

“Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already unto harvest.”

John 4:35

THE FIELDS ARE WHITE

by Craig Marlatt

Did you know that this world is aching for a move of God? I believe with all of my heart that if we will listen closely we can hear the groaning and travailing of this planet, crying out for deliverance, *“For the earnest expectation of the creature awaiteth the manifestation of the sons of God . . . For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain until now”* (Romans 8:19-22). Yes, the entire creation is in pain waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God; waiting for God’s people to rise up to the enemy and proclaim the kingdom of God.

You know when I was just a boy I remember a sign on a church building near my house that read Church spelled CH - CH. What’s missing? U R. It certainly is a catchy little phrase, but I believe it’s time to get the Church out of the buildings and take the message to where the people are. You can learn a lot about Christianity sitting in Church buildings, but if you don’t take what you have learned to where the need really is, then what you have will stagnate. It’s easy to get ‘teachitus’ where you just learn more head knowledge and don’t feel necessarily obligated to apply what you know. One ounce of applied Christianity is worth a million pounds of dormant knowledge.

We are living in days of incredible achievement in the intellectual community, and the church is not exempt from this new phenomena (Daniel 12:4; II Timothy 3:7). It seems like there is almost a glut of Bible teaching on the market today, and yet the number of people who are busy reaching out to the lost is probably just a small percentage of those professing to have an understanding of the Bible. What is Bible teaching for primarily if not to teach us to do the things that Jesus commanded us to do? He came to establish a new kingdom and sent us out to follow in his footsteps.

It’s time that we tested some of the scriptures that we quote so often in our churches today. We have little problem singing “Greater is He that is in me than he that is in the world . . . as long as no one challenges us to go out into the real world with the Good News. But how will we ever know that it’s true until we do?

When I was operating a coffeehouse ministry in the inner city of Orlando, Florida there was a reggae bar across the street where people from all over town went to listen to the music, buy drugs, and get high. You could see all kinds of people there; black, white, rich and poor alike. Yet it was in a very tough neighborhood where there was often much fighting and violence. It was amazing to me that the people of the world were not afraid to go to this dangerous place to have their kicks, and hear their favorite music, even if it meant taking a chance of getting hurt or robbed. As long as they could have a good time they were willing to risk it! Yet I found it so difficult to get many Christians to come down to the coffeehouse and witness in the same neighborhood. What is there to fear? If God is for us, who can stand against us? . . . *God hath not given us a spirit of fear but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.*

There’s not going to be any significant Christian work in the land until we learn to walk in the love and power of God’s Word. Many today are talking about believing

God's word, and standing on the promises, and walking and confessing faith to believe for the things that they want, but when are we going to start confessing and believing for the souls of God's lost children? It's time to quit standing for all of our own desires and begin standing in the gap for the souls of the men and women that Satan is dragging into hell. Don't you think that a precious soul is worth more than the puny efforts that we usually make trying to win one? If the Church would spend half as much time and money in efforts to reach the lost as she does in making herself more comfortable and happy then we would probably see the greatest revival the world has ever known.

It's time that we did some risky living for the Lord. People are drastically lost and we won't reach them without paying the price to do so. Jesus paid the price for their sins, but you and I must pay the price for reaching them with God's forgiving love.

For example, I'm looking for the day when unmarried Christian brothers will begin to join together and co-rent houses where they can take in people who need to be disciplined in the ways of the Lord. Many people need someone to help them make a new start when they first come to the Lord and it's time that some of our young men who know the Lord start using their time and money for the kingdom rather than wasting it on the pleasures of this life. And the same goes for single Christian women: there are many young women who need someone to take them under their wing and teach them how to live for Jesus. Yes it takes time and money, but what are you doing now? Is it producing fruit for the kingdom? You say you want to minister for the Lord? Well get to work! *"The fields are white unto harvest, but the laborers are few."* Are you one of the few?

Many of today's pastors are tied down to the counseling desk wasting time with people in their churches who don't have any intention of taking the advice that they so carefully give them. They just want attention and demand that the pastor be available for their endless string of problems. Some people are addicted to counsel. They are professional time wasters. You can counsel them all day long and they won't change a bit. So why waste your and God's time on them? You could instead be out reaching to someone who's looking for help.

Do we really want revival? Well so does God, and He's ready when we are. But what good would it do if He were to bring it now? Would we be willing to bring the newborn Christians into our homes and take them under our wings to teach them the way of the Lord? Should we be referring them to the pastor, or turning them over to some social agency which often has no concept of the real spiritual needs that lie at the root of their problems? The Church of Jesus Christ was never meant to be a referral service. If we are not willing to get personally involved in the lives of broken and hurting people around us, then it's a waste of time to pray for revival. We first need to have a revival in our own hearts before looking for one elsewhere. Revival only produces more babies. Who's going to raise them? If we're not willing to get involved in the needs of those who are hurting right now, why should God entrust any more precious souls into our charge?

What are we waiting for? The fields are white unto harvest. Let's join the picking and we'll see the harvest with our own eyes. The whole world is waiting for you, and they are groaning and travailing in pain. Will you apply the balm of Gilead to stop the hurting?