

Recent business management trends advise the development of a written “vision” that each member of the company can share. This vision is an attempt to imagine where the company will be several years down the road. It is not so much a prophetic thing as it is a goal to shoot for. The company vision should be constructed so that all of the employees agree with its principles. Similarly, we each should have such a vision in our lives so that we can work with purpose and be able to look back in our later years with no regrets.

Our spiritual ‘vision’ should be that of heaven, of course. But sometimes we do not really have a complete understanding of the meaning and value of that kingdom as we struggle here on earth. We must have the proper vision of God’s Goodness in order to be in a position to enjoy heaven. I think that many people just see it as an escape from all their labors; it is for the satisfaction of all their desires, where they will be catered to in all respects. They forget that what will really go on in heaven is continual, spontaneous glorification of the eternal presence of God.

In spite of all of the prophecies presented in the Old Testament, many of the people of Israel, especially the Pharisees, did not have the proper vision of Christ and the nature of the kingdom of heaven. Christ could not convince them, even though he continually showed images of what that kingdom would be like. They just couldn’t ‘get it!’ They didn’t really have a clue as to what it was all about. Their vision was clouded by their own interests.

We have to be able to understand the pattern, how all of the pieces of the puzzle work together. We don’t have to understand every piece, but we must be able to recognize the whole picture even though some pieces are missing. It gives you a great aha! experience when you finally get the message. But the satisfaction is eternal.

The worst scenario that I can imagine is where in judgment God looks sadly at us and says, “I’m sorry, but you just missed the point entirely.” If the problem was just a ‘point’ in space we could focus on it with our tunnel vision and understand the real picture. But it is much more extensive than that. We need to see like one of those cameras that give a panoramic view; the context of the scene is very important, too. When we focus on something it is a good thing, but we need to be ‘circumspect’ as well, which simply means that we look around us.

A similar way to look at this comes from the old expression that we “can’t see the forest for the trees”. McCrimmon in his book Writing with a Purpose wrote:

*The old saying that we cannot see the forest for the trees represents a natural state of confusion. When we are learning to read we cannot see the sentence for the words, because each word is a new experience which has to be understood as a part of a sentence. When we are learning to dance we are so preoccupied with the mechanics of moving our feet properly that we have little sense of rhythmic motion. In such situations we respond to the parts before we respond to the whole: we see the trees before we discern the forest...everything is so new that we are aware only of individual experiences, not the pattern of these experiences...But gradually a pattern begins to emerge. The forest becomes perceptible.*

That complete vision must comprehend the value of the total Goodness of God, no matter what happens to us in this life. We must believe in that Goodness with all of our hearts; we must be totally immersed in it. Our baptism must soak us through and through. There can be no part-timers, no sunshine patriots, no mere church-goers.

Faith is so much more than merely believing. James tells us “You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that--and shudder. (James 2:19)” The devils see, but they don’t have the vision. They know God’s power, but they don’t agree with His principles. Similarly, the only difference between “church-goers” and Christians is that only the latter totally agree with God’s truth. I’ve been told that just sitting in the hen-house (church-house) won’t make you a chicken (Christian). If you want to be a chicken, you must be able to see the world as a chicken, not just be able to look out from the chicken’s front door.

Of course, none of us wants to be a chicken. Nor do we want to miss out on God’s Goodness because we lack the proper vision. We must open our eyes and minds in submission to God’s will to clear up the view. Once we have done that, we’ll never want to look away again.

© Copyright 1999, Heard Lowry