

Understanding Vision

Similar to the type of resources one might need when going on a journey or expedition, so is the function of having a vision statement or statements to live out in our life. These same things can also be said of God's Word being alive and used in our life:

God's Word Object Comparisons:

- **Candle/Light**
 - To see the path ahead of you and staying the right course
- **Map**
 - Tells you how to get where you are going and gives you guidance
- **Compass**
 - Points you in the right direction on track to your destination
- **Magnifying glass**
 - To look at things closely and make sure things are what they seem
- **Binoculars**
 - Tool to aid in your long distance vision; things far away can be deceiving or hard to make out but you can bring them into focus
- **Level**
 - To measure and balance details of your life to determine if they are helping or hindering you in your journey

Four Action Items to Begin and Pursue a Personal Vision Statement:

1. Discern the Vision

- Knowing Yourself
 - Involves knowing who you are at the most intimate levels of self-knowledge – personality, strengths, weaknesses, abilities, habits, identity
- Knowing God
 - You do this through prayer, through meditation, through fasting, and through reading Scripture
- Knowing Your Context
 - You must understand the past and the present, your own and that of your present life situation – EVERYONE's will be unique
- Knowing Good Advice
 - As iron sharpens iron, trusted and respected advisors and friends can provide keen insight you are not capable of seeing in the midst of your vision quest

Proverbs 16:1-2 – *“The plans of the heart belong to man, but the answer of the tongue is from the Lord. All the ways of a man are clean in his own sight, but the Lord weighs the motives.”*

2. Detect the Vision

- Vision, mission, and values represent the perspectives you have on life and on what God has for you to do.

- Your goals, strategies, and tactics flow from those perspectives and result in your plans.
- The context of your vision, mission, and core values originate from your life experiences, your personality, your spiritual gifts, your natural talents, and most importantly your inspiration from the Holy Spirit. These components represent the preparation provided by God for your life and how you can have and make an impact living for and serving HIM.

Proverbs 16:3 – *“Commit your works to the Lord and your plans will be established.”*

3. Develop the Vision

- Having and maintaining a vision is equivalent to maintaining a campfire
 - Process:
 - Gathering wood, kindling
 - Build the fire
 - Ignition source – match, flint
 - Enjoy!.....BUT
 - Tend to the fire - rebuild
- Process:
 1. Prayer
 2. Identify your identity
 3. Idea/Theme
 4. Goal – Key words
 5. Action of the goals
 6. Christ-centered
 7. Finalize & revise with prayer

Incorporate a Life Verse

- Encompasses the concept
- Umbrellas the purpose statement

“Eyes that see are common; Eyes that look are not so much.”

Proverbs 16:9 – *“The mind of a man plans his way, but the Lord directs his steps.”*

4. Deploy the Vision

- The life of one living their vision will show in their personal behavior, personal interactions, their productivity, their spirituality.
- “PAUL” – Colossians 3:17, 23, Philippians 3:12-14.
- Your life vision requires a commitment; there is no room for compromise.

Proverbs 3:5-6 – *“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight.”*

Conclusion

- Your vision is a journey through time.
- It is not developed or reached overnight.
- It is not understood or realized all at once.
- We were made for a purpose beyond ourselves. When we give ourselves irrevocably and ultimately to the Lord, we find the vision, purpose, and direction to sustain us for a lifetime.

“If you read history, you will find that the Christians who did most for the present world were precisely those who thought most of the next. It is since Christians have largely ceased to think of the other world that they have become so ineffective in this.”
-C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*

“To every man (woman) there comes in his lifetime that special moment when he is figuratively tapped on the shoulder and offered that chance to do a very special thing, unique to him and his talents. What a tragedy if that moment finds him unprepared or unqualified for that work.”
-Winston Churchill

We need to start becoming more aware of the presence of time rather than the passage of time.

Ephesians 5:15-16 – *“Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil.”*

This exhortation is the Latin sentiment CARPE DIEM! I prefer an adaptation or expansion of that thought:
Coram Deo, Carpe Diem

Time is like a companion who goes with us on a journey. It reminds us to cherish every moment, because it will never come again.

Greek philosopher – *“Life is like a river; you cannot step into the same water in a river twice. An opportunity lost is lost forever.”*

We need to treat each day as a gift from God.

What are we going to do with the time that we have?
As Christians, we have ALREADY been given a basic/fundamental vision by God – love Him, love others, make disciples.

With that vision comes mission statements we can find in Scripture:

Acts 20:24 John 17:18 Matthew 28:19-20 Acts 1:8

Our mission is a continuation of Jesus’ mission on earth.
Our mission has eternal significance.

It is time to move beyond our current boundaries which stifle and restrict us like those early settlers.

Like Habakkuk

It is time for a God-sized purpose in 2024. It is time to have personal vision that leads to a mission that generates action for Jesus Christ!