**April 16, 2023 Proverbs 29:17-20**

 ***From Mission to Vision***

**Scripture:** *Proverbs 29:17-20 NRSV*

*(17)Discipline your children, and they will give you rest; they will give delight to your heart. (18)Where there is no prophecy, the people cast off restraint, but happy are those who keep the law. (19)By mere words servants are not disciplined, for though they understand, they will not give heed. (20)Do you see someone who is hasty in speech? There is more hope for a fool than for anyone like that.*

**Notes:**

1. Where there is no vision, the people***perish****.*
	1. Without vision we walk toward an unspecified ***destination***,
	2. Without vision we have effort without ***outcome***.
	3. Without vision we lack alignment and ***unity***.
	4. Why would we operate without ***vision***?
2. How do I ***live*** into God's Vision?
	1. Keep ***LISTENING***.
		1. We must wait for the vision to come from ***God***.
		2. ***Wait*** for His plan in his time.
	2. Keep ***LEADING***.
		1. Face your ***fears***; choose the ***difficult*** path; ***obey***.
		2. There is no ***growth*** in the comfort zone; there is no ***comfort*** in the growth zone.
	3. Keep ***LEARNING***.
		1. If you stop learning, you stop ***growing***.
		2. Growing in ***favor*** with God, is a lifelong journey of learning and growing.
3. Shifting from Mission to Vision must be ***intentional***.
	* 1. ***Live*** into God's Vision.
		2. God has a ***vision*** for us that is beyond anything we can think, dream, or do.

**Script:**

The Church of the Nazarene is a church that prays! In 2022, from January and through Pentecost Sunday, the Church of the Nazarene in Canada and the United States came together in prayer like no other time in our history. A half-million Nazarenes were mobilized to pray for protection, direction, and revelation of the church. We called this initiative the Half-Million Mobilization. From May 1 to Pentecost Sunday in 2022, we followed along in a prayer journal with daily devotional reflections. There has been a great move of the Spirit unifying the church in its most basic function—to pray.

What is your mission? MISSION defines our purpose and gives us the "why" for everything that we do. Our MISSION as defined by Christ himself, is to make Christlike disciples in all the nations. This is why we exist. The mission always stays the same.

And this brings me to our next question what is your Vision? VISION sets the course for where we are going. It represents the dream of what could be and clarifies the goals to be accomplished. This is how we live out the mission in our generation. The vision will sometimes change.

We as a church must be a part of this mission. We must actively participate in the times of prayer. We must participate in the devotionals; and we must participate in the journals. We must dive deeper into our walk with Christ; both as a congregation and as individuals in order to fulfill our mission to win lives for Christ. Why does making the shift from Mission to Vision matter? Today we find the answer to this question in the book of Proverbs. Stand with me as we share in or passage for today Proverbs 29:17-20.

 *(17)Discipline your children, and they will give you rest; they will give delight to your heart. (18)Where there is no prophecy, the people cast off restraint, but happy are those who keep the law. (19)By mere words servants are not disciplined, for though they understand, they will not give heed. (20)Do you see someone who is hasty in speech? There is more hope for a fool than for anyone like that. Proverbs 29:17-20 NRSV*

Perhaps you did not hear the answer too my question. But if you are reading the King James Version it is very clear. *Proverbs 29:18: "Where there is no vision, the people perish" (KJV).* Without vision we walk toward an unspecified destination, like the Israelites wandering in the desert. Without vision we have effort without outcome. Without vision we lack alignment and unity. Why would we operate without vision? Sometimes we have to wait for God to reveal his vision to us. In our impatience, we tend to fall into the trap of just "doing the work" even if the appointed time has not yet come.

Over the last year, we have been praying for a fresh vision from God. John Wesley wrote, "God does nothing but by prayer, and everything with it. " Out of this prayer for God's revelation to us, a new vision has formed. What is the Vision for the church in USA/Canada? The Vision Statement for the Church of the Nazarene's USA/Canada Region is as follows:

* Mobilizing all Nazarenes in unity
* Blessing our communities
* Bringing people to Jesus
* Becoming Christlike disciples

How do I live into God's Vision for my generation? The story of young Samuel offers a way for the church to shift from Mission to Vision of God in these days. Samuel's mother, Hannah, couldn't have imagined the results of her prayer. She prayed for a child and literally gave him to the Lord. Her act of earnest crying out and her costly obedience were the beginning of a powerful change in that generation and beyond.

1 Samuel 3:1-10: "Meanwhile, the boy Samuel served the LORD by assisting Eli. Now in those days messages from the LORD were very rare, and visions were quite uncommon. One night Eli, who was almost blind by now, had gone to bed. The lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was sleeping in the Tabernacle near the Ark of God. Suddenly the LORD called out, 'Samuel!' 'Yes?' Samuel replied. 'What is it?' He got up and ran to Eli. 'Here I am. Did you call me?' 'l didn't call you,' Eli replied. 'Go back to bed.' So he did. Then the LORD called out again, 'Samuel!' Again Samuel got up and went to Eli. 'Here I am. Did you call me?' 'l didn't call you, my son,' Eli said. 'Go back to bed.' Samuel did not yet know the LORD because he had never had a message from the LORD before. So the LORD called a third time, and once more Samuel got up and went to Eli. 'Here I am. Did you call me?' Then Eli realized it was the LORD who was calling the boy. So he said to Samuel, 'Go and lie down again, and if someone calls again, say, "Speak, LORD, your servant is listening. "' So Samuel went back to bed. And the LORD came and called as before, 'Samuel! Samuel!' And Samuel replied, 'Speak, your servant is listening."'

Keep LISTENING. The vision has to come from God. We must wait for the vision to come from him. His plan in his time. Eli got himself in trouble because he didn't listen.

1 Samuel 3:11-18: "Then the LORD said to Samuel, 'l am about to do a shocking thing in Israel. I am going to carry out all my threats against Eli and his family, from beginning to end. I have warned him that judgment is coming upon his family forever, because his sons are blaspheming God and he hasn't disciplined them. So I have vowed that the sins of Eli and his sons will never be forgiven by sacrifices or offerings. Samuel stayed in bed until morning, then got up and opened the doors of the Tabernacle as usual. He was afraid to tell Eli what the LORD had said to him. But Eli called out to him, 'Samuel, my son.' 'Here I am,' Samuel replied. 'What did the LORD say to you? Tell me everything. And may God strike you and even kill you if you hide anything from me!' So Samuel told Eli everything; he didn't hold anything back. 'It is the LORD's will,' Eli replied. 'Let him do what he thinks best. "'

Keep LEADING. Don't hold anything back! Samuel had to face his fears and speak the truth to Eli. You will need to face your fears. You will need to choose the difficult path. You will need to obey.

There is no growth in the comfort zone. There is no comfort in the growth zone.

1 Samuel 3:19-21: "As Samuel grew up, the LORD was with him, and everything Samuel said proved to be reliable. And all Israel, from Dan in the north to Beersheba in the south, knew that Samuel was confirmed as a prophet of the LORD. The LORD continued to appear at Shiloh and gave messages to Samuel there at the Tabernacle. "

Keep LEARNING. If you stop learning, you stop growing.

First Samuel 2:26 says, "Meanwhile, the boy Samuel grew taller and grew in favor with the LORD and with the people." Samuel had not arrived . . . he continued to grow in favor with God and people. It was a lifelong journey of learning and growing.

Shifting from Mission to Vision must be intentional. You will need to identify the opportunities God is giving you to fulfill His mission for your life.

* Mobilizing all Nazarenes in unity—Am I actively engaging in God's vision for his church?
* Blessing our communities—How can I be a blessing to my community?
* Bringing people to Jesus—Who in my life is desperate for the hope of Jesus?
* Becoming Christlike disciples— What step out of my comfort zone is God asking me to take?

How do I live into God's Vision for my generation?

* Keep Listening.
* Keep Leading.
* Keep Learning.

Our dreams and visions are not limited by our own imaginations. God has a vision for us that is beyond anything we can think, dream, or do. We are relying on God to actively work in his unlimited power to bring us where he wants us to be for his glory.

Ephesians 3:20-21: "Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think. Glory to him in the church and in Christ Jesus through all generations forever and ever! Amen."

Closing Prayer: Father, we praise your name. Give us courage to dream kingdom-size dreams and to trust that you will do more than we can ever imagine. May everything we do be for your glory alone.