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: **ENGAGING**

 UNION UNIVERSITY
BULLETIN

The Union University *Bulletin* is a bi-monthly publication designed to equip church leaders.

EditorCharles A. Fowler, Ph.D.
Vice President for
Development & Church Relations
ContributorsTodd E. Brady, M.Div.
Terry McRoberts, D.A.
Harry L. Poe, Ph.D.
Ray Van Neste, Ph.D.

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WORSHIPPING

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There is no specific section on vision in our hymnal. Therefore, how do we plan a worship service on vision? One can find some initial help under the heading “Holy Spirit.” This is perfectly logical, since He is with us, and can give us new vision daily. Naturally, one could also find hymns that relate to specific points in the sermon.

Three other hymns that might not come to mind immediately are “More About Jesus,” “Teach Me, O Lord, I Pray,” and “We Praise You with Our Minds, O Lord.” Some of you may immediately think that two of these are unfamiliar, and your keyboard musicians probably could not learn them quickly enough. If singing them is not feasible, the text could still be used in the service. You could read the text, you could have a skilled reader from the congregation read the text, or the congregation could read the text in unison. From “Teach Me, O Lord, I Pray” comes the text: “Lead me to understand Your Word And make its precepts mine. Impart Your wisdom, Lord, Shed light upon my way, That I may know Your boundless love; Teach me, O Lord, I pray.” What a vision for us as Christians to know God’s word and receive God’s wisdom.

For those using the 1975 or 1956 hymnal, a wonderful hymn on vision is “Holy Sprit, Light Divine.” From the first verse, we have the words: “Holy Spirit, Light divine, Shine upon this heart of mine; Chase the shade of night away, Turn my darkness into day.” As maturing Christians, we would all hope that the light of God’s wisdom would take away the darkness of evil from our lives.

How does the believer receive a vision from the Lord? It seems to me that we must be listening to hear what God has to say to us. Therefore, it seems appropriate that we would have a time of silence in a worship service on vision. For those of you who feel that total silence would not work for your congregation, you could have your organist play a soft, contemplative selection. It would be best if this is a selection that the congregation does not know. If the congregation knows the selection, their thoughts will follow the words that fit the music. If your organist only plays hymns, there are plenty of hymns in the hymnal that your congregation does not know that are accessible to musicians of any ability. The silence does not need to be long, and should be preceded by something that focuses the worshiper’s attention on listening to



Church Life; a Collection of Historic Baptist Documents which contains some recent essays and historic writings from Southern Baptists on how we should structure our churches. Chapters of this book can also be viewed online at the website just mentioned above.

I hope these resources can be of some help as you prepare for the Winter Bible Study or help others to do so. 1-2 Timothy speak strongly to the church in our day, and this will be a wonderful opportunity for us to prayerfully hear their message. ^

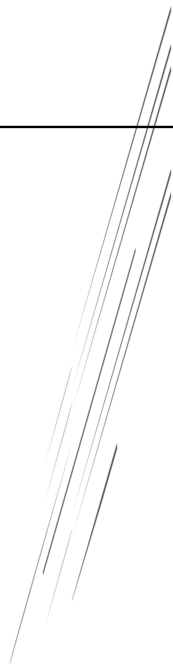
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And because of this I rejoice" (1:18). While such duplicitous preachers clearly reveal that it is possible to do the right thing for the wrong reasons, Paul steps up and clarifies what the real issue is – the preaching of Christ. He refuses to be distracted by what other preachers are doing. It does not matter to him how they are going about their preaching. Paul's godly vision keeps him focused on what *"the important thing is"* (1:18).

Church leaders must stay focused on what is important, not allowing themselves to get caught up in the fray of circumstances which ultimately do not matter. The demands of leadership are many. The wide and complex nature of church leadership means that ministers often experience a multitude of circumstances,

both positive and negative. Like Paul though, it is essential to have a godly vision that sees as God intends. It is only this kind of vision that will enable one to look beyond the many circumstances of life and on to those few things which are really important.

Godly ministry takes place through those who are committed to godly leadership. Godly leadership is possible only when a person maintains true and godly vision, staying focused on what is important and seeing things as God sees them. It was this kind of vision that sustained Paul and kept him motivated even in the middle of dreadful circumstances. Today, this godly vision is still essential for godly living. May such vision be obvious among those who lead God's people.



Greetings from Union University! I trust all is well with you and your ministry. The opportunity to serve Christ through the local church is a great blessing. I draw great encouragement from Matthew 5:16 which reads, "*Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.*"