

Session Two

Capturing God's Vision for Your Life and Ministry

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✓ Check each item below after you discuss it with the Pastors in your Pastors Life Group. (These could be Pastors from your Church/Ministry and/or other Pastors/Leaders in your area.)

Complete the following before you meet with your Pastors Life Group:

- ❑ 1. Read **Capturing God's Vision for Your Life and Ministry** Pages 17 to 23. Be prepared to share how you believe having a clear Vision will help you effectively lead your Church and equip you to develop other Pastors and leaders.
- ❑ 2. Complete the **Capturing God's Vision for Your Life and Ministry Workshop** on Pages 24 to 30. Be prepared to share your Vision Statement and Faith Goals. Explain how you believe your Vision will equip you as a Pastor to *Reach Beyond* your church to fulfil the Great Commission in your community and world.
- ❑ 3. Complete the **Summary Report** on Page 16, and have it ready to give at the Pastors Life Group. (If you are just beginning a discipling process you may not have a lot to report yet but report what you can on the Discovery Group activity since you last met.)

Complete the following with your Pastors Life Group at the meeting:

- ❑ 4. Share personal praise, encouragement and concerns. Pray for each other.
- ❑ 5. With your Pastors Life Group members discuss **Capturing God's Vision for Your Life and Ministry** on Pages 17 through 23.
- ❑ 6. Discuss the **Capturing God's Vision for Your Life and Ministry Workshop** and **Faith Goals** on Pages 24 to 30. We need to set goals and take action to improve the quality of our Church and also to work together with other churches to see our city reached.

Prayer and Closing:

- ❑ 7. Share personal or church related concerns and pray for each other and our ministries.
- ❑ 8. Go over Preparation assignment for Session Three. You will need to set aside time to work on this session. Pray as you seek God's direction as to how we can **Reach Our City for Christ**.
- ❑ 9. Set a Date _____ Time _____ Place _____ for our next Pastors Life Group session.

Summary Report

Note: Pray and believe that God will do great things through your Discovery Group Ministry. The following is a **Summary Report** for your church and **the totals of all of the Pastors in this Pastors Life Group.**

Report on the Coaches I work with and their Discovery Groups:

1. _____ Our Church has (churches have)
2. _____ Coaches who care for
3. _____ Discovery Groups with
4. _____ People who attend regularly
5. _____ New Attendees This Past Month
6. _____ Pairs of People are in Dynamic Basics One-to-One Training
7. _____ Pairs of People are in Dynamic Discipling One-to-One Training
8. _____ People received Christ as Saviour through our groups this past month.
9. We have planted a total of _____ New Churches.

Comments or Stories of Significant Life Change (attach copies)

A Total Report on all the Churches Our Pastors Life Group serves:

1. Together we serve _____ Churches who have a total of
2. _____ Coaches who care for
3. _____ Discovery Groups with
4. _____ People who attend regularly
5. _____ New Attendees This Past Month
6. _____ Pairs of People are in Dynamic Basics One-to-One Training
7. _____ Pairs of People are in Dynamic Discipling One-to-One Training
8. _____ People received Christ as Saviour through our groups this past month.
9. Together we have planted a total of _____ New Churches.

Capturing God's Vision for Your Life and Ministry

Instructions:

1. Read **Capturing God's Vision for Your Life and Ministry** on Pages 17 to 23.
2. Complete the **Capturing God's Vision Workshop** on Pages 24 to 30.
 - ❑ Set aside several hours of uninterrupted time. You may want to make this a time of prayer and fasting.
 - ❑ Pray before you begin (ask other people to pray for you) since it is God's Vision you are seeking - **ask Him! He will show you.**
 - ❑ Prayerfully answer all questions in this workshop. You will discover how God has uniquely prepared you and for what purpose.
 - ❑ Do not be tempted to limit God with small vision or ideas. **God's Vision should be God sized!**
3. Complete the Goals to accomplish your Vision on Page 30.
 - ❑ Set Faith Goals that you are willing to trust that God will do to accomplish the Vision He gives you.
 - ❑ You may not complete your Vision Statement or Goals on your first attempt. Be sure to continue to work on them until you complete them. This workshop could set the direction for the rest of your life!

5% of the people have a Clear Vision and they accomplish more than the other 95% of the people who do not!

4. Share your Vision Statement and Goals at the next Pastors Life Group meeting if you have completed them. Sharing even a rough draft with your group will encourage them and they can help you clarify and sharpen your Vision and Goals.

How You Can Capture God's Vision For Your Life and Ministry

Introduction

A leader has been given a special privilege and responsibility to lead others. God entrusts His vision to the leader to guide him in leading people in ministry and overall development.

We find that most people do not have a vision for their life. Because this is such a vitally important area I want to challenge you to spend quality time considering God's vision for your life and ministry.

Martin Luther King once said,

*"Some men dream only of the past.
Some see only the present, and say "Why?"
Others dream of things that never were,
and say, "Why Not?"*

If you want to have a dynamic life and ministry, dream an **impossible** dream that is **worth** spending the rest of your life bringing it into reality.

If you are ministering to others, **what is the basis of your ministry?** Is it the tradition in your church or your training or is it **God's vision for you?** Are you doing what **other people** expect you to do rather than doing what God has **called** you to do?

What does vision mean to you?

The Scriptures say *"Without a vision the people perish"* (Prov. 29:18). The fact is that people are perishing and the church as a whole seems unable to do very much about it. Christian vision for our **needy** world seems to be in short supply today.

The Barna Research Group pursued this matter by asking several thousand Christian leaders through a survey about their interest in receiving information and teaching related to various aspects of ministry. They found that the topic of greatest interest to them was how they could capture God's vision for their ministry, so let us consider this topic.

How You Can Capture God's Vision for Your Life and Ministry

First, we must understand that a vision and mission are related but distinctly different.

1. The **mission/purpose** statement is a definition of the key ministry **objectives** of your life.
2. The **vision** statement clarifies the **specific** direction and specific **activities** you will pursue to make a true ministry impact in your community/sphere of influence.
3. The **vision** is specific, detailed, customized, distinctive and **unique** to you. It helps you define your basic stand and intentions.
4. The **vision** statement is **strategic** in character while a mission or purpose statement is **philosophic** in nature. Vision and mission/purpose have often been equated but they are not interchangeable.

Mission/Purpose is about “Purpose”

Vision is a “Picture”

Secondly, we must also understand that *God has always imparted vision to leaders*. We see this in the lives of David, Moses, Nehemiah, and Paul. If you do not have God's vision for your ministry yet, either you have not made the investment required to capture this vision or you may not be gifted as a leader. **One thing is for certain if you do not have God's vision for your ministry today and you are not interested in seeking it, you do not qualify to be a leader because leaders lead and to lead you need to know where you are going.**

It is important that each of you have God's vision for your life. So let's take some time to examine vision more closely.

Here's what George Barna says about vision: *"Once you have it, you know it, but when you don't have it, you aren't sure what it will be like."*

What Is Vision?

1. Vision is a **picture** in your mind's eye of the way things **could** be or should be in the days ahead. It is a reflection of what **God** wants to **accomplish** through you to build His Kingdom. **Vision comes from God.**
2. Vision is about stretching reality to extend **beyond** the present state; it is never about maintaining the status quo.
3. Vision focuses on the **future**. Success in ministry therefore, is to focus upon God and to be fully committed to **His** vision for **your** future ministry.
4. God chooses leaders carefully and **provides** each of them with a vision tailor-made for their circumstances. It is up to you however, to seek to **determine** what His vision is for your life and ministry.

Capturing God's Vision for Your Life and Ministry

If you desire to grasp God's vision for your ministry you will need to make an investment in the process of finding it. It can be both scary and exciting because it is a personal matter between you and God.

You will need to:

1. Know Your God:

This is important especially for leaders. You cannot know God's vision for your ministry unless you first know the heart of God.

- a. Study the Bible - Be in the Word.
- b. Spend **time** with God in prayer. He will speak to you if you **ask**.
- c. Practice the discipline of **fasting**. It can be part of the process in preparing your heart to receive or grasp God's vision for your ministry.

2. Know Yourself

Answer the following questions honestly:

- What is my **motivation** for being in ministry?
- What kind of things am I **passionate** about?
- What is it in ministry that always **excites** me?
- What is it that keeps me awake at night, dreaming with **anticipation** and **expectation**?
- What ministry outcomes do I **deeply yearn** for?

3. **Know Your Community** (Sphere of influence)

- It is important to know your community. God has gifted different people in different ways to **accomplish** different tasks in your community.
- It is appropriate for your ministry to be **different** from others in the community.
- Fellow Believers will have unique visions of their own that should **compliment** the ministry that God is leading you to do in the community.
- Extend a **helping** hand to those who have a vision similar to yours.
- Your **competition** is not other Churches/Ministries but things like television, activities, athletic events and hobbies etc.

4. **Know Your Team**

- Understand the importance of working together with others - group/church/ministries.
- You must be able to **interpret** the vision in a way that makes sense to others. They may be able to help you determine whether the vision is appropriate for your group. You must articulate the vision to them in a way so that they can **own it** and **live it**.

5. **Know Your Vision**

- **Verify** the Vision by sharing it with trusted counselors. Consider carefully the counsel of those who are used by God to sharpen your perspective.
- Once you have a clear understanding of what God has called you to accomplish you will minister with greater **confidence** and determination. To fulfill God's vision you need to know that He **will** do it through **you** and that God will be glorified.

6. **Implement Your Vision**

- Count the **cost**. You may be criticized by some and isolated by others. A visionary leader may also experience loneliness.
- Chart your **course**. Predetermine your goals and keep your mind set on your vision. A clear course will help you **endure** the criticism.
- Adjust your **priorities** so that you can **model** your personal commitment to God's vision.
- **Share** your vision with other influential leaders in your group/church so that they will **own** it and share it with other people. This will develop a sense of unity and will create **momentum** towards the vision.

God's Vision for Your Ministry Will Be:

1. **Inspiring** - You will be **excited** as you see God's hand of blessing as He fulfils your vision.
2. **Change-Oriented** - God **never** instills in us a vision for the status quo.
3. **Challenging** - It will cause you to do things you never did before, move you out of your **comfort** zone into a walk of **faith**.
4. **Empowering** - It will empower people to **serve** other people because it will require the involvement of many.
5. **Personalized** - It will fit you **perfectly**, and be unique to your circumstances and calibrated to your abilities.
6. **Detailed** - It places valid and helpful **parameters** on where you are headed.
7. **People-Oriented** - It will center on the importance of people's **growth** of faith and their involvement with God.
8. **Long Term** - It will **not** change quickly nor be accomplished **rapidly**.

Developing Your Vision Statement

You will profit by writing down your vision for your personal ministry. God's vision for you, personally, will probably incorporate the essence of the ministry's/church's vision plus a few other areas.

1. Keep It Short

Although you may want to document your thoughts in detail, it is important that you pare your statement down to one paragraph with five or six crucial thoughts.

If you cannot capture the essence of the vision in a paragraph you probably have not clarified it sufficiently in your own mind. It must be simple enough to be remembered and specific enough to give direction.

2. Components of the Statement

- **Type** of people you are called to minister to (age group, personality type, a lifestyle segment, geographic area etc.).
- **Purpose of your efforts** to reach these people, introduce them to Christ, bring Christians who are not attending back to Church, to disciple believers, bring young families with children to Christ and to the church, etc.
- Determine the qualities that make your ministry **distinctive** from others; i.e. your target audience, ministry format etc.
- The statement must make **sense** to everyone: non-Believers, new Believers,

mature Believers, inactive Believers, active Believers and church staff.

- The statement must **motivate** by focusing on the positive while indicating the boundaries beyond which you will not move.
- Use words that are **active**, compelling and appealing.
- Allude to responsibilities, challenges and approaches that will **inspire** people.
- Keep the **words** short; thoughts crisp and the outcome evident.
- Slogans are effective for mission/purpose statements but **not** for vision statements.

Casting Your Vision

A vision statement is to be shared. It is a good idea to let your friends know even as you begin seeking God's direction in creating a vision statement. Ask for their thoughts and prayers so you can discern what God wants to accomplish through your life.

Once you have received the vision and developed a statement you will need to share the vision so it can be owned and implemented by those involved.

Examples of Vision Statements

- To present Christ in a contemporary, creative, credible and caring way to all the people in our community in an environment where they can know Christ and grow to their full potential in Christ.
- To provide seniors a secure environment that offers personal care, a personal relationship with Christ and opportunities to share the love of Christ through community service.
- To equip professionals in our city to influence their web of relationships, reaching their non-Christian friends through small groups and marketplace ministries that address their urban needs.
- To provide the greater metro area with a ministry geared to nominal Christians, offering opportunities that are sensitive to individual needs and characterized by a loving, forgiving and accepting environment.

Capturing God's Vision for Your Life and Ministry Workshop

"Vision for ministry is a clear mental image of a preferable future imparted by God to His chosen servants and is based upon an accurate understanding of God, self and circumstances." George Barna

Know Your God

Daniel 11:32 *"But the people who know their God will display strength and take action."*

1. How well do you know God?
2. How would you describe your relationship with God right now?
(If you feel distant from God take time to study His attributes.)
3. Do you know that you are filled with the Holy Spirit right now? ____ How do you know?
4. What Bible passages speak to you most consistently?
5. Which Bible character captures your imagination most often?
6. Read Matthew 28:18-20. What is Christ's command to us?

"Vision is ultimately a matter of humility and obedience to God"

How have you demonstrated obedience to this command?

7. Read Colossians 1:28-29. What was Paul's vision?

**God's vision comes as I surrender my personal pursuits to God and say:
"Here am I send me". (Read Isaiah 6:1-8)**

Know Yourself (How God has prepared you)

8. What **needs** do you see around you and feel deeply burdened by? Why?
9. Is there any other ministry you would rather be doing than what you are doing presently?
_____ If so, what would it be? Why?
10. What one thing would you want your friends and family to remember you for?
11. What ministry opportunity or results would you willingly endure persecution for?
12. What activities do you presently get totally absorbed in?
13. Describe what makes your sphere of influence unique to you.
14. What gets you excited about life and makes it worth living?
15. What type of situations make you feel most alive or exuberant?
16. What is your personality type and how does it impact your ministry? (Circle one)
a. Sanguine - influencer; b. Choleric - doer;
c. Phlegmatic - thinker; d. Melancholy - pleaser
17. What characteristics are you committed to allow God to perfect in your life?
18. What is/are your spiritual gift(s)?

19. What unique or special talents do you have that are different from others around you?
20. What goals have you set and achieved in the past 5 years?
21. What goals have you set and failed to achieve in the past 5 years?
22. What goals are you afraid to set because you feel incapable of achieving?
23. What feedback from other people have you received regarding the direction and future of your life or ministry?

***“You must make major adjustments in your life to
join God in what He is doing” Henry Blackaby***

24. What upsets you about the way you function in ministry?
25. What adjustments do you need to make?
26. How satisfied/dissatisfied are you with the following areas of your life:
(Please circle the number that best applies to you: 1 - being most satisfied to 6 - being the most dissatisfied)

	<u>Satisfied</u>				<u>Dissatisfied</u>	
Worship	1	2	3	4	5	6
Prayer	1	2	3	4	5	6
Fellowship	1	2	3	4	5	6
Discipleship	1	2	3	4	5	6

Evangelism	1	2	3	4	5	6
Caring	1	2	3	4	5	6
Leadership	1	2	3	4	5	6
Commitment	1	2	3	4	5	6
Faith	1	2	3	4	5	6
Love	1	2	3	4	5	6

27. What is important to you?

What 5 things are *not negotiable*?

If you could only do one thing, what would it be?

What present activities would you willingly give up?

***“God’s vision brings out the best in you and inspires
other people to do their best”***

Know Your Community/Sphere of influence

You also need to know and understand the ministry environment in which you are ministering.

28. What are the demographic characteristics (number of people, age, income etc.) of your community/sphere of influence?

29. What particular attitudes do the people in your community/sphere of influence possess?

30. What values determine their thoughts and lifestyles?

31. What beliefs shape their character?

32. What is their primary felt need?

(Talk to people like marketing specialists, superintendents of schools, mayor and other community leaders to help you understand your target audience.)

33. How is your vision different from others?

34. What activities are the people around you involved in?

***“Do not waste your time and effort on that which you
can do in your own strength”***

35. Why do people choose these other options over involvement in Christianity or your church?

36. If God were to accomplish whatever He wanted through your life, what do you think that would be?

What obstacles would have to be overcome?

Would it be possible apart from God doing it?

***“The most important thing in life is to live your life for something more
important than your life.”*** **William James**

Develop a Personal Vision Statement

37. Based on how you know God and yourself and understand your ministry environment today, can you in two or three sentences state your “**vision**”? (*Remember, your vision statement must center on the importance of people's growth of faith and their involvement with God.*)

My Personal Vision Statement is:

Does your statement say:

- ☐ What the purpose of your effort will be?
- ☐ Where or to whom you will minister?
- ☐ What will be the result or extent of your ministry?
- ☐ Does it point your ministry in a clear unique direction for the future?
- ☐ Does it help you understand the strategies and tactics to be used?
- ☐ Is it focused so people, including inactive Believers, can get excited about participating in it with you?
- ☐ Would it be worth devoting your total energy to?
- ☐ Is it specific enough to prevent you from trying to be all things to all people?
- ☐ Will God have to do it?
- ☐ Would God want to do it?

Verify your vision by sharing it with a trusted friend/counselor.

**Without a Vision the People Perish!
Without Goals the Vision Perishes!
Without a Plan to Accomplish the Goals
The Church/Ministry Perishes!**

Goals to Accomplish Your Vision

To have a clear vision, you must have clear written goals.

What measurable, specific goals will you set for the next **90 days**?

1.

2.

3.

What measurable, specific goals will you set to be accomplished **within the next 2 years**?

1.

2.

3.

What measurable possible targets of accomplishments would you like to see happen in **2-5 year**?

1.

2.

3.

What would you dream of accomplishing in the next **5-20 years**?

1.

2.

3.

If you did see these goals reached would you fulfil your "**Vision**"? ____ Yes ____ No

Write a personal prayer to the Lord laying your vision at His feet and giving Him the ultimate responsibility for the fulfilment of it.