

THE PASTOR AND HIS VISION



THE FULL GOSPEL CHURCH OF GOD

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THE PASTOR AND HIS VISION

WHO IS THE PASTOR?

- A. Representative of God
- B. Responsible for the congregation
- C. One who reaches out to the lost

A. **The Representative of God**

But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called *me* through His grace, 16 to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood, 23 But they were hearing only, "He who formerly persecuted us now preaches the faith which he once *tried to* destroy." (Gal 1:15, 16, 23)

B. **The One Responsible for the Congregation**

Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.
(Act 20:28, NKJ)

C. **The One who Reaches out to the Lost**

... that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.
(John 3:16, NKJV)

WHAT IS VISION?

There are three types of vision:

- A. Vision from the heart of man
- B. Vision from the need of the situation
- C. Vision received from God

A. **Vision from the heart of man**

This is very easy to explain – vision from the heart of man is one of the natural characteristics of any pastor – it is what he wants to do for God, what he wants to achieve. It boils down to this: The zeal for the house of God is consuming you. Without this type of vision there is very little hope of further expansion of the house of God. Room must be made in the spirit of man so that the Lord can deposit His vision there. The crux hereof is that we should start moving and do what is at hand, to execute that which we see in our thoughts as reality, to implement that which burns like a fire inside us.

B. **Vision from the need of the situation**

Have you ever felt that something drastic has to happen in order to change some unacceptable situation? Have you decided that a brainstorming session will solve your problem? Consequently you immediately rush in to change the situation through: your own knowledge and will, a discussion (brainstorming)

and past experience. All this may not be wrong, but *“to consult the Lord”* is far better than to try and change the situation for the better by means of human characteristics. This type of vision has in the past often failed and caused a lot of dissatisfaction. We should not forget that if a matter failed to be solved because we tried in our own strength, there will always be those who have a lot to say that is destructive and serve to belittle us. Should this type of vision succeed, however, then there will also be those who will rejoice and bring honour to man. Beware that you do not accept that honour, for the “self” must die and all the honour should be given to God.

C. **Vision received from God**

O, how sweet, how wonderful and exquisite is this vision *“Received from God”*, confirmed by His Word and given to man; that which He allows and does for us. There are countless examples of this type of vision in the Word of God. God speaks to man, to His appointed ones, His delegates, who are responsible for executing that which is closest to His heart: the salvation of precious souls. It is the core of all visions. He can and will put to our disposal the methods, provision, tools, churches and all the facilities - everything which is required for His work - so that we can reach out to the lost and bring in a rich harvest for the Kingdom of our God. If it is really received from God you can be sure that it will succeed; it will come into being. It will succeed because it comes from God and *“God will provide.”* The rest of this lecture will focus on matter regarding this vision.

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE VISION

- A. The receipt of the vision
- B. The announcement of the vision
- C. Advertising the vision
- D. The execution of the vision
- E. The victory of the vision

A. **The receipt of the vision**

The Macedonian call. You can be sure that if vision is based on this principle God will see it through. When one hears a voice calling so clearly and one is sure that it will be confirmed by the Word, then success is guaranteed. God speaks in different ways to man. Sometimes you are frustrated, hopeless and broken down, and then God starts speaking to you about a future vision when you read the Word or are battling in prayer before Him. If your heart is seriously longing for the salvation of the lost, God will take care of the vision. This is what the Kingdom of God is all about.

B. **Announcement of the vision**

This is a matter that should be thoroughly thought through and prayed about. The announcement and carrying out of the vision will be a confirmation of the vision. Before you announce any vision you must be quite sure that the vision is of God and not your own desire. To execute your own desire is difficult, and to execute the Lord’s vision is also not easy but you can tackle it with confidence because God gave it to you. You can announce it in any way with which you are confident and able to execute. Just remember that if you have announced

it, you are obliged to see it through, otherwise, in the eyes of man your vision would have failed. So, next time you say, “The Lord showed me.....” they will not trust you.

C. Advertising the vision

You must be quite sure of the vision before you start advertising it. Think about Noah and the way he behaved when God spoke to him about the ark. He announced what he was going to do, and was mocked and laughed at, but he carried on and eventually completed the task God gave him to do. Advertisement is the encouragement others need to get involved in what God had given you. In most cases in the Word where people received a vision they always had someone to assist them. Moses and Aaron serve as an excellent example. When you announce and advertise your vision try to unite people with you, not to change your vision but to be filled with the same zeal that is burning inside you. Always witness about what God is doing for you from day to day and you will find many people who will join you and will be willing to assist you.

D. The execution of the vision

The secret of this is: “*Start!*” Never allow days, weeks and months to pass before you start executing your vision. Be personally involved, wait for God to move and see that if your vision is delayed, it is by God and not by you. Never try to push ahead of your vision but allow God to lead you and to support you with the necessary provision. After all, it is God who wants the vision to be executed and you have to submit to His will.

E. The victory of the vision

How sweet is it when the vision is fully executed. Always remember that when the vision is successful and leads to the saving of the lost, it is not so much “performance” as it is “victory.” Then we know it was, and is and will always proceed as “from the Lord.” This is so because vision always maintains an effect on those who succeed you. If your vision is merely the “erection of a monument”, then it has failed miserably. Destroy the monument and rather erect an altar so that you, who are the sacrifice, can again be consumed by the “*zeal for the house of the Lord.*” Remember that when the vision is victorious, God takes all the honour and no one else. He will bless what you have done and add to that only so much as He can trust you with.

HOW FAITH AFFECTS VISION

It is fatal to hear the voice of God and then neglect to seek confirmation. If you look for confirmation anywhere else than in the Word of God you are wavering in your faith. The role of faith in the matter of the vision is of paramount importance. The reason for this is that vision normally requires you to bring something into existence which is totally beyond your powers or financial means. The Lord simply must provide in the finest detail.

It is very easy to tackle a project if there are hundreds of thousands of Rand available. However, it is a totally different matter when there is nothing available and yet the vision must be executed - then it can only be accomplished in faith.

This was the situation when Abraham had to sacrifice Isaac. Proceed into the unknown, but do it in faith. (Read Acts 11 and apply it to this statement.)

WHAT HAPPENS AS A RESULT OF OPPOSITION (UNBELIEF)

Opposition should never be allowed to prevent the execution of any vision. It should rather strengthen the efforts aimed at making it a success, for "so says the Lord". And if it is the Lord who said so, then nothing and nobody should stand in your way. The Lord always provides. His will shall be done.

WHAT HAPPENS AS A RESULT OF MAN'S LACK OF INTEREST

When there is no support for your vision, it should not be left and forgotten. You will then be forced to carry on alone so that everyone can see what can be accomplished by someone who obeys God to the letter. When others do not see the sense of the vision it should inspire you to become more determined to bring it to completion.

THE APPOINTED TIME FOR THE VISION

Hab 2:3,4 For the vision is yet for an appointed time; But at the end it will speak, and it will not lie. Though it tarries, wait for it; Because it will surely come, It will not tarry..... But the just shall live by his faith. (NKJV)

PERSEVERANCE

The Lord never promised that you will not experience opposition while you are executing the vision. When the Israelites had to enter the Promised Land, their very first problem was "Jericho". They conquered it by remaining focused on the Word of God. Without that there will be no vision. What happened to Abraham and Isaac that is mentioned earlier proved that it was from God. Vision never dies if it comes from God because it is driven by the Holy Spirit. Although Moses died before the people entered the Promised Land, God provided Joshua to bring the vision of Moses to completion. The Spirit of God never gives up. Perseverance depends on the driving power of the ever present Spirit. Therefore you should always be in contact with God while you are executing the vision.

LOSS OF INTEREST IN THE VISION

It does not mean that you have not received the vision, but because we are human we may lose interest and there may be delays. Just observe what the Lord had done up to that stage and then raise your hands and get the Spirit back inside you. The future is still in the hands of God who will see to it that what has to be done will be done. During his lifetime king David deviated a lot from what God wanted him to do and be. After he had fallen he got up and the blessing of God was still on him. So, stand up! Observe that the vision that was received from God will not perish.

HOW VISION IS BORN

It is born from a passion for the lost and not to erect monuments to honour man. It is this honouring of man that hinders the execution of vision. If you do not have a real passion for the lost there is no reason why God should give you a vision, for the vision deals exclusively with saving the lost and the provision of what is required to enable the lost to be saved. The seed of vision therefore is the desire, the passion to save the world. This is the only reason why Jesus died; there is no other reason.

LET US NOW LOOK AT THE VISION OF CHRIST

Read Luke 7:11-17.

Verse 16b: "God has visited His people." (NKJV)

Verse 17: And this report about Him went throughout all Judea and all the surrounding region.

The vision of Christ in this instance was directed to the lost - the raising to life of the son of the widow and the news of the people that "God has visited us."

"Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house." (Luke 19:5)

Jesus notices Zacchaeus in the tree, stops, addresses him and eventually brings salvation to his home. The consequence of the passion of Jesus for this lost tax collector ends with a special witness: "Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold." (verse 8, NKJV)

The vision of Christ had far-reaching consequences.

John 5:6: Jesus healed the man at Bethesda. "Do you want to be made well?" (NKJV)

John 11:33-35: Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead.

When Jesus saw that the people were weeping He was upset and wept too. *Where have you laid him?* When was the last time that you wept because of the vision that is burning in your heart to save the lost?

THE DANGERS OF THE ABUSE OF VISION

Psalm 119:33-40 Teach me, O LORD, the way of Your statutes, And I shall keep it to the end. 34 Give me understanding, and I shall keep Your law; Indeed, I shall observe it with my whole heart. 35 Make me walk in the path of Your commandments, For I delight in it. 36 **Incline my heart to Your testimonies, And not to covetousness.** 37 **Turn away my eyes from looking at worthless things, And revive me in Your way.** 38 Establish Your word to Your servant, Who is devoted to fearing You. 39 Turn away my reproach which I dread, For Your judgments are good. 40 Behold, I long for Your precepts; Revive me in Your righteousness.

THE PASTOR AND HIS VISION

Proverbs 4:23-27 Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it *spring* the issues of life. 24 Put away from you a deceitful mouth, And put perverse lips far from you. 25 Let your eyes look straight ahead, And your eyelids look right before you. 26 Ponder the path of your feet, And let all your ways be established. 27 Do not turn to the right or the left; Remove your foot from evil.

Isa 33:15-17 He who walks righteously and speaks uprightly, He who despises the gain of oppressions, Who gestures with his hands, refusing bribes, Who stops his ears from hearing of bloodshed, And shuts his eyes from seeing evil: 16 He will dwell on high; His place of defense *will be* the fortress of rocks; Bread will be given him, His water *will be* sure. 17 Your eyes will see the King in His beauty; They will see the land that is very far off.

HOLY VISION

Gen 3:9 Then the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, "Where *are* you?"

2Sa 22:28-29: You will save the humble people; But Your eyes *are* on the haughty, *that* You may bring *them* down. 29 "For You *are* my lamp, O LORD; The LORD shall enlighten my darkness.

2Ch 16:9 For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of *those* whose heart *is* loyal to Him.

Psalms 11:4: The LORD *is* in His holy temple, The LORD's throne *is* in heaven; His eyes behold, His eyelids test the sons of men.

Psalms 34:15: The eyes of the LORD *are* on the righteous, And His ears *are open* to their cry.

Psalms 139:16: Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, The days fashioned for me, When *as yet there were* none of them

Jer 32:17: 'Ah, Lord GOD! Behold, You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and outstretched arm. There is nothing too hard for You.

VISION DOMINATES LIFE

Gen 19:26 But his wife looked back behind him, and she became a pillar of salt. Looking back, to the past like the wife of Lot. This hampers progress.

Num 21:9 So Moses made a bronze serpent, and put it on a pole; and so it was, if a serpent had bitten anyone, when he looked at the bronze serpent, he lived.

John 3:14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, 15 that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

Mat 14:30 But when he saw that the wind *was* boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me!"
Look at the problem – Peter starts sinking.

THE PASTOR AND HIS VISION

Act 7:55 But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God, See the glory of God, full of the Holy Spirit.

That is vision!

EARTHLY VISION

Gen 3:6 So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make *one* wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate. It looks good but is not and brings along tragedy.

Gen 13:10 And Lot lifted his eyes and saw all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere (before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah) like the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt as you go toward Zoar. Lot only sees the earthly and not the heavenly and pitches his tent near Sodom. We know what happened there.

Jos 7:21 When I saw among the spoils a beautiful Babylonian garment, two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold weighing fifty shekels, I coveted them and took them. And there they are, hidden in the earth in the midst of my tent, with the silver under it." Achan sees wealth and concentrates his thoughts on it. If the purpose of your vision is the improvement of your standard of living it is an earthly vision. (First seek the Kingdom of God and the other things will be added.)

Mat 4:8 Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. Satan shows Jesus all the kingdoms He will be able to control and the glory thereof, but Jesus has a vision in heaven.

HEAVENLY VISION

The explanation is in the things to come.

Psalms 17:15 As for me, I will see Your face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake in Your likeness.

Isa 33:17 Your eyes will see the King in His beauty; They will see the land that is very far off.

John 17:25 O righteous Father! The world has not known You, but I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me. Acknowledge that You sent Me.

1Co 13:12 For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.

Vision encompasses only what God wants to reveal to you. One day you will know everything.

1Jn 3:2 Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

We will see Him as He is.

Rev 22:4 They shall see His face, and His name *shall be* on their foreheads.

And they will see His face. When a sinner sees His face and His glory it is the fulfilment of a heavenly vision. It is the purpose of the coming of Christ.

2 Kings 6:17 And Elisha prayed, and said, "LORD, I pray, open his eyes that he may see." Then the LORD opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw. And behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

Given in answer to prayer.

Job 42:5 "I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, But now my eye sees You.

Born from suffering.

Mat 5:8 Blessed *are* the pure in heart, For they shall see God.

Vision requires a pure heart.

John 14:19 "A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me. Because I live, you will live also.

It is only for believers.

John 16:14 He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare *it* to you.

It depends on the Holy Spirit, the Author and Finisher.

Heb 11:27 By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured as seeing Him who is invisible.

Use the expectation of faith: "*He kept on his way as seeing Him who is unseen.*" Moses was longing for the reward.

PROPHETIC VISION

The vision had to be fulfilled; otherwise the prophet would have died. Never say, "I have received from the Lord" if it is born from your own imagination. God will always precede His vision to let it come into being without your planning.

Isa 1 It deals with the vision of Isaiah. Read the whole chapter, especially verse 19: If you are willing and obedient, You shall eat the good of the land; This only means that God will reveal Himself to you through a vision.

Isa 21:1-7 He has to be a keen listener and listen as keenly as possible. Listen to God and the vision will be alive.

Eze 11:24 Then the Spirit took me up and brought me in a vision by the Spirit of God into Chaldea, to those in captivity. And the vision that I had seen went up from me.

Eze 12:27 "Son of man, look, the house of Israel is saying, 'The vision that he sees *is* for many days *from now*, and he prophesies of times far off.'

Eze 37:1-3 The hand of the LORD came upon me and brought me out in the Spirit of the LORD, and set me down in the midst of the valley; and it was full of bones. 2 Then

THE PASTOR AND HIS VISION

He caused me to pass by them all around, and behold, *there were* very many in the open valley; and indeed *they were* very dry. 3 And He said to me, "Son of man, can these bones live?" So I answered, "O Lord GOD, You know."

Eze 47:1 Then he brought me back to the door of the temple; and there was water, flowing from under the threshold of the temple toward the east, for the front of the temple faced east; the water was flowing from under the right side of the temple, south of the altar.

Measure and go.

Oba 1 and 2 Read the chapters.

THE VISION IS WORKABLE AND MUST BE PURSUED IN FAITH

Without faith it is impossible to please God.

THE VISION IS NOT COPIED BUT IS RECEIVED FROM GOD

Never try to copy what someone else is doing. Always get your instructions directly from God by personal dedication and prayer. God is reserving something special just for you.

THE VISION SHOULD BE PECULIAR TO YOU

It is very seldom that God uses similar methods and ways when He deals with different people. You are special and unique. Therefore, ask God to give you a vision that reflects your peculiar personality. At the same time thank Him for diversity, for without it much of what God allows to support and sustain the body would not have existed.

Always ascribe the success of your vision to God. Never take the honour for yourself or allow it to be bestowed on another human being. Man is only the instrument in the hands of Almighty God. He gives you a vision as part of His grace which He bestows on you so that you can complete His task that He entrusted to you.

Let us become obedient and have faith to hear His voice and then to go and do what He wants us to do - in the congregation, town or city where you are residing at present or where you are called or sent to work.

"Hear the voice of the Lord." Learn from others but hear the voice of God.

Amen. D.V.