**GOD’S VISION FOR THE NEXT GENERATION**

***Acts 2:17 “In the last days, God says, ‘I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams.”***

Welcome to the last day of Harvest Festival. Yesterday we celebrated the great work of God for last 40 years and inaugurated M. Phillip Brown as our new leader of Washington UBF to carry the torch of the gospel for next 40 years. I would like to present a protocol to lead us to a successful ministry. The baton of the gospel ministry was passed on from the pioneering generation to the next generation. At this historical moment, I would like to share God’s vision for the next generation with you. Today’s Passage is Peter’s Pentecostal address to the crowds. Peter saw God’s vision through his church in the last days quoting Joel 2:28-32 when he was filled with the Holy Spirit. God will use three people groups-sons and daughters, young men and old men in the future church program according to the passage. The vision was extended from one generation to the next generation. In the Bible God mentioned about the multiple generations. He introduced himself as God of Abraham, God of Isaac, and God of Jacob. God is God of many generations. God promised to bless a thousand generations if we love him and obey his commands. (Exodus 20:6) God wants us to pass on our spiritual legacy and blessings to the next generation. It is the mission of the first generation to pass on their faith to the next generation. We have to know God’s vision for the next generation. May God bless us to see God’s vision for the next generation through this message!

**PART I. I WILL POUR OUT MY SPIRIT ON ALL PEOPLE (17a)**

In the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit was given to special people God chose to carry out his plan. After Jesus’ ascension to heaven, the Apostles and the women and all members were joined together constantly in prayer. At the day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit poured out like tongues of fire and all of them were filled with the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:1-4) Peter filled with the Holy Spirit stood up with the Eleven and addressed the crowd. Peter’s address opened the door of the church age based on faith in Jesus by the grace of God. Salvation was given to all people through their faith in Jesus in the coming church age. After long waiting, the last days arrived and the sign was the outpouring of the Holy Spirit to all people. Here the last days covers days from Jesus’s ascension to his second coming. From the eschatological point of view, we live in the last days. The second coming of Jesus is the culmination of human history. God’s promise given to the Prophet Joel was fulfilled at the Pentecost. The Holy Spirit was given to all people. God began to use all people through the body of Christ, his church throughout the last days. God used Israel nation to implement his plan in the OT but God will use the church to carry out his redemptive plan in the NT. God wanted to use ordinary people to expand his kingdom to the end of the earth. To fulfill that goal he poured out his Spirit on all people including sons, daughters, young men, old men, servants both men and women. Wow! God opened a wide gate to invite all people to serve in his church by giving them power of the Holy Spirit. It was beginning of the Christian history in Acts.

Before talking about God’s vision, we have to think about the importance of the generation. The Baby Boomers (1946-1964) are the old generation and Generation X (1965-1979) and Millennials (1980-1994) and iGen (1995-2012) are emerging new generations. What is the mission of the old generation to the next generation? Psalm 71:18 declared the role of the old generation to the next generation. “Even when I am old and gray, do not forsake me, O God, till I declare your power to the next generation, your might to all who are to come.” The role of the old generation is to declare the power of God to the next generation. “Oh, God! Help us to declare your mighty works to the next generation” We obligated to declare the work of God to our children and grandchildren. It is to pass the baton of faith to the next generation.

Team USA won 75% of the time in 4x100 meters relay race. But in 1996 team USA consisted of four of the fastest sprinters in the world lost to the Canadian team. Why did this amazing group of U.S. fastest runners lose this race? They were disqualified because of an improper passing of the baton. They failed to pass properly the baton from one runner to the next. They fumbled the baton and lost the race. My point is that it is important to relay the baton from one runner to the next runner correctly. The Bible compared our spiritual life to a race. (Heb. 12:1) God is not only concerned how you run or how I run but also cares about runners after us, who will take our baton and run the next lap, the runners of the next generation. This lap cycle will continue until Jesus returns to us with the glory and power. The relay race began with Adam and Eve who passed their baton to their children, who then passed it on their children, and on and on-and it is the relay race that is still going on. We are in the middle of this relay race. Since we don’t know the day of the second coming of Jesus which will end our spiritual race, we need to have a long term vision for the next generation. Let’s find good examples and bad examples of passing the baton of faith to the next generation.

We have many examples of great blessings and fruitfulness whenever a generation received proper training from the previous generation. Three patriarchs of faith is a good example. Abraham taught the way of the Lord to Isaac and passed the baton of faith to him. Abraham provided a woman of faith Rebekah for Isaac. He made spiritual environment for Isaac to grow as a quiet man of great influence by sending Ishmael away though that was not an easy thing to do as a father. Pagan King Abimelech recognized Isaac as a man of faith. Isaac preserved God’s blessing and passed it on to Jacob by the help of Rebekah. Jacob received God’s training and grew in faith through many struggles and became a source of blessing with his 12 sons as the foundation of Israel nation. Each generation taught the way of the Lord to the next generation and they became fruitful in the sight of God. God introduced himself as God of Abraham, God of Isaac, and God of Jacob. Three generations were successful of passing the baton of faith to the next generation. Another good example is the wilderness generation who were born during 40 years of wandering of Israel. Moses trained them with the word of God in the wilderness. Deuteronomy is a training manual for the wilderness generation. Deuteronomy 4:9-10 says, “Only be careful, and watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them slip from your heart as long as you live. Teach them to your children and to their children after them. 10 Remember the day you stood before the LORD your God at Horeb, when he said to me, "Assemble the people before me to hear my words so that they may learn to revere me as long as they live in the land and may teach them to their children." What is the point of Moses’ message? Teach them to your children and to their children after them about the work of God when God blessed them to live in the Promised Land. Moses passed the baton of faith to the wilderness generation by providing the repeated lessons of God’s word. His education paid off later. Under the leadership of General Joshua they conquered the Promised Land. These are good examples to follow in our spiritual life today.

But there are bad examples when a generation experiences spiritual defeat and decay because the parents and leaders of a former generation neglected to train their offspring for their turn in the relay race of faith. They fumbled the baton of faith and brought disaster and shame to the next generation. Judges 2:10-11says, “After that whole generation had been gathered to their fathers, another generation grew up, who knew neither the LORD nor what he had done for Israel. 11 ¶ Then the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the LORD and served the Baals.” What can we learn from this passage? The people served the Lord throughout the life time of Joshua and the elders because they saw all the great things God had done for Israel. Judges 2:7 says, “The elders outlived Joshua.” Why did the elders outlive Joshua? Joshua belonged to Exodus generation and the elders belonged to Wilderness generation. But after the pioneering generation of Joshua died, what happened to the next generation? Another generation grew up. They did not know the Lord and what he had done for Israel. The wilderness generation fumbled to pass the baton of faith to the next generation. The wilderness generation did not teach the way of the Lord to Judges’ generation.

In a short period of time the new generation became unbelieving generation. Of course, we understand how much they suffered to possess the land God promised to give as their inheritance. Now they lived in the big houses and possessed the land. They ate good food instead of manna. They had money to buy a lot of toys for their children. They spoiled their children with many worldly things. They thought, “We suffered in the conquering war and I did not want my children to suffer like me. I want to give everything they need.” So they neglected to teach the word of God to them. They did not pass their baton of faith to their children. They failed to train their children the way of the Lord. They did not educate their children to have a sense of history. They failed to pass their spiritual inheritance to their children. When they died, the next generation did not know the Lord and what he had done for them. What a shocking news! But it was real. They lost their identity as people of God. God has vision for them to become a holy nation and a kingdom of priests but they lost God’s vision and became the object of God’s anger. How quick it is to lose one generation to the world! All it took was one generation. When the new generation did not know the Lord and lost their identity, they began to serve the Baals. It is plural because they began to serve many idols in the land. “Baal” literally means “lord”. So when it says that they served the Baals, it means that they subjugated themselves as slaves to various lords. Like the post Joshua generation today young people became slaves of Baals addicted in games, sex, drugs, alcohols, porn, corruption, violence, materialism, and smartphones. God gives us stern warning from the example of the post Joshua generation in the times of Judges. We need to provide our young generation to grow in the word of God and know what God had done among us so that they may know the Lord and serve him in this land of promise. We cannot watch them to fall into the corrupted culture of our times. We cannot watch to become the object of God’s anger and judgment of God. We need hardware to accommodate to house them in the form of training facilities and software to train them in the word of God and history lessons in the form of training manuals. The pioneering generation must pass on the baton of the gospel ministry and world mission to the next generation. Some parents may feel sorry that their sons and daughters left to the world. But remember the prodigal son who returned to home after experiencing pleasure-seeking life and wasting all the wealth. Parents should keep on waiting and praying and keep on loving them and waiting until they return to faith and live by faith. Who knows that they may become late bloomers in the gospel ministry?

**PART II GOD’S VISION FOR THE NEXT GENERATION**

Then what is God’s vision for the next generation in the last days? Vision comes from God through his promises. God had vision to use Abraham to bless all people of the earth from the beginning. God fulfilled that vision by sending Jesus into this world as the first missionary to save sinners. God has vision for his church when Jerusalem church was established. What was his vision for the church which Jesus planned to build when Peter confessed Jesus as the Son of the Living God?

Look at verse 17 again. **“In the last days, God says, ‘I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams.”** Here I would like to share two visions God revealed in this passage. To simplify our understanding I will use the term I developed. Sons and daughters (CBF, JBF/HBF) and young men (YDJ) are the next generation and old men are the first generation (MDJ). The success of God’s vision depends on the first generation (MDJ). The first generation (MDJ) must be dreamers for the next generation. They need to dream dreams. We can say that dream means vision. The first generation must have vision goal for their children and sheep.

**First**, **God’s vision is to raise our sons and daughters to prophesy.**

This means that God wants to use our sons and daughters as Bible teachers in the church. This part is called parenting because children are part of God’s program in his church as the next generation. God is at work and He wants to pour out His Spirit. He is waiting for someone to step up with a dream for our sons and daughters. That dreamer is parents. Raise your hands if you have sons and daughters. Do you have vision plan for them? Dream dreams for them. The role of parents is critical for God’s vision to be realized in this stage. CBF is the first stage of God’s vision program. I call this 30 year investment plan for children. It is never too early to teach our children the word of God. According to a study done by Cornell University revealed that up to 80% percent of a child’s beliefs, values, and self-esteem is formed by age six. There is a saying that the habit of three old boys go all the way to the age of 80. The baby stage is the most sensitive years of children’s spiritual growth. Moses’ mother instilled faith to baby Moses when he was young. Moses decided to suffer with the people of God instead of enjoying luxurious palace life. 2 Timothy 3:14-15 says, “You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned *them*; 15 and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus”. From childhood Timothy learned the Scripture from his mother and grandmother. Mother and grandmother became instrumental for Timothy’s spiritual development. Dr. John Lee understands the importance of CBF and builds the foundation of faith to young children in our ministry. The next gen can help the younger next gens because they understands them very well.

The teenager needs mentors to develop their spiritual life. Our JBF/HBF receive many training to grow in the word of God. They go to the short term mission to experience the heart of God through their mission trip. God plants vision in them through their mission trip when they help other children in the summer camp. Augustine Park and team of teachers dedicate to train our youth group to have God’s vision through Bible study and mission trainings. I stumbled in the website and found comparison study between Max Jukes and Jonathan Edwards the Puritan preacher from 1700s about the goal of all Christian parenting according to the survey done by A.E. Winship. “Max Jukes lived in New York. He did not believe in Christ or in Christian training. He refused to take his children to church, even when they asked to go. He has had 1,026 descendants—300 convicts, 27 murderers, 190 prostitutes, and 509 alcoholics and drug addicts. His family, thus far, has reportedly cost the state hundreds of thousands of dollars. They have made no contribution to society that is of any benefit.

Jonathan Edwards lived in the same state, at the same time as Jukes. He loved the Lord and saw to it that his children were in church every Sunday, as he served the Lord to the best of his ability. He has had 929 descendants—430 ministers, 314 war veterans, 75 authors, 86 college professors, 13 university presidents, 7 congressmen, 3 governors, and 1 Vice-President of the United States. His family never cost the state one cent but contributed immeasurably to the life of plenty in the United States today.” This is a powerful examples showing how a parent’s leadership can have a profound effect on their children. What is your influence and what legacy will you leave with your children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren? I pray that the first generation may have vision for their children to fulfill God’s plan for his church and pass on their baton of faith to the next generation. Amen!

**Second, God’s vision for young people**

This part is our fishing ministry and I call this 10 year vision plan for University students through our evangelism. God loves young people because they are the future of the nation. University Bible Fellowship is University people. There are about 3300 colleges in the United States. There are about 25,000 around the world. God is fulfilling his vision through us in the last days. All college students became our mission fields. Young people in college days can build the depth of the foundation of life through Bible study which will shape the next fifty years including the choice of job, marriage, values of life and purpose of life. In Scripture God revealed his vision. Pastor Steve Shadrach in his book “The Fuel and the Flame” developed 4 E’s in fulfilling the Great Commission as follows: evangelism (fishing), Establishing (1 to 1 study, raising a disciple) equipping (team training, disciple-maker), and exporting (sending a short term or long term, reproducer). What is God’s vision for the young people?

**First**, God’s vision for young people is that they may be filled with the Holy Spirit. Before receiving the Holy Spirit, Peter was weak in his faith and denied Jesus to save his own life. But he became so powerful to win three thousands convert with one sermon. Our next generation can do far better than the first generation when they are filled with the Holy Spirit. They can be another Peters in the next generation. They can be disciple-makers and missionaries.

**Second**, God’s vision for young people is that they can have dreams. Joseph was a dreamer. At age 17 he dreamed to be a ruler. God revealed his future plan to young Joseph because he had faith in God. His dream was realized when he became prime minister of Egypt at age 30. Joseph loved his 11 brothers by helping them to repent their sins and become 12 tribes of Israel. He also saved people from starvation with his excellent economic policy of saving grains in abundant years and distributing in famine years. He saved Egypt from disaster. Our young people should become leaders. Our vice president Mike Pence met Jesus in his college days. He has a nick name, a man wearing Jesus’ clothes. We can meet another Mike Pence among 1 to 1 students. Last Friday we heard 6 symposium speakers. Their Bible teachers have dream for them to become spiritual leaders in the future. I pray that God may raise up many leaders among the next generation. President Lincoln had a dream that all men are equal before God. His dream was realized when he kept United States under one nation and abolished slave system of evil. Martin Luther King had dream and had a dream speech in front of the Lincoln Memorial “I have a dream that all people beyond their colors will eat together and live together with harmony.” We have a better America today because of his dream. I was so happy when I heard that my grandson Josiah wanted to become the president of United States because he took a picture with President Obama. We need to have dream for our Bible students and sons and daughters because they know God and live by faith.

**Third**, God’s vision for young people is that they may become the army of God. The prophet Ezekiel saw the vision of God to make the dry bones to become the vast army of God. (Ezekiel 37:10) The spiritual condition of our nation is not good. We can see the spiritual decay since the Supreme Court decided not to allow Bible or prayer in the public place. Our young people are like dry bones but God can raise them as the mighty army of God by breathing the Spirit on them. Among our young people God is raising the army of God with the Spirit of God. God raised up 5 new young new fellowship leaders. They can be the mighty army of God with other 5 leaders.

**Fourth**, God’s vision for young people is that they may become the light of the world. America was built by the pilgrim and Puritans. John Winthrop said, “We have the contract with God and we are the city on a hill to shine the light of God for the whole world.” He saw the vision of God for America. Today, that vision is fading away. But God will rekindle that vision that we are the city on a hill to shine the gospel light to the dark world. God has vision that our young people will rebuild the broken wall of faith by bringing the spiritual revival among college students.

**Fifth**, God’s vision for young people is that they may have a missionary vision. Apostle Paul was a young man of Israel, a colony of Roman Empire. He said, “I must visit Rome also.” (Acts 19:21) Why did he want to visit Rome? Tourism or shopping? No, he had missionary vision for Rome. At that time Rome was the capital of the world. From the perspective of the world mission Rome was the most important city in the world because all the road led to Rome. He wanted to pioneer Rome. He began to pioneer Rome in a small rented house by having 1 to 1 Bible study. (Acts 28:30) Rome became a Christian nation after 300 years later. His vision was realized. Our ministry began in CPT210 with several American students. God gave us vision for Washington DC, the most important city in the world. God gave us missionary vision by sending our first fruit Wynelle to Germany and then M. Abe Lee and M. Phillip Brown to China, Steve and Allison Haga to Taiwan and M. Moses and Sarah to Belize. M. Phillip and Sarah Brown are the fruit of our missionary vision. God is a missionary God who wants to bless all nation of the earth. Jesus’s Great Commission is too great to do it alone but it is too important not to do it. God called us to pave the last stage of the Great Commission before his second coming. Our prayer is to raise up 20 leaders each year for the next 20 years-20/20 vision. God can use them to pioneer USA campuses and go out as missionaries to change the world for Jesus. This is God’s vision for our young people.

In conclusion, in Scripture 40 year is regarded as one generation. The first generation should dream dreams to hold sons and daughters with 30 year plan with one hand and young disciples with 10 year plan with other hand like a twin tower. I served God and his people for last 40 years offering my five loaves and 2 fish and today I am passing on the baton of the gospel ministry of Washington UBF to M. Phillip and Sarah Wang Brown. I pray that God may raise up M. Phillip Brown as the next generation leader to elevate Washington ministry to the next level by sending many missionaries to fulfill the Great Commission of Jesus faithfully. Thank you so much for enduring me and praying for me last 40 years. You will be in my prayers always. Let’s dream on in Jesus. Farewell! May God bless you all!

Let’s read the key verse 2:17. ***“In the last days, God says, ‘I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams.”***