

CATCH THE VISION

BY: BRAD CULLEN – MARCH 21, 2003

CATCH THE VISION... ANY VISION (FROM GOD'S OWN SPIRIT)

I am receiving reactions to the little book, *Unlocking The Treasure Chest of God's Gifts* from many countries all over the world. The book has brought healing, revival, "equipping of the saints" and regeneration to many people.

There have been a few detractors (about *Treasure Chest*), mostly from among the professional clergy, but in the main the book has rung a resonant chord among us who consider ourselves to be simply brothers and sisters in Christ.

Just today I received an e-mail from a brother in Canada. Here is an excerpt from my reply... (the parts in parentheses are things I have added since I first wrote the reply) --

"I've been praying about an idea for some time... and your note just caused me to focus on it. I've been thinking about publishing *Treasure Chest* and giving away a hard copy (FREE) to anyone that wants (one). I was thinking about starting (leader-less) discussion groups... on the basis of being led by God's own Spirit (alone) and just using the book as one source for material for any particular (discussion) group. If that rings a bell with you... perhaps you'd like to start a discussion group there in _____ ... with the idea of not letting it grow say beyond five or six... and once those five or six are grounded, each of them start another group (of five or six) and so on.

"If you feel you need help at first... you can e-mail me and I would make myself available to you (about specific problems) ... and maybe the Lord would allow us to start a (loosely connected) fellowship of independent ministries all over the world.

"Every group would be instructed only on the content of the book and encouraged to go to God's own Spirit for all their direction. What do you think? It would end your quest to find yet another church that still wouldn't fill the void (you describe)... I realize I am "jumping" on you... (since you opened the door), but feel led to do so. You check it out for yourself... *Treasure Chest* is being a source of healing and restoration for many people. Pray about it and let me know what you think.

"Whatever your thoughts on that... please stay in touch." (end of my reply)

The reasons for my excitement for this idea are twofold:

First, I believe in the implied edict, "Do not forsake assembling yourselves together as is the manner of some." I also know that the great majority of people on my e-mail list are either like our Canadian brother-author of the above referenced e-mail, i.e., wanting to find another church that allows free ministry in the body, or those who realize that for them the church building down on the corner (or anywhere else in town) just doesn't hold any attraction.

Second, to move into some of the things in "*Treasure Chest*" requires a different perspective, a modicum of support and understanding, as well as someone with practical experience in these things to provide assurance and ongoing support if and when needed.

I am being invited to many areas of the U.S. to help kick-off some in-home group or another, primarily to demonstrate some of the things that are mentioned in the book. I could get to all of them, but the question I had to ask was, should I? The answer is a resounding "no." I believe that "no" is in general. There may be some specific instances in which the answer is "yes." However, it seems that there is a better way.

Surely I must not provide a way of transferring dependence from some church leader to another person... particularly me. My standard statement to somebody looking for somebody to lean on is generally, "Jesus said that wherever two or three gather together in His name... there he is the midst of them – he's there -- so go to him!" ("You don't need a human teacher for God's own Spirit will lead you into all truth").

Here is my challenge: Pray to see if this idea is for you. God will reveal His will to anyone that is serious about it. Take the promise in James 1:5 seriously... get God's wisdom to see if this is for you.

If it is not God's will for you, avoid it like the plague! However, If you believe in the things outlined in the book and would like to be in a position to personally practice them as well as use them for a medium of gathering together and

growing in mutual ministry... maybe it is an indication that you should seek God's will until you do get a definite "yes" or a definite no. If you get a "yes" here is what will be done for you:

1. You will you get a hard copy of the book – FREE – when it is published. Probably in the next sixty to ninety days. There are some technical issues still to be worked out. Each of the others in your group will also receive a hard copy of the book FREE.

2. Someone will be available to you by e-mail, or perhaps even telephone, to answer any questions about issues as they arise.

3. You will be continually pointed to the Source for ultimate answers to all questions... and provided answers about practical issues as they arise. For the most part you will see that God's own Spirit is your most able guide in every area. This is one of the most valuable attributes I see to the idea... a forcing (if we will) of each group to depend upon God's own Spirit rather than any human leadership... yet human ministry will be available and I sense that some kind of support structure will develop as God leads each independent group.

4. There will be some kind of a forum for idea exchange, prayer support and so on developed as we go so that each participant has a myriad of people that are committed to the same kind of mutual ministry and feels a part of something vital and powerful.

5. Also provided will be some practical written information on group process... things to encourage among each group and things to avoid, etc.

My feeling is that it is a good thing for people to get together... and share in an atmosphere of total freedom in the presence and power of God's own Spirit. Since I take no ownership over Unlocking the Treasure Chest and since I have seen that the book has provided an impetus for some toward significant spiritual growth... I feel like what I am putting out here may have value for those that also see spiritual value in this little book.

Historically I have avoided basing anything on results using numbers of people as criteria for the value of anything. Yet I am amazed by the vision I have received. Imagine... do the math... if you started a discussion group and simply prayed over it that you wanted nothing but God's will... and that the group would be led by God's own Spirit. Let's use Five adults as the ideal number for each group. This is just a number that came to me and I place no value upon it whatsoever (maybe someone that has been given a key to the real meaning of numbers will come forward to suggest the significance of any number) all mutually committed from the beginning to use the time together as a training ground for whatever God wants to do among the group... and each of you five started another group with a different group of five. If you multiplied thusly only three times a year... There is a hole in the mathematical approach here... but let's just keep it simple, okay?

At the end of four months each of you original five would start a second group of five others. $5 \times 5 = 25$. The vision, supported by the math model which may well mean nothing, would progress so that this 25 would become 125 starting at month number eight. One hundred and twenty-five people moving in the presence and power of God's own Spirit into year number two.

Just staying with the simplicity of the five times multiplication factor... The second year would start with $(125 \times 5 =)$ six hundred and twenty-five people. At the end of four months multiplying by five again – equals three thousand, one hundred and twenty-five people. Multiplying by five twice more during that second year equals seventy-eight thousand, one hundred and twenty-five people.

Therefore, the third year would begin with three hundred and ninety thousand, six hundred and twenty-five people.

If you take your calculator out and do the math you will find that within five years the whole population of the world... is involved.

Now, we know that this kind of math is ridiculous... but that means somebody, not you, is nonetheless publishing and paying for millions of copies of this little book... and charging nothing for it... and millions of people are meeting for one purpose... to be with four other people to have a discussion about spiritual things centered around a book written anonymously and which each get a copy FREE.

So, if Treasure Chest is a viable tool with which to start small discussion groups and you believe in the efficacy of the Spirit behind this little book... just a few of you catching the vision can change the world.

If you are interested in pursuing this with me... just drop me a line with your suggestions and comments or questions and we'll get started. There are many logistical challenges... but if we can avoid the hierarchical things that Jesus

commanded to avoid... we will see a sprawling network of people meeting independently all over the world in dependence upon God's Spirit alone.

Just one note about logistics... in the e-mail from the brother in Canada... he mentioned one of his challenges to leaving the organized church. His children. The answer I did not give him... and this is not about helping everyone leave the organized church in mass... that is simply not going to happen (at least in the vision), is that in each group committed to following God's own Spirit... will be provided with ways to practically help children quickly mature in the Spirit and not be shuffled off to be tended in the basement.

The key is for each group of five (or however many – “if two or three are gathered, there am I in their midst”) adults to be led by God's own Spirit alone... for each challenge specific to each group there will be a specific answer provided.

Brad

P.S. Remember, you are responsible to God alone for what you do with this. This is merely an offer of free books... and some practical helps to those that catch the vision. Don't like this vision? Perhaps that simply means it is not for you... but if nothing else I hope it drives you to catch your own vision... FROM GOD'S OWN SPIRIT!

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