

## Vision for Life

When I first got saved/the church that I was reached through/ school, etc.

In the book- Jesus Revolution by Greg Laurie and Ellen Vaughan- (story of Laurie and the late 60's and 70's and the "movement of God" at that time)

Billy Graham's book about that move is referenced in JR/book- **spontaneous**/Jesus was the center of the movement, **Bible based**- they were digging into the Word of God, **Experience**- they were experiencing a relationship with God by being born-again, transformation and walk, **The Holy Spirit**- was manifest in the converts, **Finding a cure** for their sin as their new life turned them around, **Discipleship**- became a part of their daily reality, they were growing and growing others, **No racial divide**, **Great zeal to evangelize**, and they looked for the second coming with anticipation.

- **Recently** we studied Jonah, and how he evangelized Nineveh- reluctantly. (100 to 150 years later we revisit Nineveh and see that their revival did not hold. ) Unfortunately, throughout time we see that moves of God have to reach new groups of people and churches as others fizzle out.

1. **God is jealous, He is the Judge, and He is Just** (jealousy can be a sin and oppressive to others, but when it is holy, it is good.) For example jealous and zealous are closely related.
    - a.) perhaps we are jealous for a strong marriage, or a career, or especially a godly walk. (In other words jealous for the success of something. )
    - b.) God is jealous for our success and well being/zealous.
- Did you know that a marriage that has two people driving towards their relationship with God as the most important thing in their life find ultimate success as a couple?
  - Wiersbe- "God made and owns everything, so envy is not His problem! (But he deserves glory, worship and honor. )

**So , why is God so jealous for us then?** His love and passion is so great for us that He yearns for the very best for each one of us. (Yet apart from Him, he watches us fizzle.)

The Lord is a zealous and avenging God; the Lord is avenging and very angry. The Lord takes vengeance against his foes; he sustains his rage against his enemies. The Lord is slow to anger but great in power; the Lord will certainly not allow the wicked to go unpunished. He marches out in the whirlwind and the raging storm; dark storm clouds billow like dust under his feet. (Nahum 1:2-3)

The Lord is good— indeed, he is a fortress in time of distress, and he protects those who seek refuge in him. (Verse 7)

- In 15, God told them the tyranny of their lifestyle and attitude toward others was ending. (They enjoyed a revival during Jonah, but didn't stay there.)
  - Why are the feet of the ones who present the gospel in Romans 10:15 beautiful? (Because the tyranny of sin destroys lives, and the gospel makes everything new.)
  - Many say that God is unjust in His judgement, yet He always warns. (And the same people all like to claim, or pretend that God does not exist otherwise!)
- c.) In Chapter 3, God explains that the cruelty of Nineveh's sin was going to end. (**Shedding of innocent blood, idolatry**- they worshipped a goddess of sexual passion and war, and **pride and self-confidence**. (Self-image/seeing yourself as God sees you is better!) People and civilizations don't believe they will fall, but they do. (Churches too)

Your destruction is like an incurable wound; your demise is like a fatal injury! All who hear what has happened to you will clap their hands for joy, for no one ever escaped your endless cruelty! (Nahum 3:19 NET)

## **2. What a Church can learn from this lesson-**

Pillar of ground and truth (1 Timothy 3:15), a place of rehab, not a museum, a stronghold, sanctuary, hub of family life. A place to find our purpose, and to be taught.

Did you know that out of 112 mentions of church in the NT, 94 refer to it in a local sense? (When otherwise, it loses its autonomy and is watered down.) Loses servers!

Matthew 16:18 tells us it is to be the pillar and ground of truth. (For a lost world) Will we let Jesus have it the way that He built it?

But I have this against you: You have departed from your first love! Therefore, remember from what high state you have fallen and repent! Do the deeds you did at the first; if not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place—that is, if you do not repent. (Revelation 2:4 NET)

- Churches come and churches go. (What do we want?) (It too, can have an incurable wound. Just like a civilization)
- I want to see **discipleship, revival**, don't want to be **upset about KJV or music style** if it is true to God. Enough of that and not growing and seeing God work. No **care for the lost or each other**, or **concern for the ministry** that God has placed us in! **Marriage enrichment** for couples here, not somewhere else, but we have to have **vision and spiritual drive**. **Vibrant youth and child ministry**. (Do you have a burden for them and the parents that need to be reached?)(We are going to have to reach them!)
- The ministry at hand, **not your club**. Not how can we serve you but each of using the gifts to serve. (We need to be present, not absent. Involved, not separated!)
- Music wars ended it churches that survive a long time ago. (It was bigger than self)
- A church builds each other up, introduces people to God, and is a refuge.

What is a Church?

**Correct gospel-** For by grace/Eph. 2:8-9, 1 Cor. 15:3-4 (Whether we are somber or lively.

**Jesus is truly God-** (John 20:28/Thomas/wounds/my Lord and my God!)

**Church authority-** (baptized believers, discipline, perpetuity) Apollos ex. (1 Cor 5,&11)

**Christ is the head-** empowered !

**Pillar and ground of truth-** local churches are the base for truth (1 Timothy 3:15)

**A place/group that is important to be present with** (Hebrews 10:24-25)

**A place/group that serves with gifts** for that very purpose!

So if not this, it is not....

- Jonah could have cared less for Nineveh. Nahum told the bad news 100 to 150 years later. (God wants us to join him in life) Mankind perishes without His vision. Just like Nineveh.

Ephesians 4:11–16 (NET)

<sup>4:11</sup> It was he who gave some as apostles, some as prophets, some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, <sup>4:12</sup> to equip the saints for the work of ministry, that is, to build up the body of Christ, <sup>4:13</sup> until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God—a mature person, attaining to the measure of Christ’s full stature. <sup>4:14</sup> So we are no longer to be children, tossed back and forth by waves and carried about by every wind of teaching by the trickery of people who craftily carry out their deceitful schemes. <sup>4:15</sup> But practicing the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into Christ, who is the head. <sup>4:16</sup> From him the whole body grows, fitted and held together through every supporting ligament. As each one does its part, the body grows in love.

Discipleship- (proper baptism, as an empowered member, from a place that has had truth handed down through the ages with the correct gospel, training disciples, serving!)

Evangelism- (with the true gospel, going out to follow the command of the our Commission.)

Fellowship- (Encouragers, care, serving, building up)

Prayer- (Exhibiting our total reliance on God)

Worship- (with a testimony that speaks, real relationship with Jesus, growing daily)

- Nineveh had a real shot. A vision for life. (Despite Jonah’s wishes)
- Every church has a real shot.
- There will always be one or more that will take the shot.
- There will always be ones that die, have their lampstand removed.
- I have a vision of life, and the more of us that do, the better our chances to walk with God as a church. (When you stand before Him, will you say that you had that vision or will you be one of the “Jonah’s that desired its end?”)

