

Wait for the Vision

Annual Celebration Service

February 11, 2007

"The Vision is for His Appointed Time"

Introduction:

Sight of a car with children in the back asking, "Are we there yet?" I feel like the guy in a traffic jam on route 80 because of construction delays. The line of cars is backed up 800 deep and we are in a holding pattern, and I passed up the last gas station at the last exit and I am running low on fuel, and I have to go to the bathroom!

Flying to an important meeting in a far off destination and the planes are not allowed to land due to snow, bad weathers, or bad planning. You have to deplane three times to de-ice while waiting for the runway to clear. You miss your connecting flight. You miss your meeting. And now the airline leaves you stranded in Denver in the middle of the night. It happened to me.

I got frustrated. Then I got mad. I was upset. It took me three intense weeks around the holiday time to get ready to be on a writing sabbatical for 24-days, and I knew it would be another intense three weeks when I got back to the office. Yet right at the outset of my long-planned sabbatical, just when I got settled and into the flow of writing, Marilyn's dad takes sick and I get a call to go back home because he is dying. Ten days later I could return to writing. I am promised a cabin at Mahaffey Camp where I can be near Marilyn and Grandma, and take the solitary time alone to continue to write. I rejoiced then they called to say it would not be available when first promised but would be available on Saturday. I could deal with that. But then I called to confirm that I actually could start Saturday morning only to find it would not be available until Sunday, leaving me only three days to write. I was frustrated. God, what are you doing?

Is this or is it not of You? I thought it was. Others affirmed how important it was. You provided the time, the place, the solitude, and the opportunity and suddenly every door starts slamming shut, with my fingers in it!

Delays, I hate delays! Yesterday, printer stopped working broken frozen and cracked while packed in my pick-up during my little side trip to Punxsutawney. I plan to get a new one at Staples on Saturday so I can get everything printed out a zillion times as I do every Saturday to be ready for Sunday, and an annual meeting Sunday evening.

I get a call. Eric and Amy Philson's baby is breach and coming, most likely by caesarian section in Erie. So, I hope in the car and make the run to Erie. Babies arrive. Two boys. Healthy. Praise God. I still have time to pick up the printer on my way home. Good deal. I weave through heavy traffic rejoicing in the Lord, check a couple of stores to price compare, and finally pick up my computer at Staples. Done. Now get home.

The phone rings. It is Eric. Pastor can you turn around and come back. Something bad happened. Pause. One of the babies just died. No explanation. Just died. Please come. I am still in Erie I will be there in less than 15 minutes. It takes me 70 minutes to get to Erie from Grove City, but 35 minutes to cross that traffic light addicted town! I spend the rest of the evening grieving with a broken family and holding a lifeless newborn baby.

Where was God? Where is God when things go wrong? Where is God when delays seem to interrupt his promised blessings and sacred plans?

Bad things happen to good people.

The rain falls on the just and the unjust alike.

Accidents happen. Things break. Tires go flat. Schedules change. People get sick. Marriages end. Children die. Teeth rot. Hair falls out. People get old. Diseases come. People fail. Fruit rots. Nails bend. Hammers miss. Masonry cracks. Wood breaks. Ice melts. But Life goes on...

But God's purposes never change.

Proverbs 16:33 The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole [disposing thereof](#) is of the LORD.

CASTING CROWNS LYRICS

"Praise You In This Storm"

I was sure by now
That You would have reached down
And wiped our tears away
Stepped in and saved the day
But once again, I say "Amen", and it's still raining

As the thunder rolls
I barely hear Your whisper through the rain
"I'm with you"
And as Your mercy falls
I raise my hands and praise the God who gives
And takes away

I'll praise You in this storm
And I will lift my hands
For You are who You are
No matter where I am
Every tear I've cried
You hold in Your hand
You never left my side
And though my heart is torn
I will praise You in this storm

I remember when
I stumbled in the wind
You heard my cry
You raised me up again
My strength is almost gone
How can I carry on
If I can't find You

As the thunder rolls
I barely hear You whisper through the rain
"I'm with you"
And as Your mercy falls
I raise my hands and praise the God who gives
And takes away

I lift my eyes unto the hills
Where does my help come from?
My help comes from the Lord
The Maker of Heaven and Earth

"The Vision Is For An Appointed Time,

It may tarry, but wait for it. – It will come (to pass). Behold he (the enemy) is puffed up, and his desires are not right, but the just shall live by faith."

Habakkuk 1:5 NKJV

Habakkuk, the prophet whose name means embracer, makes his complaint to God. Verse two of chapter one: O Lord, how long shall I cry and you will not hear?

"Watch — and be utterly amazed. For I am going to do something in your days that you would not believe, even if you were told."

Habakkuk 2:2-4 KJV

OK, he says, I will stand of the watchtower and see what the Lord does. And the LORD answered me, and said,

Write the vision, and make it plain upon tablets, that he may run that reads it. 3 For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it will speak, and not lie: though it tarries, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry. 4 Behold, the proud, his soul (the enemy) is not upright in him: **but the just shall live by his faith.**

Habakkuk 3:17-19

A hymn of faith

*17 Though the fig tree may not blossom,
Nor fruit be on the vines;*

*Though the labor of the olive may fail,
And the fields yield no food;*

*Though the flock may be cut off from the fold,
And there be no herd in the stalls—*

*18 Yet I will rejoice in the LORD,
I will joy in the God of my salvation.*

*19 The LORD God [c] is my strength;
He will make my feet like deer's feet,
And He will make me walk on my high hills.*

To the Chief Musician. With my stringed instruments.

Our Vision – January 22, 2006, available in the narthex.

What Are You (we) Believing God to Do?

“You are either believing God or disbelieving God. You cannot have it both ways. What are you believing God to do, **in this place**, or **in your life**?

The Purpose Driven Life. It is a life with a goal, a compass, and a direction.

1. God Has Plans

He reveals them to his servants the prophets. - Amos 3:7

Jeremiah 29:11 NIV

11 For I know **the plans** I have for you," declares the LORD, "**plans to prosper you** and **not to harm you**, **plans to give you hope and a future**."

Ephesians 1:11 and 3:11 “According to His purpose”

Ephesians 1:11 “In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated **according to the purpose** of him who works all things **after the counsel of his own will:**”

Ephesians 3:11 “According to the **eternal purpose** which he **purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord:**”

Romans 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the **called according to his purpose**.

**Our Vision – January 22, 2006
available in the narthex.**

Our Driving Purpose

"We are committed to building a loving church family that is biblically sound, evangelistically passionate, ministry-focused, and radically committed to Jesus Christ as Lord in worship, prayer, teaching and fellowship."

2. The Enemy Has Plans

Steal, kill and destroy. He is a liar and father of it. He is the accuser of the brethren. He is the destroyer. He is the thief. His plans are not God's plans. He is the hinderer. He desires to sift you as wheat...

"Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat." The Greek is far more emphatic than the English here. "Simon, Simon, Satan has demanded to sift you as wheat." – Luke 22:31

(John 17:11) Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name--the name you gave me ...

(Hebrews 7:25) ... [Jesus] is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.

(James 1:2-4) Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

3. We Work & Wait by Faith on God's Plans

We have plans, just as Nehemiah had plans born in the closet of prayer. He will bring it to pass. *"Plan your work, work your plan."*
"If you aim at nothing you most certainly will hit it."

Habakkuk 2:2

"though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry."

I Thess. 5:24 Faithful is he who calls you, who also will do it.

There are three things we are waiting on by faith

A. God's Plans – He reveals them to his servants

Amos 3:7 Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.

B God's Timing – In His Time

Ecclesiastes 3:11 He hath made every thing beautiful in his time:

C. God's Provision – According to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus

Ephesians 3:20-21

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

1. There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven:

A time to be born and a time to die,
a time to plant and a time to uproot,
A time to kill and a time to heal,
A time to tear down and a time to build,
A time to weep and a time to laugh,
A time to mourn and a time to dance,
A time to scatter stones and a time to gather them,
A time to embrace and a time to refrain,
A time to search and a time to give up,
A time to keep and a time to throw away,
A time to tear and a time to mend,
A time to be silent and a time to speak,
A time to love and a time to hate,
A time for war and a time for peace.

17b "...For there is a time there for every purpose and for every work."

The Vision, The Plan, The Strategies

2020 Vision – 12 Strategic Priorities

Prayer

Behind the Wall
Intensive Prayer
Prayer Training Seminars
Prayer Events
Cottage of Prayer

People

New People get plugged in
New Members
Get to Know The Pastors
Fellowship in homes
Photos and Prayer

Small Groups

Sunday Seminars & Fellowships
Sunday Brunch at Kings - 11:00 a.m. fellowship and prayer
Weekday Small Groups – Bible studies, prayer cells, interest groups
Prayer and Encouragement Groups (PEG)

College

College Visits Weekly, GCAC then SRU
Brunch With the Pastor at church
Sunday Seminars
At Home With the Pastor

Expansion

Building Expansion - “Space, the Final Frontier”
Multiple Worship Services
Additions to our Pastoral Staff
Volunteer Help
Internship Program

God has wonderful and precious promises for our future. Listen to them.

Habakkuk 1:5 NKJV

“Watch — and be utterly amazed. For I am going to do something in your days that you would not believe, even if you were told.”

1 Corinthians 2:9 NKJV

“Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither has entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.”

Ephesians 3:20 NIV

“Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.”

Jeremiah 29:11 NIV

For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.