

The vision and call of the Church

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 06 April 2025

Preacher: James Wengerd

[0 : 00] I greet you in the name of Jesus this morning.! It is good to be here. I appreciate the devotions.

I think if he would have kept going a while,! he would have started preaching my message. Turn to 2 Corinthians 4.

And, you know, there's a verse in Proverbs that says, where there is no vision, the people perish. And there's various wordings for that verse in other translations. NIV says, where there is no revelation, people cast off restraint.

And the New English translation says, where there is no prophetic vision, people cast off restraint. The Amplified says, if there is no redemptive revelation of God, people cast off their restraint.

[1 : 13] He goes on and it pronounces a blessing on those who walk with God and keep His law. But where there is no vision, the people perish.

And I believe that, as we have already heard, we need a renewed mind if we will have a proper vision in our life.

And a proper vision is what will direct us and keep us in the right way.

You know, it's so easy to be sidetracked, to become sidetracked. It is so easy to let our mind wander.

Even in church, to let our mind wander and to think about other things and to think about next week and to think about last week, to think about tonight and all of those things.

[2 : 15] You know, in 2 Corinthians 4, it says, let's read verse 3 and 4, if our gospel is hid, it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the God of this world has blinded the minds of them which believe not.

Lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. You know, when we get sidetracked, we lose our vision.

And then the next thing, there's a blindness that wants to come in. There's a blindness that comes and overtakes us.

And we cannot clearly see the truth of the gospel and the truth of what is before us. You know, we have two examples in the Old Testament.

Maybe we will just quickly look at them. The first one is Job. In the last chapter of the book of Job, he says here, You know, after all that we read in the book of Job, then in the end of the book, we have God coming on the scene and talking to Job.

[4 : 03] And in chapter 42, I'll just read the first six verses. Then Job answered the Lord and said, I know that thou canst do everything and that no thought can be withholden from thee.

Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge? Therefore have I uttered that I understood not, things too wonderful for me, which I knew not.

Here I beseech thee, and I will speak. I will demand of thee and declare thou unto me. I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee.

Wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes. So let's just look a little bit at what Job's saying here. He says, he acknowledges that God can do everything.

God can do anything. And God knows everything. No thought can be withholden from him. You know, God knows what we think.

[5 : 31] We can't hide that from him. And then in verse three, he says, he says, I have uttered that I understood not.

Things too wonderful for me, for I knew not. You know, when we, like we heard in our devotions this morning in Romans, when we think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think, then we also speak things that we shouldn't speak.

We think we speak things without the understanding. We speak things that we do not see the whole picture of, just like Job is confessing here.

And then he says, you know, I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now my eyes see. Now I see more clearly.

Now I see more clearly. And as I see more clearly, I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes. You know, I believe that when we see ourselves for who we are and, and in our humanity, we will abhor, we will abhor ourselves.

[6 : 51] We will repent in dust and ashes. Here we have a man after all those trials and, and all of that, you know, in the beginning of the book, God says there's, there's not a man on the earth that, that, that is a righteous man and abhors evil like Job.

But here at the end of the book, when he, when he sees really, truly who God is, he, he says, I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes.

The other example I want to look at briefly is Isaiah in chapter six. Here it starts in chapter six. It says, 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.

And so he, he, he had this vision of, of God and, and the holiness of God and the holy of holies.

And. Maybe we'll just read through these next few verses above, above the temple stood the seraphims, each one at six wings with 20 covered his face with 20 covered his feet with 20 did fly.

[8 : 24] And one cried into another and said, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts. The whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried.

And the house was filled with smoke. And so when he saw this vision, when he saw the Lord high and holy and, and, and the seraphims and all of that, what did he say?

What was his response? He said, 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. You know, and I believe what I want to say here today is I believe that when we, when we have a true vision of God and who he is and his holiness, I believe we will find ourselves in the same place that Isaiah was that day.

We will find ourselves in the same place that Job was that day. And we are, we are a mere human being.

[9 : 37] And we are a man of unclean lips. And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips. And, and our only righteousness is the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

Yes. Then flew one of the seraphims under me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar.

And he laid it upon my mouth and said, lo, this has touched thy lips. Thine iniquity is taken away and thy sin purged. 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. Here am I, send me. You know, and I, I wouldn't say that the prophet was not willing to go before this, but I believe that God showed him this vision because he needed to see the greatness and the holiness of almighty God.

He needed a vision of who God was, this God that was talking to him. And, and God wanted to, to bring great and wondrous revelation to this man.

[10 : 55] And, and, you know, he wrote the book of Isaiah. It's a wonderful book and much, much prophecy in it concerning the Lord Jesus Christ.

So, let's go back to second Corinthians chapter four. And I'm going to read here.

And they had the end of the chapter. We'll start in verse 16. Second Corinthians chapter four. For which cause we faint not, but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.

For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

[12 : 10] For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

Now, this verse 18, notice what he says here. He says, while we look not at the things which are seen, but the things that are not seen.

You know, as we think about having a proper vision, as we think about where there is no vision, the people perish. You know, and it's not just that we need a vision, but we need a right vision.

We need a vision that comes by revelation from the Holy Ghost. We need a vision that, what some of these scriptures, they say a prophetic vision.

We need a vision that comes from God. It comes to us through the Holy Spirit. And, and listen, notice what he says here.

[13:18] He says, we look not at the things that are seen, but the things that are not seen. You know, it is our natural tendency to look at the things that are seen, to look about, to look at the things here.

And, and we go to work each day in our work, and we go to town, and, and we see everything here. But, our true vision must be, the things that are not seen, the spiritual world, the, the unseen world, and the world that is to come.

The things which are seen are temporal. Everything we see here is going to pass away. Everything we see here, it's temporal.

temporal. But the things that are not seen, they are eternal. And we all know, which will last.

The temporal things, they all pass away. The things that we see, they will pass away. But the unseen, are eternal. That is why we must have, a proper vision.

[14:32] And, we must, focus, on what the Lord, is saying, and what his word says to us. And we must, you know, it's so easy, it's so easy, to, to have our vision, on other things, on temporal things.

I don't know, that might have been, where Job was at. You know, the, it, the first part of the book, you know, talks about his family, and his, and, and so on, and, and his life, a little bit.

But when he, when he saw God, when he, when he, saw, when he got, when he got, supernatural vision, of the almighty God, creator God, he changed.

And today, today, when we get that renewed mind, that we heard about earlier, we can see things, in the light of eternity.

You know, as we live our lives, yes, we have our jobs, we need to, we need to, provide for our families, and, and all of those things.

[16:05] But we must, keep, the vision, that is, eternal. We must, keep it, in the right perspective.

You know, all of these, things, all of these, temporal things, as important, as they might be, they need, to take second place.

They need to, to, to, you know, the priority, they're not the priority, they're not the first priority. Jesus said, where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

If our treasure, if we're building our treasure, here on this earth, then our heart, will be there also.

But if we're laying up, treasure in heaven, and we're focusing, on the eternal, and we're, you know, like Isaiah, when he got, the true vision of God, what was his response?

[17:14] Here am I, send me. You know, we, we must have that response, that, that when, when God speaks to us, when he, you know, and he will not speak to us, if we, if we are all tied up, and, and overwhelmed, and the things of this life, and, and, and, and the temporal things, and, then it blocks, what he wants to show us, what he wants to speak to us.

but, if we, can keep, our vision, right, and, we have this, communion, with the Holy Ghost, the Lord Jesus, through the power, of the Spirit, you know, he will, if we will walk with him, he will keep our vision, right, but, it will only be, as we, focus, we keep our focus, in the right place, you know, it is so easy, I know this, it is so easy, to, to, to have, our vision dimmed, of what God would have us to do, to have our vision dimmed, of, of the true reality, of the kingdom of God, yes, and I believe, the, the way, the way to, to restore that, is to come back, and to realize, a new, who God is, who the Lord Jesus is, who the Holy Ghost is, that dwells within us, and the kingdom of God, on this world, you know, the true vision, a true vision, will cause us, to be willing, to sacrifice, the temporal, for the eternal, you know,

I, some of you, would know this, better than I, but, someone told me that, in the German, I guess, that verse in Proverbs, says, where there is no, vision, I'm not sure how, but, says the people, become, wild and wist, where there is no prophesying, the people become, wild and wist, wild and, and, wicked, wild and wicked, you know, we live in a day when wickedness is rampant we live in a day when people are throwing off the old ways of of godliness and and piety and and modesty and serving god with all their heart and going after other things they're throwing off why because they've lost the vision they've lost the vision of god almighty they've lost the vision of the holiness of god

they've lost the vision of our place in the kingdom of god representing the lord jesus here in this earth in this world isaiah when he got that new vision of the lord in his holiness what happened he said here am i send me i believe what he saw was the holiness of god the holiness of god on one side the wickedness of the children of israel on the other side and he said here am i send me and then he asked how long and god said basically until until forever you know the rest of your life you you will you will preach this word you will preach this message they will not hear you they will reject you the eternal perspective of life will change us when we when we see everything in the light of eternity knowing that these things these things that we that we strive for the work that we do every day it's temporal it's temporal you know i i'm reminded of a motto my mother had on her wall only one life will soon be passed only what's done for christ will last you know only what we do for christ is the only thing that will be there in eternity it's the only thing you can take along to heaven is the treasure you lay up ahead of time the souls that you win for the kingdom of god those are the only things

that will be there i believe we must always have eternity before us every decision we make must be made in the light of eternity let's go on here in chapter 5 we'll drop down we'll start again let's start in verse 9 well verse 8 says well verse 7 says we walk by faith not by sight we are confident in verse 8 i say and willing rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the lord and he's talking you know we're so concerned with this body here on this earth right health and strength and all of that but you know he says here and this is how it is this body is temporal someday we will lay it down and we will have a new one an eternal one to be absent from the body is to be present with the lord now let's read verse 9 wherefore we labor that whether present or absent we may be accepted of him for we must all appear before the judgment seat of christ that everyone may receive the things done in his body according to that he hath done whether it be good or bad knowing therefore the terror of the lord we persuade men but we are made manifest unto god i trust also are made manifest in your consciences so we labor why because we must we labor that that we may be accepted of him of our lord jesus for we must all appear before the judgment seat of christ you know if we would keep this thought ever in our heart that someday we will stand before jesus we will stand before him and we will give an account of our life says that everyone may receive the things done in his body whether it be good or bad we will receive for the things that we have done you know there's there's another place here in corinthians where he talks about building on the sure foundation and then every man's work will be made manifest for the day shall declare it it will be revealed by fire and the fire will try every man's work of what sort it is you know what what does our work consist of are we building a kingdom for ourselves are we building the kingdom of god how is it with us you know it is so easy to get overtaken and to be and to be pulled into this thing of building the kingdom of this of our own kingdom in this world but in all of our building in all of our life in all of our doing let us build for the kingdom of god let us

ever keep before us the thought of eternity this life will soon be passed and the only thing left will be what we've done for christ yes verse 12 for we commend not ourselves again unto you but give you occasion to glory on our behalf that ye may have somewhat to answer them which glory in appearance and not in heart so they had it in their day also they had people that gloried in appearance you know we see that in our day people that have the outside just right they have everything just perfect but the inside is just like jesus said full of dead man's bones says he wants us to have an answer to those who glory in appearance and not in the heart for whether we be beside ourselves it is to god or whether we be sober it is for your cause for the love of christ constrain us because we thus judge that if one died for all then we're all dead and that he died for all that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves but unto him which died for them and rose again very familiar verses but they are so right and they are so precious the love of christ do you love jesus do you love him more than anything else or do you love self more than you love christ you know you know he loved us so much that he gave his life for us he laid down his life for us for you and for me and what less can we do but to live for him he died for all verse 15 that they which live should not henceforth live to themselves but to him who died for us you know it is only because of him that we have life it is only because of jesus that we can have eternal life and so what less can we do but live for him you know we can never we have a debt that we cannot pay but we can live for him we can live for him you know if we live for ourselves we'll miss it but if we live for him oh hallelujah let's continue on wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh yea though we have known christ after the flesh yet now henceforth know we him no more therefore if any man be in christ he is a new creature all things are passed away behold all things are become new you

know again let me ask the question are we has everything become new or are we still living in the old do we have a new life has the old passed away do we have a renewed mind do we have a new vision or are we living in the old how is it

[31 : 35] how is it you know the love of christ constrains us the love of christ compels us the love of christ controls us if you will you know if we if we love him we will live for him it urges us on to live for him to lay down our old life and to become a new creation in christ jesus all things are of god who hath reconciled us to himself by jesus christ and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation you know we are reconciled to him we are reconciled to him by the blood of jesus christ shed on calvary that is how we are we are reconciled to god almighty and you want to read this verse in timothy says not by works of righteousness which we have done but according to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the holy ghost you know the the washing by the blood of jesus he washes us and cleanses us and makes us a new creation that is what we just read here he if we are washed by the blood of jesus then we are a new creature in christ jesus and those old things are passed away and now all things are become new but you know those those old things that old vision that old life it wants to come back and that is why we must always be so careful that we keep this right vision that we have the correct vision that we have the vision that we keep before us the kingdom of god and that there is eternity right ahead of us yes it's ahead of us maybe not far away from us those things that we see they will pass away but the things that are eternal are those things that we cannot see we must always keep that before us well so back to verse 18 he has reconciled us to himself by jesus christ you know jesus came to to restore humanity back back to fellowship with god that is why he came he came to destroy the works of the devil he came to to do this and now as we those of us if we're hopefully all of us were born again today we are reconciled back to god by the ministry of our lord jesus but as we are reconciled to him he has also given us the ministry of reconciliation let's just read on down through here verse 19 to with that god was in christ reconciling the world unto himself not imputing their trespasses unto them and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation now then we are ambassadors for christ as though god did

beseech you by us we pray you in christ's stead be ye reconciled to god for he hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of god in him we then as workers together with him beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of god in vain so let's take a look at this in verse 18 he ends that verse with saying that we have been reconciled and then he gives us the ministry of reconciliation says god was in christ when christ when jesus was here on earth he was god incarnate he came to this earth and his purpose in coming here was to make a way of reconciliation back that we can again be accepted in the sight of god so jesus came to to begin this work of reconciliation and to make a way he shed his blood he died he gave his life he rose again and then he delegated this work to his disciples and to the church and so we have this this work is now our work as we are a part of the church of jesus then we are also a part of this work of reconciling a lost and a dying world back into fellowship with a holy god he says we are ambassadors for christ an ambassador is someone who represents another country so we are here representing heaven representing god representing the lord jesus here in this wicked world we represent him we are ambassadors here and our work here is to to take the gospel of jesus christ to a lost and a dying world you know i think i'll just read matthew 28 here these couple verses we all know them but i think it's good to read them jesus his last command before he left before he ascended to heaven jesus came and he spake unto them saying all power is given unto me in heaven and in earth go ye therefore and teach all nations baptizing them in the name of the father and of the son and of the holy ghost teaching them to observe all things whatsoever i have commanded you and lo i am with you always even unto the end of the world he gave this commandment to the disciples that they that they go into all the world and this commandment is still for us today that we go into all the world and

I know none of us going to go into all of the world but if I believe if the whole church is obedient to the command of our Lord Jesus I believe the whole world will be reached you know Jesus said in Matthew 24 you know the disciples had asked him they they asked him you know Jesus had said that this temple will be destroyed there will not be one stone left upon another and then the disciples asked him when shall these things be and what will be the sign of thy coming and of the end of the world you know Jesus when he begins answering this he says take heed that no man deceive you and I believe we are living in that day of deception we are living in that day of deception

you know wherever he takes us his grace will be there he will be with us he will he will be with us
hallelujah yes let us walk faithfully let us walk faithfully let us let us not get sidetracked with another
vision but let us ever keep before us the vision of eternity that someday all of this will pass away
and the kingdom in heaven will become a reality to us will we be faithful what