

Running with God's Vision | Biblical Keys to Finding Your Divine Purpose

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[0:00] Looking at the thought of vision, now I don't think we're getting new agey here and that's not the eye of the pyramid or anything, but we're talking about vision and what does the Bible talk about? How's your eyesight, your vision? Can you see clearly? The word vision occurs a lot, 31 times in the Old Testament. It's about hearing from God. It's when God makes communication with men. Sometimes he uses a vision, a revelation. He reveals his purposes.

Nowadays we don't need a vision as such, aside from the Bible, as we have God's complete word in our hands now, but we still need to know what's God's plan? What does he want for me in the future? God's guidance. We need that, all of us, each one.

Now we have the word of God to go to, to get that vision, that revelation. And we can go to it with this kind of heart. I know Michael likes to pray this prayer or make this comment as we come to the word of God.

Psalm 119 verse 18, it says, Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law. It's a good prayer to pray, isn't it? When you come to the word of God, people often think at the start of a new year that it's a good time for a new outlook.

And as we come to this time of meditation around the word and these thoughts, we need a spiritual discernment as we come to the Bible, as it talks about in 1 Corinthians 2.14.

[1:28] These things are spiritually discerned. This is no ordinary book. It's God's book. And it's God's perspective on truth as we reassess our life, as we look forward. Hopefully we can catch a glimpse of what it is that God wants for our future.

Hopefully God is a part of that picture, our future, our planning, as we reflect on God's purposes in the here and now and for the future ahead. It's good for us to get that fresh spiritual outlook, isn't it? That direction to search out.

What's God's plans for me, for my future? And this theme of vision is about taking that kind of fresh look, a new look ahead. And we're going to really dwell in Habakkuk 2.

So if you'd like to turn there, Habakkuk 2. And it's one of the books at the close of your Old Testament. And we're going to go to Habakkuk 2.

Now in Bible terms, vision speaks of seeing things as God sees them and believing God for the future. The Old Testament prophet Habakkuk receives a vision.

[2:32] And we can take some points from these words and what happened for our own lives too. And Habakkuk 2, verse 1, it reads, I will stand upon my watch and set me upon the tower and will watch to see what he will say unto me and what I shall answer when I am reproved.

Here's this man, the prophet Habakkuk. And here he is, he's standing watch. This was the duty of the watchman stationed on the ramparts, on the city walls.

He's on that lookout point. And he's as one standing guard, protecting the city. And he's watching, watching for danger. He's attentive, watching who's coming and going from the city.

He's a man on a mission. And he's seeking God's guidance here. He's ready for God's response. And the Bible calls us today to likewise, to be, as it were, watchmen on the wall.

To be alert. Our Lord says, watch and pray. In Mark 14, 38. There's words of scripture that tell us, be vigilant of impending danger, of the enemy's works.

[3:52] There's many spiritual threats. And Habakkuk here, you notice, he said, I'm ready. I'm standing on the watch. He says, I want to hear God's

direction. And may we likewise have that attentiveness as we come to the word of God, to receive it.

I know one of the prayer points, I put a word out lately in asking people, and I've got a big long list now of what people want me to pray for. And one of them that struck me was, what does God want for me to do?

That's a good prayer to pray, isn't it? We should all have that heart's cry. Lord, what is it you want me to do? What will God say unto me today?

Habakkuk has that humility to say, yeah, I want God to show me the way. What to do. And in the context, we see the humility of Habakkuk too, that he's got this anticipating of God's correction. He says that when God answers me, when I am reproved, he's anticipating that there's some rebuke here of sorts. And in the context, there's a whole lot of injustice and violence and corruption in Judah.

[5:00] It was this uncertain time. And Habakkuk says, hey, Lord, I want to hear you. Show me what you want. And I'm open to reproof. I'm open to correction. I'm teachable.

That's important, isn't it? When we come to the word, when we come to receive the word, receive from God, we want to hear from God. Hey, Lord, correct me if I need correction.

That will help us to grow spiritually. And verse 2, it reads on, He's saying here, when we're talking about vision, God's saying here, receive the vision.

Receive it. Get this. We need to be receptive, don't we? As Habakkuk was there standing as a watchman on the wall, it's a picture of readiness. He's ready to receive from God.

He's waiting on God. It's a good thing, isn't it? Brother, sister, we can all wait upon our Lord wanting to receive. And sometimes we've got to wait a while. We've got to be patient waiting.

[6:05] And we can be like this too, like Habakkuk, to look to God. What's God's purpose for me? What does He want for me to do? Of course, for us to see, as far as vision, you have to have our eyes working.

Our eyes working. Sometimes we need to wear glasses. There's times I need to wear glasses.

People have all kinds of vision problems. Short-sightedness, tunnel vision, clouded vision.

Our vision can get blinkered too. The Bible shows us how God wants to show us his will. He wants to reveal things. And yet, for the many, they're spiritually blinded.

It talks about that in 2 Corinthians 4, how many people are spiritually in blindness. Paul writes, We're blinded spiritually.

Yet God can open eyes. God helping us. We can have our eyes open. The eyes of our mind. And we can look to Jesus and know God's plan for our life. We don't have to stay in that darkness, that blindness.

[7:33] We can know a fresh vision and know God's will. Know God's way. God can help us find his saving. Like the familiar song goes, Amazing Grace. Once I was blind.

Now I can see. I can see. That's our testimony as saved people today. And when we get saved, our eyes get open. We see things different.

We get this forward vision. We look beyond the here and now. We know that we're part of a bigger plan. An eternal dimension. We can envision what is it that God has in mind for us.

And we can trust the Lord. He gives us a vision to help us see things that are beyond human sight. That are humanly invisible. And God's shown us this.

And even if we're outside of Christ just now, if we would just simply have our eyes open to see. Even creation is giving us such evidence. God's shown himself.

[8:32] The invisible God has shown himself in the wonder of his handiwork that's all around us, isn't it? As Romans 1 verse 20 reads, It's telling us here in the context, really, no one's got an excuse to not believe.

No one has that excuse. The evidence is really all around us, the creation of the world. It shows to us the invisible one, our creator, God.

And all creation bears evidence of his design. It bears witness to the invisible God who made it. And Romans 1 says, really, no one's got any excuse. It's all around us if we but open our eyes.

All creation bears witness. Another way that helps us to see, spiritually see, is prayer. When we pray, we lift up our eyes.

Like it says in Psalm 5.3, The psalmist says, My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord. In the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up.

[9:53] There's a sense where we have an upward look when we pray, isn't there? We look to God. How is our spiritual eyesight that we would see? Sometimes we can get so earthbound that we can miss the spiritual dimension.

We need a fresh vision, don't we? Not just individually, but corporately too. I know an insightful question at a recent committee meeting was, Pastor, what's your vision? What's your vision for the church? And really, it's not just my vision. It's a corporate vision, isn't it? It's a shared vision. What is God moving upon the hearts of God's people? They will have a vision. What is it that God's showing for us? We need to pray, don't we? To seek his face, to find his will, to find his vision. And it happened with Elisha that he saw that his servant was despairing at a time.

In 2 Kings 6, verse 17, It tells time came for Elisha to lift our vision a little higher. Here he was, Elisha and his servant. And at the time it sounded like it was a hopeless situation.

[10:58] They were surrounded by this army of the Syrians. Elisha prayed and he said, Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes that he may see.

So in the circumstance here, Elisha and his servant were in this situation. They were trapped, outnumbered by the hostile Syrian army. It was dangerous.

It seemed like all hope was lost. And Elisha, though, he saw with the eyes of faith that God was with them. There was a supernatural protection and presence that was with them. And so it says then, Elijah said, And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man.

And he saw. And behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha. Elisha wanted his servant to see God's heavenly army.

Think of it, brother, sister. We might be in despair at times, but God's heavenly army is with us. God is with us. God's angels. Sometimes we just need to have a spiritual viewpoint, don't we?

[12:07] And to be, as Elisha prayed, Lord, open his eyes that he may see. It's the same in our lives, isn't it? And really, we've got that privilege of prayer, haven't we? Where we can call unto God.

And he says, Sometimes we neglect to pray. We have need of prayer. To get that sensitivity. Prayer will help us as we look up, look to God. We can expand our horizons. And like Habakkuk, in our troubled world, he needed to receive a vision.

We can ask God, Show me the answers I need. Show me the way to go. Seek the Lord, and he'll show you his truth. And so think of it, your own spiritual eyesight today.

How is it? Sometimes we can get so earthbound that we miss the spiritual, the spiritual direction. So, as Elisha prayed for his servant, Lord, open.

[13:06] Open our eyes. Catch the vision, the glimpse of eternity, the eternal dimension that we're all living in. There's a spiritual dimension, and we don't always catch on.

The sense that, actually, God's with us. When we're feeling like all hope is lost, we can be like Elisha and his servant, and see, hey, there's a mountain here.

It's full of horses and chariots. God's with us. And there's no need to be fearful. If we get that perspective, it changes everything, doesn't it? Another thought about vision is really the value of people, and the potential of people.

We see, for example, there was a class of boys in Germany, and a teacher was speaking to these boys, and he said, Boys, when I meet you on the street, I want to remove my hat in your presence. For who knows but that from this class of boys will come one day a man who will change the course of human history. I like to think teachers amongst us or people that have a mentoring role with younger ones, young adults, young people, children, the Sunday school, the youth group, the potential that is there, the latent potential.

[14:24] And Martin Luther was a boy in that class. Who would have known that when the teacher was there teaching, there was a Martin Luther there? Now, for all his faults, Martin Luther was a man who changed history, didn't he?

And he did some good things for God. Sometimes we don't realise the bigger picture. Who knows? Amongst our children, the children that are present, our younger men and women, younger ones, that there's a wonderful potential of what they can become, of who they will be when they're older, let alone who they are right now.

And so, what a wonderful truth it is. And that's why, as a church, we've always had a heart for young people. I know on Google, you find us the Church for You and youth programs. That's our name.

We care about youth programs. We care about young people. We've got a heart for young lives, ministering in the Sunday school, in the church youth group, young adults.

That's what we want. I know it's been pointed out to me, really, we could do better with that demographic. We don't want to miss that. We don't want to miss those opportunities. We really want to minister to the younger people in our church.

[15:34] And so, we want to have that vision, that heart, that we're not missing that. It's very important. Let's have that vision of what they will become. They are the church, just as much as we.

And it's about getting the vision right, too. We think another kind of worldly kind of example is Helen Keller. She was a famous blind woman and she was asked a question one day, what is the greatest calamity?

And she answered, to have eyes and not to see. You know, despite all of her disabilities, she became quite a renowned writer and author and such.

She became a very famous person. But we can have eyes and not see, can't we? We can miss it. Don't miss the vision. Think of it, brother, sister, don't miss the heavenly vision, as it were.

Some people go through life never having their eyes open spiritually and they come to the end of their life and really, they've missed the boat. Receive the vision today.

[16:37] There were some Greeks that came to fill it and they had come to worship at this time and their cry was, Sir, we would see Jesus. Really, when I preach or whoever preaches, that's our object that I would not be seen, but that he would be seen.

That's what you want today. I pray that's your heart's cry too. We want to see Jesus. That's what we need, isn't it? May that be our heart's cry whenever we come to worship, whenever we come to the word, whenever we come to fellowship, that we'll lift our eyes beyond the immediate and the everyday and we'll look to God for an eternal perspective.

Lord, we want to see you. We want to see you, Jesus. And we can expand our horizons and see God's eternal perspective on life. So God tells the prophet to receive the vision, to write it, and he says, make it plain.

He says, make it plain. Write it down, make it plain. God tells the prophet to write the vision clearly on tablets so that it can be easily understood. He's saying, write this down.

He says, make it plain. And when we think about the word of God, when we think about ministry, when we think about what we do to reach others, we want God's message to be accessible. We need to understand and simplify the vision, to spell it out so it's clear and simple.

[17:55] You know, God helping us and nowadays we've got so many kind of modern means, we don't want to be detoured with that, but we want to use every means we can to communicate spiritual truth, whether it be through social media, through our YouTube, whatever it be, any way we can get the message out and make it plain, make it accessible to our world.

That we can be good messengers of the gospel to others. Make it plain, make it concise, get it out there. It's our mission to get the message out and to make it plain to our world.

Now it is possible, brothers and sisters, talking about vision, to get our vision wrong, to get murky vision, a flawed, faulty vision.

There's a story to illustrate that. In 1906, there was a famous man, Sir Percival Lovell, a noted British astronomer, and he completed and published a detailed map of the red canals on Mars. It was the crowning achievement of his distinguished career. And this man, this eminent astronomer, Sir Percival Lovell, he was so specific and detailed with his maps and he made this design here, he published it, his work was published and studied far and wide for decades.

[19:13] Unfortunately, it was later discovered that there were no red canals on Mars. Sir Percival Lovell suffered from a rare eye disease

known as Lovell's syndrome that caused him to see the blood vessels in his own eyes.

So his map of Martian canals was actually a map of his own eyeballs. Yet for years, Lovell, his colleagues and his students all knew that Mars was covered with red canals.

So the point is we can get the vision wrong. We can have a faulty vision, can't we? Make it plain. Don't be having this blurred, faulty, failing vision like Sir Percival Lovell, this flawed vision.

But make it clear. We need a clear vision, don't we? Percival mistook his own eyes' blood vessels for Martian canals. What about us?

Is there something that's clouding our vision that we're getting something wrong, that we're hindering our walk with God, that we're missing the clarity that God wants for us when we think about what is it that God wants us to do?

[20:19] What's God's will? It's important that we zero in what is God's desire for me? Is there something hindering? Is there something clouding my vision, stopping me seeing what God's telling me?

What's stopping me? What's hindering me? It's a reminder for us that we ought to seek God's truth. God's love for you and be led by his word. Like Joshua, in Joshua's time, Joshua 1 verse 4, God gave Joshua specific directions, not some vague options.

He said, from the wilderness and this Lebanon, even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, unto the great sea, toward the going down of the sun, shall be your coast. God didn't tell Joshua, just pick any old piece of land.

He gave him specifics. He gave him clarity, a clear vision. And it's the same with you and me. God can give us that clear understanding of the priorities that he gives for us to do, a specific course for each one of our own lives.

And the word of God talks about having a clarity as in a certain sound. If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, he shall prepare himself to the battle.

[21:29] You know, in warfare times, they would, and they still do, don't they, they sound a signal, a trumpet sound for different instructions and we've got to be clear what the instruction is.

What is God saying? We need that clarity to hear God's clear voice. And so we need a biblical vision, a clear biblical scriptural vision. There's many quarters where people are going on and on about visions, all kinds of extra biblical visions.

We've got to be careful about the visions of man and make sure it's not a manufactured vision but the real thing. So for clarity, it's important that we get the right focus too.

Think of it, brother, sister, for yourself. We're on the, well, we're already in the new year. We're not on the brink of it. We're in it already. What am I going to put my focus into in 2025 and beyond?

What's, what's my focus? What am I going to do in my life? Where am I going to put the focus? And we could think someone would put the focus on temporal, present things.

[22:31] Well, we've probably all got a mortgage we're paying off or rent that's due and the burdens of all of the cost of living. There's our own resentments, our own hurts.

We could put the focus on that. Hey, I'm having a tough time here. We could put the focus on the difficulty, on the circumstances. We could put the focus on our environment, on the challenges that we're facing, our health and worries and they're genuine.

But we can get the focus such that it's all about our own failures, our own lack, instead of the victory that we've got in Christ and what God wants me to do to activate.

There's a truth where really we can put the past behind and look to God for the future. For example, Philippians 3 talks about that.

Paul says, Brethren, I count on myself to have apprehended but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

[23:40] Brother, sister, we've all got a race to run, the race of life when we get saved. That's the bang. That's the status pistol, isn't it? We've got a whole new outlook, a whole new race to run, a new direction.

It's important that we have the focus right and think, what's God's purpose? What should I be led to do? How can I have the focus right?

How can I fulfil God's call? Without vision, we don't accomplish God's plan. Vision provides direction. It shows us where to go, where to head and we need that specific vision. People cannot focus on fog. We need a vision that's clear and really we get that as we seek clarity from the word. That's where it comes from. That's where we get the clarity. What is God's will? What is it that he wants for my life and for the church? Where are we headed? We want to make that plain. We want to seek God's will. Notice when Paul got saved on the Damascus road, he prayed that prayer.

[24:43] Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? What wilt thou have me to do? Damascus road. Here he is. Paul, what will you have me to do?

It's really, our hearts cry too, isn't it? We're looking forward. Who knows how much time we've got yet ahead to make the best of it. God tells Habakkuk, receive the vision, make it plain. What simple steps are we going to do? What can we ask God to show us? What clear steps are we ought to take? What is it that God wants me to focus on for my life ahead? What priorities, what steps will he lead me to fulfil his purpose? Friends, as we receive the vision, we make it plain. God tells us how we are to also run with the vision. He says, write the vision and make it plain upon tables or tablets and that he may run that readeth it. The phrase here, run with the vision, it tells of urgency and action.

[25:54] It's telling us here, hey, we can do all kinds of things but make sure we run with this, run with God's vision, act on that. There's an urgency, there's a call for action, purposeful action.

When God shows you something to do, get on with it and do it. Take action. Put the vision into action and not just any kind of action. A quote here, it's not what we do that counts but what we actually get done.

Have that intention to get things done, to put your faith into practice and when you've got the vision, when God's shown you what it is, he's put on your heart to do, run with it.

It's actionable. Do something with it, the vision. Now sometimes there may be a weight. Verse 3 of Habakkuk 2 talks about the vision was for an appointed time.

But sometimes we've got to be conscious, hey, what's God's timing for the fulfilling of that vision. Sometimes there's delay and it's his delay but we rest in his leading and we can trust his will will come to pass in his time, in his good time.

[27:03] Our part is to be responsive and it's telling us here, God's telling Habakkuk, run with the vision. It's a call to action and we think of running, this is a marathon too, it's a perseverance here.

It means a change. So vision means obeying God's plan for our lives, for our church. There's action to take. There's times when our running can get hampered.

Paul tells the Galatians, you did run well, who did hinder you? But you should not obey the truth. Sometimes we're good, running with the vision but we stumble, we get slowed down, something detours us and maybe we get off track, we miss it, we can refocus, we can recalibrate, get the vision back, we can get the vision of what God wants for us.

Maybe it's fear, lack of faith, setbacks, disappointments, hey, get over it and get running again. We're all part of this athletic team, the church, that we should run, run well, run together.

How can we all play a part in that running? And this theme of running, running with the vision, this theme of running, you could relate it also to the idea of a messenger and in Bible times they would take a post and they would take that and run with it.

[28:25] Before the days of Wi-Fi, the man was the carrier, the communication carrier to take the post and pass it on to the receiver.

And think of it as we think of the symbol of spreading a message. That's what we are about, isn't it? We've got a message that this world needs so desperately. The message of the gospel, we should want to run with it and carry that, God's word, make it known.

Think of a worldly example, in 1967, the company executives of Coca-Cola at their world convention took a big step of faith. They said, only one half of the world has tasted Coca-Cola and we're going after the other half.

What vision? And that's a worldly organisation. Of course, nowadays it's a global thing, isn't it? They wanted to have the vision to reach out with their product.

What about us with our product, with our message, with our gospel? There's people who haven't heard the name of Jesus yet in our world and we ought to be about this task of running with the message, taking the message of the gospel to our world.

[29:38] And one who did that was Booth, William Booth. he talked about having a vision for souls that grips your heart. The quote here, some men's passion is for gold. Some men's passion is for art.

Some men's passion is for fame. My passion is for souls. Booth talked about this vision for souls that gripped his heart. He was talking about ministry of evangelism, that burden, that harvest for the lost, for the suffering.

and he says, my passion is for souls. That's a vision, isn't it, that he had and we see how God used him and when we're setting goals, maybe here's a good motto that I saw that maybe could be a motto for our church.

Our goals are souls. Our goals are souls, aren't they? to see people come to the saviour. That's why we care about knocking doors and reaching out, taking the message by whatever channel, however, in whatever way we can, by all means, save some, that compelling message that should grip our heart, our goals, our souls.

And Australia is a mission field, isn't it? As much as in Darkest England was one of Booth's books that he wrote. The Darkest England, well, we've got the Darkest Australia, this dark, dark nation.

[31:12] And what's our viewpoint? Have we got a heavenly viewpoint, a heavenly passion for souls? It's sad you could reflect that apparently churches worldwide, they put \$4 into real estate for every \$1 in evangelism.

So evangelism is not the priority. Much of the resources are lost and they're not invested in souls. Friends, we've got to have that vision, that godly vision and keep on running and have that vision that will empower us to cross the desert as it were, to know that God's got a purpose and a plan and the present circumstances are not going to hold us back.

Brother, sister, don't look at what you are today, but what God wants you to be tomorrow. You could think of worldly examples of having a vision.

Kingsford Smith, the great Australian aviator, started his airline, Qantas, with an idea, a dream, not a fleet of 747 jumbo jets. It's the same for you, brother, sister.

What's God putting on your heart to do? Get a grip, a grip on God's grip on your heart. God's grip on your heart and just surrender to that vision.

[32:36] It's immobilising, isn't it? And we give ourselves to vision and we become a part of its fulfilment. When God told Noah, build an ark, he didn't even know what an ark was.

But it came to be, didn't it? We see Joshua and Caleb, God says, go into the promised land and they believe God for it. Can we dare to believe God? Young people especially, and hey, you're all young here, present.

What's God got in store for you? It's as big as your faith, isn't it? Can we dare to believe God?

There was a large piece of marble discarded that lay on a rubbish heap for 40 years.

Michelangelo saw the stone, and the possibilities in it, the masterpiece that it became, David. It was just on the rubbish heap. We might feel like we've been on the rubbish heap for 40 years.

God sees the possibilities that we can become. Someone asked another famous sculptor, Thorwardson, and he was asked the question, what is your greatest statue?

[33:46] He promptly replied, the next one. Can we have a heart? Hey, what's God doing for me? Maybe there's something new. God's energising me, refreshing my faith, giving me a new vision, a new mission, a new task, a new call.

How can I serve God? How can we serve God together as part of his church? How can we as a church, when we think, what is the church's vision? That each one will reach one, will reach out, everyone in this neighbourhood, will make disciples, will see members growing, maturing, working for God, discipleship, will see ministries released, will see practical mercy ministries, caring for souls, and another avenue to reaching them.

How can we seize the harvest opportunities? Lift up your eyes, Jesus says, behold, the fields are white unto harvest, just got to lift up our eyes. Oh, I never saw that before, the opportunities that are

all around us.

How can we be that vital church, vibrant, with strong worship, reaching every demographic, reaching new families, going into our world and reaching this little community that we part of and our city?

How can we run with that vision? How can we put feet under our faith? Here's an ancient quote that goes like this, it's from an old church in England in 1730, so it's not some new fad quote, and it says this, a vision without a task is but a dream, and we can have a vision and do nothing.

[35:21] A task without a vision is drudgery, you know, we can get busy but not have the vision, but it says here, a vision and a task, a vision and a task is the hope of the world. When we get the vision right, we'll know what the task is and we'll do it, because the vision will activate our walking and our doing, it'll energise and activate us brother, sister, we've all got a vision, a task, this church body and we're all part of that together.

The Bible image of the church is not some hunkered down holy club in some kind of bunker, but of an army advancing, assaulting the gates of hell, an advancing army.

The picture of running with the vision, it's got a sense of urgency. Hey, how much time, how much more time are we going to waste? This need of urgency, how can we believe God to grow us as a church?

And in a way, it's how big is our vision? There was another worldly example just to illustrate that soon after the completion of Disney World, and I'm not a big fan of Disney World, let me tell you, but after the completion of Disney World, someone said, isn't it too bad that Walt Disney didn't live to see this?

And the director replied, he did see it, that's why it's here. It's the same with us, what can we believe God for? I know when we first saw this building next door, it was a burnt out wreck, a shell, fit for demolition, and God helped us to take ownership, my wife and I, and to see the church grow there and be blessed, and now this place we're sitting on was a vacant lot, and we had the vision to see a building could be here, but these are just buildings, what about spiritually so?

[37:15] What can we see for the vision, for the harvest field that is our mission field here? It's why we're here, isn't it? That we can see beyond the present.

The vision must come from God, it must be a vision from heaven, not of our own making. It's got to be a biblical vision based on God's word. There's a time where God alerts to the vision that can be a faulty vision of false prophets.

Lots of people going around talking about, I had a vision, I had an experience, and they go on and on, but it's a vision of their own heart. It's not scriptural, it's not out of the mouth of the Lord, we've got to be guarded about that.

Not everyone who speaks for God is of God. We have to discern that, because the vision can be wrong. A vision of our own heart, a vision of our own manufacture, scripture.

We want to make sure the vision that we have is biblical, it's from God. That's why we need to go to the word and discern God's will. What are we aiming for? What are we here for?

[38:17] And notice, brother, sister, it's really important because the vision is vital because the people are perishing. Where there is no vision, the people perish. But he that keepeth the Lord happy is he.

There's a sense where we can miss the vision and there's a great loss, a tragedy. People are perishing, souls are perishing all around us. Society is pretty much divided, it's been said, between seekers after gold and searchers after God.

This world, mostly they're in the other quarter, aren't they? May we have our eyes open. May we be a part of opening the eyes of the lost to see the blinded minds of others come to see Christ, they need of him, of the gospel.

people. And we, likewise, we'll have an eternal point of view, sort of scurrying around, so busy, busy, busy, so earthbound, that we think, hey, what am I really here for?

What is it God wants me to do? To have that eternal point of view, God's point of view for my life.

Can we focus on what truly matters? Now, of course, we still have to make bread and support our homes and our families and make a living.

[39:26] thing, but can the focus be diverted more heavenwards in the years ahead, this year ahead? What are we here for? What are we aiming for? What really matters?

God told Habakkuk, get this vision. We need a vision as well. Maybe as believers, we need to regain the vision. Maybe you had it, but you've lost it somehow. Somehow, you kind of, it's not like front and centre anymore.

Other things are occupying, distracting. Now, when you're driving along, you can be distracted by the scenery and miss what really matters. And it's the same spiritually too, isn't it?

How's our perspective this morning? Our individual vision, it's between you and God, isn't it? Hey, Lord, maybe I need to rethink, what's your plan? What is it you want me to focus on?

And then our collective vision as a church. What's our perspective? Hopefully this marry up our individual vision and our collective vision. We're all on the same page. It's been said, a vision without action is merely a dream.

[40:29] You might hear all this and think, yeah, I'll have some kind of vision, but you do nothing with it. We've got to run with the vision. So there's an activation there. A vision, it speaks of a divine revelation of seeing his glory as Isaiah saw the Lord high and lifted up and his train filled the temple.

We may not get that actual vision today, but we can have that sense of it, the sense of the wonder of God, of his majesty, of his holiness. We'll have that focus that's right, a focus on his word and we'll line up our life's priorities.

Hey, actually, my life's priorities should be led by the scripture, should be led by the heavenly vision, which is the word of God. How can we set some spiritual goals for this year ahead?

How can we collectively have that heart for souls to witness, to have discipleship, outreach? Paul talks about moving forward in faith, forgetting those things which are behind.

Brother, sister, it's time to turn the page. Turn the page, those things which are behind. If it's stopping you, if it's slowing you, put it behind.

[41:45] Press toward the mark. Amen? You might have different ways that kind of speaks to you. Could it be challenges, distractions?

Hey, I've been discouraged, so I'm going to stop trying. I've been discouraged, so I'm going to throw in the towel and I'm not going to do anything. Past discouragements.

forget those things. Set some spiritual goals. Hey, Lord, it's a new year, it's a new moment, it's a new turning of the page.

I want to know, Lord, what is it you want me to do? Go back to the Damascus road. What is it you want me to do? And trust God to show you.

The world says if we fail to plan, we plan to fail. And we can think of that spiritually, couldn't we?

Hey, maybe it's time, maybe I should actually write the vision, write down some goals.

[42:45] Hey, in 2025, I'm going to, God helping me, read the Bible more, pray more, fellowship more, witness more, serve more.

What is it that I can do? You might have different things. On a spiritual level, if we fail to plan, we plan to fail. Hey, what is it that God's moving upon you to do?

To be, to run with the vision and not lose sight. Friends, we've been talking really to believers here.

You might say, preacher, I'm still spiritually blind. My eyes have been blinded, but I want Jesus.

The Bible talks about looking unto Jesus. He's the author, he's the finisher of our faith, he's the one who saves us and keeps us saved and will see us saved at the finish line. Friends, it's faith in Christ.

It's Jesus. Put your focus on him. Know him today. To know his life eternal. To know Jesus today. Make that the focus of your life, to look unto Jesus, to trust him.

[43:47] And God helping you. Believers here this morning, that we'll be like Habakkuk, we'll see that sense of, hey, God's talking to me. Not in some spooky thing, but through his word he's talking to me.

And if I just have that heart open my eyes, when I open your word, Lord, open my eyes at the same time, that I might see what it is you're telling me, that I might act upon it.

Let us pray. Lord, we thank you that we can have that heart, that grip that you put on our heart of souls, that burden of the harvest, that vision, that dream of trust, of what we can be, as, Lord, you

enable us and you put on our heart what to do.

Lord, help us to have the hearts cry like Paul, as he was Saul at the time. Lord, what would you have me to do? Give us, Lord, that focus, that refreshing. So, Lord, we'll have that vision.

We'll receive it. We'll write it down. Lord, we'll put it in plain language. Lord, this is what you want me to do. A, B, C. Lord, I'm going to write it down. And, Lord, put that burden on my heart to make it live, that I might run with it, that I might run, that I might be activated, that I'll be, Lord, put into action.

[45:07] Help me, Lord, not just to dream what I can be or to think about what I can do, but, Lord, to be energised and activated, empowered by your Holy Spirit.

We pray for any present, that each one will have that heart's trust, to know you're saving. Lord, that each day our prayer would be, Lord, we want to see Jesus. We want your will. We want to see your will.

We want you to show us the way. Lord, guide our steps, we pray. In Jesus' name, amen. Thank you.