

INSPIRED BY DREAMS

Dr. Fred Fourie - Sunday, January 14, 2007



[Matthew 4:18-23](#)

As he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea—for they were fishermen. And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fish for people." Immediately they left their nets and followed him. As he went from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John, in the boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets, and he called them. Immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed him. Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and curing every disease and every sickness among the people

Over Christmastime, one of the many proud grandmothers in our Church introduced me to two of her grandchildren. They were cute little kids! I asked about their age. She picked the little one up and said, "This is the attorney, he is two and this is the doctor, she is four!" Further explanation was not necessary! That is how parents and grandparents communicate. We all have great dreams for the future of our next generation!

Today, churches across our nation will celebrate and remember the immortal words "I have a dream!" Martin Luther King Jr. was the most important Christian voice in the drive for civil rights in America. His "I have a dream," speech changed a nation and the world forever. His dream was born during a time of crude injustice and his cause was right! Dr. King's vision of freedom and equality for all has become the dream of millions. Dreams and visions of harmony and unity amongst all people are still reverberating across the world. Even an assassin's bullet was powerless to destroy the dream. People everywhere still give their all for ideals of justice, equality and acceptance.

However, people do not always buy into the dreams of others. Jim Egan is one of them! Jim worked at the West Coast Computer Fair in 1977. His business was to help customers decorate their booths. Industry shows are the least expensive way to reach customers within the trade. In real life, some entrepreneurs with little capital hardly have enough money to rent a booth, let alone pay for the decorations. Two longhaired kids went to Jim Egan with their problem. They needed some chrome-displays to make their little booth "look flashy." Egan said he had the displays in stock, and they were for rent, payable in advance. The kids said they were short of cash, but perhaps Egan might like some stock in their new company. Egan refused and insisted on cash! Therefore, Steve Wozniak and Steven Jobs did without the chrome, fixed up their booth, and kept the stock in Apple Computer to themselves. Today there are Apple computers and products everywhere. The two longhaired kids became filthy rich -- but Jim Egan probably continued decorating booths for little hard cash. Sometimes it is a good thing to catch someone else's dream. ☺

Christianity also began with a vision and a dream. The story of our faith is the story of men and women who got close enough to Jesus to be inspired by his dream. Jesus walked by the Sea of Galilee and shared his dream with poor fisher folk. The bible says that Simon Peter and Andrew immediately let go of all their other interests and followed Jesus. It does sound a little abrupt. What? No discussion? Not even, "We'll think about it and get back to you tomorrow?" No "don't call us; we'll call you?" Obviously, something unusual happened that day, long ago, on the shore of the Sea of Galilee.

There must have been something very impressive about Jesus for them to act so rapidly. Just any ordinary run-of-the-mill person does not sweep us up that quickly. There was something

special about Jesus! **Some, difficult to define, quality set him apart.** Those four fishers, Simon, Andrew, James and John, got excited when they met Jesus. They left their families, they left their jobs, and they left everything important to them for an uncertain future as disciples of Jesus.

What was so special about the dream, the vision of Jesus? He had God's Kingdom in mind. He had a dream of a changed, different world with peace and no war – love and no hate – justice, righteousness without apartheid and discrimination. It was a message that conquered the hearts and hopes of the impoverished, despised and overlooked Jews of Nazareth that battled to make a living on the shores of the Sea of Galilee!

Jesus said, "The kingdom of God is at hand." They believed and they followed. What was there about that kingdom that got these ancient anglers so excited? One also wonders why **so many Christians in our time seem to have lost their excitement.** Possibly, it has something to do with the way that some fundamentalists, even in our times, try to force their convictions down our throats.

A certain woman heard that dogs were healthier if fed a tablespoon of cod liver oil each day. Therefore, each day she followed the same routine -- she chased her dog, Fluffy, until she caught it, wrestled it down, and managed to force the fishy remedy down the dog's throat. Then, one day, during the struggle, in the middle of this grueling medicating effort, the bottle got kicked over. With a sigh, she let go of her grip on Fluffy so she could wipe up the mess. To her surprise, Fluffy trotted over to the puddle and began lapping up the cod liver oil. The dog loved cod liver oil! Fluffy was only objecting to the method of application!

Jesus had a **vision** for the world, a **dream**, a **picture** of how life can and should be. **Jesus saw a world where God ruled in every heart--a world of righteousness, peace and justice - a world of love, harmony and unity. He called it the Kingdom of God.** Jesus said that this kingdom is at hand. It is available. It is not merely a distant dream. It is a present possibility. Occasionally people still catch a glimpse of that kingdom ~ and when it happens, lives are touched and changed, like long ago on the shores of the Galilean sea.

Can we still get excited about a world **in which you can always trust people to do the right thing because God lives in their heart?** Getting excited about a world without child abuse, without murder, without broken families, or drug addiction? Just imagine a world without fear, poverty, or disease. Well, the earliest Christians got excited. Jesus' dream also became their inspiration. They believed such a world was possible and they gave their lives to see it become a reality. The disciples also became excited about the role they personally would play in following Jesus. He said to them, **"I will make you fishers of people."** They knew all about fishing for fish, but Jesus was calling them to something far more significant. He was calling them to introduce men and women to this kingdom of love, this kingdom of power, this kingdom of God on earth. **They would not be passive spectators of this coming Kingdom but active participants.** They would make a difference, a lasting difference in their world and in individual lives. No wonder they were excited. They were going to help change the world!

Because we believe with all our heart that Jesus words are true and Jesus' dream inspires people of all times and that the kingdom of God is coming in this world, we have molded this dream into one of our Quo Vadis, long-term planning initiatives. Quo Vadis wants to recruit, train, and equip the people of God in this place and this time and age to respond to the call from the shores of the Sea of Galilee.

There is something very special about Jesus of Nazareth. There is something very special about his dream. **It is a dream of the rule of God in every heart.** It is a dream of a world freed from the grip of man's inhumanity to humankind. **Christ is still inviting** ordinary people like you and me to follow him and be fishers of people.

Oh, deep in my heart, I do believe, we shall live in peace Some day! **AMEN.**