

## **It Starts With Vision**

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*"Where there is no vision, the people perish..."* —Proverbs 29:18

The **vision** in this text refers to a revelation from God's Word. **Faith** comes from hearing God's Word (Rom. 10:17). Faith gives us "eyes" to "see" what God can do. Where there is no such vision, our effectiveness as Christians is weakened and people perish without the Lord.

What is the most important feature of any church? A building? The preacher? Congregation? The programs? These things are important, but before anything of these things can happen, there must first be a VISION.

I've never done anything that I didn't first see myself doing it first. I saw myself preaching before I ever preached a sermon. I saw myself riding a motorcycle before I ever got on one.

Everything from the simplest rat trap to the most complex computer began as a vision in someone's mind. The automobile started in the mind of Henry Ford before it was ever rolled off an assembly line.

The same is true in the realm of a church. Nothing short of a vision from God will start a church. And nothing short of a vision from God will keep a church going. When a person loses God's vision for the church they will soon quit.

Churches don't just sprout out the ground. Ministries in a local church don't start by accident. They begin with a vision of what God wants to do— Patch Club (vision of Ron Hamilton)... Life Groups... A choir... A TV ministry... G.R.O.W. (vision of Jerry Tidwell)... EPIC... Celebrate Recovery (vision of John Baker)... etc. These all are the result of someone catching a vision sent from God.

How is your vision for God's work today? A blind man's world is bounded by the limits of his touch... an ignorant man's world by the limits of his knowledge... a great man's world by the limits of his vision.

Everyone in my family wears glasses. We have eye examines every two years to get a new prescription so we can see clearer. I've had a cataract removed in one eye. Cataracts obscure a person's vision so they cannot

see clearly. I wonder if some of us may need to have a spiritual cataract removed so we can see God's work more clearly.

In a *Leadership* magazine article, Lynn Anderson described what happens when a people lose their vision. A group of pilgrims landed on the shores of America about 350 years ago. With great vision and courage came to settle in the new land. In the first year they established a town. In the second, they elected a town council. In the third, the government proposed building a road 5 miles westward into the wilderness. But in the fourth year the people tried to impeach the town council because they thought such a road into the forest was a waste of public funds. Somehow these visionaries lost their vision. Once able to see across oceans, they now could not see 5 miles into the wilderness.

➡ We at BBC must beware that we never lose the vision of what God wants us to do.

In May, 1934 a farmer in Charlotte, North Carolina lent a pasture to thirty local businessmen who wanted to devote a day of prayer for revival. They planned to hold an evangelistic campaign later that year. The leader of that prayer meeting was Vernon Patterson. He prayed, "out of Charlotte the Lord would raise up someone to preach the Gospel to the ends of the earth."

The crusade began in September led by a fiery Southern evangelist named Mordecai Ham. Revival broke out and extended for eleven weeks. God answered the prayer of Vernon Patterson. The farmer who lent his pasture for the prayer meeting was **Franklin Graham** and his son Billy was saved in that revival. Billy Graham went on to preach the Gospel to the ends of the earth. Now his son, Franklin, named after his grandfather, is also preaching the Gospel around the world.

Why? Because some men had a vision of what God could do!