

Vision

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A vicar had a dream. He was on his way to heaven. Before him, there stretched a long flight of stairs. As he started to go up, he was given a piece of chalk and told that he must put a chalk mark on each of the steps for each sin he had committed. When he was about halfway up he met the bishop coming down. He enquired why his Lordship was returning, and the bishop answered, "I'm just going back to get some more chalk!"

Today I would like to preach on VISION but before I BEGIN TO TALK ABOUT WHAT IT MEANS TO HAVE VISION, it is important to know the difference between A vision and A dream.

A Vision, is "What you see when you look to the future without hypothesizing, wishing or imagining." It means sight, revelation, or enlightenment.

A Dream: is "a strongly desired goal or purpose, it is "What you see when you are imagining a hypothetical scenario.

Now, there are two reasons why I would like to preach on vision this morning:

The first reason comes from the book of Genesis, BECAUSE IT IS IN THAT BOOK THAT WE ARE INTRODUCED TO THE concept of vision. Look at Genesis 15: 1-5.

This is what vision is about; it is the ability to see the future before you get there. It is what drives you to keep working toward your goal, because since you have already seen it, you can't wait to get to it. God showed Abraham his future, He told Abraham that he would be the father of a great nation and that his descendants WOULD be as numerous as the STARS. But before God revealed his future, Abraham had no clue where he was going in life. He did not know the purpose of his life until God showed him the reason for his existence, which was to BUILD A NATION WHICH WOULD INTRODUCE MONOTHEISM TO THE WORLD, OUT OF AN INSIGNIFICANT GROUP OF PEOPLE.

I would also like to bring to your attention that the blessing Abraham received from God was not only for him, but it was for the generations to come. You see, Abraham was anointed to prepare the way for future generations.

As Christians we are also ANOINTED - called by Jesus Christ to prepare His church for the next generation AND, THROUGH THEM, THE GENERATIONS TO COME. However, the problem I see in many churches is that we become comfortable doing the things we have always done,

and by doing the things we have always done we have neglected our children, our children's children and the future generation waiting for us thirty or fifty years from now.

Finally, did you notice what happened next after God revealed his vision to Abraham? Abraham offered sacrifice to the Lord in obedience to God and in thanksgiving for showing him God's future. Jesus has shown us his vision for our life and for His church, when we offer our sacrifice to the Lord through our time, talent and treasure we receive God's abundant blessings.

The second reason THAT I WANT TO TALK ABOUT VISION has to do with Holy Faith. You see, I discovered that this congregation LACKS vision, AND has no understanding of THE REASON FOR ITS EXISTENCE and, most importantly, has no clue as to where it's going. Holy Faith is a church that has been wandering in the desert for years walking, LIKE THE ISRAELITES, in circles without a specific destination. But THIS WANDERING IN THE DESERT IS not because Holy Faith does not have a purpose to exist, and it doesn't mean that God has no vision for this church. What this means is that many members of this congregation have not taken the time to discover, THROUGH PRAYER, THROUGH LISTENING TO GOD, THROUGH MEDITATION, God's vision for Holy Faith. This is the reason for the internal struggle the church has experienced over the years, AND the division that has weakened the Body of Christ.

Helen Keller, THE INVENTOR OF BRAILLE, WHO WAS BLIND AND DEAF FROM A VERY EARLY AGE was ONCE ASKED "What would be worse than being born blind?" to which she replied "Having sight without a vision."

"If we fail as members of the Lord's church to have a vision, not our own mind you, but God's vision for us, we will lose our pioneering spirit. We will become grumblers. We will become "ineffective." This, beloved sisters and brothers, is the kind of church we have become, but this is not the church Christ has envisioned for us, because the Church that Jesus has dreamed for us is much bigger, better and beautiful.

When Walt Disney World in Orlando, opened in 1974, Mrs. Disney was sitting beside Walter Cronkite. Walt Disney HAD passed away a few years earlier. Walter Cronkite wanted to say just the right thing to Mrs. Disney, so he leaned over to her and said, "Wouldn't it be great if Walt were here to see this today." Mrs. Disney wisely replied, "If Walt had not first seen this, you would not be seeing it today."

The author of Proverbs 29:18 says where there is no vision, the people perish." If we don't have a vision for Holy Faith, if we cannot see where our Lord Jesus Christ is leading this parish, then we will cease to exist.

VISION IS: THE ABILITY TO SEE: AWARENESS.

To see like Abraham, Moses, Joshua, Peter and Paul did.

VISION IS: THE FAITH TO BELIEVE: ATTITUDE

Genesis 15:1-6

A) Steve Goodier, an Evangelist and missionary, says " Both the hummingbird and the vulture fly over our nation's deserts. All vultures see is rotting meat, because that is what they look for. They thrive on that diet. But hummingbirds ignore the smelly flesh of dead animals. Instead, they look for the colorful blossoms of desert plants. The vultures live on what was. They live on the past. They fill themselves with what is dead and gone. But hummingbirds live on what is. They seek new life. They fill themselves with freshness and life. Each bird finds what it is looking for. We all do.

a. Successful churches are like hummingbirds, they move ahead, they incorporate elements of the present in their worship in order to achieve their vision and they plan for future generations.

ii. We need to stop behaving like vultures - a congregation that dwells on the past; **INSTEAD WE NEED TO** become like the hummingbirds, a community that embraces the future.

What is God's vision for Holy Faith?

A. That we celebrate God's presence in our worship through music and prayers that **TOUCH** God and the hearts of the generations to come.

B. That we become a congregation that witnesses Christ in our community, and that we bring others to Jesus.

C. That through our fellowship we integrate God's people, loving and caring for one another.

D. That our ministries demonstrate the love of God through outreach.

E. That we train, equip and send out disciples into the world.

Vision is the Ability to see what others can't. --Faith to believe what others will not. --Courage to do what others say can't be done. I pray that together we strive to achieve God's vision in this church and that we prepare this congregation for **THE next GENERATION, AND THE GENERATIONS TO COME.**

May Jesus continue to raise up **HUMMINGBIRDS HERE AT HOLY FAITH --- COURAGEOUS** men and women **WITH VISION**, so that his work will be effective in whatever cultural situation you and I find ourselves.

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