

Vision (Part Two)

Have a Plan and Stick to It

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Proverbs 29:18 Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint; . .

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When I was in elementary school, there was a game that we played very frequently through recess or on lunch breaks called dodge ball. Maybe some of you remember playing that. It was a game played with an inflated ball about the size of a volleyball and two lines of players. The opposing team stood about twenty five feet apart, with your team lined up between them. The ball was thrown back and forth between the two lines in an attempt to hit one of those who were in between. The object of those in between was to avoid getting hit by the ball, and if the ball hit you, you were out of the game.

I thought on this as I watched a video on the computer titled, "Did you know?" At its beginning, the screen showed a large number of question marks flying toward you from every direction. At the same time, a hard, throbbing beat, combined with a group of people constantly saying, "Right here, right now; right here, right now; right here, right now," drove the concept of the speed of events impacting on us.

Did you know that despite China's one-child policy, China's English-speaking population is growing so rapidly that in just a few years it will be the largest English speaking population in the world?

By 2010, the top ten in demand jobs in the United States of America did not even exist in 2004.

How many people are there in the world? It's a bit over six billion.

Are you aware the 31 billion searches are made on Google every month? Three years ago—only three years ago; 2006—only 2.7 billion searches were made every month. That's an eleven-fold increase in three years. Who answered all those questions before Google?

The first commercial text message was sent in 1992. Today, only seventeen years later, the number of text messages sent each day exceeds the population of the world.

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It took radio broadcasting 38 years to reach an audience of 50 million people. It took television only thirteen years. That's one third of the time. Things are going faster.

It took the Internet only four years to reach 50 million people; the iPod, three million; and Facebook, two years.

In Shakespeare's day, the English language contained 540,000 words; today, 2,700,000 words.

Here is one that is really scary to me. One ordinary weeks' worth of *The New York Times* contains more information than one would have received in a *lifetime* in the 1800s. We are being bombarded by information at a rate that exceeds the ability of our mind to contain the pressure that it is putting on us.

The point is this: The world we live in—this world that God commands us to come out of—the point of the video was to impress upon us how fast everything is moving, and that there appears to be no way to avoid most of it impacting on us, even if it's only in a very tiny way—each aspect in a tiny way. A driving, wearying rhythm of life has been created.

I want you to reflect back on last week's commentary that involved that song from *Les Misérables*, "I Dreamed a Dream." Fantine had a vision of what she wanted from life, but as she said in the lyrics as the song ended, life destroyed that dream.

Now my comment was that Fantine had no real plan, that her dream was not supported by the right kind of ethics and morals, and the vision stood alone and was thus unattainable. She was like Forrest Gump and virtually all other people on earth. She was like a leaf, driven in the wind.

It seems as though life's news events and this culture's activities are moving at us at light speed. We cannot change them, but we must understand that we are not helpless before them. We have got to have a sensible plan and the discipline to stick to it.

But that's not all. I believe that if we arrange a plan for ourselves and discipline ourselves to stick to it, God will enable us to make the right choices. Remember our Commander-in-Chief, Jesus Christ, said, "Seek you first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added unto [us]." But there is a caveat here: We must be willing to accept what He allows or even arranges to come our way. If we grumble and grouse about it, or get angry against Him, thinking God is unfair (like Jonah did), why should He bless us any further? Where is the faith?

The Church of the Great God has been accused of being too serious. The brethren, God's calling is serious business. In fact, in an overall sense, there is nothing in life more serious. Preparation for the kingdom of God *is* our life. It is to *consume* our life has a whole burnt offering to God.

To me, the first place to start is to ask ourselves if we really care, or are we just playing at being religious? If we do care, we will accept the challenge God has set before us, and make a plan and get working, and stick to it every day.

I also mentioned last week that Fantine's problem was that she only lived for the day that she was in, and thus, she was not bolstered by a concrete plan for actually achieving the dream she desired. The Christian must be radically different. He is in the present and he takes his present responsibility seriously, but what is driving him is his vision of the future. This is the Christian's overall guide for life, and this is what is meant by the statement that "Abraham looked for a city, whose builder and maker was God." He lived in the present for him, but he was always acting with the future in mind.

The entire Western world, which has been dominated by the Israelitish people for the past 300 years, is rapidly—and I mean *rapidly*—sinking into the sunset, toward virtual irrelevance. Huge portions of the population of our cultures are being driven by such irrelevant things as entertainments.

Let me give you a comparative example. A survey recently revealed that this nation's teen boys—the survey was only of teen boys—are spending an average of twenty four hours *a week* playing computer games. That's over *three hours a day*. Meanwhile, in India, they are spending their time studying.

Catch this statistic: A mere twenty five percent off India's highest-IQ population is greater than the entire population of the United States of America. They have a goal, while we are teaching our children to play computer games and to lust. Incidentally, a teenage Indian girl living in Kansas won the National Spelling Bee this past week.

Don't be a Fantine. You have a prophetic vision. Do you care enough to willingly accept what God permits? Make a plan and vigilantly follow it.