

THE VISION OF THE FIRST CENTURY CHURCH ACTS 26:1-29

Text:

Introduction:

As Paul is permitted to speak for himself about what he was doing in preaching the Gospel we have that record in the text.

Notice the expression Paul declared to King Agrippa, "I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision." Paul hinged all his behavior on his vision of God.

What tremendous insight we find here concerning the first century church.

Many churches are caught up in the latest fads that are available, but we must stay with the Bible. We understand that God's Word will not return void.

As we look at the vision of the first century church, we learn that out our vision, everything else will come. If our vision is not right, then nothing else is right. But if our vision truly comes from God, it is a different matter altogether. Everything begins with God. The clearer

our vision of God, the clearer everything else in life will be.

We learn much about this matter of vision from the powerful Old Testament account in Isaiah 6

Isaiah 6:1-8

In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. [2] Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. [3] And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. [4] And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke.

[5] Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts. [6] Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: [7] And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged. [8] Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me.

Our vision of God determines everything else that we are going to do. It not only determines what we are going to do, but also will determine the way we attempt to accomplish It.

1. THIS VISION CREATED ACCOUNTABILITY

- A. Our vision of God brings us together in our accountability to God.
- B. Vision comes the same way for each believer.
 - 1. It a matter of seeking God, praying and desiring to know God.
- C. Many have made service their goal and not God, but God must be our goal.
- D. There are many today spending their lives for something that has not come from their vision of God.

2. THIS VISION DEMANDED ACTION

Acts 26:19-20

Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision: [20] But shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and then to the Gentiles, that

they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.

A. Immediately he began to speak to people about the message God gave him.

B. When we see the Lord high, exalted, and lifted up, it creates this accountability to God, and we must do what God has given us to do.

C. We don't have to sit around and wonder what it is that God wants for us to do. We just get in on what God is doing, and do it.

D. We are to be wholeheartedly engaged in His work.

3. THIS VISION REQUIRED FAITH

Illustration:

Joshua - God told Joshua to put his feet into the waters of the Jordan river and then He would part them so that they could cross them.

A. It requires faith because of its size

The great commission is certainly more than we can do, but this action requires faith, because we will attempt more than we can do.

B. It requires faith because of the opposition

Acts 26:21-22

For these causes the Jews caught me in the temple, and went about to kill me. [22] Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come:

1. There is a refining process even after we are in the process.

Illustration

Nehemiah

Neh. 2:11-12

So I came to Jerusalem, and was there three days.

[12] And I arose in the night, I and some few men with me; neither told I any man what my God had put in my heart to do at Jerusalem: neither was there any beast with me, save the beast that I rode upon.

Before Nehemiah spoke to anyone about rebuilding the walls, he spent time with God. He had already caught a

vision of God, and after that he communicated and began to take action.

And after the process began, the opposition began as well. There were efforts to try to discourage, and stop the work. But because he had the right vision he stated to the enemy in Nehemiah 6

Neh. 6:3

And I sent messengers unto them, saying, I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?

Many young people who get married will say, "I believe that this is the Lord's will for my life." Wonderful! They take action and get married. But I guarantee you that it will not be long until faith is required in that marriage. You want to have a family and rejoice because God has blessed you with children. That great! But it will not be long until faith is required to raise those children.

C. A vision requires us to take action.

Close

There are two totally different ways of life. We can be men and women of vision, or else we can be men and women of ambition.

Visionaries:

Begins with God

Does a work of faith

Believes, "If it is right, God will bless it"

Is obedient to God

Desires God to be glorified

Is Christ centered

Serves God

Lives a life of simplicity and godly sincerity

The Bible states in Proverbs 29:18

Proverbs 29:18

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

We see the results of not having a vision in Lamentation 2

Read Lamentation 2:1-22