

God's Vision for Your Life

PASTOR RICHARD'S NOTES
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Acts 2:17-18

“And it shall be in the last days, God says, That I will pour forth My Spirit upon all mankind and your sons and your daughters shall prophecy, and your young men shall see visions and your old men dream dreams.”

This morning I would like us to look to the word to inspire us to ask for a vision for our lives Or perhaps to ask God to restore the vision or the dream that God gave you in the past

The Lord says “When I pour out my Spirit upon mankind
Your sons and daughters shall prophecy?”

Now when you bring up the subject of Prophecy
Different people have different directions: Some say “Can’t wait”

Others, quite literally, think that prophecy was something that was done in medieval times that has no place in modern society

BUT What does it mean to prophecy?

Webster’s dictionary’s thinks that Prophecy is all about predicting the future: If you look it up here’s what you get: predictions, forecasting the future, fortelling the future, fortune telling, prognosticating

But the prophets of old were not “Fortune tellers”

They were simply men and women who enquired of the Lord and heard His voice
And shared what He was saying to the world

Let me acquaint you with the words of the Apostle Paul that give us a more practical explanation of what it means to prophesy

Corinthians 14: 1 and 3

1 Follow the way of love and eagerly desire gifts of the Spirit, especially **prophecy**.

3 the one who prophesies speaks to people for their strengthening, encouraging and comfort.

So let’s look at this verse from this perspective

God says: When I pour out my Spirit on all flesh

Young men and young women will hear from God

And they will speak My words to people and strengthen them, encourage them and comfort them

**We are not all prophets
But we all can and should Prophecy**

Then the Lord says:

When I pour out my Spirit they shall see Visions (Plural) and dream dreams, plural

Dictionary gives us two definitions of Vision and
Two definitions of Dreams

They will see Visions -- God will give them visions

Two definitions of vision

1. Seeing something at this present moment
2. Seeing something in the future: A clear understanding of something that will happen in the future or be accomplished in the future (I have a vision for my life)

They will see visions

Paul Speaks of this in 2 Corinthians 12:1

I must go on boasting. Although there is nothing to be gained, I will go on to visions and revelations from the Lord.

I believe that visions and revelations should be part of the standard Christian experience
I call these "Ah Ha Moments"

Vision: Means to see something:

Those times when the Holy Spirit make something clear to you:

Aha! I understand what the will of God is.

Aha! I understand what this scripture means

Aha! I see it now

Aha! I understand what He is asking me to do

I think that one of the greatest blessings of all

Is to see what God is doing And to hear what He is saying

This is something we all need to aspire to and long for

Matthew 13:16-17 New King James Version (NKJV)

But blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear; for assuredly, I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.

The Christian life is definitely shallow

Unless you can see what God is doing and hear what He is saying

John 3 Jesus is explaining to Nicodemus the things of the Spirit

Lest you be born of the Spirit you cannot see the Kingdom of God --- You just don't get it

Now this passage goes on to say: They will see dreams (Plural)

There are two kinds of dreams

1. Dreams of the night: a series of thoughts, images, occurring in a person's mind during sleep.
2. Dreams in life: a cherished aspiration, ambition, or ideal.

I would imagine that we are talking about the latter here

A cherished aspiration, ambition or ideal

I believe that too many of us are living our lives without aspiration, ambitions or ideals

Too many of us are saying "I Once had a dream"

What's the difference between a Vision and a Dream?

- Visions or Ah Ha Moments are regular occasions in the life of a person who seeks God
- Dreams: are things that require long term planning, require effort, take time to come to fruition:

Jesse Owens: Won 4 gold medals at the 1936 Olympics in Berlin. From the time he was young boy Jesse had to fight his way through intense racial prejudice in order to pursue his dream of being the best runner in the world.

In his victory speech he said: "We all have dreams, but in order to make dreams come into reality, it takes an awful lot of determination, dedication, self-discipline and effort"

WE ALL HAVE DREAMS!! It begs the question:

What's your dream? What's your vision?

Now let us understand This passage is not just talking about visions and dreams

But visions and dreams that are inspired by the Holy Spirit

God's Vision for our lives - God's Dreams for our future

The Lord wants to give every one of us clear visions And dreams and goals for our lives

I think at this point I should also mention: The death of a vision

It has been my experience that, almost without fail,

The visions and dreams God gives us

Go through times of testing

The Scripture says: Unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it abides alone

Dave Ramsey is widely known as one of the premiere instructors of Financial Freedom in America

From the time he was a small boy he was highly motivated to make money and his dream to become a millionaire was realized by the time he was 26

He had a dream And he headed toward it at a sprint

But his dream fell to the ground as he got way ahead of himself and had to file for bankruptcy

His dream appeared to die Only to be resurrected by the Lord

This process is sometimes necessary to teach us that

It is not by our own wits, nor by our own strength

Nor our own resources that our dreams are fulfilled and it's not for our own purposes

Can you think of a time in your life when it looked like

Your vision died. Your Dream died?

Only to have God raise it to life

Testimony from Lillian Cawdry

Illustration: Moses gets the Vision of who he is
He is not an Egyptian Prince, but a Hebrew
Rushes out to the rescue
Sees an Egyptian mistreating a Hebrew slave
And takes matters into his own hand and kills him

Flees into exile thinking, "I must have got that wrong!"
But 40 years later, by a burning bush in Midian
He is called again to fulfill that dream

I have seen this so many times
Someone clearly sees God's call for their life
Understands God's dream for their life
And they rush out in their own strength and in the flesh And kill the Egyptian

One of the most used verses in the bible Talking about Vision

Proverbs 29:18

KJV: Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keeps the law, happy is he.

NIV Where there is no vision the people cast off restraints, but blessed is the one who heeds wisdom's instructions

Msg If people can't see what God is doing, they stumble all over themselves; But when they attend to what he reveals, they are most blessed.

The bible commentary says:

The Hebrew word for "perish" means to make someone go out of control, to run wild, to "cast off restraint". In other words, where there is no revelation from God, people do their own thing instead of what God wants them to do.

Or they do what's right in their own eyes

Having a vision puts an end to wandering around this planet
Doing your own thing, or just making yourself comfortable until you die

Having a vision motivates a person
Vision puts wind in your sails
VISION Gives you something to live for
Something to strive for in your life.

IN THE MIDDLE OF THE FAITH CHAPTER **Hebrews 11:6**

Without Faith it is impossible to please God for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him

When you come to God you first realize that He is....

But there is more ""He rewards those who diligently seek Him"

Now here's the thing: You can read this and not see it!

If you know, that you know, that God rewards those who diligently seek Him.
What will you do?

This reward is not just in Heaven

It also applies to things in life

Your life will count for something, You will experience God

See miracles, Bear Fruit, See results, Be amazed

Your life will bless the lives of others

Phil 3:12-14 Paul's Vision for his life

12 I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.

13 Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead,

14 I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

There is a reason the Lord saved me

He took hold of my life for a purpose

There is a purpose for my life

And I am pressing on to fulfill that purpose

In Genesis 12:1-4 God give Abraham a vision:

1 The LORD had said to Abram, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you.

2 "I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing.

3 I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."

Abraham stepped out in faith because God gave him a vision

A Huge Vision: My life will be a blessing to all the people of the earth

Can you imagine yourself running around the planet with this vision? Hi! I my name is Bob, and I am here to bless you

This is the vision and purpose God has given me for my life

I am willing to do whatever I can to bless you

I really want to be a blessing

Lord how can I bless this person, these people?

I'm sure he didn't quite know how this would happen

But God had said it, he was sure of that

So that was God's problem.

A Clear Vision and a Vivid Dream – Gives us passion

If we don't know where we are going

Any road will take us there

As a matter of fact, we are already there

So we can just work on making ourselves comfortable

God's Dream and Vision always begins a Word from God
God Speaks to a person and a vision is born in their heart

I hope you don't mind if I use myself as an illustration:

God gave me a vision for my life within the first few days after I gave my life to Him

The day after I was saved, I wrote my mother a letter
"Mom, I am going to be a pastor

Do you know where I was?

I was in prison at the time – for drug related offenses

I had no education – no discipline, I had no money

I had not accomplished anything yet in my life

I was irresponsible and dishonest and lost

BUT ON THAT DAY: GOD.....Gave me a dream and a vision

I started pastoring that very day, right there in prison

That vision has guided my decisions all through my life

It has caused me to accept responsibilities

To embrace certain disciplines

To make certain sacrifices

To do things I would not have otherwise done

The Lord gave me a wife who has her own vision

And we help each other fulfill our visions

I NOW HAVE HAD A NUMBER OF DREAMS AND VISIONS

To see the church come into its full destiny and power

To reach this unreachable city for the Lord

To be someone who rightly divides the Word of Truth

A vision to care for the poor and the needy

To be someone who can be trusted with the power and the resources of God

God has provided the opportunities, the money, the talent and the grace to make all of that happen

No matter what Vision or Dream the Lord has given you

You can't get there without learning to hear God's voice

You can't get there without help from the family of God

Billy Graham: **A turtle on a telephone pole**

One thing for sure, he didn't get there by himself – somebody else put him there

You can't get there without a heart for people

You can't get there without a servant's heart

Without embracing the cross

You can't get there without being a giver

God gives to Givers They can be trusted

I believe that we are in a season where God is making some things clear
God wants to give every person in this room Visions and Dreams

Don't be intimidated by some of the BIG Visions God Gave to our forefathers: Abraham, Noah, Moses, Gideon, Paul

Don't say "Hey I am just an ordinary person!"
These were extraordinary people ----- Think so?

LET'S TALK ABOUT MOTHER TERESA

In her file at the convent, as a younger woman, her teachers wrote the following words about her: "Teresa is nothing special as a student, or a teacher or a person."

Do you know who would have been the first person to agree with this statement? Mother Teresa

That's how many, if not most people look at their lives

But God gave this (this nothing special) person a vision

She dreamed a dream.

Her Eulogy Read:

When Mother Teresa died, barefoot paupers, movie stars and government officials waited outside in monsoon rains for hours for a chance to file by her body and express gratitude for her life. She was given a state funeral by the Indian government, an honor reserved for heads of state. She received the Nobel Peace Prize, which meant nothing to her but an opportunity to challenge people to ask God for a vision for the poor. She is held in the highest honor by people of nations, all faiths and stations in life.

She had a vision, She had a dream, And she dared to act upon it
And was ready to do it alone, without any support or money
Where did she get a vision like that?

So many of the famous Christians of our day were ordinary people
Even less than ordinary, They were Broken, Hurting people

BUT DREAMS AND VISION WERE Poured OUT ON THEM BY THE HOLY SPIRIT

They caught a vision and a dream from God
And stepped out in faith to make a difference in the world.

God wants to share His vision and dream with people who passionately want to do His will.

Why not us? Why not now?
Are you too ordinary for such a dream?
Are you too old?
Are you too scared to ask for such a dream?"

Would you rather live a "me centered" life and devote yourself to your own pleasures in this world?

Or are you ready to receive it and pursue it?

Today some of you have heard the voice of God
The Lord is saying, "Who will I send, and who will go for Me?"

You are saying "**Here I am, Lord**" **Send me!**
Whatever it takes

Whatever it costs send me

Pour Your Dream into me
Fulfill Your vision in me
Set me apart for Your purpose --- I am willing!