



HERE'S A PICTURE OF MANY MODERN DAY CHURCHES

Jesus Calls Every Christian To Be A Fisher Of Men

Now it came to pass that a group existed who called themselves fishermen. And lo, there were many fish in the waters all around. In fact, the whole area was surrounded by streams and lakes filled with fish. And the fish were hungry too!

Week after week, month after month, and year after year, these people who called themselves fisherman, gathered in important meetings and talked about their call to fish, the abundance of fish, and how they might go about fishing. Year after year they carefully defined what fishing means, defended fishing as an occupation, and declared that fishing is always to be a primary task of fishermen.

Continually they searched for new and better methods of fishing and for new and better definitions. Some wondered about using *emerging* fishing fads that seemed to be growing in popularity. Further they said, "*The fishing industry exists by fishing as fire exists by burning.*" They loved slogans such as "*Born to fish,*" "*Fishing is the task of every fisherman,*" "*Fish 'till you drop,*" "*Every fisherman is a true fisher,*" and "*A fisherman department for every fisherman's club.*" They sponsored special meetings called "*Fishermen's Campaigns*" and "*The Month For Fishermen To Fish!*" They sponsored expensive nationwide and worldwide congresses to discuss the finer points of fishing and to promote fishing. It was a great time to hear all the effective ways of fishing. It was the place to preview all the latest fishing equipment, books, fish calls and to see whether any new bait was discovered.

These fishermen built massive industrial styled buildings that were ultra-modern inside and out; complete with state of the art floor to ceiling horizontally gliding flat-screens, top of the line high-definition surround sound theater wiring and rock concert speaker stacks thirty feet tall. They called them "*Fishing Headquarters.*" Everything was designed with über-hip-teenagers in mind, but the ambience certainly appealed to the cyber-savvy generation following them, as well. The plea was that everyone should be a fisherman and every fisherman should fish. One thing they didn't do, however... they didn't fish.

In addition to meeting regularly, they organized a board to send out fishermen to other places where there were many fish. All the fishermen seemed to agree that what is needed is a board which could challenge fishermen to be faithful in fishing. The board was formed by those who had the great vision and courage to speak non-offensively about fishing, to define fishing, and to promote the idea of fishing in faraway streams and lakes where many other fish of different colors lived.

Also the board hired grateful staff members and appointed committees and held meetings to define fishing, to defend fishing, and to decide what new streams should be thought about. But the staff and committee members were too busy to fish.

Large elaborate and expensive training centers were built whose original and primary purpose was to teach fishermen how to fish. And these wonderful buildings and their maintenance operations took on the greatest of importance as their leaders prayed eloquent prayers and prioritized. One craftsman made a beautiful white gold plaque for the entry of one such center, with their engraved watchword, *"We duplicate what we are! Our constituents will fish like we as fishing-guides fish, more than if we just tell them to go fishing!"*

Over the years, specialized courses were offered on the various needs and dependencies of fish, the nature of "entitled fish," the politically correct fisher, fish self esteem, fish as victims, healing the fish we plan to catch, where to find fish, the psychosomatic reactions and phobias of 21st century fishermen, psychological fishing vernacular, also how to sensitively approach and feed the curious seeking-fish.

Those who eloquently taught fishing had earned doctorates in fishology. But the teachers did not fish. They only taught fishing theory properly coupled with the right inner motivation. Some of them who were thought of as having fishing expertise felt that actual fishing activity, utilizing pole or net, was to be left for the few fishing clubs that were so gifted therein. But year after year, after tedious training, many were graduated and were given fishing licenses. They were sent to do full-time fishing in a cutting-edge way; some to distant waters, which were filled with fish.

Some spent much time in study and travel to go learn the history of fishing and to see faraway places where the founding fathers did great fishing in past centuries. They lauded the faithful fishermen of many years ago who stayed the course with their respective fishing clubs and also handed down the idea of fishing.

Further, the anglers built large printing houses to publish glossy brochures and clever marketing tools for progressive types of bass boats, bait, lures, nets, rod and reel. The presses near the boathouse were kept busy day and night to produce materials solely devoted to fishing methods, equipment, and programs to better facilitate and to encourage meetings to talk about fishing. A speaker's bureau was also provided to schedule speakers on the subject of fishing.

Many who felt the call to become fishing-personnel responded. They were commissioned and sent out to WOW the fish and to actually fish ...however, like the fishermen back home they never fished. Just like the fishermen back home, they engaged in all kinds of other occupations. Some, without having received a proper diagnosis, were convinced that they were allergic to fish. So, they made all kinds of equipment to travel here and there to look at fish hatcheries. Some also said that they wanted to be part of the fishing party, but they merely felt called to furnish fishing resources and premiums. The political satirization, comedy, ranglings and punditry surrounding the whole fishing occupation including the coastline also took on greater importance for many—top priority! Others felt that their job was to relate to the fish in a cool and friendly way so that the fish would know the difference between good and hypocritical fishermen. Others felt that simply letting the fish know they were nice, land-loving neighbors—how warm and kindhearted they were—was enough to make these fish eventually get themselves caught.

After a stirring meeting on "*The Necessity for Fishing*," one young fellow stood up, left the meeting and went fishing. The next day he reported how he had caught two outstanding fish. Some nonplussed fellows in the crowd scoffed out-loud thinking this guy somehow embellished or exaggerated things by saying that he went fishing. Fishermen are indeed known to tell stories, but this young fellow was very sincere; he actually went and did it. And he was in turn honored for his excellent catch and was then scheduled to appear on all the prime-time/drive-time TV fishing-talk shows and XM and SIRIUS Satellite Radio shows that dealt with fishing. Soon countless experienced his Webcasts and Podcasts; firsthand and his face even appeared on the cover of top fishing magazines. Soon book contracts were signed. They scheduled him to visit all the citywide Angler Conventions and stadium meetings, as much as possible, to tell how he did it. Crowds wanted to check out his tackle box and other equipment. They subscribed to his mobile blog and lined up for his touch, his autograph, his counsel, his signed photos, his DVD movie about his upbringing, his tee-shirts and CDs ...or maybe for one of his family members or cousins just to come talk to them. Countless sought to get closer to him in various ways... and his own speaking became "*in demand*" internationally, so he quit his fishing in order to have the time to tell about the exhilarating experience to the other eager fishermen. He was also placed on the General Board as a person having considerable experience and there was even talk of eventually making him the president of a reputable fishing college.

Now it's true that many of the fishermen sacrificed and put up with all kinds of difficulties. Some lived near the water and bore the smell of dead fish every day. They received the ridicule of some who made fun of their fishermen's clubs and the fact that they claimed to be fishermen yet never fished. They wondered about those who felt it was of little use to attend the weekly meetings to talk about fishing. **After all, were they not following the Master who said, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers..?"**

Imagine how hurt some were when one day a person suggested that those who don't catch fish were really not fishermen, no matter how much they claimed to be. **Yet it did sound kind of ...correct... Is a person a fisherman if year after year, he never catches a fish? Is one following if he isn't fishing?**

Kurt von Schleicher adapted this from John Drescher's "A Plea for Fishing."
© Copyright 2007 by Fish4Souls. All rights reserved.

"One can love fish but never catch any himself until he goes fishing."

—Vance Havner

"There is no such thing as Christian discipleship that is non-evangelistic. According to Jesus Himself, the result of following Him is that we become fishers of men and women." —D. Shibley

"The sinner cannot convert the sinner. Fish will not be fishers."

—Charles Spurgeon

"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which is lost"

(Luke 19:10).

"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday today and forever"(Hebrews 13:8).

"It's not enough just to follow our Lord's life-principles, teachings, or His good example. We must be regenerated inside and follow Him daily ...where He's going ...as He leads us in worship of the Father and to people in need. Christ had His priorities in order. He loves and died for sinners. He still loves fishing them out of deep dark polluted ponds if they will freely take what He has to offer and allow Him to. Saving people for eternity—fishing for souls—is still the master passion of Jesus Christ and He wants to use you in this ministry! There's no time to waste and no fishing in heaven, so we need to do our skillful casting now." —Kurt von Schleicher