

MISSIONS REIMAGINED

Encouraging and Strengthening Leaders



KINGDOMBUILDING
INTERNATIONAL

Guidebook

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Who we are

We are a group of like-minded Christians dedicated to enlarging the Kingdom of God globally through empowering leaders and strengthening local churches.

What we do

We provide ways for the Kingdom of God to impact unreached nations by mobilizing believers and churches. This is accomplished through relational mentoring, cultural engagement, and Christ-centered, Spirit-filled, and Bible-based training and resources.

What makes us unique?

We believe the only way growth in the Kingdom is sustainable is through strengthening healthy churches. Our goal is to equip indigenous churches in unreached nations to become self-supporting and self-propagating.

Once churches are equipped, we continue our support through seminars, training programs, prayer partnerships, and resources that help churches achieve greater ministry effectiveness.

Kingdom Building International (KBI) also offers specialized retreats and conferences that reignite passion and purpose in the lives of Christian Leaders so that when they return to their perspective fields of service, they are refreshed and refocused on their mission.

<https://kingdombuilding.us>

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

WHY ARE WE DOING THIS? 2

Taking Care of Ourselves	3
Taking Care of our Finances	4
Taking Care of our Relationships	5
God cares about All of Us.....	6
Notes.....	8

WHERE ARE WE? 9

Our Current State	10
What are we missing?	11
Planning is Scriptural	11
Are you a planner?	13
Notes.....	16

WHAT DO WE DO NOW? 17

One-Page Plan (OPP)	17
Who can do an OPP?.....	18
Why do an OPP?	18
Write it down.....	20
Notes.....	22

THE PLAN (VISION) 23

What is a Plan? 24
How do I write a Plan? 24
What does a Plan look like? 25
My Plan 25
Notes 26

OBJECTIVES (GOALS) 27

What is a Goal? 27
How do I write a Goal? 28
What does a Goal look like? 29
My Goals 29
Notes 31

STRATEGIES 32

What are Strategies? 32
How do I write a Strategy? 32
What does a Strategy look like? 33
My Strategy 34
Notes 36

DOING THE PLAN 37

How Do I Write a Plan? 38
My Planning 40
How Do I Do the Plan? 41
Can I adjust the plan? 43

What does it look like to adjust my Plan?.....	43
Commit to the Plan.....	44
Notes.....	45
FINAL WORDS.....	46
Notes.....	47
ONE-PAGE PLAN.....	48
REFERENCES	49

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WHY ARE WE DOING THIS?

"The key is not to prioritize your schedule but to schedule your priorities."

— Steven Covey



Bryan Dyson, former CEO of Coca-Cola delivered a commencement speech at Georgia Tech in September 1991. Dyson discussed the juggling-glass-and-rubber-balls illustration in relation to our life. Here's what he said:

"Imagine life as a game in which you are juggling some five balls in the air. You name them—work, family, health, friends, and spirit—and you're keeping all of these in the air. You will soon understand that work is a rubber ball. If you drop it, it will bounce back. But the other four balls—family, health, friends, and spirit—are made of glass. If you drop one of these, they will be irrevocably scuffed, marked, nicked, damaged, or even shattered. They will never be the same. You must understand that and strive for balance in your life."

In essence, Dyson was saying that you can bounce back from dropping a job in favor of your family, health, friends, and spirit; but dropping your family, health, friends, and spirit in favor of your job will result in long-term damage.

Ministry and business share many similarities, and for those of us whose job is ministry, it's essential to find a balance between our personal lives and our work. How can we ensure that we manage our priorities effectively and avoid failing to juggle the demands of both?

Jesus understood the importance of fulfilling His earthly responsibilities and commitments. Even though He was about to become the sin sacrifice for the world, He made sure to care for His mother. He entrusted her care to John by looking at them both and saying, "Dear woman, here is your son.... here is your mother." (John 19:26-27) This incredible act emphasizes the significance of the Christian duty and the value that God places on the care and concern of our family and loved ones.

The importance of balancing one's life and ministry cannot be overstated. Neglecting one aspect of life in favor of the other can lead to burnout, stress, and dissatisfaction. It is essential to prioritize self-care and ensure that personal and ministry obligations are given the attention they deserve. Unfortunately, many ministers fail to distinguish between God's call to ministry and the legitimate duties of life.

TAKING CARE OF OURSELVES

You have answered the call of God for your life. This call is very real and cannot be discounted. However, sometimes ambition tends to override wisdom. What is the result? You become "married" to the ministry or the church and neglect your actual marriages and families. You push yourself so hard to fulfill God's call on your life that you neglect yourself and even your health. When this happens, you can experience burnout.

What is burnout? In its more extreme state, burnout is mental, physical, and emotional exhaustion. If you are experiencing burnout, you may notice it is difficult to engage in activities you normally find meaningful. You may no longer care about the things that are important to you or experience an increasing sense of hopelessness.

What are the five common symptoms of burnout?

- Exhausted or drained of energy
- Hopeless and unmotivated
- Detachment from your responsibilities and relationships
- Cynical and negative
- A sense of failure

Instead of waiting for it to happen, we need to be aware of it before it happens. We need to closely examine our lives to acknowledge if we are setting ourselves up for burnout.

Ask yourselves these questions:

1. *Are you tired or exhausted?*
2. *When is the last time you took a vacation with your family?*
3. *What is something you enjoy doing outside of the ministry? When is the last time you did it?*
4. *What advice would you give to a younger you?*

Are you surprised at some of your answers? Has it been longer than a month since you have taken time for yourself? Do you regularly do things to take care of your physical body such as exercise or eating healthy? If not, you need to start planning to do this today. Be intentional about taking care of yourself and your body. Plan and schedule times of rest for yourself. If you don't, you will pay for it later.

TAKING CARE OF OUR FINANCES

Does God care about our finances? What about our jobs or working? We read in 2 Thessalonians 3:10-12 that Paul corrected the church at Thessaloniki since there were people in the church that weren't working. Paul saw this as an issue. But what about if we are called to ministry?

Was Paul called to ministry? Absolutely. In Acts 9, we see the story of Paul's conversion. After Paul encountered the Lord on the Road to Damascus, the Lord spoke to man named Ananias and said about Paul, "Go! This man is a chosen instrument to proclaim my name to the Gentiles and their kings and to the people of Israel." The Lord Himself affirmed the call of God on Paul's life.

However, we know that Paul had an occupation (or job) as well. Acts 18:1-4 describes this occupation — he was a tentmaker. Although this passage is familiar, it is often understood too narrowly. In the familiar reading, Paul earns money by making tents in order to support himself in his real ministry of witnessing to Christ. This view is too narrow because it doesn't see that the tent-making itself is a real ministry of witnessing to Christ. Paul is a witness when he preaches and when he makes tents and uses his earnings to benefit the broader community. Paul said:

I coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel. You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my necessities, and to those who were with me. In all things I have shown you that by so toiling one must help the weak, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' (Acts 20:33-35 RSV)

Paul's money-earning work was an effort to build up the community economically.ⁱⁱ Paul employs his skills and possessions for the sake of the community, and he explicitly says that this is an example others should follow. He does not say that everyone should follow his example of preaching. But he does say everyone should follow his example of toiling to help the weak and being generous in giving, as Jesus himself taught. Paul is not claiming any

higher status arising from his apostolic position, but rather is “stepping down the social ladder for the sake of Christ.”ⁱⁱⁱ

A life of true blessing requires generosity. It is absolutely necessary to be generous to experience the full measure of God’s blessing. However, this requires managing your financial resources wisely and prudently, so you’ll actually be able to be generous. The ability to wisely manage wealth and material possessions is not a talent that you’re gifted at birth. It’s a skill. This means it can be taught and learned.^{iv}

The biblical word for skill is stewardship. Quite simply, you can’t expect God to shower you with more resources if you’re still mismanaging the ones He’s already given you.^v We need to learn how to manage our finances and be good stewards of the resources that God has already provided to us.

TAKING CARE OF OUR RELATIONSHIPS

Life is full of duties—family duties, business duties, civic duties, ministry duties, etc. Paul acknowledges and recognizes these duties. For instance, below are some examples of Scripture written by Paul about our duties to family:

- **1 Timothy 3:5** — *If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God’s church?*
- **1 Timothy 5:8** — *Anyone who does not provide for their relatives, and especially for their own household, has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.*

The circumstances in our lives created by such duties have to be considered when we seek God’s guidance in our life. God understands and recognizes our duty to our relationships. Consider the following statistics:^{vi}

- *33% of Pastor’s kids are no longer actively involved in church*
- *42% of Pastors say they wish they had spent more time with their kids.*

These statistics are alarming. Why do they exist? What are we doing or not doing in our relationships that affects their Christian walk? The Lord does not teach that our family falls only after all of our ministry duties are completed.

In fact, according to the the Scriptures we just read, we are worse than an unbeliever if we do not provide for our own families. It even says that one who does this has denied the faith. This truth doesn't just refer to our relationships with our kids, but our spouses as well. The duties associated with being married are the very reasons why Paul urges great care in entering into marriage (1 Corinthians 7). Going further, we see in Scripture that these principles apply to servants and masters and citizens and the state—in other words, to all of our relationship duties.^{vii}

Maybe a better word to use instead of “duty” is “commitment.” Duty may imply obligation, but commitment implies motivation and intentionality (or choice).

The commitment that our relationships and lives demand from us are part of our circumstances that impact how we act out God's will in our life. Personal revelation that completely contradicts these scriptural commitments to our marriage, family and relationships does not honor God. Only under the most exceptional circumstances can this be tolerated—and with great thought and care before acting.

Rodney “Gipsy” Smith was a British Evangelist who conducted evangelistic campaigns in the United States and Britain for over 70 years. One day, a woman approached him and shared that she felt called to preach but had twelve children. Gipsy Smith replied, “Hallelujah, sister. God has not only called you to preach, but he has given you a congregation to preach to.”

We cannot and should not neglect our marriages, families, and relationships in the name of Christian duty or Ministry. Our normal duties in life—obedience to parents and recognition of the commitment of married/family life—cannot always fall in last place behind “Our Ministry” or “Our Calling”. Our relationship commitments are actually an integral part of both our ministry and calling. We can confidently expect God to guide us in these relationship commitments while we carry out our Ministry.

GOD CARES ABOUT ALL OF US

God cares about all of us, not just our calling or ministry. God leaves in our care resources such as time, talents, relationships, and wealth. When we

handle these precious resources wisely, it qualifies us for blessing. It also qualifies us to be entrusted with more.^{viii}

Are you managing well the resources Gods has entrusted to you—your body, your soul, your life, your relationships, your family, your natural talents, your possessions? Are these resources growing, producing fruit, and impacting the world around you? Are these resources producing a growing impact on God’s Kingdom?^{ix}

Ultimately, we must recognize that we are stewards of everything God has given us—our money, possessions, bodies, and ministries. The ultimate goal for this stewardship is to bring increase to the Kingdom of God. If this is true, then we must ask ourselves the following questions:

- 1. Am I properly stewarding each of these areas?*
- 2. What kind of story is my life telling those I interact with daily?*
- 3. Is my message supported by the way I live my life?*

NOTES



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WHERE ARE WE?

"If you don't know where you are going, you'll end up someplace else."

— **Yogi Berra**



A young woman took a large knife and sliced off the ends of a ham before placing it in a pan to roast. Her young daughter was watching her closely and asked, "Mommy, why do you cut off the ends of the ham?" The young woman said to her daughter, "Well, I don't really know. That is always what your grandmother did." The next time the young woman spoke to her mother, she asked, "Mom, why do we cut off the ends of the ham before we roast it?" Her mother was quiet for a minute before replying, "Well, I don't know. That is always what your grandmother did. Why don't we ask her?" Finally, they called the grandmother to ask the same question. The grandmother quickly replied, "Well, the ham was always too big for the pan that I was using, so I would cut off the ends to make it fit in my pan."

How often do we do something because it is always the way we have seen it done. We may not have given any thought about whether it made sense, was necessary, or even beneficial. Just like the young mother, we may be doing something in our life or ministry just because it is the way that we have always seen it done by our parents or even other pastors/church leaders. We have never asked ourselves, "Does it make sense?" Or "Are we seeing the results in our lives and ministries that we would expect or even like to see?" Are we doing some things just because that is the way that we have seen them done by others around us without thought as to why? Have we assessed the impact of the current way that we are doing things to see if they make sense?

OUR CURRENT STATE

As we will show you, there are some alarming statistics that would suggest that we aren't getting the results that we would expect from "business as usual." Consider the following statistics:^x

- *Approximately 90% of ministers feel like they have nobody they can talk to*
- *10% of Americans 65 and older live in poverty*
- *50% of all congregations in the US are either plateauing or declining*
- *33% of ministers say that being in the ministry is a hazard to their family*
- *33% of pastors confess inappropriate sexual behavior with someone in the church*
- *10% of ministers say that they have looked at porn in the last month*
- *90% of pastors work more than 46 hours per week*
- *Typical pastors have the greatest ministry impact at the church at years 5-14. Unfortunately, the average pastor only lasts 5 years at a church*

In addition, many governments have identified that lack of planning for retirement is such an issue that they have stepped in to set up some type of plan (socialized program) to help people save for their future.

We have previously noted that business and ministry have many similarities. Many business concepts can also relate to ministry. As we talked to many business owners, we were shocked to discover that over 90% fall into one of these three categories:

1. *Their taxes are not up-to-date*
2. *They don't have the right insurance—medical, compensation, etc.*
3. *They have no plans for retirement (or for how they will live financially after the age of 65 years old)*

If there are a lot of similarities between ministry and business, how many ministers fall into one of these categories? Are you doing or not doing any of these things? Do they apply to you?

1. *Are your taxes up to date?*

2. *Do you have insurance for the church? Do you have insurance for your family?*
3. *Do you have a retirement plan?*

You can't fix what you don't know. Some of these statistics may not apply to you. But if God works through leaders, then you have people that you know or are currently dealing with that are going through some of these things. If this is true, then how do we change these statistics for the positive and not just accept the way things have always been?

WHAT ARE WE MISSING?

As Christians, we have a powerful spiritual inheritance and resources available to us:

1. *The Word (or Bible)*
2. *The Redemptive work of Jesus Christ*
3. *Prayer*
4. *The Holy Spirit*

These are powerful truths and resources. So, why are we seeing these alarming statistics not just in society, but in the ministry and church leaders? What are we missing? We would propose that the missing factor is intentional planning to carry out and support these powerful spiritual truths and resources.

PLANNING IS SCRIPTURAL

We may believe leadership in ministry should be more intuitive and simply trusting the Holy Spirit as we go. We may think that we are not letting the Holy Spirit lead us if we are planning too far down the road. Is it possible to plan better and still be directed by the Holy Spirit? What does the Bible say about planning?

Many times, ministers have the greatest message about how God has a plan for us. We quote Jeremiah 29:11 and tell them that God has an amazing PLAN for their life. Is God a planner? Absolutely Yes.

God had a plan from the beginning of time (Ephesians 1:4). God's plan of redemption for man is God's master plan. In the story of creation, you see God's plan in action (Genesis 1:26). When sin entered the world through Adam's disobedience, God had a plan (Genesis 3). God reveals His plan to Abraham in Genesis 12:1-3. We also see in this Scripture that God's plan revealed through His promises was both physical and spiritual. Physically, Abraham's descendants would become a great nation. Spiritually, God's plan was to all people and fulfilled in the coming of Jesus (the Messiah) through whom all people and nationalities may receive salvation (Acts 4:10-12; Galatians 3:16). God is strategically working His plan both physically and spiritually from creation to the cross (and even ongoing now) to accomplish His ultimate purpose. It took both the natural and supernatural (spiritual) working together.

We see another example of the importance of planning with Nehemiah. Nehemiah implemented a plan to successfully rebuild the walls and gates of Jerusalem. Again, we see the natural and supernatural coming together. First, Nehemiah prayed and sought God's vision (Nehemiah 1 & 2). But he didn't just stop there. Nehemiah needed to fully understand the circumstances of the project he was about to undertake. He had discussions with the people that had seen the destruction. Then, he personally examined the damage to the wall and gates to determine what was needed. He physically assessed the project before he started. After he confirmed his vision, he developed goals and strategies (Nehemiah 3:28, Nehemiah 4:16). Rebuilding the wall would not have been possible if Nehemiah had just stopped at prayer and seeking God's vision and favor. He developed and executed the plan which resulted in rebuilding the wall and gates in only 52 days!

The Word says that we are in the world but not of this world (John 17:16). But since we are in this world, we have to operate in this world. That means that the natural and supernatural must work together — through intentionally planning. Yes, let the Spirit of God move and work in you, through you, and in your church/ministry. But allow the same Spirit to move in you through your plans. Good stewardship of all the resources that God has given us can only be accomplished through planning.

ARE YOU A PLANNER?

Abraham was a planner. Nehemiah was a planner. God is a planner. Are you a planner? Ask yourself these questions:

- *Do you have plan for your life?*
- *Do you have a plan for your ministry?*
- *Do you have them written down?*
- *Have you worked that plan?*
- *Have you shared that plan with anybody? Have you shown it to anybody you are leading? Have you shown it to your wife or family (kids)?*
- *Have you ever gotten advice from someone who is successful at what you are doing (or want to do)?*
- *What does 15 years into the future look like for you, your family, your ministry?*
- *What are your monthly expenses now? What will they be when you are 65?*
- *Are you saving anything for tomorrow, 10 years, 20 years?*

If you answered “No” to any (or maybe all) of these questions, then you are not planning for your life and future.

We all agree God’s got a plan for our life. But do you have plan for your life that lines up with God’s plan? What natural plans have you made to align yourself with God’s plan? We challenge you to intentionally start planning for tomorrow.

What Biblical principles do you want to guide your life? While we are to be doers of the whole Word or Truth, intentionally identifying Scriptures to meditate on regularly helps us to focus. You may already have Scriptures that you stand on. If so, that is great — write them down here to reinforce them in your thoughts. If you don’t have some guiding scriptures that you regularly review and meditate on, then we challenge you to find one to three key scriptures that you want to intentionally allow to guide your life and/or ministry. Below are some examples of Scriptures:

Psalms 127:1	1 Corinthians 13:8	Colossians 3:15
Unless the LORD builds a house, the work of the builders is wasted. Unless the LORD protects a city, guarding it with sentries will do no good. (NLT)	Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. (NIV)	Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. (NIV)
My Commitment: I will make plans, but I seek and desire that they align with God's Plans and Biblical Truth (principles). If I identify something in my life or plans that is not in alignment with God's plans, I will make an adjustment.	My Commitment: Love never fails. I endeavor to become a love expert. I desire to reflect God's love nature through my words and actions.	My Commitment: I have the Holy Spirit on the inside of me. I am God-inside minded. I will let the Holy Spirit lead and guide me in my words and actions. I will let His peace rule in my heart regardless of my circumstances.

But you should identify your own guiding Scriptures/Biblical Principles on which to base your life and ministry. Prayerfully consider the Scriptures that you choose. It is when the natural and supernatural work together that great impact is made for God's Kingdom. Identify and write down 1-3 guiding scriptures and what commitment you are making personally to live out that Scripture/Biblical Principle:

Scripture #1:	Scripture #2:	Scripture #3:
Write it out:	Write it out:	Write it out:

<i>My Commitment:</i>	<i>My Commitment:</i>	<i>My Commitment:</i>
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Write these scriptures down in your Bible, on your phone, in a notebook — somewhere that you will look at them frequently (even daily). Make a decision to start today. You are only going to get out of this what you put into it.

NOTES



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WHAT DO WE DO NOW?

"If you want something you've never had. You must be willing to do something you've never done."

— **Thomas Jefferson**



Alice in Wonderland is a playful story told by an author named Lewis Carrol. In the story, one day Alice comes to a fork in the road and doesn't know which way to go. Then, she sees a Cheshire Cat in a tree and asks him which way she ought to go. The cat responds by asking, "where do you want to go?" Alice says, "I don't know." The cat quickly responds by saying, "well, then it really doesn't matter which way you go."^{xi}

While it may seem a little sarcastic, it is also very true. The only way you can know where to go or what to do is if you know where you want to go. It may sound too simple. But if you don't have an intentional plan in place for your life and ministry, then you are like Alice who doesn't know where she wants to go — so she will never know if she ever gets there.

If you are not currently a planner and you don't know where you want to go, how do you change this? How do you have a clear idea of what you want to see happen in your life and ministry? The simple answer is that you make a plan!

ONE-PAGE PLAN (OPP)

We call it the "One-Page Plan" or "OPP". Your plan does not have to be complicated to be effective. In fact, the simpler you can make it, the easier it is to implement. An OPP is a simple plan that has four main components:^{xii}

1. *Vision (overall plan of what you are trying to achieve)*
2. *Objective (or Goal — specific goals that you are trying to accomplish which support your overall vision)*

3. *Strategy (How you are going to do it)*
4. *Doing the Plan (Acting on specific projects with deadlines with adjustments as needed)*

We will spend more time on each of these components. But a simple plan that includes a vision, goals, strategies and projects with timelines is critical to living life intentionally.

WHO CAN DO AN OPP?

In the business world, business plans are common. Words like vision, goals, and strategies are consistently used. If someone wants to borrow money for a business, the lender will likely want to review their business plan. They want to ensure that they understand the plan, goals and strategies. They want to understand that the person asking for money has put time and thought into what they want to achieve and how they plan to get there.

We have consistently compared business to ministry. If businesses need a plan, then shouldn't ministries have a plan as well? But why stop there? If the purpose of a plan is to define what we want to achieve and how we plan to get there, where else can we apply a plan? The answer is anywhere — or in all areas of our life including our finances, our family, and our personal life.

Anyone can do a plan — a ministry, an individual, a church, a traveling ministry, a family, a business, a teenager, or an organization. Anyone can develop and implement a plan. But is there a reason to actually do it?

WHY DO AN OPP?

Caleb, along with Joshua and ten other leaders of Israel, were sent by Moses to explore the Promised Land prior to the Israelites entering. They were supposed to bring a report of the fruitfulness of the land and to encourage everyone to quickly enter and take possession. The land was fruitful just as God had promised. But there was also an obstacle to overcome: they saw giants in the land. This discouraged ten of the spies who drove fear into the hearts of the people. Their lack of trust in God caused the entire population to wander in the wilderness forty years.

But Caleb and Joshua were the exception. Caleb was convinced that Israel could take immediate possession. The others were not, and they let the opportunity pass by. As a result of Caleb's bold trust in God, Moses promised him the very land he had initially walked on in Canaan. Caleb kept that vision before him and forty-five years later, he seized the promise by entering into the Promised Land at the age of eighty-five. Even though it was promised to Him, Caleb still had to keep the promise before him and step into the land that was promised. He couldn't just sit in the wilderness and do nothing. He had to seize the promise through action.

How do you seize the things that God has been talking to you about? How do you seize what God has already prepared for you? By developing and implementing a plan. God has a plan for you. But if you are not seeing the fruit in your life, what is going to make this year different than last year or the last few years? What dreams or goals have you hidden away or forgotten? We cannot expect God to make our goals and dreams happen independently from our actions.

We must possess everything we have and experience in life. This is a Spiritual Law that we see throughout the Scriptures in both the Old and New Testament. From the redemptive realities to the plans and promises God has for our lives, our actions are required in order to possess the promise. Faith without works is dead (James 2:26). It takes both the natural and the supernatural working together.

There are a number of reasons that it is important to develop and implement a plan. A plan provides a solid foundation and helps both yourself and those around you visualize what you hope to achieve. It gives both you and anybody you lead or impact something to connect with. Below are just a few reasons that you should consider:

- 1. When you have a bad day, you can always go back to your plan*
- 2. It's easier to lead your family and people*
- 3. It keeps you focused on the important things*
- 4. It brings out the best in you*

5. *It's easier to work towards God's plan for your life*
6. *It's easier to raise funds for your ministry*

However, it is not just enough to have a vague plan in your head. In order to truly have a solid plan, you have to write it down so that you and others can actually see it.

WRITE IT DOWN

The Lord spoke to Habakkuk the prophet and shared the following words:

“Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so he may run who reads it. For still the vision awaits its appointed time; it hastens to the end — it will not lie. If it seems slow, wait for it; it will surely come; it will not delay.” (Habakkuk 2:2-3 ESV)

God clearly told Habakkuk to write the vision down. Why? Have you ever had a great idea, but you were too busy to write it down and lost it? Thoughts can change and become less clear. Without a written plan, your plan is always subject to change just like your thoughts.^{xiii}

Writing down a vision or plan starts bringing it to life. If it is not written down, we cannot make blueprints or see what it can become. There is a certain power that comes to our plans when we write them down. Things get clearer when we write them out.

God understood the practical importance of writing the plan down as well. God understood that when it is written down, those we lead can “run” with it and we will see it succeed. A clear process begins to develop for both the leaders and followers when it is plain because everyone sees the same thing. It allows others to participate in your dream.

Finally, writing a vision down solidifies the plan and helps you to make a pathway towards implementation (or accomplishing the dream). After the vision is made plain, it can be continually shared, reviewed, or taught to people so that it can grow and become a reality. Writing takes more time than talk. Since it takes time, our words are chosen more carefully, reflection occurs more frequently, and adjustments can be made more thoughtfully

(when necessary). So, get ready. We are going to write our vision and make it plain — and we shall surely see success just as God promised Habakkuk!

THE PLAN (VISION)

"Where this is no vision, the people perish..."

- God (Proverbs 29:18)



When Coach Bobby Bowden played baseball in college, he never hit a home run. His senior year at Howard College, he was the only player not to hit a home run. One day, he hit a line drive against Auburn. As he approached third, the coach was waving him on. As he made his turn, he heard his third base coach say, "But hurry!"

When he touched home, the team was ecstatic, slapping his back and shaking his hand back in the day before "high fives." The first baseman yelled for the catcher to throw him the ball. The umpire yelled, "out." When he ran the bases, Bobby Bowden never touched first. Maybe that's why he became a football coach. Anyway, you can probably imagine he told his players, "If you don't take care of first base, it doesn't matter what you do." He didn't put first things first.

When we become a planner, how do we put the first things first? What is the first thing we need to do in planning? The answer is Vision.

Ephesians 3:20 says, "Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power that is at work within us (RSV)." If we can dream it, God can do abundantly more than our dreams. But we have to start with a dream so that God has something to work with. What have you dreamed about doing with your family? What do you dream about for your marriage? What do you dream about for your church or ministry?

The first step of making a plan is to develop your vision or dream for your future. The main areas that you should consider when developing your vision include:

1. *Personal (dreams for yourself)*
2. *Family or Marriage*
3. *Finances*
4. *Business or Ministry*

Use your imagination. Picture yourself in situations that you would like to see in these areas. Then, write them down.

WHAT IS A PLAN?

When an artist wants to paint a picture, they have to first decide what they are going to paint. They need to have an idea in their vision or thoughts about what their painting should look like. Are they going to paint flowers or a mountain range? They first need to understand what they want to paint or accomplish.

A plan is similar to creating a painting. In order to create a plan, we first need to decide what we are trying to accomplish. What do we want the end product to look like? This is your vision or overall plan. We call it the One-Page Plan (OPP). An OPP is a simple plan that has four main components:

1. *Vision (overall plan of what you are trying to achieve)*
2. *Objective (or Goal — specific goals that you are trying to accomplish which support your overall vision)*
3. *Strategy (How you are going to do it)*
4. *Doing the Plan (Acting on specific projects with deadlines with adjustments as needed)*

For this lesson, we will start with the Vision.

HOW DO I WRITE A PLAN?

To develop your vision, you need to ask yourself, “What am I trying to accomplish?” Pick one of the main areas of focus to start (i.e., personal, family/marriage, finances, or business/ministry). For instance, do you want to save for retirement, complete a degree, work less, or spend more time with your family? Maybe you have a dream vacation that you want to plan for your

family or you want to pay off debt. Whatever the dream is, the first step is to write it down. After you learn how to do this for one area, then we encourage you to develop a plan or dream for each of the other key areas as well.

WHAT DOES A PLAN LOOK LIKE?

Following is an example of a possible vision for the area of family: I want to strengthen the bonding among my family members.

You can see that a vision is high level and broad. It is an overall plan that you want to accomplish.

MY PLAN

Now it is time to write your own vision.

What area do you want to start with? (Circle One)

- 1. *Personal (dreams for yourself)*
- 2. *Family or Marriage*
- 3. *Finances*
- 4. *Business or Ministry*

After you confirm the area you want to focus on for this first plan, start dreaming. Dream big. If God will do abundantly above all you ask or think, why dream small? Give God something big to work with!

Write down your vision or dream below:

This is the starting point that your OPP will be based on.

NOTES



Lined area for notes, consisting of 25 horizontal lines.

OBJECTIVES (GOALS)

"A goal without a plan is just a wish."

— Antoine de Saint-Exupery



A young man was totally broke and blamed the government, taxes, the high price of goods for his lack of financial success. One day, he met an entrepreneur who became his mentor and helped change his life. This mentor taught the young man many things, but they had one specific conversation that changed his life. Two weeks after he started working for him, they were having breakfast together. Just as they were about to finish their eggs, the mentor said, "Let's take a look at your list of goals so that we can review and discuss them. Maybe that's the best way I can help you right now." "But I don't have a list with me," the young man replied. "Well, is it out in your car or at home somewhere?" asked the mentor. "No, sir, I don't have a list anywhere," the young man said. The mentor sighed. "Well, young man, looks like this is where we'd better start." Then, looking directly into his eyes, he said, "If you don't have a list of your goals, I can guess your bank balance within a few hundred dollars." He guessed right.

Our choice of goals can shape the course of our lives. Someone with the goal to become a doctor is going to have a radically different life to someone with the goal to become a professional painter. Someone with the goal to get married and have a family is going to have a very different life to someone with the goal of "stay single forever and enjoy my freedom".

Our goals give us a direction to work towards.

WHAT IS A GOAL?

A goal is an explicit statement of a result that you are trying to achieve. It gives a direction to go in order to accomplish the vision. It is an idea of the

future or desired result that a person or a group of people envision, plan or commit to achieve. It should have a specific timeline associated with it.

There are two types of goals:

1. **Short-term goals**—goals that you achieve by a certain deadline. They are things that you have to do before you can move on to a higher level or goal. They are more focused than the ultimate goal but should align with it. They keep you on track so that you don't lose sight of why you are taking action in the first place. Short-term goals can be achieved 1 month to around 3 years.
2. **Long-term goals**—the overarching objective that drives you. It holds you accountable to move forward. Long-term goals can be a goal that is 5, 10, or even 15 years or more out. For instance, "I want to have XX amount of dollars in my retirement when I turn 65."

Your short-term goals should always line up with your long-term goals. If they don't, you need to adjust your short-term goals.

Goal setting is not just about achieving your goals but taking the necessary steps on a regular basis towards doing so. We shouldn't become too attached to any one goal, because it may be necessary to change or adjust it if circumstances change. But no goal means no direction and no results.

HOW DO I WRITE A GOAL?

How do you write a goal that can give direction to your vision? First, dream big but also be realistic with your goals. For instance, if you have no savings at all, then a goal to have \$1,000,000 in savings by the end of the year may be little far-fetched. Second, be clear. The clearer your goal-setting criteria, the easier it will be achieving them.

An accepted standard for writing goals is using the "SMART" method. SMART goals stand for **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**elevant, and **T**ime-Bound. Terms like "less", "more", or "better" should not be used because it is difficult to know definitely if you achieve the goal.

- **Specific** — goals should be written with a clear end result in mind.

- **Measurable** — every goal should be quantifiable. This means that you should be able to tell if you achieve it.
- **Achievable** — goals should be realistically achievable and split into manageable steps.
- **Relevant** — goals should have a tangible impact on the area that you are trying to change.
- **Time-bound** — goals should have a due date.

Defining these parameters as they pertain to your goal helps ensure that your objectives are attainable within a certain time.

WHAT DOES A GOAL LOOK LIKE?

Following is the example of vision we identified in the previous lesson for the area of family: I want to strengthen the bonding of my family members.

Based on this vision, below is a possible goal (objective) that we could write based on the SMART goal method. For the purposes of this example, we will share a short-term goal (one that can be accomplished in 1 month - 3 years):

- **Specific** — I will intentionally schedule quality time to spend with my family.
- **Measurable** — I will plan fun activities with my family
- **Achievable** — I currently have \$XXXX saved for family activities
- **Relevant** — This goal will help my family to intentionally spend time together in a relaxed setting. When the entire family enjoys themselves, there is less room for negativity or conflict and more room to express love and compassion.
- **Time-bound** — I will plan a schedule of fun activities by the end of the month and add them to our family calendar.

MY GOALS

Using the vision or dream that you wrote down in the planning session, write at least two SMART goals — one short-term goal and one long-term goal. But you can write more if you choose. Start by re-writing your vision.

My Vision: _____

Short-term goal (objective):

- **Specific:** _____
- **Measurable:** _____
- **Achievable:** _____
- **Relevant:** _____
- **Time-bound:** _____

Long-term goal (objective):

- **Specific:** _____
- **Measurable:** _____
- **Achievable:** _____
- **Relevant:** _____
- **Time-bound:** _____

STRATEGIES

"If you fail to plan, you are planning to fail."

— **Benjamin Franklin**



Two frogs were sitting on a lily pad. One frog looked at the other frog and asked, "What are you going to do?" The second frog answered, "I am going to sit on the shore." Ten minutes later, both frogs still sat on the lily pad. Why? Because the second frog didn't put any strategy behind his goal to get from the lily pad to the shore.

Now, what if the first frog asked, "how are you going to do it?" The second frog may answer, "I am going to jump into the water and swim to the shore."

By adding these strategies, the second frog is no longer sitting on the lily pad indefinitely. That frog is now making a plan to reach his goal of sitting on the shore.

Goals may provide direction, but strategies provide a way to get there.

WHAT ARE STRATEGIES?

Strategies are plans of action designed to achieve a goal. Strategies drive action. Strategies answer the question, "What will make this plan successful over time?" Strategies give signposts to follow in order to achieve our vision and goals. In other words, they define how you are you going to do it — how you are going to get there.

HOW DO I WRITE A STRATEGY?

In order to write strategies, think of things that you can do that will help you to achieve your goal.

If you want to grow your church, how are you going to do it? If you want to grow to a thousand people, you probably need a strong kids ministry. Maybe

you will need a strategy to identify a Children’s Pastor or leader. You may need strategies for volunteering, etc.

How much more likely to do you think you are to achieve your goals when they are supported by strategies? The answer is much more likely.

WHAT DOES A STRATEGY LOOK LIKE?

Following is the example of vision we identified in the previous lessons for the area of family: I want to strengthen the bonding of my family members.

Based on this vision, below is a possible goal (objective) that we wrote:

- **Specific** — *I will intentionally schedule quality time to spend with my family.*
- **Measurable** — *I will plan fun activities with my family*
- **Achievable** — *I currently have \$XXXX saved for family activities*
- **Relevant** — *This goal will help my family to intentionally spend time together in a relaxed setting. When the entire family enjoys themselves, there is less room for negativity or conflict and more room to express love and compassion.*
- **Time-bound** — *I will plan a schedule of fun activities by the end of the month and add them to our family calendar.*

How are we going to do it? Let’s look at some possible strategies we can identify in order to achieve this goal:

- **Strategy #1:** *I will plan a family vacation for the coming summer*
- **Strategy #2:** *I will get input from the entire family to help identify and schedule fun activities*
- **Strategy #3:** *I will write the fun activities on a family calendar so that we can all look forward to them together*

If we complete the strategies, it is clear that we will be closer to achieving our goal of scheduling a fun family activity. But if we don’t implement the strategies, then our dream may never come to pass. It will just remain a dream.

MY STRATEGY

Using the vision or dream that you wrote down in the planning session, you wrote two SMART goals — one short-term goal and one long-term goal. For the purposes of this exercise, we will use the short-term goal to develop strategies. Start by re-writing your vision and short-term goal. Remember that writing and reviewing your plan solidifies it in your mind. Then, based on your short-term goal, write 3-5 strategies that will help you to achieve your goal.

My Vision: _____

Short-term goal (objective):

- **Specific:** _____
- **Measurable:** _____
- **Achievable:** _____
- **Relevant:** _____
- **Time-bound:** _____

Strategies:

- **Strategy #1:** _____
- **Strategy #2:** _____
- **Strategy #3:** _____

• **Strategy #4:** _____

• **Strategy #5:** _____

NOTES



Lined area for notes, consisting of 25 horizontal lines.

DOING THE PLAN

"Intentional days create a life on purpose."

— *Adrienne Enns*



As we sat at the restaurant, the very successful businessman sitting across the table quietly reviewed my plan. I tried to quietly eat as his eyes scanned my written pages. I had scheduled a lunch to get together with this man because he had already sold a successful company for millions of dollars. He was looking to do what I wanted to accomplish. Finally, he looked up from the pages and asked, "how much do you owe on your house?" What? I hadn't written anything about my personal life or home mortgage in my business plan. I proceeded to tell him that it was really none of his business. He quickly informed me that I really didn't want his help if I wasn't willing to answer that question.

Since I really did want his help, I ended up sharing the information and got very critical and helpful feedback on my plan. I realized that I had to keep an open mind and really listen to him if I truly wanted his honest help and feedback. In the end, I realized that my personal debt did have a huge impact on my ability to grow my company. So, the question actually was relevant.

I learned a few very important lessons from this meeting:

- 1. It is important to ask people that you respect and are doing what you are trying to do to review your plan and give feedback*
- 2. Keep an open mind and be open to change*
- 3. Do more listening than talking*

I was now ready to do my plan. You are almost ready to do your plan.

HOW DO I WRITE A PLAN?

Doing your plan requires planning specific projects with timelines. In order to start implementing your strategies, you will need to create tasks and activities with specific deadlines. Think of projects (actions or tasks with specific deadlines or frequencies) that you can do that will help you achieve your goals and strategies.

For instance, if you say that you have a financial goal to be financially stable, you may have a strategy to save \$2000 in one year. But it doesn't matter what you say if you don't put action behind it. If you aren't saving any money, you are probably not going to get there. But what if you create projects to align with this goal/strategy? Buying a lottery ticket and hoping you win is not a good plan. Break down the goal into months and weeks to see how you can take small steps to achieve the goal. In order to save \$2000 in a year, you would have to save \$167 per month, or \$39 per week, or about \$5.60 per day. What can you change or what project can you create to "find" this money to save. It may be looking at your spending habits, or it may be finding a way to make that amount of extra money so that you can put it in savings. For instance, you may say "I usually spend around \$6 a day in specialty coffees at the coffee shop. I am going to stop buying coffee every morning and put that money in a savings account for one year." Now you have projects with specific deadlines in place to work towards achieving your goal.

Following is the example of vision we identified in the previous lessons for the area of family: I want to strengthen the bonding of my family members.

Based on this vision, below is a possible goal (objective) that we wrote:

- **Specific** — *I will intentionally schedule quality time to spend with my family.*
- **Measurable** — *I will plan fun activities with my family*
- **Achievable** — *I currently have \$XXXX saved for family activities*
- **Relevant** — *This goal will help my family to intentionally spend time together in a relaxed setting. When the entire family enjoys*

themselves, there is less room for negativity or conflict and more room to express love and compassion.

- **Time-bound** — *I will plan a schedule of fun activities by the end of the month and add them to our family calendar.*

Below are some strategies we identified in order to achieve this goal:

- **Strategy #1:** *I will plan a family vacation for the coming summer*
- **Strategy #2:** *I will get input from the entire family for to help identify and schedule fun activities*
- **Strategy #3:** *I will write the fun activities on a family calendar so that we can all look forward to them together*

Now let's look at possible projects and timelines we can assign to this objective (goal):

- **Project #1:** *Look at the calendar and identify a good week for the family to take a one-week vacation.*
 - **Timeline:** *Look at the calendar by next week to schedule a vacation by no later than end of summer (August)*
- **Project #2:** *After I identify a week for the vacation, have a family meeting to talk about places we would like to visit.*
 - **Timeline:** *Within one week of identifying a good week to take vacation*
- **Project #3:** *After we have a list of our possible places, look on travel websites to confirm which options would be within our budget.*
 - **Timeline:** *By the end of the month*
- **Project #4:** *After we have the final list of options, take a family vote to decide where we want to go on vacation.*
 - **Timeline:** *By the end of the month*
- **Project #5:** *Book the trip using the travel website and put it on the calendar so that we can look forward to it together!*
 - **Timeline:** *By the end of the month*

MY PLANNING

Using the vision or dream that you wrote down in the planning session, you wrote two SMART goals — one short-term goal and one long-term goal. For the purposes of this exercise, we used the short-term goal to develop the remainder of our plan. Start by re-writing your vision, objectives (goals), and strategies. Remember that writing and reviewing your plan solidifies it in your mind. Then, based on your plan, write 3-5 planning projects with specific timelines that will help you to achieve your goal.

My Vision: _____

Short-term goal (objective):

- **Specific:** _____
- **Measurable:** _____
- **Achievable:** _____
- **Relevant:** _____
- **Time-bound:** _____

Strategies:

- **Strategy #1:** _____
- **Strategy #2:** _____
- **Strategy #3:** _____

- **Strategy #4:** _____
- **Strategy #5:** _____

Planning:

- **Project #1:** _____
 ➤ **Timeline:** _____
- **Project #2:** _____
 ➤ **Timeline:** _____
- **Project #3:** _____
 ➤ **Timeline:** _____
- **Project #4:** _____
 ➤ **Timeline:** _____
- **Project #5:** _____
 ➤ **Timeline:** _____

HOW DO I DO THE PLAN?

You have created a vision, goals, strategies and planning (projects with specific deadlines) to work toward the achievement of your dream or vision. How does it feel? It can be satisfying to finally have a plan in place to work towards something you have dreamed about. But this is just the beginning. We are going to spend some time talking about how you actually carry out the plan you have now written down.

However, before you do your plan, you have a final assignment. The final assignment is to find three different people that you respect and are doing what you are trying to do. Take them to lunch and ask them to critique your plan and ask them their thoughts.

Who are the people that you plan to ask about your plan? Why?

- **Person #1:** _____
- **Person #2:** _____
- **Person #3:** _____

How often do you think these people have been asked to share how they were successful and how they got there? When was the last time someone asked you how you got where you are at? How you accomplished it? How you became successful at what you do? Have you ever been asked these questions? I would guess the answer is usually no.

For those who have been asked, I would suspect that most have had a similar experience as I have. I have found that when most people ask my opinion, they don't want my advice. Rather, they want me to validate their plan. But when you are meeting with each of these people, learn from my mistakes and implement the important lessons that I learned.

First, be open to listening. Do more listening than talking. Ask questions. Second, be open to advice and change. If one of these three people tell you something, consider whether it is valid. Don't get defensive, write it down and don't give excuses. Finally, review your plan again based on the feedback and make any final adjustments needed. You are now ready to go do your plan!

Creating an initial plan is a starting point. But eventually you will have to start executing your plan by putting your goals and strategies into action through planning (or doing the plan). If you have committed to doing something once a week, then schedule that task or activity into your life. Setting deadlines and frequency in the planning stage is critical to moving your plan forward. Adjust your calendar and priorities so that you can do each project that you have listed.

CAN I ADJUST THE PLAN?

Look frequently at your plan to make sure you are on track. As you frequently look at your plan, you can adjust as needed. Are things going slower or faster than you planned?

For instance, maybe one of your goals was to be debt-free within five years. Maybe you were able to make extra payments on your debt. As a result, you may be able to pay off your debt in four years. This would require an adjustment in your plan.

Another example would be if you own a business, and your plan is to grow and expand. However, circumstances can change. Perhaps employees left or retired. This may require an adjustment to the plan.

When you frequently look at your plan, you will be able to easily identify if adjustments are needed. You can change objectives and strategies, but your vision stays the same...or what you want to accomplish.

The need to adjust your plan is not a failure of the plan. Adjustment of the plan is just proof that the plan is working. You are still working towards an overall vision — it is just the that the way you get there may need to be adjusted. In fact, Ephesians 3:20 says that God will do above and beyond all that we can ask or think. When we think and ask God, He will do above and beyond. What have you dreamed or imagined for your plan? God can support and multiply it. So, we should expect that adjustments will eventually be required to our plan as we see God work through us and through the plan.

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE TO ADJUST MY PLAN?

Following is the example of vision we identified in the previous lessons for the area of family: I want to strengthen the bonding of my family members.

We identified goals and strategies to achieve this plan or vision. Our strategy was to plan a family vacation in a specific timeframe. But what if something changes? For instance, what if my car needed repairs and I had to use some of the money from my savings to fix it? Could this impact my goals and

strategies? Possibly. Since part of my goal identified a budget for the vacation, I may need to evaluate the goal to ensure that I still have the budgeted funds to plan the vacation for the original destination planned. If not, then I may need to either change my destination to a place that fits the new budget, or I may need to delay the timelines until I can build up my savings again. My vision doesn't change, but my goals and/or strategies may need adjusted based on the change in circumstances.

COMMIT TO THE PLAN

Most importantly, you have to be committed to the plan and overall vision. You have to be motivated to stay with your plan to see it through.

A crucial part of doing the plan is accountability. We tend to perform better when someone is watching over us. For example, it is easier to cheat on a diet or skip the gym when we are doing it alone. But the moment we pair up with others or have a trainer to guide us through the process, there are increased chances of us sticking to the plans/strategies and succeeding in them. Find an accountability partner. Share your plan and progress with them. Pick someone that will be honest with you and will support you in doing your goals and strategies.

Look to the reward. When you are tempted to not stick to the goals or strategies, look to the reward. Remind yourself of what you will accomplish if you stick to the plan. The more we educate or remind ourselves about its benefits, the easier it becomes for us to stick to it.

Commitment to your plan will eventually lead to success. If you stay on course, you will accomplish the vision. When you commit, God can also commit to doing above and beyond anything you can ask or think (or plan). However, you have to give God something to work with — your plan!

NOTES



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FINAL WORDS

"The busier you are, the more intentional you must be."

— **Michael Hyatt**



Busyness cannot be an excuse to not do your plan. The busier you are, the more intentional you must be to schedule time in your day to develop and re-visit your plan. Make it a habit. Keep your plan somewhere that you can easily access it regularly. In order for your plan to change your life, you have to be intentional about implementing it. You now have tools and resources that you can use. The work you have done so far is just a starting point. Doing a plan is not just one and done. It is a constant process of evaluation and adjustment. Now that you know what a plan looks like, commit to spending time to develop a plan for all key areas of your life — your family, your finances, and your ministry.

Remember, we are stewards of everything God has given us—our money, possessions, bodies, and ministries. The ultimate goal for this stewardship is to bring increase to the Kingdom of God. The word says that we are in the world but not of this world (John 17:16). But since we are in this world, we have to operate in this world. That means that the natural and supernatural must work together — through intentionally planning. Yes, let the Spirit of God move and work in you, through you, and in your church/ministry. But allow the same Spirit to move in you through your plans. Good stewardship of all the resources that God has given us can only be accomplished through planning.

ONE-PAGE PLAN

Vision:

Objectives (Goals):

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Strategies:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Planning (specific projects with deadlines):

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

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