

Sermon Topic: Diminishing Vision
Sermon Text: Proverbs 29:18, Hebrews 12:2

1. One sign of aging is poor vision (both physical and spiritual)

- We begin to lose sight of God's vision for our lives, a sign that we are aging spiritually.
- Our memory becomes bigger than our dreams.
- When we lose sight of our vision, we lose sight of the purpose of our God-given life.
- Proverbs 29.18 - where there is no vision (young and old), the people cast off restraint; and blessed is the one who heeds wisdom's instructions.

2. Spiritual vision

- Assess our vision. Do we get distracted easily and settle for short term gratification?
- God has a destiny He wants to fulfil in our lives. He has a purpose for us in life. What is His purpose for you?

3. Factors in life that will affect our spiritual vision.

- eg. Caleb whom asked God to "give me this mountain". He asked for Hebron at 85, Hebron was bigger than the red sea experience.
- Caleb never gave up hope that he can be useful to God at his old age. He was focused, he kept pursuing God for his Hebron.
- What about you? What is your Hebron? What is your passion? Focus your eyes on God and He'll refine your vision of what God is calling you to do. Never say you are too old:
 - Though outwardly we are wasting away, inwardly we are being renewed everyday.
 - Not by might, not by power but by the Holy Spirit. So do not lose heart.
- Age is not a factor coz God uses us no matter how old we are.

4. How to regain 20/20 Spiritual Vision?

- a Divine Truth – Remember Our Identity in Christ (John 1:12)
 - Caleb remembered the God of his youth, he reassured who he was in God.
 - Our identity is in Christ, sons and daughters in God
- b Nurturing Relationships - Love God & Others (Matt 22: 37 -39)
 - Loving God renews us inwardly everyday
 - Remain in Him, so that we might bear fruit. Fruit of the spirit, in ministry, in evangelism
 - To stay renewed, wait upon on the Lord
 - As we nurture our relationship with God, we stay connected with God. So that we will not stray away from God, to hear God, to help the people around us.
 - Take the word of God to reflect upon our attitude, our actions and our words. So that the Holy Spirit can deal with the negative energy in our life.

- Apostolic Mission
 - As we remember our identity and nurture our relationships, our awareness of our apostolic calling will grow.
 - Apostolic calling - we are all called to be light of the world, salt of the earth. It is a calling on all believers, not just for a pastor or a missionary.
 - We are also called to be a sign post (wonder) to point people to God. Point people to the Way, Truth & Life.
 - No matter our age, God is not done with us yet. He has a purpose in our lives no matter what stage we are in our lives now.

Discussion Questions

1. What have you done to keep God's vision before you?

2. What do you think made it possible for Caleb to keep his zeal for the Lord from youthfulness to old age? (Read the extra article provided for you below)

3. How will you fix your eyes on Jesus today and the weeks ahead?

Question: "Who is Caleb in the Bible?"

Answer: The story of Caleb, a faithful man of God, begins in the book of Numbers. After being delivered from bondage in Egypt, the Israelites were led by God to the border of the land of Canaan, a land “flowing with milk and honey” that God had promised they would inherit (Exodus 3:8, 17). Moses had chosen twelve men, one from each tribe, to scout the land before entering. Among them was Caleb, representing the tribe of Judah. The twelve men spied out the land for forty days and then came back to Moses. They reported that the land was indeed fruitful but its inhabitants were the mighty descendants of Anak. Terrified by the size and strength of the Canaanites, ten of the spies warned Moses not to enter Canaan (Numbers 13:23–33).

Caleb silenced the murmuring, fearful men by saying, “We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it” (Numbers 13:30). Caleb took his stand because he followed the Lord wholeheartedly (Joshua 14:8–9). Caleb knew of the promises of God to the Israelites, and, despite the evidence of his own eyes regarding the obstacles, he had faith that God would give them victory over the Canaanites.

Unfortunately, the people of Israel ignored Caleb and listened to the report of the other spies. They were so frightened that they wept all night and even wished they had died at the hands of their slave masters in Egypt (Numbers 14:1–4). They turned on Caleb and Joshua (the spy from Ephraim) and wanted to stone them on the spot (Numbers 14:6–10). God was exceedingly angry with the people and threatened to destroy them until Moses interceded for them. God relented, but He decreed that the people would wander in the wilderness until all of that faithless generation had died. But God said that “my servant Caleb has a different spirit and follows me wholeheartedly” and gave him the promise that he would own all the land he had seen as a spy (Numbers 14:11–24).

The Israelites wandered in the wilderness for forty years until all of that generation, except Joshua and Caleb, died (Numbers 14:29–30). After the forty years of wandering and five more years of war within Canaan, Caleb was 85 years old; yet he was as strong as ever and able to fight the same Anakites that had frightened his countrymen. His confidence was born out of his absolute faith in the promises of God (Joshua 15:13–14).

Caleb’s territory in Canaan included “Kiriath Arba, that is, Hebron. (Arba was the forefather of Anak.) From Hebron Caleb drove out the three Anakites—Sheshai, Ahiman and Talmai, the sons of Anak. From there he marched against the people living in Debir (formerly called Kiriath Sepher)” (Joshua 15:13–15). Othniel, a nephew of Caleb, captured Kiriath Sepher and was given Caleb’s daughter Aksah to wed (verses 16–17). Later, Aksah asked her father to include some springs of water as part of her inheritance (verses 18–19), and Caleb gave them to her. Later still, Othniel, Caleb’s son-in-law, became Israel’s first judge (Judges 3:7–11).

From the accounts of the life of Caleb, we see a faithful man who trusted God to fulfill His promises when others allowed their fears to override their small faith. Even into his later years, Caleb remained steadfast in his faith. God blessed Caleb for his faithfulness and patience, an encouragement to us to believe God. Like Caleb, we should be prepared to follow God in every circumstance, patiently waiting for Him to fulfill His promises and ready to take action when the time is right.

(Taken from gotquestions.org)