

## **A PREACHER WITHOUT A BIBLE**

By Vance Havner (1901-1986)

I STARTED out back in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains. I did not know much. I have not learned a lot since, but I knew precious little in those days. However, I believed the Bible. I just took it and read it as it came. I started in Genesis and was having a great time, taking promises right and left, just like a boy picking apples off a tree in the orchard. One day I was met by one of these “Bible scholars” and was told that those promises were not for me, that they were for the Jews. Well, that discouraged me a little bit, but I said, “I believe I will give it another try.”

So I moved over into the New Testament and started down through Matthew, claiming promises right and left. Again I was interrupted and duly notified that those promises were all for the Kingdom Age, not for me. I had never heard of the “Kingdom Age” before, but since those things were not for me, I did not want to take them.

So I moved over in the Acts of the Apostles and was daring to claim some, not all the blessings that flowed from Pentecost. Once again I was interrupted and told that it was a transitional period, that we were not to press those promises too literally.

Well, that left me by and by, with nothing but the Epistles and the Revelation, and most of the Revelation was for the future. By the time I had made allowances between groups and marginal references, and tried to look at the Bible through the spectacles of a dozen disagreeing expositors, bless your heart, I was afraid to put down my foot on any verse for fear some “scholar” would come along like a policeman and order me off private property, and tell me, “This verse is not for you. Get going, Brother, somewhere else!”

Finally I said, “Lord, I have heard of a man without a country. If this keeps up, I am going to be a preacher without a Bible. If You will give me a verse I can stand on, I will have to have it in a hurry, because they are just about to take it away from me.” I got down to that one verse, “**LET GOD BE TRUE, BUT EVERY MAN A LIAR,**” and I have been standing on that one ever since!

*All the promises of God are “Yea” and “Amen” in Christ.* Brother, I tell you I believe it is all for me, and I enjoy it. We need just that childlike enjoyment of the Word of God. Today we have gotten to the place where people are taking the Bible apart and then are trying to put it back together, analyzing it, dissecting it — not

enjoying it. There needs to be a childlike enjoyment of God's Word and a sweetheart love for Jesus. V. H.

Footnote: "Dispensationalism" (dividing up and segmentizing God's Word) KILLS the Bible for many people ... thus the importance of **Vance Havner's** experience here!