

VISION 1:8

Vision Judea

TEXT: Acts 1:8, 6:1, 15:1-2

INTRODUCTION: I have been looking forward to sharing these messages with you for a long time, messages about the further development of the Acts 1:8 strategy for St. Andrew Baptist Church.

Acts 1:8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

The first part of this vision was **VISION JERUSALEM**. Since we all start in our Jerusalem, let me remind you of what the Lord has put upon my heart, and I see Him confirming it to your hearts as well

I. GOD WANTS TO EXPAND OUR JERUSALEM MINISTRIES OF CARING FOR PEOPLE AND EVANGELIZING THEM BY ADDING MINISTRIES THAT WILL HELP THEM BECOME DISCIPLES OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

We need to become the Center of Hope for the hopeless.

II. THE EXPANSION OF OUR JERUSALEM MINISTRIES WILL REQUIRE THAT WE PROVIDE LARGER AND BETTER FACILITIES FOR THOSE MINISTRIES.

If we are to become the Center of Hope for the hopeless, then we need a Center of Hope Building in which we can minister to our Jerusalem.

1. In December, we complete our present capital stewardship commitments.
2. We have already said that we will start another capital stewardship campaign to finish paying for the Student Center and the Kid Zone.
3. I will propose to the church that as we begin the follow-up campaign to pay for those buildings, that we also provide through that campaign the money necessary for the building and equipping of the St. Andrew Baptist Church Center of Hope.

Then I told you how God surprised me with the news that we were being given the property across the street from our Jerusalem Ministries – 3 buildings, about 14,000 sq ft of space total.

We will need to do considerable remodeling to be able to use the buildings for our purposes and make it look like it is an integral part of our church campus. But the cost of that will be hundreds of thousands of dollars less than if we were building a new building from scratch.

III. THE GIFT OF THIS PROPERTY IS CONFIRMATION THAT THIS IS GOD'S WILL AND DIRECTION FOR ST. ANDREW BAPTIST CHURCH.

Now let me tell you something. Your reaction to this news was no different than mine. When I learned of this gift from God I could not quit rejoicing and thanking God for the building. The same for you. That's all I heard this week.

But I must remember, and you must remember. The buildings are a gift from God for us to use to make disciples.

We will

- **feed the hungry,**
- **clothe those in need,**
- **help young mothers,**
- **give medical care to the poor,**

because Jesus did all these things, and told us to do them also.

But none of these things were the primary purpose for which Jesus came to this earth. Feeding the hungry, clothing people, helping the hurting, healing the sick were all things He did on the way to accomplishing the purpose for which He came. Because Jesus said

Luke 19:10 for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."

And feeding the hungry, clothing people, helping the hurting, healing the sick is not our primary purpose either. If that is all we do, we accomplish very little because most of the people will be hungry again in a week or a month, the clothes we give them will wear out, they will have new hurts that need soothing, and new illnesses needing cures. And if that is all we do, most of them will step into eternity and fall immediately into hell, and the sufferings they endured in this world will be instantly and forever forgotten. Their hunger, nakedness, emotional distress, and terminal illness will be as nothing in

comparison to the one thing that matters: their name was not found written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

Jesus said, "Be a witness to Me."

Jesus said, "Make disciples."

God has given us the buildings as a tool – to make disciples.

We will refurbish the buildings to make them the best tools possible – to make disciples.

Now let us look at **VISION JUDEA**.

I. OUR JUDEA IS FLORIDA AND THE GULF COAST.

A. Disaster Relief

I had planned to use this time to tell you about our Judea mission ministries, the largest of which is our Disaster Relief Ministry, which can be a mission in right here in our Jerusalem, anywhere in our Samaria, or even to the end of the earth.

God has enabled our DR ministry with a trailer that is well equipped for chain saw and mud out work. We have more than 40 people trained and certified to work DR., and this is a place that there is always room for more to join the team.

But I am not going to spend time here because I believe God has spoken a warning to my heart that I feel compelled to share with you. It comes right out of the Book of Acts and the story of the first Baptist Church of Jerusalem doing Acts 1:8 missions.

II. WHEN THE JERUSALEM CHURCH BEGAN DOING MISSIONS, THE UNITY OF THE FELLOWSHIP WAS THREATENED.

A. When the church started feeding widows, some folks got stirred up because they thought the widows they knew weren't getting as much food as other widows.

Acts 6:1 Now in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a complaint against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution.

B. When the church spread into the next step of missions by supporting the new church planted at Antioch, dissension and dispute broke out in the mission.

Acts 15:1-2 ¹ And certain *men* came down from Judea and taught the brethren, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved." ² Therefore, when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and dispute with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain others of them should go up to Jerusalem, to the apostles and elders, about this question.

For the last six years, St. Andrew Baptist Church has enjoyed an amazing season of unity and uninterrupted fellowship.

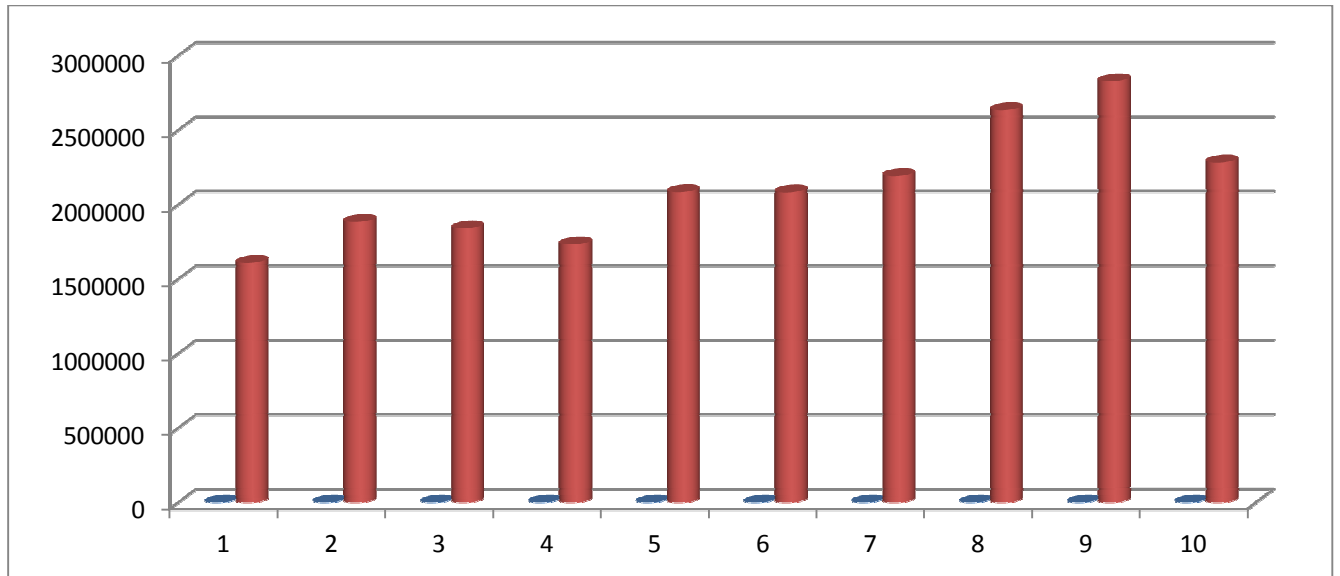
Here is the warning I believe God wants me to deliver.

That unity and fellowship is going to be tested.

Bro. Mike, why do you think that?

1. **People get grumpy when finances get tight.** Isn't that true at home? I've seen it at church all my life. As long as your meeting the budget, and every area is getting all it needs to fully operate, all is well. But when things get a little tight, like the Jerusalem church of old, this one thinks more should go here and that one thinks less should go there.
2. **Building programs give people a lot of opportunities to express their grumpiness.** There are so many decisions to be made, and everybody has an opinion.

SABC is about to have both factors. Finances are already tight in spite of the fact that in the midst of the worst economy in many of our lifetimes, the total giving through our church is the highest it has ever been.



Things are tight in the general fund because we are giving separately to a building fund and separately to our Global Missions Fund. But see what God has done!

And, if you follow my leadership, we are about to begin another building project, to get our new Center of Hope operational.

So what do we do?

We recognize our vulnerability.

We become intentional in preserving the unity and protecting the fellowship.

- 1. Unless it is a matter of Biblical importance and eternal significance, we practice deference, deferring our desires for the desires of others.**
- 2. When there is a matter requiring attention, we go to the one responsible.**
- 3. We refuse to gossip or be a talebearer.**
- 4. We refuse to take sides and develop personal followings.**
- 5. We keep the main thing the main thing.**

CONCLUSION: In a little bit we are going to share the Lord's Supper together. This gives us special opportunity to take steps of prevention in our lives and focus the affection of our hearts upon our Savior. The Scripture says in preparation for the Lord's Supper

1 Cor 11:28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup.

INVITATION So in our invitation time, let us examine ourselves and prepare our lives that we might participate in the supper with clean hands and a pure heart.

It is a time for the lost to come and trust in Christ

It is a time for those needing a church to join in the local body

It is a time for repentance of sin

It is a time for renewed commitment to the Master.