did agree to cast down all evil spirits that prevented the fish from biting and several groups of fishermen agreed to hold "prayer marches" along the beaches. One group of fools smugly replied that if any fish were to be caught it would happen automatically according to fate. But not one of the fools or fishermen would actually get in the boat and fish.

The boy did catch fish because the sea was full of hungry fish. Then the fishermen argued about the way the fish should be distributed. So another committee was formed....

How surprised they were when one day the little boy went out fishing and never came back to fish for them again.

After the boy's departure an angry town of fools and fishermen scheduled a series of meetings to discuss the matter.

"Follow Me and I will make you fishers of men." Jesus of Nazareth