

## My Vision For Christchurch Baptist Fellowship

Proverbs 29:18 *"Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he."* The word "vision" in Hebrew is *chazown* which can be translated: vision, oracle, prophecy (divine communication). Zodiates also said "vision" is a mental sight, a dream or a revelation. Noah Webster said "vision" in Scripture was a revelation from God; an appearance or exhibition of something supernaturally presented to the minds of the prophets, by which they were informed of future events. In George Barna's book, *The Power of Vision*, he quotes a church leader who said, vision "is seeing the invisible and making it visible." Another leader said, "vision is an informed bridge from the present to the future." Barna went on to say, "Vision concentrates on the future. It focuses on thinking ahead rather than on dwelling upon or seeking to replicate the past."

Let me share with you what I can see for our church:

### 1. A place where everyone who enters our fellowship is convinced that God loves them and has a unique plan for their life.

Hebrews 2:9 says, *"But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man."* I pray God will help us to make every man, woman, boy and girl understand that they are of inestimable value to the Lord, thus encouraging all who need salvation to repent and believe and for those away from God to return. I also see:

### 2. A place where the home is sacred.

When we see our subtitle to Christchurch, *The Family Church*, it is more than everybody feeling at home here it means it is a place where your home is prayed for and protected. Nehemiah charged the men of Judah, *"...Be not ye afraid of them: remember the Lord, which is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons, and your daughters, your wives, and your houses"* (Nehemiah 4:14). I can see in Christchurch:

### 3. A place where prayers are answered and miracles happen.

Some years ago, as I prayed for the church, I believe the Lord revealed to me that Christchurch will be a place where people are restored to God and to one another. I can see burdens lifted and lives changed. When this happens we are aware that prayers are being answered. *"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us"* (Ephesians 3:20). And when we begin to pray fervently, supernatural workings occur. *"...The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much"* (James 5:16). I can also see:

### 4. A place where Christ is Lord, culture is a righted and revival prevails!

*"And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence"* (Colossians 1:18).

These are the words of Dr. Reuben A. Torrey who saw God give revival in the late 1800's. His "prescription" included three basic requirements, "FIRST: Let a few Christians get thoroughly right with God. If this is not done, the rest will come to nothing. SECOND: Let them bind themselves together to pray for revival until God opens the widow of heaven and comes down. THIRD: Let them put themselves at the disposal of God for His use as He sees fit in winning others to Christ. That is all." Dr. Torrey said, "I have given this prescription around the world, and in no instance has it failed. It cannot fail."

In one of the early towns of the old west a young preacher, in obedience to God traveled to the town, rented a public facility and began a protracted meeting. This was a name the old timers called a revival meeting. Well, revival broke out. It was so thorough a meeting, the local saloon closed, which

was converted into the new building to house the church that was born out of the revival. How God blessed! Souls were saved regularly and lives changed. The building was teeming with the excitement that only God can give. Then a spirit of mediocrity began to settle over the congregation. So, the pastor began to plead with the people from Proverbs 29:11. He became so earnest in his bequest, that he even made beautiful wooden letters and nailed them to a wooden plaque. The large, easy to read sign was placed over the door of the church. As the people exited they could not help but see the sign which read: *"Where there is no vision, the people perish."* The pastor continued to plead with the people to have a vision, reminding them every week of the words of the sign. The days passed by without the least show of interest. Finally, God led the preacher on to a place where he believed he was usable, a place where he was allowed to lead the flock to follow the Lord. He never forgot the place of his early experience, the great revival and the close friendships encountered. One day the preacher was visiting the town and entered the building that used to house the church. It was now obsolete. No church met in the town. He walked into the building and remembered where each and every family sat. His heart was getting heavy as he reminisced those grand old days. The preacher walked into the pulpit, now covered with dust. He remembered how he used to preach his heart out at that very spot. Then he audibly began to raise his voice and cry, "Why, God, why?" The Lord answered his prayer immediately. Those words no sooner came out of his mouth, when he focused on the sign he had constructed those many years ago, *"Where there is no vision the people perish."* The sign was in perfect condition except the "w" on *where* had fallen away and it now read, *"here there is no vision the people perish."* A sad but true commentary on what had happened in that church in the old western town. May it never be so here; therefore, let us have a vision from God, allowing Him to accomplish His purposes in our lives!

- Pastor Pope -

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