

Have You the Vision?

by George Kulp

The sermon emphasizes the importance of getting a vision of God, which is essential for understanding God's character, heart, and mind, and for experiencing forgiveness and being effective in service.

Scripture: Psalm 19:1, Isaiah 6:1, Isaiah 6:8, John 14:9, Romans 5:8, Romans 8:16, Hebrews 11:6, 1 John 1:9

Topics: "Spiritual Vision", "Holy Regeneration"

Description

George Kulp preaches on the importance of having a vision of God, emphasizing that every truly converted soul receives a vision of God brought about by the Holy Spirit through regeneration. He highlights how God can be seen in nature, history, providences, His Word, and ultimately in Christ, revealing forgiveness and love. Kulp stresses the need for self-abasement and confession before receiving the fire of God's cleansing and cheerful obedience to His call for service.

Transcript

Isaiah 6:1 -- "I saw the Lord."

In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord, sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple.

Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly.

And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.

And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke.

Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts.

Then flew one of the seraphim unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar:

And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin is purged.

Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me. Isa. 6:1-8.

I believe, firmly, that every soul really converted gets a vision of God, that is brought about by the Holy Spirit, for every really converted person is regenerated -- born of the Spirit.

I admit that man can see God in nature. The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth His handiwork. Every planet has been running on schedule time ever since worlds rolled from the fingers of Omnipotence -- never one for one moment a second behind time. I think that it was General Mitchell who said, "The undevout astronomer is mad." And he further said, "If at any time any planet should be one half a minute behind time consternation would be found in all the observatories because men would fear that the arms of the Infinite had, grown weary." You can see God in nature. We have the seasons, and the day, and the night in accordance with the divine plan.

We can see God not only in nature, we can see God in history: "His footsteps down the centuries beat one eternal rhyme." It may be only here and there that you can see His imprints, but we know that God is moving. Nations have their judgments in this world. Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people. God has been calling the nations to account. The historian has yet to record the history of any nation that has been true to God. God's own chosen people went away from Him and served other gods, built groves on every mountain top, worshipped idols before whom they bowed, forgetting the living God. They had their judgment, they had their captivity, and at last they were so lost that men today speak of them as "the lost tribes," and the rest of them are scattered and peeled, and dwelling as strangers in the midst of almost every nation that has a name.

You can see God in nature; you can see God in history; you can see God in His providences. Every need of man has been supplied; God has made provision for us. God made wool on the back of the sheep, so that you and I may be clothed; God put enough wood in the forests and enough stones in the ground so that you and I might have homes, every family a dwelling place. He placed the oil so that we could have light and heat; He placed the coal that we might be comfortable with heat and stand the ravages of the zero weather. God placed the gold and silver, that you and I might have the wherewithal to purchase the things that are necessary to our welfare. The providences of God made provision for every son and daughter of Adam. Men have cornered oil. A few men own the coal mines, and the gold mines. Five thousand people in the United States own the great majority of the wealth, but it is all contrary to the will of God. God said that the earth was His, and He made provision in His providences for you and me, and you can read it as you would read . the pages of history. I do not wonder that God has said in His Word, "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God?"

You can see God not only in nature, in history, and in His providences, but you can see God in His Word. I believe that an unsaved man with ordinary common sense, and intelligence, can see God in His Word. It gives us the mind of God, gives us the thought of God; shows us the heart of God. I get my ideas of my Christ from the Word. I do not have to read Sheldon in order to find out what God would do; I take down that old Bible and find what He did do, and I know lie is the same, yesterday and forever. If a blind man were lying by the roadside, and Christ passed by, and that blind beggar should cry after Him, I know that my Christ would stop and help him, though on His way to make another world. I know the heart of God by the teaching of that Book.

We can see God in nature, in history, in providences, in the Word, and we can see God in Christ. Now we are getting a revelation of the character of God. You cannot find forgiveness in nature; nature NEVER forgives. It took the incarnation of love to teach us that God would forgive. Philip said, "Show us the Father, and it sufficeth us." And Jesus said (I imagine His heart was almost breaking. He had been with them three years, and such a question as that from those who had walked with Him, and seen His miracles), "Sayest thou unto me, Show us the Father? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father also." God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself. God commendeth His love toward us that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.

Every person needs to get a vision of God. You can never be what God wants you to be until you have seen the King. You can never get the thought that God wants to fill you with until you get a vision of Himself, and He withholds it from no man. You are never equipped for service, never effective for service, until you have had the vision. You will never be in God's hands, plastic and passive, until you have had the vision. Men have talked about the first heaven and the second heaven, and the third heaven to which the Apostle was lifted, but it took a man who had a vision to get a better thought of God. He lay down by the side of an old oak, pillowed his head on a stone, and had the sands of Arabia for his couch, had the blue sky for his covering; but while he slept he saw a ladder, the topmost round hard by the throne of Infinite love, and the lowest round where he could put his foot on it, and he saw the angels ascending and descending upon it. And when he awoke in the morning, the man knew as he never had known before that heaven was not very far off. Say, beloved, that ladder was a type of Jesus Christ, and He brings heaven not only near man, but puts it inside of him.

Listen, beloved, men are only effective for service as they get the vision. God wanted a man and He showed him a bush on fire. This man had a staff in his hands; he was attending to his flocks. God never gives visions to lazy folks. This man said, "I will go and see what this means;" and, when he came near, God spoke and said, "Moses (God knows our names) take thy shoes from off thy feet, for the ground whereon thou standest is holy ground." And then He gave him the message, "I want you to go and talk for Me." You have to get the vision of the King before you can talk effectively.

Step down through the centuries! See Elijah discouraged! There are good people who get discouraged. This man had been on the mountain top; this man had brought fire from heaven; then again had unsealed the fountains of the skies, as before he had sealed them. This man became discouraged, but God does not forget discouraged folks. Some folks will not hunt them up, but God does, and I am glad that He did. And He finds him where? Hidden away in a cave. Yesterday he bids defiance to eight hundred false prophets; yesterday he commands the skies, and the fire falls; but today he is off, hid in a cave, and God hunts him up. "Elijah, what is the matter? What doest thou here?" "Well, Lord, there is not anybody else but me; the rest of Thy people have gone off after idols. No one is left but me." Did you ever get where you thought you were the only one left, your church the only church in all the land? It is wonderful how God will waken such folks up. "Elijah, I have seven thousand that have not bowed the knee to Baal." This man now gets the vision. A discouraged man, but God says to him, "You have been true; you have been faithful; you have met much opposition. Come, anoint that man to be king of Israel, then take a journey through the land of Israel and the chariots of fire shall come rumbling along the ridges of the worlds and I will have them stop and bring you home." Oh, thank God, He will send the chariots of fire to the one who gets discouraged and who wants to be true. Glory be to heaven's King, He never forgets us! Our hearts may be breaking; our friends may fail us; and our own brethren may misunderstand us, but God knows, and He will never forget us. Paul had the vision, and he never got over it, and I want my hearers to know that the

soul that has had the vision will never get over it. There was a man who was sent to a barren rocky isle, a banished prisoner. He was banished to an island where Rome sent her thugs and anarchists, and her felons, but this man was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and he heard a voice behind him and it called him by name, "John." Oh, a few years before that was the sweetest voice in all the world to him. He had been thrilled by it again and again; but there came a time when he saw his Lord defying gravitation and going up to where out of sight the angelic escort met Him and sang, "Be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. He never thought that he would hear that voice again on earth, but let me tell you, when you are banished, when you are far off from your folks, when you are all alone, the Christ of the Mediatorial throne, will walk the same land where you walk, and He will say, "John," oh, so tenderly. And John turned and saw his Lord. I am so glad that God gave him that revelation; I have been feeding on it ever since I found out about it.

With the vision of God comes the abasement of self. I have seen folks at the altar again and again, and they never get anywhere. Why? Because they are not willing to die to themselves. Along with the vision of God comes the death of self. Oh, here it is, right in this vision, "I am undone ... I am a man of unclean lips." Not only Isaiah, "What is your name?" "My name's Jacob." Oh, names in those days meant something. What is your name? Jacob. What does that mean? Supplanter, Deceiver. Oh, this fellow is coming down, -- I deceived my old father, I deceived my brother, I deceived my father-in-law. He is getting somewhere. That is the trouble; they do not like to make the confession, do not like to acknowledge even to God how mean they are, but He knows all about them. Brother, I never knew how mean I was until God let the light on me. Ah, when the vision comes you will feel the self-abasement, -- "I am the chief of sinners, I am less than the least of all saints." I wish people would get today where Jacob did. when he got his name changed, -- make the confession and hold on. I remember when I would hear the old-fashioned Methodists sing:

"Come, O thou traveler unknown,
Whom still I hold but cannot see;
My company before is gone,
And I am left alone with Thee;
With Thee all night I mean to stay,
And wrestle till the break of day."

I have heard that Jacob limped always after the wrestling. And if folks today would get the experience, wrestling till victory came, they never would be the same. Folks would know them by their walk. Self-abasement comes after you get the vision. Paul had ancestry, -- Hebrew of the Hebrews -- but after the vision, he was less than the least of all God's people. When a person gets the vision, and the victory, he feels so unworthy that he never would force himself into a position where he ought not to be. Will you please get that? And this also, that God will get you where He wants you, no matter how small you feel. Amen! He got this man there. Isaiah saw Him on the throne, and the Triune God is on the throne today. I am as confident of victory for the cause of Christ as I am that I am alive.

Now I want you to get it, that after the confession came the fire, and not before it. "I am a man of unclean lips; I am undone." He saw himself as God saw him, after the 'confession. Say, beloved, have you the fire?

If not, Why? I remember once in a meeting where I was, a brother came to the altar and he prayed "O God, I have been secretary of the Y. M. C. A. for a number of years." I can see him yet as he knelt there and uttered those words. He never got anywhere. That was not a confession, that was a boast, and boasting never gets one anywhere. One never gets the fire until they go to the bottom, and confess "My name is Jacob," "I am a man of unclean lips; I am undone," "Lord, I am no good, I cannot talk. There is Aaron, he is a talker, but I am slow of speech. Send Aaron, Lord" -- send somebody else. God will show you your heart and you will shrink, but when your heart is cleansed, God will give you fire. It takes a clean heart to be a hot heart. We have hot heads today, but what God wants us to have and what the world needs today is men with hot hearts. Here a live coal from off the altar touches his lips -- "thy iniquity is forgiven," -- only after he made the confession. God help us now to see it!

After the fire, cheerful obedience. He heard God say, "Whom shall I send? Who will go for us?" And he said, "Here am I, Lord; send me." He did not ask where. See? Some time ago a church wrote me and asked me to send them a pastor. Please recommend us a man. You know men you know our church; you know the kind of a man that we need. So I wrote them, "There is Bro. _____, a bright young man, has a capable wife, a good preacher; write him." I also wrote and told him it was "a good church, good people, etc.," and he wrote that Beard, "How much salary do you pay? Have you a parsonage? Have you stoves, furniture? What is the prospect of support?" They wrote him that they did not want him. Do you wonder? Oh, after you have made the confession, and received the fire, you will not ask where. It will be, "Here I am; anywhere you say go, I will go." I heard a young girl at the altar, and she was boohooing at a great rate. I asked, "What is the matter?" She said through her tears, "Oh, God wants me in Africa." I said, "Well, if you know what God wants, and where He wants you, what is the good of crying? Go." I heard a young woman in Kansas praying at the altar, and her prayer was, "O God, why don't you call some girl to Africa whose mother does not need her as my mother needs me?" I heard a man testify once that when he was seeking the blessing God said, "Africa," and he said, "No." But he wanted the blessing, and he said, "Yes, Lord, Africa." He has never heard God say, "Africa," once since. I believe if it had been God who was saying "Africa," He would have sent him there. The devil can say Africa, too. God bless you, when you get the vision and the fire you will be glad to labor anywhere that He calls you, and do it cheerfully. It was after the fiery furnace that God promoted the Hebrew children. It was after the lions' den that Daniel was promoted in the confidence of the king.

The great need today is a vision of God -- Not as a third blessing, -- it comes to every one who wants to go with God. It is not to be sought. Just live where God wants you to live, and He will attend to the rest. I know a young woman who received the fire, and for two whole years God let her wash dishes, sweep the kitchen, make bread, and then when she had proved her consecration, and lived up to it -- "kitchen," if God said kitchen -- then He said, "Now go and preach my Word," and whenever that young woman does preach God blesses her, and often gives her souls. There is a world perishing, -- a hundred thousand souls going to eternity without God every day, a world perishing, a church indifferent, and the devil wise to do evil. You know what the churches are doing today. I just read in the "Methodist," of which Dr. Munhall is the editor, that the leading denomination in the United States is credited with but a fraction of one half of one per cent increase. Property to the value of four hundred and fifty million, a payroll of thirty-two million a year, over one million members, and only one half of one per cent increase according to their own statistics. The churches today are preaching the gospel of do, do, do, running to social service, and neglecting the salvation of souls. Everything today is along the line of humanitarian effort and social lines. The world will never be won for God that way; it is not His way. "Go preach the Gospel saith the Lord." The call is for men and women who are abandoned to His will and who are responding, "Here am I; send me."

Read the text again, "In the year that King Uzziah died." He knew when he got the blessing. He knew when the live coal touched his lips. Beloved, has the fire fallen on you? Have you received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? Have you been so cleansed that you are a habitation of God through the Spirit? Well, Preacher, I do not feel. It does not come by feeling. We are not going by feeling. The first term applied to the followers of Jesus Christ was "Believers," and we are the children of Abraham, and he believed God. He was the Father of the faithful, and the first time the word believe is mentioned in the Bible it is in connection with his name. He believed God and it counted. God counts faith. He does today. Lord, increase our faith!

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/george-kulp/have-you-the-vision/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net