

Visions and Revelations:
Message 9 - The Apostles Peter, Paul, and John

After hearing and considering the word that was spoken, a group of brothers and sisters were inspired by some of the verses that were shared. We felt that it was helpful to reconsider these verses again to dig deeper into the burden of the message and to discover how rich it could be to us. We compiled these verses into six sections, one for each day of the week until the next message, in hopes that many other saints could spend a bit of time every day to reconsider the burden of our brother in a new light. If anyone considers some of these verses or questions and feels enriched by them, we ask you to please leave a comment on the Church in Cleveland site under the message to share your thoughts! Thanks! Grace and peace be to all the saints!

Note: These six sections are not comprehensive of the content of the message! This is just designed to be a help to get into a portion throughout the days.

DAY 1

Psalm 40:5

*Many, O Lord my God, are Your wonderful works
Which You have done;
And Your thoughts toward us
Cannot be recounted to You in order;
If I would declare and speak of them,
They are more than can be numbered.*

Even now in the New Testament age, there are miracles. It is a miracle that we are saved, a miracle to realize that we are sinners who need salvation, a miracle to see Christ. We may take these things as common, but to believe in Jesus is to have a vision, and to have a vision that brings you closer to Christ is miraculous.

However, God does not bestow these miracles for the sake of being miraculous. Each of His marvelous, wonderful works are related to His will. We may be awed by the miracle, but the Lord would instead ask, "Will this bring you to Christ?" The visions and revelations are to cause us to be more and more one with Christ. They may come in life or in loving the Lord, but eventually, we will see something that leads us to Christ. This is marvelous!

We praise God for all the miracles He has worked, but we do not let them distract from the center of His will: Christ. So today, as you spend time in the Bible and then go about your day, ask yourself this question from the Lord: will this bring you to Christ?

DAY 2

Philippians 3:14 (3rd type)

¹⁴ So I run straight toward the goal in order to win the prize, which is God's call through Christ Jesus to the life above.

John 13:23 (4th type)

²³ *One of them, the disciple **whom Jesus loved**, was reclining next to him.*

Revelation 1:1-2 (4th type)

The revelation from Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, ² who testifies to everything he saw—that is, the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ.

As a Christian, there are different ways we can respond to the Lord when he reveals a vision to us. Oftentimes when we see something higher of Christ, we are hesitant to take action and change our living. We are unwilling to pay the price to follow the vision, so we nod our heads and continue living our lives. Other times, we may be someone who is living in the reality of a vision but we don't have an appreciation of it. We may "go to church" on Sundays, enjoy the meetings, occasionally read the bible, but there's not much more. There's no motivation to strive for anything higher.

Instead, we should be ones who "run straight toward the goal in order to win the prize" when we see a vision. When God places a burden in our heart, we should be willing to fight for that vision and pay the price no matter the cost. We see how rich and bountiful the supply of Christ is and in turn, we give our all to pursue it. We realize what God's heart's desire is, so we dedicate our entire lives to accomplish His purpose. The vision is so clear that it becomes our living. But sometimes, the vision may not always be this clear. We may be a Christian that simply loves the Lord. We are faithful in our living and we continue to abide in his riches over the years. Eventually, with the riches of Christ that we've experienced, we are able to see the overall vision that God has for us. We are able to see the culmination of His heart's desire. This is similar to what John the apostle experienced. He was a faithful brother who was considered most beloved by the Lord, and in the end God revealed to him the full picture of what is to come. I hope that we can consider our lives and what type of Christian we are. What is our response to the Lord when he reveals a vision to us? Or can we be so faithful in loving the Lord that eventually we see an overall vision of what He wants to accomplish? I pray the Lord can place this burden in our hearts to consider.

DAY 3

Acts 26:13-20

¹³ *At midday, O king, along the road I saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, shining around me and those who journeyed with me. ¹⁴ And when we all had fallen to the ground, I heard a voice speaking to me and saying in the Hebrew language, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.'* ¹⁵ *So I said, 'Who are You, Lord?' And He said, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. ¹⁶ But rise and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness both of the things which you have seen and of the things which I will yet reveal to you. ¹⁷ I will deliver you from the*

Jewish people, as well as from the Gentiles, to whom I now send you,¹⁸ to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.'

¹⁹ "Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision,²⁰ but declared first to those in Damascus and in Jerusalem, and throughout all the region of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent, turn to God, and do works befitting repentance.

Paul (previously Saul) is someone who received a very clear vision from God. His journey with the Lord started with this one vision that changed his whole life. He went from someone who persecuted the church to a faithful servant that the Lord used for the building up of His church. Paul saw the value in what God revealed to him and spent the rest of his life following this "heavenly vision." He even testifies to King Agrippa that he was "not disobedient" to the vision and becomes a minister and witness to the things he has seen and the things that will be revealed. This shows us that even though Paul received such a high vision, the Lord says that there is more of Christ that he has yet to see. How rich our Lord is! When the Lord gives us such a clear vision like this, our only response should be, "Hallelujah! Praise the Lord for this revelation!"

DAY 4

John 1:41-42

[Andrew] first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which is translated, the Christ). And he brought him to Jesus. Now when Jesus looked at him, He said, "You are Simon the son of Jonah. You shall be called Cephas" (which is translated, A Stone).

Luke 5:8, 10b-11

When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!" ... And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men." So when they had brought their boats to land, they forsook all and followed Him.

It is difficult to consider Peter's story and not be filled with feeling. In Peter's beginning, he saw something, but he was somewhat unclear. When his brother brought him to the Messiah, Jesus was nice to him and gave him a new name. But Peter did not truly *see*—he did not truly see himself nor the Lord—and he "escaped" back to his normal life. Some time later, Jesus came to his house and healed Peter's mother-in-law, and then He ministered to a great crowd. Peter stood by, hearing His words, and began to understand a little bit more of this Messiah who changed his name, of this healing One, of this ministering One who met the needs of all those listening in the crowd.

Afterwards, Jesus and Peter were in Peter's boat, and Jesus told Peter to let down his nets. There were so many fish that the nets began to break and the boats began to sink. Then Peter *really* saw. Initially, he was not clear at all, but now, after these experiences with and of

Jesus, he said, “Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!” Peter saw who he really was: totally disqualified. At the same time, he saw who Jesus really was: Lord, that is, “You are my Master.” He had a revelation related to Christ, the Lord, and related to himself, one who is not qualified. Yet, what was the Lord Jesus’ response to Peter? “Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men”; this means “Look how many fish you got in My presence. In the coming days, still in My presence, how many more men you will get.”

What a testimony this is of who our Lord is and of His heart for us. At his first meeting of Jesus, Peter was not clear at all, but Jesus drew Peter bit by bit until Peter’s eyes were really opened to his Lord. May we all have such experiences with our Lord, that we may truly see Christ and truly see ourselves. May our lives, like Peter’s life, become a continuation of these Christ-centered visions and revelations.

DAY 5

Luke 9:28-33

²⁸ Now it came to pass, about eight days after these sayings, that He took Peter, John, and James and went up on the mountain to pray. ²⁹ As He prayed, the appearance of His face was altered, and His robe became white and glistening. ³⁰ And behold, two men talked with Him, who were Moses and Elijah, ³¹ who appeared in glory and spoke of His decease which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. ³² But Peter and those with him were heavy with sleep; and when they were fully awake, they saw His glory and the two men who stood with Him. ³³ Then it happened, as they were parting from Him, that Peter said to Jesus, “Master, it is good for us to be here; and let us make three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah”—not knowing what he said.

2 Pet 1:16-17

¹⁶ For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. ¹⁷ For He received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

Though Peter was not like Paul, who had a clear vision that controlled his life from the beginning, his vision was no less marvelous. Peter was a man who grew in his vision. His life was full of continuation of visions and revelations. He sees more, then he sees more, then he sees more. Compare the two passages above. When Peter saw the Lord transfigured on the mountain, he was not so clear. He said, “Let us make three tabernacles, one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” By the end of his life, however, he could recount that vision with much more understanding. He says in 2 Peter, “Let me tell you, brothers: I had a view. I saw the process. I saw what happened. I viewed all the happenings. I viewed them with my Lord. Do you know what I see? I see a glorious image; I see a glorious person sitting right in the midst of a glorious circumference--everything that's surrounding Him is glory.”

What a vision! Peter went from a person who was not clear at all to one with such a marvelous testimony! If the Lord would give us vision like He gave to Peter, then may our

prayer be, “Lord please advance it. Make it richer. Make it fuller, until I can see there is an image of glory, a person of glory, in the midst of all the glory.”

DAY 6

John 1:1

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

1 John 1:1

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life—

John just loved the Lord Jesus and from that, the Lord was able to give him many revelations. He could testify, “I loved the Lord all my life, I have heard him, seen him, touched him, handled him, and I declare He is the very living Word of life!” Isn’t this a grand vision? Not a vision like Paul or like Peter, but John’s is the result of loving the Lord over many years. He had such a rich life. He was the one who reclined on Jesus’s breast, the one who was entrusted to take care of Jesus’s mother, and at the end, he was the one who received the highest revelation. He saw New Jerusalem, he saw the wedding feast, he saw the overcomers, he saw the seven churches and the seven lampstands.

Brothers and sisters this is so encouraging, we may not see a great light or have a clear vision like the apostle Paul, we may not even have a blurry vision and the experiences of Peter, but can we be like the apostle John and just love our Lord Jesus? Loving our dear Lord Jesus is so precious, every day he can be nearer and dearer to us, every day we can have a desire to love him more, follow him more, give our life to him more. Eventually, our love for the Lord can bring us into deeper and higher revelations and visions.