



newsletter

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF
OMEGA BIBLE INSTITUTE & SEMINARY
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WHERE THERE IS NO VISION, THE PEOPLE PERISH

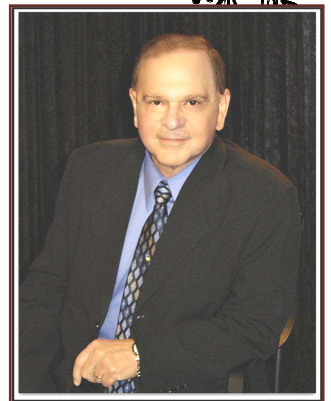
(Proverbs 29:18) - *Republish by popular request*



Every Christian has heard this verse quoted numerous times...but, usually out of context. A noun, the word “vision” (Heb. *mar’ eh*) in the Old Testament refers to *prophetic visions* or a *revelation*, and sometimes an *appearance of God* in some manner, not to be considered a manifestation. In the New Testament, “vision” as a noun (Gk. *horama*) more often refers to something manifest or actually *seen* such as the *Transfiguration of Christ* on the mount (Matthew 17:9) witnessed by Peter, James and John. It may also refer to a *night dream* or a *revelation* received while in a semi-sleep state, such as in a trance. A vision (revelation) may be given by God to a single person or to a group of people for direction. In a literal sense, Proverbs 29:18, an oft quoted verse, should be translated as, “Where there is no adherence to the *Law of God*, the people go astray—[that is, *go in the wrong direction and die spiritually*].” In this context, “vision” refers to the *Law of God* being that which directs people toward pleasing Him in much the same way as the Word of God guides those who serve Him today under the New Covenant.

Sadly, many churches in America today are dying—closing their doors because there is no vision. People go to church on Sunday and experience a *Greeting, Seating, Meeting, and [time off] Eating*—after which they go home and wait for the next service. When asked “What is the vision (mission) of your church?” most church members will respond “I don’t know.” Thus, it is of paramount importance that the vision (mission) of the local church be continually preached by the pastor and kept at the forefront of various other activities. All activities of the local church are important, but usually the vision suffers because it is *never mentioned by church leaders*. In fact, it often isn’t mentioned, because there really is NO VISION at all [in the church].

On numerous occasions, I have seen small churches begin to grow when the pastor and leadership placed a painting or architectural drawing of a future church facility on the platform where the congregation could observe it at all times. It became a visual reminder to God’s people that the church was not dead like the stagnant water of the Dead Sea. A vision that is kept before the people brings purity and new life—[that is, a *fresh vision, spiritual growth, and new church members*]. A vision gives the congregation purpose, strength, and vitality. In fact, it’s always a good idea to have special offerings for the *VISION* in order for the church to reach more people for the Kingdom of God.



By Dr. Henry Harbuck,
Omega President

In the current economic downturn, some churches have given up and said “we perish.” Thus, it behooves pastors to preach victory, not defeat. More people are leaving the church now than ever in the history of our nation, and are looking to the government to supply their needs. But this is in sharp contrast to what Paul says in his letter to the Philippians: “But my God shall supply all your needs according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:20). While we must not be insensitive or foolish about earthly matters, we must also realize that the wisdom of men will fail, but the Wisdom—[that is, Gk. *the Logos—Christ, the Word, Wisdom, and Communication*] of God will not. There is no doubt Paul is saying in Philippians

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Enjoy These Quick & Easy Unique Recipes for Thanksgiving and Christmas

Gran's Fruit Cake

by Dee Nance

8 oz chopped dates
8 oz diced cherries (candied)
8 oz diced pineapple (candied)
3 small cans coconut
1 qt sliced pecans
1 box vanilla wafer crumbs
2 cans condensed milk



Dice the candied fruit (use red and green cherries for color). Mix the coconut, dates, and sliced pecans in a larger bowl. Pour in the condensed milk and mix thoroughly. Grease a bundt pan or two loaf pans. Pack the ingredients in. Cook at 300 degrees for thirty minutes. Let cool before removing from pan.

Big Mama's Buttermilk Pound Cake

by Jan Harbuck

5 eggs
3 cups plain flour
3 cups sugar
1 cup Crisco
1 cup buttermilk, plus
½ teaspoon
soda and a little salt
1 teaspoon vanilla
1 teaspoon lemon extract



Cream the Crisco shortening, then add sugar and 1 egg at a time.
Add one teaspoon vanilla and one teaspoon of lemon extract.
Finally, add flour and buttermilk a little at a time.
Bake 2 to 2 ½ hours at 275 degrees.

Peach Roll Ups

by Elizabeth Foy

1 pkg. flour tortilla-medium size
1 can peach pie filling (or your favorite flavor)
2 sticks melted butter
1 ½ cups water
2 cups sugar



Mix ½ cup sugar with ½ tsp. cinnamon
Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Put 1 Tbs. of pie filling in each tortilla, roll up and place seam side down in glass dish. Mix butter, sugar and water and pour over tortillas. Cover with foil and bake 30 min. Sprinkle with sugar/cinnamon. Mix and bake for 20 more minutes uncovered.

Christmas Broccoli & Cauliflower Salad

1 small head cauliflower
1 small head broccoli
1 (3 oz) jar chopped pimiento, drained
½ medium green pepper, chopped
1 small red onion, chopped

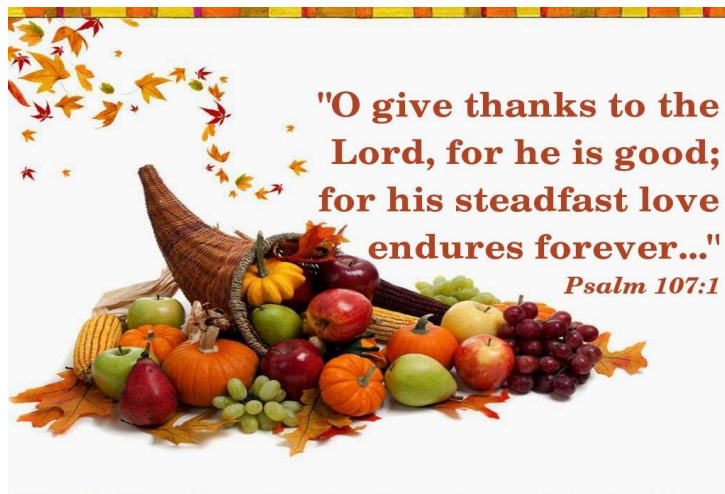


Wash cauliflower & broccoli. Drain. Break off cauliflower and broccoli heads into bite-sized pieces. Toss with pimiento, green pepper, and onion. Set aside.

Yuletide Dressing:

1 cup mayonnaise
½ cup white vinegar
½ teaspoon salt
½ cup vegetable oil
½ cup sugar

Combine dressing ingredients. Mix well. Pour dressing over salad. Place entire salad in a large, airtight container and refrigerate overnight. Will keep several days in refrigerator. Best to make in advance of when needed. Yields 8-10 servings.



Where There is NO Vision...

Continued from page 1

4:20 that ...through Christ, God will supply what you need (not what you want) according to His abundant supply and His divine will. When people who claim to be Christians have more of the world's wisdom than the wisdom of God (I Corinthians 1:20-21), there is no faith resident in their lives and they have no peace. The Lord has promised to give every believer a degree of [inner] rest—*peace* (Gk. *anapauso*), regardless of what may be weighing them down.

Keeping a local church on track and in a growth mode is much like keeping the body in check. There must always be discipline and the desire to do better than the status quo. To merely attend church, experience some "goose bumps" [and thrills], and then go home is not enough to sustain a Christian. When there is no vision, no strategic planning, no sermons that meet needs, there will be death in the church. There will be no spiritual growth in the church because there is no spiritual growth in the people of the congregation. A congregation is much like a baby. If a baby is not growing, it is sick. Good parents immediately take the child to a doctor to determine what the problem is.

It is to our shame, as Christians, that Buddhists exhibit more discipline than we do. Buddhists fast and discipline themselves beyond what we could even imagine. But most Christians whine and complain about every small matter the church requires, giving one excuse after another why they cannot get involved. And even when they do become involved, it is usually only "lip-service" and nothing more.

Every church must have purpose -- a revelation, a direction, a plan to establish, a goal to reach. Sometimes the "word in due season" comes during a sermon, or in the form of a one-on-one statement. However, if the people have NO VISION, they will die spiritually. Based upon my experience, I am convinced pastors become involved in too many matters and neglect to speak of vision. When a vision is kept before the congregation, progress is made. Excitement and joy prevail, not hopelessness. And when everyone in a church is given a role to fulfill in a body of believers, the attention is diverted from the pastor. As people learn to minister to each other, they cease to believe the pastor is the only one who can "give a word." When people are studying the Word of God for themselves, praying and showing concern for others in the Body of Christ, a flame is ignited. Life flows into the church. The church becomes "People Centered and Purpose Driven."

If you are a pastor, or planning to become one, remember that "Where there is no VISION, the people perish." Lastly, remember to focus not only on preaching, but on what is necessary for a congregation to grow spiritually and numerically. Today, anyone in America can stay home on Sunday and listen to a sermon delivered by a TV preacher. The local church must provide more. It must be a place of refuge, healing, comfort and learning – a haven where someone feels he/she belongs because the people who attend care about each other. ♥

(Scripture quotes are from the King James Version of the Bible and the New Millennium In-Depth Bible—General Editor, Henry Harbuck, Ph.D.)



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Happy Holidays



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