

VISION SUNDAY 2024

Pastor Tom Gang

Jeremiah 29:13

Special Vision Message

Every year we have a *spiritual* _____ or overall *goal* to achieve as individuals and as a local church. It's important that it be easily understood and clearly articulated in writing so that every member can run with it in order to succeed (Hab. 2:1-3). This year's vision, at first glance, may seem intangible or vague but when understood can *move* our relationship with God _____ in a more personal and meaningful way. It is effortless for us living in a material world to identify with things we can touch and feel, purposes and goals that can be achieved, and experience efforts that produce forthcoming results. Yet, as believers we are living for another world, an _____ realm where eternity replaces the temporal, where faith surpasses sight. As we peer into this place may our hearts and minds *Draw Nearer to God*.

DRAW NEARER TO GOD – JEREMIAH 29:13

1. Our church – a fair description, not without problems

- a. Sincere and kind-hearted, _____, and genuine...
- b. Hard working, volunteer spirit, teachable...
- c. Sincere desire to bring glory to God...

2. Our 2024 Vision – *Draw nearer to God*

a. What it means:

- Before we start and/or end our day we spend time with God

It does not have to be a lot of time—it can be, or not

During this time we are not necessarily asking or petitioning God for anything—we can, or not

During this time we are communicating our *thankfulness* to God for ...

During this time we seek to be closer to him and talk to him *as our Father and friend*

Communicate to him in such a way that is not always objective but to seek a *personal* connection

At this time we read our Bible, not for information or knowledge, but to *know him, to hear his voice*

Sometimes we just need to be *quiet*— calm in our heart and mind, listening for his still small voice

- When dealing with the issues of life, we develop a habit to seek God

As difficulties arise, go to him in prayer *first* before we seek counsel or advice from others

When bearing deep burdens we call out to him *first* before we share them with others

When we experience benefits and pleasures in life, we thank God *first* before moving forward

When faced with big or even small decisions we *first* choose to get God's counsel

When our heart is full of grief or joy we *first* choose to commune with God

- As we experience the daily issues of life—*draw nearer to God*
 We *draw nearer* by personally talking to him in prayer
 We *draw nearer* by listening to him through introspective scripture reading
 It is not based on the amount of time spent but rather on the personal quiet time with him

b. Related scriptures to _____ upon

- Key chapters: Psalm 73; 84; 145
- Key verses: Psalm 73:28; 84:2; 145:18
- Important cross references: Psalm 27:4; 34:18; 63:1; 105:4; Proverbs 8:17; Isaiah 55:6; Lamentations 3:25; Colossians 3:1-4; Hebrews 11:6; James 4:8
- The example of two women, both friends of Jesus – Luke 10:38-42
 Choose the one thing that is needful—it is that _____ part, which shall not be taken away

c. Seeing this vision practically worked out

- Focusing on the *how*
 Corporately as a local church:
 Our pastors and leaders will remind us of the need and value of *closeness* with God
 We will have an increase in prayer during assemblies and special initiatives
 We will have our leaders add more intentional prayer to ministry related gatherings

 Personally as an individual believer:
 Seek to pray with *passion* to know the person of God
 Increase prayer and scripture reading with family members
 Seek God *first* in all your circumstances and decisions

NEXT WEEK: METHODS OF BIBLE *STUDY* – PART THREE

God's use of key words and phrases