

The Vision - Myopic or Far-Sighted

If we are going to nurture a vision we need to check upon our sight and it presupposes that we have a future for which to nurture that vision. So what is MU's future? The bad news is that we are not changing fast enough to survive. The good news is that we are living longer so we will still be hanging around for a while. So we have to ask ourselves do we have a long sighted vision of service and adaptation or a short-sighted and selfish one that will keep everything just the way we like it.

People who make predictions about the future often get it wildly wrong. In the 19th Century there were dire predictions that London would sink beneath a mountain of horse manure. But a futurologist called Faith Popcorn got the rise and rise of the credit card right. Technology will be significant but children's use of technology far outstrips their parents' ability to control it. On the BBC World Service it was reported that 70% of children who have mobiles have used it to text sexually explicit numbers. How do we help parents to address such issues? We now speak about values instead of morality. We have large sections of the news now devoted to finance. We face globalisation and the clash of cultures, a concern for the environment and swelling numbers of refugees all over the world.

Visions have to be related to what is pleasing to God. Proverbs 29:28 says, *Where there is no vision the people perish.* The vision here related to the revelation of God's Word to his people and interestingly, from an MU point of view, the verse occurs in the context of teaching on family and parenting.

Mary Sumner's vision, "winning the families of the nations for Christ" holds for us today as much as in her own day because it is in accordance with God's purposes. But the way it is carried out may vary.

Does your MU diocese or branch give flesh to this vision in the way it operates?

Usually? Often? Sometimes? Occasionally? Never? Be honest!

So when we talk about nurturing a vision do we really have one? Sometimes although we have a vision the way can be shrouded by fog. The fog can be caused by our own ignorance or it can be caused by fear of the world and the future. Be encouraged with the words of Hebrews 13: 8

Jesus Christ the same yesterday today and forever.

In this passage the author refers to leaders who have gone before and shown the way. But Mary Sumner is long gone. Many of our loved mentors are gone. But Jesus is always with us unchanging. Yesterday he suffered on our behalf to save us from judgment. Today he represents his people as a high priest in the presence of God - a high priest who is able to sympathise with our weaknesses because he was in all points tempted like we are. This Jesus is the same forever as he lives to make intercession for us, so why should we lose heart. He never needs replacing and nothing can be added to his perfect work. Knowing this one whom we serve gives us great hope and strength for nurturing the vision but only in so far as we are seeking to serve Him and not ourselves.

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