



Leadership Collaborative



LEARNING • SUPPORT • ACCOUNTABILITY

MONTH 8

VISION: WHERE IS GOD LEADING YOU?

Ephesians 3:20 (NLT)

"Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think."

OBSERVE

Go back and read through this verse again...slowly. Reflect on it for a moment.

Think of a time when you felt inspired to do something even though you weren't sure how it would work out. What pushed you forward to pursue that project, calling, or new effort despite the unknown?

We may not be aware of it as we are moving toward the goal, but what pushes us forward is vision. Vision is being able to see the future from God's perspective. For spiritual leaders, vision is grounded in God—who God is, what God can do, and our faith in God to act on our behalf.

Vision involves understanding and accepting that **God is able**. God has the capability to help us accomplish the vision that God gives to us. When we imagine the future from God's perspective, we envision God beside us on the journey toward that vision. We don't make the journey on our own strength, but with the strength and resources of God who is able.

Not only does God have the ability to help and to provide, but God also has the inclination and intention: **God is willing**. God is willing to respond, especially when what we desire and work toward are in line with God's will.

What is the current vision that you believe God has given you and your ministry context to work toward?

Share this vision. Define it in the greatest detail you can. Describe how it makes you feel. Articulate the hope you have in seeing this vision become a reality.

How does the statement "God is willing and able" impact your vision? Is this vision shared by your ministry colleagues? How are they living into it?

IDENTIFY

Read Acts 11:1-18 (MSG)

This story from Peter's life shows what happens when God engages us in a new vision. We can glean deeper understanding when we reflect on Peter's experience. His story can give us greater clarity on how to discern vision and a future reality from God's perspective.

When God gives us a vision:

1. It messes us up.

When God gave this vision to Peter, it changed his life and it changed the world. Vision goes beyond ourselves. Visions never focus on just you, nor are they exclusively for your benefit. When we receive a vision from God, we should no longer be content with what is or what was. For Peter, he was no longer content with salvation only being for Jews. Now he was also going to minister to Gentiles. Your vision will mess you up—maybe even more than it already has.

2. It makes us look forward.

We don't focus on the past when we're given a new vision; instead, we begin to see possibilities. For Peter, unclean things did not remain unclean; God was making them clean. The old way was no longer good enough. Peter was going into a new future. Vision helps us to look forward, to imagine the future, to see it as different.

3. It moves us in a new direction.

For Peter, it was a simple journey: from Joppa to Caesarea. From a ministry exclusively to Jews to one that's open to all. When God gives us a vision, we choose to follow it, and this takes us in new directions.

When we have an encounter with God that sparks a vision, we are invited to pause. We are urged to reflect, wonder, and ask questions: *Will we follow? Or will we just stay in the same place, doing the same things, responding the same way?*

We are often faced with difficult choices when we say "yes" to the vision God has for us.

How is the vision God has given you "messing you up"?

What will happen if you choose not to move forward?

What is the greater "yes" you are affirming in your vision, and the lesser "no" that would tempt you to remain in the same place or to go in the same direction?

APPLY

In his book, *Beyond Church Growth*, Bob Logan writes about **visionizing faith and prayer**.¹ He holds that faith and prayer are central to a Godly vision. The following descriptions can be helpful to clarify and cast vision:

1. A Godly vision is right for the times, right for the church or organization, and right for the people.
2. A Godly vision promotes faith rather than fear.
3. A Godly vision motivates people to take action.
4. A Godly vision requires risk-taking.
5. A Godly vision glorifies God, not people.

How do these statements about Godly vision fit with the vision you have articulated?

Which of these statements most supports your vision? Which one has the greatest disconnect with your vision?

Where are some places where you might need some reevaluation and refining?

NEXT STEPS

Mary Oliver

"Tell me, what is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?"

Vision answers the following questions:

1. Where are we going?
2. Why are we going there?
3. How do we get there?
4. Why is it better there than where we are now?

How do these questions provide you with a deeper foundation out of which to lead?

¹ Robert Logan, *Beyond Church Growth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Fleming H. Revell, 1989).

What are some ways you can help your church, organization, or group reflect on these types of questions regarding vision so that transformation can happen?

REFLECT

Audrey Lorde

"When I dare to be powerful, to use my strength in the service of my vision, then it becomes less and less important whether I am afraid."

Habakkuk 2:2-3 (NRSV)

Then the LORD answered me and said:

Write the vision;

make it plain on tablets,

so that a runner may read it.

³ *For there is still a vision for the appointed time;*

it speaks of the end, and does not lie.

If it seems to tarry, wait for it;

it will surely come, it will not delay.