Where there is no Vision

Pro.29:18 Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he. It should not be thought an understatement that everyone saved and lost desires and dreams of living a life of happiness. It should further be stated that the perpetual pursuit of true happiness must be accompanied with an equally perpetual pursuit of God. As our creator, he is not only the only source of true life but the only source of true happiness. When God created Adam and Eve, he created them with true life and true happiness. That happiness was made possible by having a right relationship with their creator and heavenly Father. They, in their glorious state of purity and innocence were in complete harmony with their God. Their happiness was derived from one source and one only and that being their total submission to and no doubt their overwhelming gratitude toward the giver of such a privileged life.

It is of course common knowledge that the father of pride and the author of death snaked his way into their euphoric world of divine blessing bringing with him deceptive wiles and seeds of doubt, leading to the most costly decision ever made by man, and with it the curse.

Inside the Trojan horse of this diabolical victory, so unseen and undetected was the greatest enemy of true divine life, and that being Death himself. He offered no threat or paralyzing sting as long as Adam and Eve were walking in obedience and submission to God’s Word. Ah! If only the serpent could charm Eve through his beauty and persuading charisma to believe just for a few moments that there was more to life than what God had told them. If only he could paint a picture in her mind of an irresistible horizon of happiness, available for the taking, but hidden from their eyes by the Almighty.

One wrong judgment call and one wrong choice later, the Garden of Eden became the Garden of Evil, as Adam followed suit under the persuasion of Eve to partake of the most poisonous fruit ever eaten by man. The silver lining on this cloud of shame is that their loving Father offered a blood sacrifice to cover their sin. In his mercy and grace, he afforded them a new life and a measure of happiness, but till there dying day would they remember the depths and riches of what was a truly divine existence, and a life with a measure of divinely imparted happiness only to be dreamed about, not experienced.

This has been the most tragic story ever to be pinned in the history of mankind and yet is being rewritten on a daily basis in the lives of believers who have little to no spiritual vision. These two children of God perished spiritually and eventually physically just as God had said they would in his word. Never would they have imagined that the dream life they were living of prosperity and true happiness could vanish so suddenly. If only they had placed a supreme premium on the value of their Father’s fellowship and his spoken words of instruction. If only they had had a greater spiritual vision based upon adherence to, and an appetite for God and his word.

Definition: “vision” – God’s way revealed through God’s word; Holy Spirit imparted insight and or foresight based on his word that reveals the path of light and life divinely chosen and ordained.

Pro.4:18 says, But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the coming day. Keep in mind that this path is reserved for the privileged few that choose to walk justly or in righteousness with their Creator God and Lord Jesus Christ. Put simply, it is God’s way revealed to the saints through his word. It is the pathway of spiritual vision.

Might it be said that life without spiritual vision is no life at all, but death. Is it any wonder that God’s people of old perished without spiritual vision as Adam and Eve did? A life changing and life preserving truth is that the only existence that God recognizes as life begins with death. We find this truth in Gal.2:20 where we read, “I am crucified with Christ: neverthless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life that I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”

Let it be understood that the only life God recognizes as life is the resurrection life of his Son lived out through us as we walk in the Spirit. This divine life was designed by our all wise Father to be lived through his very own nature, imparted to his children, beginning at the moment of Holy Ghost orchestrated repentance and confession. At this moment of Holy Ghost empowered surrender our great high priest immediately sprinkles his blood on our evil heart and defiled conscience, according to Heb.10:19-22. With all our sin washed away by the blood of Christ, and being purified unto holiness by the washing of the water of the word, our old man is put off and crucified. Instantaneously, we are enabled by God’s mercy and grace to put on the new man that according to Eph.4:24, is created in righteousness and true holiness. It is here that we can and should proclaim to God’s glory, “the life which I NOW live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God”. We must ever be reminded that it is here that we fulfill these words in Rms.13:14, “ But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lust thereof.”

It is also here that we fulfill and obey these words of Jesus in Mark 8:34, “Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.” When we choose, under the influence and power of the wooing and working of the Spirit of God and of Christ to put off the old man, we choose to take up our cross, at which point we are crucified with Christ. Only at this point do we deny ourselves by denying the old man any further control in our lives.

Vision’s Journey of Potential

If vision truly is God’s way revealed through God’s word by Holy Spirit insight and foresight, what level of potential does he plan to elevate his children to through the ministration of his Spirit in our lives?

In II Cor.3, we find two of the highest pinnacles of potential that can be attained to by mortal man on our journey of spiritual vision. Christ in us is truly the hope of glory and glorious living that glorifies our Lord. The first pinnacle of potential is found in verses 3-4 in these words, “Ye are our epistle in our hearts, known and read of all men: Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart.”

Spiritual vision reveals to us that this pinnacle of potential is possible and can only be attained unto when we are under the full control of the Spirit of the living God. God informs us in verses 4-5 that if our trust toward him is through Christ, he is fully sufficient to enable us to achieve this pinnacle. Verses 4-5 says, “And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward: Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God.”

How do we assure ourselves that our trust is through Christ? Again, we must understand these vital words, “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life that I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God….” This pinnacle can only be reached by the ministration of the living Spirit within us, as we learn to walk consistently in the Spirit. It is only here that the Spirit of Christ can live his resurrection life through us.

Surely the supreme importance of spiritual vision is becoming of a greater premium as we realize that it must become a greater priority in our lives. With this in mind, let us discover the second pinnacle of potential in verse 18 in these words, “But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.”

Remembering that the key context of II Cor.3 is the ministration and work of the Holy Spirit, it should be clearly evident in verse 18 that our greatest pinnacle of potential is that we will be changed into the same glorious image as Jesus Christ, by the Spirit of the Lord. No wonder God said in verse 8, “How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious?

Rm.8:29-30 says, “For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.”

How many in our churches today have enough spiritual vision to understand that this reveals God’s plan and purpose, determined in the heart of God before the foundation of the world for his children? To say that he saves the believer for the mere purpose of keeping them out of hell and giving them an eternal home in heaven with him makes for good preaching, but misses his foreordained and determined purpose for his children by a country mile and then some. Thanks be unto God eternally for the ministration of his Spirit in regards to salvation but this is only where our God’s plan and purpose begins.

God has given us enough spiritual vision in II Cor.3 to enable us to become fully aware that through the ministration of his Spirit, we can become living epistles known and read of all men and goes on to say in verse 6 that he can make us able or fully capable ministers of the new testament in such a way that we can gives others that same quality of life, if we live under the control of the Spirit of Christ. Read it! It’s there if you follow the mind of the Spirit and the heart of God.

Furthermore, through the glorious ministry of the Spirit within us, we can be changed into the same glorious image of Jesus Christ, thus fulfilling the predestinated plan and purpose of God for his beloved children that he valued highly enough to send his beloved Son to die for.

Great and glorious truth! But how does the ministry of the Spirit accomplish such a daunting and divine task? It seems the answer is found in these words in verse 18, “But we all with OPEN face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord….” The concept of “open face” carries the idea of having a veil removed that prevented the eyes from seeing. This not only applies to the Jews in verses 13-16 but the same truth applies to believers who have their hearts and minds unveiled when they are surrendered and under the control of the ministry of the Spirit. The word “open” clearly carries the idea of unveiled, a word chosen by God to bear the weight of the importance of the ministration of his Spirit in our lives. If we choose to put off Christ rather than putting on Christ as Rms.13:14 admonishes us to do, the veil will once again fall upon our eyes and there will no further spiritual vision or understanding, for we are now walking in the flesh and in darkness. We are no longer crucified with Christ, having resurrected the old man, and the life that we now live is death in God’s eyes. Walking in the Spirit of Christ and of God produces glory and an abundant life, whereas walking in or after the flesh produces shame and condemnation.

To be more specific about how the Spirit accomplishes the task of changing us into the glorious image of Christ, note the words, “beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord”. This phrase actually means seeing the reflection of the glory of the Lord in a mirror. Now we know from James 1:23 and I Cor. 13:12 that the word “glass” is a picture of the word of God. As we look into the word of God and behold the person of Jesus Christ and his glory, we “are changed into the same image”. The word “changed” implies a complete metamorphosis like a tadpole becoming a frog. We are talking about the quickening power of the word of God as it is ministered to our hearts and minds through the work and ministry of the Spirit. This word “changed” is the same word “transformed” in Rms.12:2. God reveals to us in this verse that this transformation takes place by the renewing of the mind. This of course is accomplished by the washing of the water of the word when administered by the Spirit.

Question? How important do you now consider spiritual vision? Have you come to the realization that we are talking about YOUR spiritual potential? We are not talking theory or pie in the sky here but we are talking about what should be reality in YOUR life at this very moment. Listen quietly and carefully and you may hear the still small voice of the Holy Spirit bearing witness to or testifying to the truth of what has just been said. Do you understand that this is God’s foreordained plan and purpose for your life? Can you comprehend the fact that without this spiritual vision you will live a carnal existence of fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind? Finally, has it registered yet in YOUR mind that where there is no vision God’s people perish?

It must be understood that while it is God’s foreordained plan and purpose for our lives that we become conformed to the glorious image of his Son, he will not stand idly by and allow his children to make a mockery of his sacrificial Son, by our choosing to be conformed to the image of this world. Where there is no spiritual vision provided through the ministration of the Spirit of God and Christ, his people will perish at his hand at some point if they continue to despise the efforts of the Spirit of grace to love and woo them back into fellowship with their Father. Once again I ask, are you willing to quietly and carefully listen to the witness of the Spirit in your soul? Are you yet spiritually sensitive enough to yield your spirit to the Holy Spirit and allow him to reveal to you afresh and anew his spiritual vision of your spiritual potential? This writing is written with a hopeful and trusting heart that it would be so.