

Phineas F. Bresee Sermon Notes - Isaiah 60:5, Acts 2:17

Every attempt has been made to transcribe these notes accurately. Indecipherable text appears in brackets [-]. Abbreviations transcribed as they appear in the notes.

Isaiah LX:5 Then thou shall see

Acts II:17 Shall see visions

Thou shalt see – shall see visions. It is not my desire or purpose to isolate these words from their environment or to break the trend of the onward march of thought & power that comes along the highway of which they are a part, but to lay hold of them and be [force] by them on to the experiences & power of which they speak & to which they lead the way. Though one is in the Old Testament & the other in the New Testament they are both one. They are both promises that men shall see & put together they complement & complete each other. Seeing is the first necessary thing. Whether it be physical, mental or spiritual, seeing is first. We see that we may receive. That we may lay hold of. That we may advance. In both of these texts seeing is to an end. "Thou shalt see & flow together & thine heart shall fear or throb & be enlarged." The young men shall see visions that these may be dreams or experience & the preaching of the things seen & known. It might seem as if it were for a class of young men. But this simply means the first side of this experience. The front side. There are two sides. The one side is that of discovery of beholding of seeing. The other is the things seen melting through that gaze into experience. Heart throbs, strength of life, liquid glory, enlargement of love & being. Ministry to men. This is the beginning of the fulfillment of the promise of promises. Of the blessing of blessings. It is hardly necessary that I give expression to the fear that very much if so called Christian life is little more than in name. That men & women are so absorbed with the things which deck the outer court. That they know little of the sweet mysteries of the vision of God. These texts lead us forward they [lure] us onward; they lift the veil that our feet may tread the inner sanctuary. Thou shalt see – shall see visions. There is no attempt to describe what is seen. Thou shalt see – every one for himself. There is a vision to which utterance has never been given. There is a picture which has never been painted. There is music which has never been sung. Thou shalt see, thou shalt know the picture for thyself. Some of its effects are stated. Some of the things which flow from it are hinted at. But that vision has never been told. You may long to tell it but it has in it unutterable words. Every man must see it for himself. Must gaze into it in his own personal intensity & be transformed by it from glory to glory by the Spirit of the Lord. We know that it is the vision of the Lord. There is but one picture which the Holy Ghost paints upon the canvas of the soul. There is but one great fact from which he lifts the veil and that is Jesus Christ. He leads forth into all truth as you lead a child forth into the sunshine. But he takes of the things of Christ & shows them unto us. He reveals the living Christ. Not a dead Christ. Romanism makes the mistake of taking the crucifix for her emblem. She puts the crucifix everywhere. Set before living & dying is the vision of a dead Christ. The dead Christ is not the vision of the Holy Ghost, but Christ alive. Christ in glory. Christ who was dead & is alive again & is alive forevermore & has the keys of destiny. Paul to whom the heavenly vision had come – declared that he did not know Him after the flesh. He did not know him in the environments of His mortality. His vision was of the wonderful Counselor. Mighty God. Everlasting Father. Prince of Peace. The vision of the Christ is not a mere incident. It comes into the life as the greatest fact, the one all absorbing all controlling all infilling fact. There is much lack of clear thought in reference to this. Many seem to have no clearer thought than that a casual glance towards things religious will be of value. That they can be absorbed in the world and turn aside a little to the house of worship and in some way it will be what they need. They say or seem to say religion & churches are good things and I patronize them. I help

support them. I attend them somewhat. But I am not narrow and shut up to these things. I like a good opera and a rendering of Shakespeare & I am a very busy man of the world &c. I do not wait to discuss those who tread the open way where the seed is so soon trodden under foot of men, only to say that to such the sweet visions of the King never came. There is a way that leads to the place of vision. The beginning of that way is a proper estimate of Jesus Christ. I say proper. I use that word in such limited sense as is possible to a man fixing his gaze upon Him. This estimate may not have come to him all at once. He has come to see that in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. That He is the Redeemer of the world. The Prince of the four names. That He is Immanuel. That the government is upon His shoulders. That His name is Jesus because He saves His people from their sins. That He is the center of all history & the remedy for all the ills of society. More than this He died for me, still more He lives for me. There will be an intellectual & a kind of moral perception of all this & there will be surrender to Him & faith in Him & devotement of life to Him. There is now an absorbing interest in Him. All other things are of very moderate interest. All things which do not lead to Him are of little value & come to be discarded. This is the beginning of the way to the place of vision. Much has gone before this but the real vision is not yet. There has been the call. The sound of His voice. The offer of His atoning grace. The begetting in us of a great fear of eternal loss. A great sorrow for sin. A surrender at His feet. Pardon from His lips. Somewhat of sweet communion with Him. A realization of the disloyalty, of carnality & the yielding ourselves to Him to have it taken away. There has come the gracious work through the baptism with the Holy Ghost. There have been flashes of light and glimpses of His glory all the way. Growing brighter as one epoch after another has been reached. But now we are invited to His presence. The veil is taken away & we are permitted to begin to see the manifestation of His glory. You are ready - somewhat prepared to see Jesus Christ. Not as an idle observer. He sees nothing. But to gaze in soul passion upon Him. You will see Him now with open vision. You will see Him in His saints. How the lives of His holy ones as they [having] in the eyes shine & sparkle. No literature like that which tells of the transforming power of Jesus' presence in the hearts & lives of men & women. You stand before their completed record & the open heavens which have received them & words & adore. You see the shining faces of the blood washed about you & then the transforming glory shining through. You see Him in His sacred word. There is a strange light on its pages, there is a strange halo about its letters. There is a strange glory shining through it all. As I gaze it takes the form of His face - marred, glorious. There is a strange form in your inner soul, walking with your own real self like the form of the fourth in the furnace. You have the [consciousness] that within you is a new holy personality. That He lives & reigns within & pours such streams of life through all your being. And now He so fully has you & your attention that you can mediate upon Him & through this continued gaze in the light of the Holy Ghost begin to behold Him. You gaze in meditation. This is no ordinary thing. It is scarcely possible in men in ordinary conditions. It puts away the things about us. Puts back the things which [press] us. No wonder that Michel Angelo painted the Prophets in heroic [world] they meditated & they must have been athletes in good training to have trod this way until before their gaze the infinite marvels were uncovered. It is different from study. It does not demand things gathered from the outer world. It does not employ the familiar methods of reasoning. It does not follow the paths of least resistance. It faces all obstacles & presses resolutely towards the goal. Men can scarce mediate unless they realize that God is nigh & the over-arching verities of eternal things are all about us. Few men seemingly have faith enough to meditate. Just enough to study to gather facts & make guesses. But he who feels that God is nigh, saying peace be still, and is mirroring Himself in the depths of the soul. Such [in] one will come to see His matchless beauty. To such [a] one comes the vision of the Christ & he is transformed into the same

likeness. From glory to glory by the Spirit of the Lord. There is a transmitting power which comes along that gaze.

During the Middle Ages amid the corruption & the darkness. When the Word of the Lord was precious because of its scarcity. There were a few who shut up with God heard the voice & came where they gazed with divinely inspired intensity & were changed into the Christly image. Such is Bernard, who gazed until he sang with such illumination of Jerusalem the Golden, and [Johannes Tauler] of 14th century who coming forth from his [university] life with rare eloquence so preached that he awakened much interest and a humble layman went far to hear him & made him his [companion] and told him of his lack of spiritual life & power. And he went to his monastery and prayed for two years becoming an object of ridicule to his friends until the vision of God was on his soul & the fire touched his lips & he went forth to lead men to God. And Madam Guyon notwithstanding her mysteriousness and errors of theological belief – notably – that God could never purify a soul but by inward & outward suffering – yet she saw the King. There was earnestness & intensity & passion under the cleansing blood.

Please note: the original has lines through the first paragraph)

~~In the church of Santa Croce of Florence on the north wall of chapel Giotto painted the death bed scene of St. Francis. By his couch are the eleven brethren stooping down – some kissing the marks in his hands & feet. The artist having transferred the generally uncredited statement to canvas that he had by his intense gaze transferred to his own body the marks of stigmatic from the crucified Christ.~~

Through the gaze of thy soul thou shalt put on the very image of Jesus. Thou shalt eat of his flesh & drink of His blood & be transformed into His likeness. It shall be through the spirit & act of prayer. Intense earnest meditation might [arise] in art or poetry but would not uncover His face. Meditation in impassioned prayer beholds Him. The way of prophesy & triumphant transforming prayer is not an easy way but it is the way of glory. As we see Him we learn to pray in His name. We are one with Him. We are united with Him in His passion. Made partakers with Him of His sufferings. Filling out the measure necessary to reach a lost world & stand clothed with His personality to ask in His name.

The following stamps are on the last page of handwritten sermon notes:

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The following is handwritten across the middle of the last page under the stamps:

The visions of the Redeemed

End of notes