

Vision

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[0 : 00] Welcome again and God bless you. Let's go to the Word of God. Proverbs 29.! Some thoughts about vision as we approach our annual meeting.

! Where are we as a church? Where do we want to be? Where does God want us to be? Proverbs 29 verse 18 is a good scripture to highlight vision.

And we've got it here on the screen. Proverbs 29 verse 18. Where there is no vision, the people perish. But he that keepeth the law happy is he.

Let's pray. Lord, we thank you again for this time. We can gather together and be your people in this place, in this city. Lord, in this state, this region. We've come from different places to be here together today.

And Lord, you've drawn us by your Spirit to be your church, your assembly of people. Lord, you're gathered people here today.

[1 : 07] And what a blessing it is to know that wherever we gather, whenever we gather, you are there in the midst of us. And Lord, be glorified, we pray. Be lifted up.

Help us, Lord, to put our attention on things above. Lead us by your Holy Spirit. Quicken us by your Word, Lord.

Let it be quickened unto us and quicken us to put us into action, Lord. Thank you for your grace and your pardon for the joy that we have.

It's inexpressible. We can't express that joy that you give to us, soul redeemed, set free. And the joy that we have to be your dearly beloved people here today.

Lord, we just can't thank you enough for that. And we pray that you would be lifted up. And as you would be lifted up, you would draw all men unto you.

[2 : 18] In Jesus' name, amen. Where there is no vision, the people perish. The opposite should be true. Where there is a vision, the people perish.

And this is a sermon based on one I delivered when we as a church were really just about one year old. We weren't anywhere near this place. We were in a school hall.

It's timely for us to think about our vision. What lies ahead for us? We look back at where we have been. We look now where we're at. And we look forward. We look ahead. What's God's plan for each one of us individually and as a gathered people, as his assembly, to fulfill his plan for us.

To grasp his vision. His vision for our future as a church. And that's not to say we have been working without a vision. I believe we have had this vision.

I believe we have had this vision deep down in our hearts and led by God to reach out to this city. Yeah, it's always good to readjust that vision and get it back in a clearer focus, a sharper focus.

[3 : 29] Think for a moment about living without vision. To be blind. It would be a difficult time, no doubt, as we know some are experiencing that.

And how, if you were unable to see how easy it would be to get lost or disoriented. I was just thinking lately, I know a man called Joseph. People would know him and how he would get around and be so able.

And yet, it's such a limiting thing, isn't it? I was just thinking like at night without the light on. Just trying to rummage in my drawer at night to get something. And how hard that can be. How frustrating.

How hard it can be to work out size and shape. To judge situations and determine colour or sense danger. Now, a famous blind person, Helen Keller, was asked, What is the greatest calamity?

And she answered, To have eyes and not see. A lot of people have eyes, but they do not see. They're blind to the truth of God. They're lost in the world. They're described as blind.

[4 : 38] It says in 1 Corinthians 4 verse 4, That for them, the God of this world, small g, 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.

The devil has blinded the minds of many. And a church also can be blind and miss out on God's best, as it says of the Laodicean church.

In part, it says they're wretched, miserable, and poor, and blind and naked. What a tragic thing to be a church that is blind.

No institution can survive without a vision to pull it forward. A vision motivates us. And we know even worldly thinking, management gurus talk about vision, about having a vision.

And it's a concept that people realise it's important, to know where you're going. There's a famous book about war and peace.

[5 : 45] And Leo Tolstoy said, We lost because we told ourselves we lost. Vision brings victory. It gives us something to aim for, to aspire to.

And as a church, we want to have a vision. We want to have something that energises us and sets our feet in motion. It gives us courage. It gives us that motivation.

And I'll put to you some things that vision needs. Some things that we need to have vision.

Firstly, we need to be alive. We need to have life. A dead person cannot see. But God gives us his life. Jesus says, I am the light of the world.

He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. God gives us life.

And for we that believe, we know we have life, life more abundant.

[6 : 43] The life that we have, it's not just living, it's eternal. We have eternal life. We have that vibrancy of God's life, of that freshness, of that resurrection life, that powerful life, to be that fresh, vibrant church that we need to be, to have that renewing, that revitalising that God gives to us, that passion that we have of this message, that is life changing, it's eternal, and we have the life of God in us.

To see, we need to have life. Secondly, we need to have a lens. We need eyes. We need working eyeballs. And we need to have a lens.

You know, some of us need a few lenses, on top of our God-given lens, to be able to see. I know I've got, I've got a blue case, and a black case. One's for my short-sightedness, and one's for my long-sightedness.

You know, we need to have that thing, to correct our vision. You know, some of you look a bit blurry right now. But it's not your fault. It's my eyes. You know, we need to be able to see.

Sometimes we've got to get that telescope out, to see beyond, or to get the microscope out, to see deep, close up. And the Bible tells about problems with vision.

[8 : 01] Paul says, for now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face. He's using a picture of like a mirror that's kind of, needs a bit of buffing up. It's kind of a little bit murky.

It's like a window, like a mirror, that is marked. And there's a dull picture. And Paul's talking about how ultimately, that limited vision we have right now, in this earthly, limited time, as vessels of clay, that our vision of God is a little bit blurry.

But then we shall see him face to face. It's like God's purpose for us can be like a blurred image in a mirror, not a clear focus. And sometimes we can have problems with the lens, as it were, our focus. What is our focus as a church? Have we got it right? It's really encouraging to hear good reports lately of people witnessing for the Lord and wonderful responses to the gospel.

That is a blessed encouragement to me and to us as a church, that that focus is souls, of witnessing, of reaching out, of encouraging, of uplifting, of teaching, of training, that right focus.

[9 : 22] We need to get the focus right, the lens. Another thing, we've seen the life, we've seen the lens. Third thing is the light. You can have, you can have life, you can have your eyes working, but if the light's off, you're as bad as everybody else.

Because if you're in a dark room, you will still not be able to see. You must have a measure of light. Light. And as I've talked about before, Julie and I went deep down underground in a dark mine, deep down in a mine shaft, some one kilometre down.

And when they turned the light off, it was dark. We need the light. We need the light. The light that we have, the light that we need, is the word of God. This is the most dazzling, brilliant search light. It searches our own lives and hearts and it gives us light unto our feet, a lamp to our feet and a light unto our path. So a lamp to our feet, like where we are right now, and a light to our path.

It shows us the way to go. There was a learned Chinese man who was working with some missionaries to translate the New Testament into Chinese. And at first, the work of translating had no apparent effect on him.

[10 : 41] But after a time, he became quite agitated and he said, what's a wonderful book this is. Why so, said the missionary. Because, said the Chinese man, it tells me so exactly about myself.

It knows all that is in me. The one who made this book must be the one who made me. He saw the light. He saw the light.

And this is the wonderful searchlight, the bright light, the powerful shining beam of God's light, the Word of God.

It's the master plan, the master's plan. The one who founded the universe has given us this blueprint for life. And without this, we're in darkness. And many, when they go astray, and in church situations too, as was talked earlier, there's many that are in churchianity that have not got the light. They're still in the dark ages, as it were. But, as Isaiah said, to the law and to the testimony, go to this as your source.

[11 : 50] If they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. When churches stray from God's truth, they lose that light, that truth.

And our vision takes the light of God. It takes vision. And vision takes life, a lens, and light. It's God's life within us, His Holy Spirit.

It's His lens, His focus for us. What is God's focus? What does God want us to focus upon? What does God want for us? What does God want us to be doing?

And the light of His Word will lead us in His way. Those three things, what it takes to have vision. And some things that vision gives to us now.

Some three things that vision brings to us. And we see in 1 John 2 verse 11, that vision brings us direction. It says in 1 John 2 verse 11, But he that hated his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not where he goes, because that darkness has blinded his eyes.

[13 : 04] People who are blinded can lose a sense of where they're going. A blind person can easily lose their bearings and get lost. And sadly, as our Lord talked about the Pharisees, he called them blind leaders of the blind.

They were still, they had no direction, because they were astray from God. To know which way to go, you need to be able to see.

He knows not where he goes, because the darkness has blinded his eyes. Direction.

Vision gives us direction. Vision shows us where to go, the way to go. It shows us the goals that we ought to have. And as a church, prayerfully, let's see God's face for the way that he wants us to go, for what he wants us to be.

And again, just to remind you, those that might have come in a little late, you and your church, please, I'd like as many people as possible to fill this out before you leave, before you go out the door, really.

[14 : 20] Please, if you can. It helps me to understand, sort of gauge us where people are at, what your gifts and callings might be, how you want to be involved in this church. If you're not a member, you can say, I'd like to be a member.

And also, it helps me to update things, because frankly, sometimes I lose track of people's phone numbers and things, especially when people change them a lot. It's hard to keep up.

Or if you've got an email address, please, if you can help me with that, that'll help me to keep everything up to date, because it's quite a job at times, keeping up to date with things. It's got some, there's over 100 people that I'm trying to keep track of, as it were, that come and go, and some a bit hit and miss when they're attending and not attending, and I'd like to do a better job.

And so, it helps me. Vision brings direction. You can set goals. A vision is a dream, in a way. It provides us a purpose and a focus.

It's seeking God. Now, you know, the familiar one that's quoted, Martin Luther King, as much as he himself wasn't a particularly good example of a Christian when you actually examine the man and what he actually stood for and actually did.

[15 : 42] He was a very poor example, I must say. I'm just talking honestly here this morning, because some people look at, oh, Martin Luther King, he was a great man. He was a great man, in the world's eyes.

He was actually a fornicator. He wasn't a good example, a very poor example, what he actually did with his life.

And I'm just being honest with you this morning. Some people think it's the same as Mandela, Nelson Mandela. He was a great man, a great man in the eyes of the world. But he actually was

quite a dangerous man, what he actually did and what his philosophies were and what he actually stood for when he actually examined the man.

I'm not talking about his colour, that's irrelevant. But there's good men who are black, good men who are white. But this man, again, another dangerous man.

But Martin Luther King, as we know, he stood against the tide of public opinion, so he did some things that were good and in the face of much opposition, he said, I have a dream. I have a dream.

[16:50] And people got behind that vision that he had, which was, it was, it made a huge change and a lot of it was for the better, certainly. Against racism, which we're totally against.

Because that's, no man is better than another man because of his skin or his race or his colour. That's irrelevant. It's about what's inside of you.

That's what matters. And Martin Luther King, he had a dream. He had a direction and he gave that direction. And as a church, there's a sense of direction that we ought to have.

And what is the direction we ought to have? It's a God-given direction. It needs to be directed by God. Vision.

A healthy church begins when it gets that God-given vision, that God-given direction. What is our dream?

[17:52] What is our vision? Now, let's talk about another man and again, another man that I probably wouldn't recommend to you, Walt Disney. Walt Disney was a 33rd degree mason and he had some very sinister ulterior motives.

And even the cartoons and movies of Disney are very questionable when you actually look at the hidden underlying messages in such things. And you might think, oh, what's this preacher on about attacking Walt Disney?

Well, I can give you some information to back up what I'm saying. But at the completion of Disney World, someone said, isn't it too bad that Walt Disney didn't live to see this?

And one of the fellows who knew Walt Disney said, he did see it, that's why it's here. Now, there was a dream. And it's like, you know, this church, you know, when we first saw this block of land, when we saw this building next door, which we first met in, it was a broken down, burnt out shelf of the building.

that we could see the potential of what it could be. We just saw it at a building. And likewise, this church has been purposefully built for us to meet here in this place.

[19:06] And it was just a block of land before. And there's a sense where you've got to see what can be and make it happen. And we've done that as a church.

We've done that together. It's been said, if you never have a dream, you'll never have a dream come true. And, you know, some of you young people here, you've got some ambitions, some maybe career aspirations.

Go for it. Just aim for it. Have that direction to set. But more so, how much better would it be? What about spiritual?

What are your spiritual ambitions? What are your spiritual aspirations? And that goes for all of us. You might be 40 years in a church and then get saved. And your life begins at 40.

You know, it's not restricted by your age. Don't think because I'm a certain age, God's finished with using me. While you've got breath to breathe, while you've got life living, while you've got blood pumping, do something for God.

[20:16] Don't let anything stop you. Don't make an excuse. Don't make an excuse. Go with God. Be encouraged to have that vision of what God wants for me.

Realise his direction for your life. men who live in the past are like a small wooden toy bird called the phloogie bird.

There's a bird apparently called the phloogie bird and it's got a label reading I fly backwards. I don't care where I'm going. I just want to see where I've been. Now some people just think, oh, I used to serve God.

I did this for God. I did that for God. Back in my younger days. look forward. Have the direction. What is God going to do with my life today, tomorrow, this year?

While you've got life to live, live it. Vision brings direction. Don't be like the phloogie bird thinking, oh, yeah, I've served God and now I'm just going to hang my hat up.

[21:26] No. The direction we have for all of us young and old is to keep serving God. Whether you're 81 or older, don't stop. Keep going.

Vision brings direction. Another thing is vision brings dimension. In Ephesians 3, we hear about some dimensions. now, again, as I say, somebody can see, they can see where they're going. They can see the direction. Vision brings direction. They can see the path to take. Secondly, vision helps you to realise the shape and size of things, the dimension of things. You might, as someone who you cannot see, you might come and meet someone, you don't realise how tall they are, how large they are, because all you can see, all you can take in, is their voice. you can't have that sense of dimension. And, again, in a spiritual sense, too, there's a sense of dimension, the size of things. What is it that God is showing us to be, to do?
[22 : 38] And if we get the vision for our life, we can be able to step into that. Fanny Crosby was a woman who was blind, but she wasn't wallowing in her self-pity.

She wrote many thousands of hymns, such as, I am thine, O Lord, Jesus is tenderly calling, to God be the glory, blessed assurance. And when Fanny Crosby was old, someone told her that if she had been born in that time, an operation could have restored her sight. But instead of being busy, she said, I don't know that I would change anything. Do you know that the first thing I'm ever going to see is the face of Jesus?

She had a sense of dimension. Sometimes we can get caught up in the earthly dimension. We can get caught up in how can I make a buck, how can I make a living, how can I enjoy my life in a fleshly, earthly sense, without realising, hey, the dimension that really counts is the eternal, the eternal dimension, the overwhelming vastness of God's great love and mercy.

We see in Ephesians 3, verse 17, Paul says that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith, that you may be rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the length and the breadth and depth and length and height and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge that you might be filled with all the fullness of God.

[24 : 26] Now sometimes we can be spiritually short-sighted that we just see the here and now. Sometimes we can be spiritually short-sighted.

Why all this talk about the next world? I'm having enough trouble getting through this one. Two men look through the same bars. One sees the mud and one the stars.

It's depending on where you look, isn't it? We can see the mud, yeah, life's hard, or we can see the stars. Actually, God's preparing me. He's shaping me. I can see the God dimension and he's in charge.

As a church, what about our spiritual dimensions? Can we widen our horizons as a church? What can we do to be more effective, to reach this city?

The dimensions. Sometimes the dimension of new possibilities as well. In the year 1870, the Methodists in Indiana had their annual conference and the president of the college they were meeting and said, I think we live in a very exciting age.

[25 : 37] But the presiding bishop said, what do you see? The college president said, I believe we're coming into a time of great inventions. I believe, for example, that men will fly through the air like birds.

And the bishop said, this is heresy. Heresy. The Bible says that flight is reserved for the angels. We will have no such talk here. And after the conference, the bishop, his name was right, went home to his two sons, Wilbur and Orville.

And you know what they did? See their father's vision. Orville and Wilbur Wright got that plane off the ground, first plane of any significance.

They believe in the vision. And it's a dimension, isn't it? The dimension is sometimes us stepping into new possibilities. And it's the dimension of faith as well.

Sometimes our faith is too restricted. We can limit God by our lack of faith. Now some think the church should be small, a little flock.

[26 : 56] Of course, we know there was, our Lord talked in the Gospel of John that we are a little flock. It's almost like some magnify that. There was a church up at Gorla called the Little Flock Baptist Church, for example.

It's like we're just a struggling band of survivors. We're meant to be just staying little and small and insignificant. What about Abraham? Over 80 years old, unable to have even one child by his wife Sarah, God told him, your descendants would be as numerous as the stars in the sky or the dust of the earth.

And what did Abraham do? Abraham believe God. He believed God. He believed in the God dimension. He believed in God. And it's about getting a different look at things.

Lift up your eyes as the Gospel up look. Look up, Jesus says. Lift up your eyes and look on the fields for they are white or ready to harvest. He says to these disciples, the time is now.

It's ready. It's ready for you to go out and gather in the grain, go out into the harvest field, the Gospel up look. Then we see the prayer up look. As the psalmist cried, in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee and will look up, look up in prayer.

[28 : 17] And thirdly, the blessed hope up look. Look up and lift up your heads for your redemption draweth nigh. It's about the dimension. Where are you looking?

We can look at ourselves and our own limitations and think, oh, I'm not able. Or we can think, the God who I serve is able. How can we ever do anything unless we start to do something different? You might say, oh, I've never done that before. When the pastor asks for volunteers, oh, you look at your shoes. Oh, he's picked someone else now.

I can look up. No. Honestly. How will we do anything different unless you step out of the comfort zone?

And what is it that we're doing? It's eternal. This is eternal, the dimension. You know, there's a familiar story of some stonemasons working on a construction site and one's there chipping away and someone says, what are you doing?

[29 : 27] Oh, you can see I'm chipping a stone. And a man walks over to the other builder there, what are you doing? Oh, I'm building a wall. And then he walks over to a third one and asks, what are you doing?

He says, I'm building a cathedral. They're all three who are doing the same thing, but the difference was the perspective, was the dimension.

Sometimes we can lose a vision. You can get caught up in all the machinery and administration. As a church, we can get bogged down.

It's like for some of us who work in some bureaucratic government type organisations, that you just get lost in the paperwork and you actually forget why you're actually there to actually deliver some valued service to the community.

people. I was talking to one of my old bosses just Friday night and he was just saying how frustrating it was, the bureaucracy, just the total waste of time and energy and filling out forms.

[30 : 44] He said, what really matters? And as a church, we can do the same. We can go through the motions. It's all about the ho-hum and we can miss the point of why we're here.

Last Sunday morning's communion word, love one another, love one another. We can miss the things that matter by the trivialities and the idiosyncrasies.

Certain people bug us. get over it. Love one another. There was a time 350 years ago when a shipload of travellers came to the northeast coast of America.

They landed on a ship and in the first year they established the town site. Next year they elected a town government. The third year the town government planned to build a road five miles westward into the wilderness.

In the fourth year the people tried to impeach their town government because they thought it was a waste of public funds to build a road five miles westward into a wilderness. Who needed to go there anyway?

[31 : 53] And here we see people who had the vision to travel 3,000 miles across an ocean to come to America but in just a few years they didn't have the vision to see that their community could extend five miles into the interior.

They'd lost the vision. Sometimes we've got to step out of our comfort zones. How does a city grow unless they do something different and invest?

As much as we're all paying rates and you think oh that's a bit of a waste of money what they're spending our money on but it's actually growing the city and it's growing the economy.

It's growing the benefits and there's always that thinking but it's about actually unless we do something different nothing will change. It's about the dimension.

So we've seen vision brings direction, vision brings a dimension vision and thirdly vision brings discernment and we see the story of Jacob and Esau.

[33 : 12] Just on that sense of vision again, one quote about vision is people who think that nothing can be done usually end up doing nothing.

vision. Let's not make that mistake. Vision brings discernment. You know, blind people find it hard to judge situations to determine colour or sense of danger.

You know, people can be colour blind. They can't discern and likewise our discernment can get off as a church too. I think of the things that I've seen over this time in supporting this church and nurturing this church and being a support to you have I made some wrong judgements?

Potentially I have. We need to judge righteous judgment. Judge righteous judgment. That doesn't mean we don't discern but we discern wisely and we all need to prayerfully see how can I discern things spiritually?

How can I make wise spiritual decisions? How can I discern between error and truth? How can I discern the deceiver or those who just be ignorant and need a bit of encouragement?

[34 : 31] How can I tell if some doctrinal practice is off, it's wrong, it needs straightening out? And mostly it's about looking within. How can I be more spiritual? Jacob went near his father, Jacob, sorry, Isaac.

Jacob went to Isaac, his father, and he felt him. Isaac felt him. He said, the voice is Jacob's but the hands are the hands of Esau.

And verse 23, it says, he discerned him not because his hands were hairy. The situation is, as we've heard in a recent message on a Sunday night, where Jacob wore a hairy kind of garment on his arms to trick his father, Jacob, and Jacob discerned him not.

We can make a wrong discernment, that's what Jacob did, and blessed Jacob instead of Esau. And another situation is, our Lord says to the Pharisees, when it is evening, he say it will be fair weather, for the sky is red, and in the morning it will be foul weather today, for the sky is red, and lowering or menacing.

Oh, you hypocrites, you can discern the face of the sky, but you cannot discern the signs of the times. We need discernment, people of God, don't we? I'm just staggered about the total lack of discernment in many quarters.

[36 : 06] I've seen some wacko things, it just boggles my mind what people swallow. Some of these weirdos, who's that guy, the big fat bald guy with tats, what's his name?

Todd Bentley, and he's talking about gold flakes coming down. I don't know whether he goes around and collects them because he could cash them in, but I never hear about that.

It must be just fake plastic gold that they blow through the air-conducts. It makes people think there's some shower of spiritual blessings because of these gold flakes. They're flaky all right.

We need discernment, people of God. When things get out of focus, don't swallow such things. It's rubbish. It's falsehood. People of God, we need discernment, don't we?

Let's just quickly recap. We might get a few links on can help. David, my dad. This just recaps where we travel, just to wrap it all up in just a few words so you kind of see where I've taken it today.

[37 : 16] Just where we travel here today about vision. Vision is vital. Without vision, we miss so much.

Joseph was called a dreamer. God's people are called to be people of faith, people of vision. As a church, how we need to do a reality check and check where are we at.

Are we sensing and following God's vision for us as God's people? Because without a vision, the people perish. Do we see the problems and the negatives or the possibilities of faith?

Are we like the conference that Orville and Wilbur riots dad went to and they just laughed at the concept of flight?

There was just too much out there, something totally different. Here's just a recap of where we've come just today, this morning. We need life. A dead body can't see. We need to have life, God's life, the spirit of God.

[38 : 27] We need God's lens, his perspective. What's God's perspective? What's God's viewpoint? What's God's focus for us? Individually too.

What is God telling me to do? Let's shift the focus and get that clarity we need. We need God's light. The word of God is a light unto our path. Ask God to show you through his word what he's calling you to do.

Vision needs those things and vision gives some things. Vision gives direction. It gives God's leading, God's purpose. What is God's leading? What is God's purpose? Some have said to me, God led me there and now I don't know what he's doing.

Maybe it's a new direction. God's direction. God's direction. His leading, his purpose, being in the way God led me. Moment by moment, follow the cloud as it were.

Seek God and find his purpose, his leading. God's dimension. See beyond the world's horizon, beyond your own limitations, beyond your own abilities or your perceived lack of abilities and see that God has called you to his work and there's an eternal dimension.

[39 : 50] As I was saying earlier, young people especially, we can set our path. Sometimes even in the school years, we can decide subject choice.

Ultimately, I'm going to head this way or that way and doors close behind you. I remember when I was at school, I think the principal was saying it's like a hallway with all of these doors.

Once you go through one door, you're leaving other things behind. You're heading in that direction. It could be like a university choice or your job choices can lead you in a certain pathway and your whole life goes that way.

So choose wisely, but more especially spiritually. How much more important it is, how does it go for a young man to choose in the youth of their life?

There's a scripture that talks about a youth choosing to follow God. In the younger days of their life, to set that pathway for your life. Everybody here is youthful.

[41 : 01] You've all got youth. You've all got vigor and vitality. Amen, brother. It doesn't matter what your body's saying. You've got life and set a direction for God and find God's dimension with eternity in view.

What God wants for you. You might choose some worldly job choice, but it's beyond that.

Spiritually, how can I be a glowing, active Christian?

How can I be used of God and find a way for God to harness your energies for spiritual purposes?

Jesus? We heard earlier about studying the Word of God.

You don't have to go to a Bible school, but you can go to the Word of God. You can go to Christ's school, the school of Christ, and his timetable is always open for you to study his Word and to grow in your faith.

And then discernment, how we need that today, to be rock solid with what is truth and what is error.

So, friends, to close, sometimes our vision fails us, but we sometimes just have to jump and trust.

[42 : 15] You know, during the terrible days of the blitz, there was a father holding his small son by the hand, and they ran from a building that had been struck by a bomb. And in the front yard was this shell hole.

hole. And the father thought, look, we have to jump in this hole to get shelter. And he jumped into the hole, and he held up his arms for his son above to follow.

But terrified, yet hearing his father's voice telling him to jump, the boy replied, I can't see you. It was pitch black. But the father was looking up and saying, jump, son, jump into my arms.

The father looked up against the sky, it was tinged red by the burning buildings, and he could see the silhouette of his son above. And he said to his son, but I can see you.

Jump. The boy jumped because he trusted his father. And so too for you and me. We've got to jump. Jump into those opportunities to extend your faith and put your faith into action.

[43 : 20] Sometimes we just have to jump and trust. Trust in God. Let's pray. Lord, we thank you that you give us a vision, you open our eyes and see the great needs all around about us.

Lord, help us to be responsive to those things. Help us, Lord, to be led by your spirit, to have the light of your word. Lord, to be aware of the dimension that we're living in.

It's just not this earth which will be finite, but that which is eternal, which goes on forever. And help us, Lord, to prepare our hearts for that task that you've called each one of us to do.

In Jesus' name, Amen. Thank you.