

# Vitalising Vision

by John Ridley

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*John Ridley's sermon 'Vitalising Vision' explores the transformative power of divine vision in the face of human loss and sinfulness.*

**Duration:** 12:19

**Topics:** "Worship And Praise", "Gods Sovereignty"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of having a vision of God and eternity. He refers to a passage in Isaiah that presents a four-fold vision of Christian truth. The first vision is of the splendor and sovereignty of God, reminding people to meditate on heaven and eternity. The second vision is of the sinfulness of man, as the preacher acknowledges his own unworthiness in the presence of God. The preacher also mentions the importance of presenting the inspiration of vitalizing vision to the congregation, as it is the main spring of valor and the pulse of victory. He concludes by emphasizing the need for praise and reverence in worship, as heaven and earth belong to the Lord.

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## Transcript

Way back in 1741, a Prussian musician produced an oratorio, the like of which has never been equaled. It's supposed to be the grandest piece of music ever heard. And wherever Handel's Messiah is rendered by a grand choir, there is a response from the people.

It was written under the influence of a vision. Handel tells us he seemed to be in a trance as he was writing the Messiah, and his servant could back that up for many a time. He brought his warm or his hot dinner to his room and let it sit there, and returned hours later to find it cold and untouched.

He was in a trance. He was gripped by a vision. And when he came to the hallelujah chorus, I did think, he said, that the heavens were open and I could see the great God himself.

Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah, praise the Lord, that was what came in then upon his soul. I have written elsewhere in one of my books, and it's not a quotation, it's just something that has been warm to my heart for years. Vision is the mainspring of valor, and valor is the pulse of victory.

And I commend that to my beloved brother, for to me that vision is the mainspring of valor, courage, and valor, the pulse of victory. And it's your duty, brother, and your responsibility, to present to the people of your congregation, wants and dreams, the inspiration of vitalizing vision. You know as well as I do,

brother, that people can sit beneath the pulpit and pray.

They can sit and hear the Bible read, an open Bible, and throw off all the restraints of the word of God. And they can come to the porch of the house of prayer, and rarely support a prayer meeting. Where there's no freedom, the people can, they throw off the restraints of God and his gospel, and he's almighty, omnipotent command.

Yes, vision's the central thing. And here in the passage that we read this morning, we have a fourfold vision. I'd like you to turn back to that, the sixth chapter, of Isaiah the prophet, and you've got there a fourfold vision, capturing the great notes of the Christian truth.

And I want to introduce each one of those fourfold glimpses of vision, with a very small word. And the first is awe, awe, awe. Yes.

It's the vision of the splendor, and of the sovereignty of God, that must be presented from a true Christian platform or pulpit to the people. In the year that King Isaiah died, I saw the Lord high and lifted up, and his train filling the temple. In the year of disappointment, in the year of death, in the year of loss, when the great King Isaiah, who was marvelously helpful, he was strong, was smitten as a leper.

Perhaps that may have been when he died. I rather fancy it was when he was cast out as being king. Because he was a leper, he'd invaded the prince's office.

He'd grown proud. His heart was lifted up. He cast away the strength.

Oh, what a loss, what a sorrow to Isaiah, the prophet of redemption, that this great King Isaiah should go down and would become a leper, unclean, unclean. Yes, it's in the year of loss that we often see the vision. Oh, that vision.

It was in the year that Mrs. Josephine Butler saw the tragedy of her life. Her only girl, leaning over the balcony, unbalanced and cracked to her feet to die. Mrs. Josephine Butler, stunned and broken as any mother would be, sat in deadness until she caught the vision of four unwanted girls in London and beyond.

And she sprang up to meet the need and be a mother to the mother then. And it was in the year that Captain Alan Gardner of the Royal Navy knelt by the side of his dead wife. And he'd lost the companion that he loved.

It was in that year that he saw the vision of the ends of the earth and decided that he'd become a pioneer mission week to the far-flung coast of Patagonia, the wildest part of the world. And would lay down his life for Christ at need's way. And it was a need's way.

And he laid down his life as a martyr for Christ. It's in the year of your loss that you find suddenly a vision rising. Oh, that vision.

That vision. I saw the Lord high and lifted up and He climbed filling the temple, the smoke filling the place. I beheld it and the seraphim, the seraphim, with their six wings, two covering the feet and two covering the face and two as the wind supplies, the guardians of the throne of God.

I saw them to desire and they said, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts. The whole earth is full of His glory. And yet to hear His name tossed about by the riffraff of the day in blasphemy and curses.

The whole earth full of His glory. The flowers, the trees, the freshness of the fragrant breeze. The song of birds upon the wings.

The joy of summer and of spring. The earth full of His glory. Ah, God ruleth over all.

His kingdom is over all. His hand is on the helm of the universe. Though people do not acknowledge it.

And the little letter that Alexander Snelly rescued for us from one of the early fathers that came down into his understanding and to his hand that he could pass it on to us. Just a little scrap of a letter. And now the blessed polygraph suffered martyrdom on the seventh day before the highlands of May.

Status for greatest being proposal. Jesus Christ being king forever. And the thrill of the heart of dear Alexander Snelly.

You know it was David Garrick, the great actor, who said he would give us hundred guineas if he could only say, Oh, as Whitfield, George Whitfield, the mighty soul winner, could say it. But he couldn't. Even if he had the hundred guineas in the hand and given it to George, he couldn't say, Oh, as that great preacher could say it.

Why? Because they'd heard of George Whitfield with no entertainer except by the prisms of his illustrations. George Whitfield was a man who walked in two worlds and had eternity stamped upon his eyeballs. What a preacher.

Now have the final sword. Praise, brethren, praise Christ holy is our Lord Praise, brethren, praise What more of it fits the tongue Soon to join the angels' song While heaven and earth prolong Praise, brethren, praise That's the vision, isn't it? Oh, beloved, you have to present constantly to people who hardly ever meditate on heaven and eternity that vision of the magic of the splendor and the sovereignty of God. And then you come to the second part of this remarkable vision and it's introduced by a little word Woe, woe Why? This is the vision of the sinfulness of man.

Woe is me, cried out Isaiah Woe is me I'm a man of unclean lips and I tell in the midst of a people of unclean lips and my eyes have seen the King the Lord of hosts Oh, woe is me Yes, that brings one low And he's realized, great prophet of redemption he's realized that in the previous chapter of his message from God he's pronounced six woes on the people of Judah It's been woe to the rich and woe to the rioters woe to the poor woe to the vain woe to the proud woe to the drunk and it's easy enough for the preacher when the spirit of God is in the place and filling his heart it's easy enough for him to say

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