

## WHERE THERE IS NO VISION

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Proverbs 29:18

1. Many people are wondering where our nation and world are headed.
  2. The problems we face seem to be insurmountable to any rational, thinking person.
  3. Yet we press on while rejecting God and relying on our own wits and resources.
  4. On the one hand we (as a society) wring our hands when faced with man's inhumanity to man while at the same time we promote violence and immorality.
- NOTE: Anyone who is honest must admit that much of what is viewed on television or in a movie theater glorifies violence, cruelty, immorality, godlessness, and hedonism (the belief that pleasure or happiness is the most important goal in life).
5. Human depravity must be restrained or it will manifest itself in numerous and troublesome ways.
  6. Reading and meditating on the principles set forth in the book of Proverbs will provide us with a perspective that will help us to interpret and understand our times.
  7. An example would be the verse we are considering today.
  8. The King James Version reads, "Where there is no vision, the people perish."
  9. I have often seen the verse in that form used evangelistically.
  10. A translation that better captures the meaning of the verse would be, "Where there is no vision (revelation of God), the people are unrestrained."
- NOTE: Very few people have a correct view and understanding of God and consequently they do not fear God, nor do they believe that they will ever have to answer for their beliefs, attitudes or actions.
11. I want to make a few simple observations this morning.

### **I. As morally responsible human beings we are free to believe whatever we want to believe.**

- A. There are many options.
- B. The Bible does not dispute the fact that in this world many paths are open to us.
- C. A passage I find instructive is Jer 6:16-19
  - 16 Thus says the LORD, "Stand by the ways and see and ask for the ancient paths, Where the good way is, and walk in it; and you will find rest for your souls. But they said, '**We will not walk in it.**'
  - 17 "And I set watchmen over you, saying, 'Listen to the sound of the trumpet!' But they said, '**We will not listen.**'
  - 18 "Therefore hear, O nations, And know, O congregation, what is among them.
  - 19 " Hear, O earth: behold, I am bringing disaster on this people, the fruit of their plans, because they have not listened to My words, and as for My law, they have rejected it also."
  1. God counseled people to examine their options, ask for the ancient paths, where the good way is, and walk in it.
  2. God promised that those who sought His direction and subsequently walked in it would find rest for their souls.
  3. Most people respond, "We will not walk in it."
  4. God then warns, "Listen to the sound of the trumpet warning of My impending judgment."

5. Again man's response is rebellion because most say, "We will not listen."
6. God then says, "Therefore hear, O nations, and know, O congregation (of mine) that is among them (the professing church), behold, I am bringing disaster on this people, the fruit of their plans because they have not listened to my words, and they have rejected my law."

## II. God actively opposes men and nations that reject Him and His counsel.

- A. This truth was clearly stated by the Psalmist. Ps 33:10-12  
10 **The LORD nullifies the counsel of the nations; He frustrates the plans of the peoples.** 11 The counsel of the LORD stands forever, the plans of His heart from generation to generation. 12 **Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD, The people whom He has chosen for His own inheritance.**
  - B. What we believe determines what we do and has implications both now and for eternity.
  - C. Our counsel and our plans will come to nothing in the end, but God's counsel and the plans of His heart will be fully realized. Isaiah 25:1  
"O Lord, You are my God; I will exalt You, I will give thanks to Your name, for you have worked wonders, **plans formed long ago with perfect faithfulness.**"
  - D. Our nation was never perfect, but it was formerly a blessed nation because, for the most part, our God was the Lord.
- NOTE: Not everyone was a genuine Christian, probably not even a majority, but most people embraced and were guided by what we refer to as the Judeo Christian Ethic.

## III. One aspect of God's judgment is to allow mankind to experience the consequence of its rejection of Him and its rebellion towards Him.

- A. Rather than restraining evil God allows evil to have its day.  
NOTE: God allows evil to have its day, but He keeps it on a leash. F.B. Meyer expressed it this way, "There is a 'thus far and no farther' to the wrath of man."
- B. Because man has rejected God's revelation of Himself there is nothing to restrain the sinful impulses and desires of depraved human hearts.  
NOTE: This truth is clearly expressed in Romans 1:24-32.
  1. "Therefore **God gave them over** in the lusts of their hearts to impurity." 24
  2. "For this reason **God gave them over** to degrading passions," that led to gross immorality and homosexual behavior. 26-27
  3. "And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, **God gave them over** to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper." 28NOTE: People's ability to think, reason and understand is removed.
- C. Some reject the doctrine of human depravity that is clearly taught in Scripture and choose to clutch at various intellectual and philosophical straws to explain our dilemma.
- D. In the end all attempts to explain and solve the human condition apart from God and His self-revelation will fail.

## APPLICATION

1. Unfortunately the day we live in can be compared to the day the prophet Amos wrote about. Amos 8:11-12  
11 "Behold, days are coming," declares the Lord GOD, "When I will send a famine on the land, Not a famine for bread or a thirst for water, But rather for hearing the words

of the LORD. 12 "People will stagger from sea to sea and from the north even to the east; they will go to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, but they will not find it."

2. There are not many places where genuine seekers can find the word of the Lord faithfully proclaimed and taught.

NOTE: Even where the Bible is used as a point of reference it is often distorted and misapplied.

2 Peter 3:14-18

"Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless, 15 and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation; just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you, 16 as also in all his letters, speaking in them of these things, **in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction.** 17 You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard so that you are not carried away by the error of unprincipled men and fall from your own steadfastness, 18 but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen."

3. America's only hope is for God to raise up men like Jeremiah who will do and say exactly what God wants done and said. Jer 26:1-3

In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, this word came from the LORD, saying, 2 "Thus says the LORD, ' Stand in the court of the LORD'S house, and **speak** to all the cities of Judah who have come to worship in the LORD'S house **all the words that I have commanded you to speak to them. Do not omit a word!** 3' Perhaps they will listen and everyone will turn from his evil way, that I may repent of the calamity which I am planning to do to them because of the evil of their deeds.'

4. I cannot speak for others, but I can speak for myself.

5. As long as I have breath, strength, and a functioning mind I am going to stand for God, His Word, His Christ, and His true Church.

6. As you all know I tried to retire, but found it impossible to do so.

7. I praise God for giving me a place, a platform and a group of people to pastor and teach.

8. May God be glorified in our individual lives and in the corporate life of Pacolet Hills Baptist Church.