

Casting Vision

If you want to build a ship don't herd people together to collect wood and don't assign them tasks and work, but rather teach them to long for the endless immensity of the sea.

- Antoine de Saint-Exupery –

Proverbs 29.18

New International Version: Where there is no revelation, people cast off restraint; but blessed is the one who heeds wisdom's instruction.

New Living Translation: When people do not accept divine guidance, they run wild. But whoever obeys the law is joyful.

English Standard Version: Where there is no prophetic vision the people cast off restraint, but blessed is he who keeps the law.

"Without a Progressive Vision, We Dwell Carelessly"

A meditation by Steve Brewer, posted April 17, 2011

These words penetrated me years ago. They came from a song that I first heard in a black church in Rochester, New York in the early 1970s. The song was powerful, but the message that followed by Paul Garlington was even more powerful. The gist of the message was that Christianity isn't a life that's thrown at you and just happens to you, but instead, it's a visionary life. You've been designed with natural interests and talents in life. Within those natural talents, God has a vision for you, and from that vision will develop a mission.

That mission might not necessarily be "religious." It might be medical, legal, engineering, teaching, administrative or whatever, but its roots will be from God. And if you follow what God designed you for, you will find great fulfillment in whatever you pursue because you will have vision, you will have mission, and you will find achievement. That type of achievement will have fulfillment rather than regret.

That doesn't mean life will be pain-free or without challenge. You will likely find times when you feel like you've accomplished nothing, but if you spend time before God and really seek him for your personal vision, you will find your vision. As you meditate on this vision that you've been designed for, you will find your mission, and from there you will be able to lay out your plans for achievement.

The lyrics to the simple song I refer to in the title are below. The tune was simple but catchy. I wish I could find a recording of it.

*Lift your vision high; we're in a way we've never been before.
Lift your vision higher, and you will see the glory of the Lord.*

*For without a progressive vision we dwell carelessly.
Without a progressive vision we dwell carelessly.
So lift your vision higher, and you will see the glory of the Lord.*

Be Thou My Vision

Direct English translation by Mary Byrne (1905)

Be thou my vision O Lord of my heart
None other is aught but the King of the seven heavens.

Be thou my meditation by day and night.
May it be thou that I behold even in my sleep.

Be thou my speech, be thou my understanding.
Be thou with me, be I with thee

Be thou my father, be I thy son.
Mayst thou be mine, may I be thine.

Be thou my battle-shield, be thou my sword.
Be thou my dignity, be thou my delight.

Be thou my shelter, be thou my stronghold.
Mayst thou raise me up to the company of the angels.

Be thou every good to my body and soul.
Be thou my kingdom in heaven and on earth.

Be thou solely chief love of my heart.
Let there be none other, O high King of Heaven.

English version by Eleanor Hull (1912)

Be Thou my Vision, O Lord of my heart;
Naught be all else to me, save that Thou art.
Thou my best Thought, by day or by night,
Waking or sleeping, Thy presence my light.

Be Thou my Wisdom, and Thou my true Word;
I ever with Thee and Thou with me, Lord;
Thou my great Father, I Thy true son;
Thou in me dwelling, and I with Thee one.

Be Thou my battle Shield, Sword for the fight;
Be Thou my Dignity, Thou my Delight;
Thou my soul's Shelter, Thou my high Tower:
Raise Thou me heavenward, O Power of my power.

Riches I heed not, nor man's empty praise,
Thou mine Inheritance, now and always:
Thou and Thou only, first in my heart,
High King of Heaven, my Treasure Thou art.

High King of Heaven, my victory won,
May I reach Heaven's joys, O bright Heaven's Sun!
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
Still be my Vision, O Ruler of all.

Till I am able to pass into thy hands,
My treasure, my beloved through the greatness of thy love

Be thou alone my noble and wondrous estate.
I seek not men nor lifeless wealth.

Be thou the constant guardian of every possession and
every life.
For our corrupt desires are dead at the mere sight of thee.

Thy love in my soul and in my heart --
Grant this to me, O King of the seven heavens.

O King of the seven heavens grant me this --
Thy love to be in my heart and in my soul.

With the King of all, with him after victory won by piety,
May I be in the kingdom of heaven O brightness of the son.

Beloved Father, hear, hear my lamentations.
Timely is the cry of woe of this miserable wretch.

O heart of my heart, whatever befall me,
O ruler of all, be thou my vision.

Alternate English version by Eleanor Hull (1912)

Be Thou my Vision, O Lord of my heart;
Be all else but naught to me, save that Thou art;
Be Thou my best thought in the day and the night,
Both waking and sleeping, Thy presence my light.

Be Thou my Wisdom, and Thou my true Word;
Be Thou ever with me, and I with Thee, Lord;
Be Thou my great Father, and I Thy true son;
Be Thou in me dwelling, and I with Thee one.

Be Thou my Breastplate, my Sword for the fight;
Be Thou my whole Armor, be Thou my true Might;
Be Thou my soul's Shelter, be Thou my strong Tow'r,
O raise Thou me heav'nward, great Pow'r of my pow'r.

Riches I heed not, nor man's empty praise;
Be Thou mine inheritance, now and always;
Be Thou and Thou only the first in my heart,
O high King of heaven, my Treasure Thou art.

High King of heaven, Thou heaven's bright Sun,
O grant me its joys, after vict'ry is won;
Great Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
Still be Thou my vision, O Ruler of all.