

Where There is No Vision, the People Perish

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I want to call attention to the new issue of the Alliance Witness. It's interesting, more than usual. I've written an editorial on Wesley's poetic commentary, which some of you may find enjoyable.

Somebody already did, a lady had the courage to write me and ask where she could get it, and if she couldn't get it, would I lend her mine. Well, I'm going to. I may never see it again, but I'm going to actually send it to her. She lives in Upper Darby, PA, very close to Chester, and she must be all right. William D. Carlson has a missionary, the kind of missionary needed today, which I think is most interesting. Bernard King has an article called, It Came, A Floodtide of Missionary Giving.

And then there's a lovely picture, so lovely that your heart is moved by it, of Mr. and Mrs. Melvin Lobston, lovely faces, and a story of Melvin's accident in which he was killed.

Then we also have here something that most of you will enjoy. That is the picture and the story of Dr. Richard A. Forrest, Dr. R. A. Forrest. Without a sound to indicate his passing, Dr. Forrest went into the presence of his Lord. He said he wanted to go with his flag flying and his boots on, and he did. He's been here many times, and we loved him here and love his memory.

Then on the back is a picture of Raguel Chavon, who is the moderator. I'm sure those Indians would enjoy my pronunciation here. But Raguel P. Chavon, the moderator of the Alliance Marathi Churches in India, and the story of the self-supporting churches in India. I think this is a most unusual issue. If it comes to your home, why, that's something else. But if it doesn't, pick up a copy, keep it, any that are left, Brother Myers takes around and uses them in the neighborhood as he visits.

Now for the morning sermon. In Proverbs 29:18, I just want the first half of it, because as is often true with these proverbs, the second half says something else, quite away from the subject. First sentence, where there is no vision, the people perish. And if you are a margin addict or a lover of other versions, you will notice that, perish there, has to do with desolation and nakedness. Where there is no vision, the people are desolate.

Now, it is a cliché to say that we are serving God in a changing world. We sing a little song, wrongly attributed to a man named Alan, I don't know how he got in it, but actually it was written by Sir John Bowering. One stanza says, Chance and change are busy ever, worlds decay and ages move. You and I might as well not attempt to change this. The only thing we can't change is change. Chance and change are busy ever, worlds decay and ages move. And as time goes on, the face of the world is being altered.

Now, everybody under 20 will think, will wish I was somewhere else, or they were, because they won't believe this. The reason they won't believe it is they haven't lived

long enough to experience it. But everybody over 30, we leave the ones from 20 to 30 to figure it out, but everybody over 30 will begin to know that I'm telling the trope. Chance and change are busy ever, and we are serving God in a changing world.

And the face of the world is being altered by irresistible forces. There are at least four forces that are at work changing the face of the world. One is political.

Those of you who are old enough to remember the 30s, 37 and 38, will note a painful parallel between the rantings of Khrushchev and the rantings of the paper-hanger Hitler. He said, give me five years and you won't know Europe. They gave him five years and they didn't know Europe.

And there are parts of Europe that today lie in desolation and rubble. And the same irresponsible mouthings, the same troublemaking, the same moving from one part of the world to the other and starting trouble there and then withdrawing and starting trouble somewhere else like a gang of delinquent boys breaking windows and when the police rush there they go someplace else where the police are not and break a window, and keep a neighborhood in trouble. That's what's happening in the world now. Those political forces are at work. They're at work in Africa.

About eight years ago, Brother Roseberry, while he was still chairman of our French West Africa field, said to me that he would give, well it's been longer than eight, it could have been ten years ago. He said he would give Africa five years yet for missions to operate there, Christian missions to operate there. And he said communism and nationalism would take over and drive out the missionaries.

We have been driven out of China. We have been driven out of North Vietnam. We've been driven out of North Korea. We've been driven out of Arabia. And there is a likelihood, if things continue, that foreign missions, Christian missions will be driven out of Africa. Political changes are taking place. Political forces are changing the face of the world. And there are economic changes.

When I was a boy, they used to say about a man, in order to sort of commend him, to give him a compliment, they said he raised ten kids on a dollar a day. But you couldn't raise a real healthy parakeet on a dollar a day now. And economically, the face of the world has changed. And biologically, there has been what they call a population explosion. It started with the Second World War.

You know, in those days, the soldiers said, if it moves, salute it. If you can lift it, pick it up. If you can't lift it, paint it. If it cries, change it. If it's hollow, rent it. And if it has wheels, buy it. That's all gone now, and the population explosion has altered everything.

A few years back, you would ride out and you would see cows contentedly munching. And then now you go out there and you see a schoolhouse, a lodge hall, a movie picture house, a chain store, and a whole carpet of new houses. South Holland is an example of where our New Alliance Church has been located. Fortunately, in time, the population explosion has literally spattered the world with houses and homes and young couples and new children and overflowing schoolhouses, everything overflowing.

And then, of course, military. One of the forces that's changing the world is the military force. I have myself lived in three different Americas.

I lived in the America from the time I was born near the turn of the century to 1917 when America entered the war. A new America was born out of the First World War. Then things went on.

And another, there was until between the two wars, we had a different world altogether from the world that we knew before the First World War. Then came the second, and after the second, we have a different world altogether.

If in 1925 you had talked about countdown, would anybody know what you meant? You'd think it was a kid's game. If anybody had talked about orbiting Venus, as they did in the newscasts last night, you'd have smiled and said more of that Jules Verne stuff or H.G. Wells.

Now that's common talk. I saw the other day a list of the new words that have been created in the last few years. Panelist, for instance, and simulcast, and countdown, and missile. Some of them are created and some of them are used in other ways than they had been, so it added up to a new word. And I suppose that you could do with 150 to 200 or maybe many more than that words that a little while before simply had no meaning, but political forces have changed the world completely. And the next world war will change it still more completely. If there's another world war, as there undoubtedly will be an Armageddon, but we'll not go into prophecy this morning.

Now, I say that we're serving God in such a world as that. We're not serving God in a static world. I wish that we could. I'm static by nature, I don't mind telling you. But I have said that if God had made me a tree and made me conscious, I'd have been a happy man, rooted in one place, loving the familiar scenes and never changing. I don't like to travel never did and like it less all the time. I get invited all around.

I was invited to Japan here last week, but I'm not going unless the Lord sends me because I'm too much of a tree by disposition. I like to stay. But you know we're serving God in a changing world, not in a static world, but in a changing world.

And the Christian or the church that lives for just a little while will be forced to serve God under a set of circumstances different from those that were extant when he was converted, altogether different, in a radically new situation.

Your grandchildren, if the Lord tarry, will serve God in a world so different from the one you know now that your grandchildren will look at your pictures and laugh and will look back at the houses you lived in, the automobiles you drove, and grin and say, isn't that quaint, if they used the word quaint in that day. A radically new situation.

If you're going to serve God on and endure unto the end, you're going to have to learn to adapt to all these situations. Rigidity is always a bad thing. You know rigidity belongs in the cemetery, and that's the most rigid, most carefully well laid out and carefully planned and most conventional part of the world is the poor, pathetic cemetery. People are rigid there. They do not move; they do not adapt.

They say that intelligence is the ability to adapt mentally to a changing situation. You're intelligent if instead of going straight down the line, you can adapt. You're fast in your mental footwork to change with the new idea that comes up.

Now, if you're going to serve God until the end, and I trust all of you are, then you're going to have to serve Him under changing sets of circumstances. This one we know now will have to change, and the one that we're going into will have to change. If the Lord tarry in another generation, we'll have to be alert to see it change. We'll have to occupy new territory and witness to a new generation.

But what do we mean now about the vision? Well, the vision, what does it mean? To follow Christ and to follow Him rightly, there must be a vision. There has to be a vision. But what do I mean by vision? I mean a knowledge of the inspired Word.

You see, we are the victims of the planners who know not the word. They know not the word. They're the planners. They're our city planners, and we can resist it all we will. We get shoved around by these planners. But those who know the Word, they have a vision. That is, they have insight and intelligent awareness.

The average person does not know where he is. He knows in a general way, or he can look at the street signs and tell. But mostly as touching situations and current circumstances, we don't know where we are. Even newscasters and men who gather gossip all over the world from all halls of legislation and debate, from presidential palaces and palaces of kings, they know what is taking place, but they don't know why.

Now, vision means that we not only know what's taking place, but that we know why. And without a vision, people are desolate. People perish. Not only the people that they go to help, but they themselves, because they have not a vision.

Vision means insight, ability to see in, to see through. Back in the 11th chapter of the book of Isaiah, it tells about the Holy Spirit coming upon Jesus and making him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord. That quick understanding in the Hebrew means a sense of smell. He has a quick sense of smell. He's a bloodhound. He can tell smells.

A thousand pairs of gloves can lie in a pile, and a bloodhound will go in and pull one out, the glove that belongs to the man he's after. Or he'll rub that one glove out of a pile of fifty on the dog's nose, and he'll follow the scent of the man who wore the glove right through swamps and across rivers and on until he finds him. And God says the Holy Ghost comes on a man, and He makes him of a quick sense of smell.

He doesn't simply vegetate and live in the world, letting circumstances push him wherever he will, but that he's alert and alive and awake, and he can see, and he knows where he's going. And he knows the current situation in which he lives.

I have not prayed to God that I might have the gift of divine healing. I did when I was a boy, but I soon gave that up. But I have long prayed to God that I might have prophetic insight, that I might live in the world and know what God is saying to the world at a

given time, and to know what He's saying to the church at a given time, to know what He's saying. He doesn't always say the same thing.

And what is good for fifty years ago still stands, but the emphasis may lie someplace else, when times and circumstances change. And the wise prophet is the one who has insight to know what God is saying at a given time, under a given set of circumstances, and to know our relation to conditions and the purpose of God in those changing or changed conditions.

Now, there are two purposes of God that I want to talk about briefly. There is the remote and the immediate. The remote purposes of God, of course, have been set as the beam upon which the airplane flies on, and it never alters any. Those are the purposes of God. They are, as far as we know, they involve Israel and the church and the nations, the earth and the heavens.

God has a remote plan for Israel. That is why I do not get excited when some little thing happens in Jordan or Iran, because those are immediate, short-term things. But the long-range plan of God must be carried out, and it will be carried out. God would not lie to Abraham, his friend, and God has a long-range purpose for Israel.

He also has a long-range purpose for the church. That long-range purpose is that she, after she has suffered a while and has bled sufficiently and groaned and wept enough and prayed and worshipped enough, she will be led into the presence of God on the arm of her Bridegroom, and that from north and south and east and west round the world the Bride shall be gathered, and Jesus Christ, who left the earth apparently a defeated man, shall come back bringing her on His arm to show unto to all created intelligences as being a Bride worthy of Her Bridegroom. God has that in mind for the Church, and that is a long-range purpose, and it can't change and won't.

Then for the nations, God has purposes for the nations. That is the reason I keep telling you, don't you let yourself get excited about warnings from the scientists and the writers. Keep calm. God has His plans, His remote plans, plans way out there.

And the day will be when He will call all nations before Him, and there will be nations in that day as there are now. He will call the nations before Him. It won't be one brown nation, so those who would have His intermarry all around the world are not going to win.

There will be nations and there will be tongues, and we won't all be speaking Esperanto or basic English. The planners are trying to teach us Esperanto or basic English. They say we ought to cease to have so many languages. We'd love each other more if we only had one language, and so the poor butterfly brains are trying to create one language.

Listen, when Cain slew Abel, he spoke Abel's language without an accent, whatever it was. And when he planned to take Abel out into the woods and murder him, he said in a language Abel could understand. Come on, brother, let's take a walk. And there was no accent. A common language between Cain and Abel did not prevent Cain from murdering his brother.

We have fought Britain twice, and we speak the language of Britain, even though the British don't think we do. But at least we make a stab at it. And we speak the language of Britain, and yet we fought Britain twice.

So, language doesn't mean a thing, yet they say it does. The nations of the earth are going to have their languages redeemed from tongues and peoples and tribes. And so instead of the planners making us all one brown race with an antenna on top of our head and no hair as the comic artists make it, we're going to remain very much as we are now until we see Jesus. I don't know whether you scientists believe that or not, but it's so.

All right, now, that's the remote purpose. God has a remote purpose for this earth on which we live. I love the earth, always have loved the earth. I love the red birds that sit and sing their poor little goofy heads off these cold mornings because the sun is shining and the temperature is 30 and they don't know the difference. But there they sit and sing to beat the band. You know, if they'd look at the thermometer out on our porch, they'd go back to bed. But because the sun is shining, they're singing. I love the earth.

I love to see the trees blossom in the spring and lose their brown leaves in the fall. I don't like too much snow. You can get enough even of a good thing, and while snow is beautiful, we overdid our beauty this year.

But I love the earth. I love God's wonderful, lovely earth, and God has a plan for the earth. Don't write the earth off, and don't allow anybody to tell you why we're going to dissolve it into atomic dust. We're going to do nothing of the sort.

Jesus Christ, when He died on the cross, the blood that ran down over His legs and down off His toes onto the ground was earthy blood, blood that He had gotten out of the ground. It was the blood of men, the blood of man, made of dust. Though He was God, His body was man's body.

And this is our Mother Earth, and when we call her Mother Earth, it's not a poetic flight of fancy. It's a reality, Eighty percent of it is water, and the rest is dust and earth, eighty percent water. And the part of us that's from heaven is inside, the spirit, the soul, the mind. But physically we belong to the earth. It's our mother, as God is the Christian's father.

And God isn't allowing old Mother Earth to be dissolved in atomic dust until the day when He burns all things up with fire. Then they will not be annihilated. They will simply be rejuvenated. The fire that Peter talks about in 2 Peter 3 is not a fire that makes ash, it's a fire that burns out impurities and renews, as the fire of the Holy Ghost renews the heart of a Christian. So, He has His plans for the earth, and He has His plan for the heavens above.

Brother Chase said this morning that he kind of wished that one of our satellites would bump into a Sputnik and blow it up. But there's too much room up there for them, you know. The traffic isn't heavy enough up there yet for there to be any bumping. There's plenty of room up there yet, but one of these days God is going to take His rake and rake

the leaves off His front lawn, and they'll be the Sputniks and all the rest of the satellites that we hurl up there in our pride. That's the remote plan of God.

Then there's the immediate plan of God. And the immediate has to do with current situations and conditions which break out because of political changes and because of economic forces and because of military campaigns. And now a vision means that while I keep in mind always the remote purpose of God, I've got to be able to adapt to the immediate purpose of God.

Now, that's why we need a vision. We've got to know what the current situation is. And you know that it's so easy to settle down and not know what the current situation is. And you think, you know, I think we did it here over the past few years unintentionally.

We love to sing so much in this church, and I've been preaching over the years about worship and the eternal wisdom and the Triune God and the Attributes, and people have been enjoying it, they tell me and coming to hear it. And we've been no trouble, nobody's raising any fuss, no divisions.

And we have just enjoyed it to a point where it's been wonderful. And even the people have moved away, and God knows they've been vast numbers. They've all left with a tear in their eye. Nobody wanted to go. But changing circumstances, chance and change are busy ever.

A sample of it was here about the latter part of May. I've got a wrap on my door here. And I said, come in. And in came Brother Campbell with that red face, you know, and a head innocent of hair. And he was really shocked and excited. And he was never an excitable man. And I said, hello, Brother Campbell, how are you? He said, good morning, and he sat down. He said, you know what, Brother Tozer? I said, no. He said, I have been transferred to Los Angeles, and I've got to report there by the 9th of June. Just a week or two away.

That was a sample. And his wife came up then, too, almost wringing her hands, as much as that good godly woman ever would. Said, what are we going to do? Well, they didn't want to leave, but they had to leave. They wiped away a tear and said goodbye, and they have done it and done it. But mostly we like to hear the old truth. You don't hear deep truth in too many places. And this church has enjoyed it tremendously. The chance and change are busy ever. Worlds decay and ages move.

And the situation, the current situation, is not what it was even five years ago. Conditions have changed, and the purposes of God, the immediate purposes of God, not the long-range purposes. They never change. But the immediate purposes, the plans of God, the strategic purposes of God.

Now, the present question is, for us, and I think that it is biblical, it's here before us, the present question is, what direction is God moving now? Here my human sympathies conflict with the call of God. And you know that it's possible for our human sympathies to go one way and the will of God to go another for a little while. It was so with Peter.

Jesus said to Peter, to his disciples, Peter heard it, He said, now the Son of Man, and they loved him so much, the Son of Man, they said, is going up to Jerusalem and He's going to be arrested by the Gentiles, and the people are going to crucify Him. And Peter jumped up and put a comforting hand across Jesus' shoulder and said, not so, Lord, not so. And Jesus said, ah, Peter, you don't savor of heaven, you savor of earth. Your human sympathies are getting away with you.

It's entirely possible to let our human sympathies miss the will of God if we don't look out. And I'm in great danger of it because my human sympathies are away from what I believe the plan of God is.

And I refer particularly now to this church, this fellowship, having to relocate its place of worship and have a new field of service. My heart says, now wait a minute here. You don't want to run away from the poor. You don't want to let a neighborhood rot. You mustn't do that. You must stay and minister to what we call the poor classes of people.

That's where my sympathies lie. And you just have to bump me twice real hard, and I'd go down and apply for assistant superintendency at the Pacific Garden. Because that's where my sympathies lie.

But you know, friends, here are some things. Now some people won't like this, and I may alienate a few minds here. But I'll say it anyhow because it's true and it must be said that slums are changing, are moving. And they're moving out and covering areas like a blight.

Now somebody says, but wait a minute, should not we minister to these blighted areas? The answer is yes. The slums will always be a mission field. There will always be an important place for the rescue mission. There will always be an important place for the mission church. And there will always, I suppose, be a place for the storefront gospel mission. Always.

But have you noticed one ominous thing? Rescue missions, mission churches, and storefront gospel missions have to be staffed and supported from without. A blighted area never supports itself. The slums will never be the place of spiritual outreach. Missionary societies have never been born there. Never.

The appeal of Christ, while it is rarely to the very rich, it is never to those who are willingly of degraded taste, to persons without aspirations and without ambitions, lazy drones who are satisfied with degeneration.

Now you say, isn't that a terrible way for you to talk? Are we not all sinners in the presence of God? Brother, I don't suppose any man or woman here has spent more time beating the floor and telling God what a hopeless, worthless, rotten sinner he is.

But every city does have a people without aspiration. You can't make them aspire. You can't. Every city does have people without ambition. They don't want to be any different from what they are.

I remember visiting a rescue mission once down on Madison Street. I was standing in the doorway and men were coming in. I saw a particularly good-looking young fellow coming in. He was bright-faced and smiling, and I spoke to him. I found he wasn't a Christian at all. He was there coming into the mission. I said, I being the father of six sons, I loved him. I said to him, now listen. I took hold of his sleeve, and I said, listen, you don't want to go on like this, do you? I said, look, you're young, and if you continue like this you'll be a bum. He said, I'm a bum now.

I didn't faze him. He was contented. I don't know what his background was. I only know he was physically good to look at and wasn't too badly gone yet in his clothing. And he'd had a haircut at least within recent months. But he didn't mind saying, I'm a bum now.

And there are hundreds of thousands in the great cities, while they're those for whom Jesus died, and while they are just as good as you and me, and if we stood on our own merits, we'd all perish alike, they simply don't aspire. They have no ambitions. A mug of beer, unshaven, shoes off, while the wife splashes around barefooted and hair down, getting up for breakfast, cussing each other while little kids run about.

You say, but shouldn't the church do something? Brethren, the church tries hard. Through the arm of the church, her missions, her mission churches, her storefront churches. But there are masses of people who simply don't care and they won't care. You say, well, now wait a minute. Don't write cities nor sections of cities off.

Did not God write Sodom and Gomorrah off? He did. And he wrote Pompeii and he wrote other cities off. It's possible simply to get so degenerate that we've lost all desire to be different.

And a church with a message such as ours, I wish that we could move further north and settle further north in the middle of this and try to do something. That's where my human sympathy says. But all of church history cries, No.

Denominations were not born among lazy, degenerate people who live in their lusts and who live like beasts and don't care. You say, The Methodists ministered to common people? Yes. But John Wesley was an Oxford man, along with all of his brothers. You say, The Salvation Army ministered to the poor in the slum? Yes. But William Booth was a man of high social position and education and aspiration. The Moravians? Yes. But Zinzendorf was a Count.

What do I mean by this? I simply mean that it's possible to get up where God can't reach you and it's possible to get down where God can't reach you. It's possible to be a Gold Coaster and live up where the gospel of Christ is scorned. It's possible to give up to saloons and sex and beer and shows and poker until there's no thought of God, and not all the rescue missions in the world will ever win people like that. Not all the help you can give them will ever bring them. One here, one there, maybe.

Harry Monroe was rescued and came out of Pacific Garden. Billy Sunday came out of Pacific Garden. But those men were men with fiery ambitions. Don't forget the very missions that won those two men were supported by the middle-class Christians, who

did have some ambition and some aspiration, and who did want to shave and put on a clean shirt.

Now, it says here that the common people heard Him gladly, and the fruitful field has always been the middle classes. It is from these that the support comes for foreign missions. It's from these that the support comes for rescue missions and mission churches and institutional work, hospital work such as ours from this church, and other such work, old folks' homes and orphanages, and home missions and foreign missions, and missions among the Indians.

Practically none of these, at first at least, are ever self-supporting. Foreign missions may become so, but not at first, neither the Indian work, and certainly never the orphanage work. The little chaps can't earn any money. A dime is high finance, you know, to them. Somebody has to think for them, and somebody has to be where he can be producing so he can think for them.

You want to know why we're planning to move and why we're leaving this area and going to a place, a simple place, a plain place, not the Gold Coast, but where young couples move and where babies are born and where schools are overflowing and where the simple people, the plain people like you and me who do have some ambitions in God and in the world, who are aspiring, who do believe in education and a bit of culture, at least, and who do have some aspirations where they are. They have always been those to whom the gospel of Jesus Christ appealed.

That's history, brethren, and you can't get away from it. You can get up so high, behold your calling, brethren, not many mighty, not many noble are called. But also behold your calling, brethren, that there are whole blighted areas where people's ambitions are dead and their aspirations lost and where they live for liquor and food and sex and gambling and care nothing about God.

And if they're going to be ministered to, it must be from the outside. Somebody out there that does have some ambition and that does care will go back there and preach to them. But they'll never support a church, and they will never be interested enough ever to carry on the work of God. And foreign missions to them, the name wouldn't even be known.

So, my brethren, over top of the nostalgia of my own heart and the grief and the heartache, we must go and open a truth center where the common people are and where they will be over the next years and where the next economic or military bump will put them by the hundreds of thousands. And the vast numbers will be.

But we'll never forget the missions and we'll never forget the jails and we'll never forget the hospitals. And we'll never forget those who are ready to forget themselves. And always we'll be a part of the missionary activity that takes the Truth to them. And we'll always have boys like Lou Finney, Dave Lutschweiler, and Stan Lemon, and I could name others of you if I just look around here, that feel called to go and minister to the people that haven't any money, to the people that can't support missions, to the people that you have to catch them and make them listen.

We'll always have them and God bless them and increase their number by the thousands. For to me it's a tragic and terrible thing to leave whole sections of blighted areas of the city without a gospel witness. Or worse, to leave them with a witness every third storefront of church presided over by an ambitious ignorant preacher who lives off of the fears and superstitions and emotions of his people, but who has no message, no vision, no outlook, no aspiration, no desire for anything but a bit of fast music and some shouting. So, with a heart full of nostalgia, we plan to relocate.

A young person wrote a letter recently. We've got a lot of kids out from here in the various schools, and one of them wrote and said, I am so sorry that the church is going to have to move. I have such sweet memories of the Alliance Church, one of our girls. Sweet memories, and I know it.

And have I? I have such sweet memories of this church and of the people here and of the music, Brother McAfee, the gorgeous, wonderful music. We're not a Robert Shaw chorale or a choir, I know. You're hard-working people that work all day and then drag yourself to practice Friday night. I know we're not a Robert Shaw chorale, but brothers and sisters, we've sung beautifully about a wonderful God.

And for me to get put where we'd hear nothing but choruses and cheap gospel numbers, I think it would break my heart. If I'd ever have to leave here, I think that I would take three days off, like Nehemiah, to grieve. But sometimes you have to do what your heart doesn't want you to do. I'm talking now about locating. I think when we do relocate, I'm going to have to come back every once in a while.

I don't drive a car, but I can get a bus by, walk around and look it over and try to recapture some of the blessedness that I've known in this place among the good people. I have a little trouble here and there once in a while, one every ten years, but it doesn't last, and everybody loves everybody else. It's been very sweet and very wonderful.

But the change has come. Change and change are busy ever. World decay and ages move.

And if we're going to maintain this blazing gospel witness that has sent young people to the ends of the earth over the last thirty years, we're going to have to go with God on it, literally go with God. And if we can't see it and have no vision, without a vision the people perish. Without a vision, that is, without knowledge, without the insight and intelligent awareness to appraise the situation and know what you ought to do, without it we fail God.

Tomorrow I'll preach twice. I have to preach one, two, three, four, five times next week, in addition to a board meeting and radio meeting. But I'll be preaching for the Mennonites at a conference of Mennonites.

For many years they've had at the corner of 19th Street and Union Avenue a church and some kind of an institution there. I never was too sure what, but it was a church. One of these churches where they don't have musical instruments, they sing a cappella, and I enjoy being with them.

And I'm going to enjoy it tomorrow when I preach for them twice. But you know what? The thruway condemned their area. Now after trying to hang there, they're having to go; 19th and Union. Good people. They stuck.

But chance and change are busy ever. And when the man with the star-spangled hat and the white beard says, I want to put a highway through where your church is, no matter whether you've dedicated and wept over it and soaked it in salty tears, I want it!

I want to put a highway through so beer trucks can travel over where your church used to be. And young fellows drive wildly while they sit close to their girlfriend, and traffic can come back and forth. People want to go out into the country, and we're going to have to provide them a way out of the city, and your church is in the way!

So, they condemn it. So, our poor friends the Mennonites have to pick up and move. Leave a lot of heartaches behind, but they're having to go. So are we. And we are going with mixed feelings, but we're going with certainty that we have the vision that we see where God is moving to.

I preached here a few, I guess, ten days ago at the Methodist church down here at 70th and Union. And a good fellow, an old brother by the name of Mr. Cox, a Methodist brother, Mr. Cox, drove me out to my house after the meeting. Had a nice meeting, I enjoyed it, I preached on the cross of Christ. We sang about the cross.

And I said, well, Brother Cox, I suppose you've been a member here a long time. He said, 40 years. He said, you know, Reverend, when I joined this church, it was on the outskirts. He said, this was way out when I joined it. I don't know whether anybody here can remember back 40 years or not. But I remember whole areas out here that were what the boys called prairies, that is, we call them vacant lots, are now packed solid.

The city is moving. And we're going to move with it. We're going to have in mind little fellows that need a Sunday school, young couples that need a church home, older people that are retired and can afford to build a decent little cottage out, and those who are leaving in droves or being driven out from this city.

So that's what we're doing. And that's why we're doing it. And remember one thing, that while we'll never forget the jails and the hospitals and the institutions and the street corners, the hope of the Church for tomorrow does not lie with them.

The hope of the Church for tomorrow lies with responsible families. And we're going where the families are.