

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE – A Life of Vision and Purpose

A People of Vision

The Christian life, when lived correctly and biblically, is one of vision and purpose. We are all called to service in one way or another – serve one another, serve the community, serve the local church, serve the kingdom – and to live by faith. Jesus' encouragement in Matthew to seek first the kingdom indicates strongly in the preceding verses that if we do this, then all our needs will be met in abundance.

***“But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness,
and all these things will be added to you” (Matt 6:33)***

Vision is an essential component required to advance any endeavour. So is faith, and passion, and so many other important qualities that God gives us to help harness our own gifts, talents and calling to honour Him in service. It takes confidence to think outside the box. It takes vision to create a new tomorrow. It takes courage to change the world, and it takes enthusiasm and perseverance to overcome all and every obstacle that would stand in our way.

***“Where there is no (progressive) vision
the people perish (run around unrestrained)” (Prov 29:18)***

Vision is critical for everyone, believer or not, otherwise life is mundane, even boring and actually quite unhealthy. We all need a purpose, a reason to begin our day with enthusiasm and complete it with satisfaction. Hard times come and go, challenges rear up and are overcome, life can sometimes be tough, but God has called us all to be kingdom seekers, and to believe He is in control.

Infinite Capacity

Henry Ford wanted to do a lot of things that had never been done before, especially when it came to building motor vehicles. In 1932 the Ford Motor Company invented the first V8 engine, something Ford was told couldn't be done. In answer, he came up with this gem:

“I am looking for a lot of men with an infinite capacity for not knowing what can't be done”

On the need for new ideas regarding his vision for the motor car he left us this timeless quip:

“If I had asked people what they wanted, they would have said faster horses”

God is also looking for those men and women with an infinite capacity for not knowing what can't be done!

What is Vision

As far as the kingdom is concerned, our best expressions of service comes to the fore when we are associated and committed to the vision and purpose of a local church.

- ◆ Vision defines a direction so that we can all work together in unity (Amos 3:3; Psalm 133:1)
- ◆ Vision calls for a commitment to a defined set of purposes (Phil 3:14; 1 Cor 9:24)
- ◆ Vision helps us to raise our expectations to believe God for greater things (Eph 3:20; John 14:12)
- ◆ Vision helps us to accept necessary and progressive change (Heb 12 26-29; Dan 2:20-21)
- ◆ Vision in the kingdom of God is about the pursuit of excellence as defined by doing, to the best of our ability, all that God asks of us. Near enough is definitely not good enough in the business of the kingdom. God gives us His best, and we should give ours in return.
- ◆ Vision provides us with measurable objectives so that we can know when and if all of our efforts are being successful.

Churches speak of vision, businesses speak of vision, political and social activists speak of vision. Without a vision we perish. Without purpose we lack direction and motivation to persevere in order to overcome all obstacles and setbacks. Without faith, which is defined in Heb 11:1 as being *“the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction (evidence) of things not seen”*, we cannot please God, but Jesus declares clearly in Matt 19:26 that with God “all things are possible”.

“Without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him” (Heb 11:6)

Nothing great is every accomplished without faith, vision and a purpose that motivates and inspires us to at times accomplish the seemingly impossible. Jesus called it the *“God kind of Faith”* (Mark 11:22).

The Bible describes vision in terms of spiritual discernment or spiritual perception. The ability to see or imagine a thing before it become a reality. We need to be a people of vision – for our own lives, for our families and loved ones, for our calling in God, and for the work of a kingdom.

A strong commitment to your local church means buying into their vision. Moving forwards in your chosen career or business venture requires buying into a broader vision than just a personal one, and expanding your capacity to serve. Vision inspires us to grow, to invent, to commit and to achieve great things people without these qualities only dream about. A clear vision acts as a motivator and filter that helps us determine what to pursue as a priority when opportunities and ideas are many and resources limited. Vision and purpose, commitment and perseverance, these are the qualities in any endeavour that will make success and achievement more a certainty than anything else.

The Truth Will Set You Free

“You shall know the truth, and the truth will make you free” (John 8:32)

“So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed” (John 8:36)

He whom Jesus makes free is free indeed! Christians can be some of the most bound up and rigid people you will ever meet, yet we are called to live in the glorious freedom that Jesus won for us on the cross! The Bible says that the truth will set us free.

Through Christ we have been given total freedom ... total freedom within the boundaries of love!

We are not free to give licence to sin but rather to love – to love God with all our heart, mind and strength, and to love others as we love ourselves (Matt 22:37-40).

Jesus came to set us free and that we should not be bound by the keeping of religious laws, legalism or traditions. We are now bound by the bond of the Holy Spirit which binds all believers together in love. (Luke 4:18)

“By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:35)

Setting The Captives Free

Jesus' very first public messages recorded in Luke 4:18-19 gave us an insight into His Mission Statement:

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour”

Who were these people? They were the ordinary folk of Jesus time, oppressed on two fronts – by the religious leaders of the day and the occupying Roman forces.

Clearly Jesus did not come to free them from Roman oppression. That only leaves freedom from religious bondage and legalism, two of the most insidious of all spiritual diseases people still suffer under today, some of whom are Christians.

True freedom is something worth fighting for, both naturally and spiritually. True freedom is what Jesus lived and died for. Freedom from religious dogma, freedom from sin and judgement, freedom from sickness and disease, freedom from poverty and lack. Freedom to overcome the devil and all his schemes.

Growing In Community

We are called as believers to live abundantly.

“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly” (John 10:10)

We are also called to be “living sacrifices” (Rom 12:1). Out of the abundance we are given by God we are also to be generous and selfless, giving back into the kingdom of God according to our means with our time, talents and finances. (2 Cor 9:8)

So we encourage everyone to participate in the activities and vision of their local church, while not neglecting to pursue their own individual dream and purpose in God. The 21st century Church is a church of fresh vision, awesome possibilities and unlimited potential. Only those who risk going too far will ever find out how far they can go. As Francis Xavier said in the 16th Century to a church on the brink of bringing the world out of the dark ages via the Protestant Reformation:

“Give up your small ambitions. Come and change the world”

In community we are called to be a witness of God’s love to the world. In that regards the Bible says the harvest is plentiful, but the labourers remain few:

“The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest” (Luke 10:2)

At TC Ministries, our goal is equip, support and enable believers everywhere be an active part of the Church Jesus said he would create – the one that the gates of Hell will never prevail (Matt 16:18). A Church full of power and dynamism that is sending out signals of love, acceptance, forgiveness and healing to the communities around them.

To achieve this we must be relevant, communicate in a user-friendly manner, and treat unchurched people and those who choose to worship differently from us with respect. Jesus did not come to judge the world, but that the world, through Him, might be saved.

Building a church in the 21st Century requires us to think outside the box. What worked in a different time, with a different generation, doesn't necessarily work the same today. We need to encourage fresh ideas, a fresh approach, and a fresh message of freedom, liberty and victory!

The Digital Age

This is wonderful time to be alive. The digital age in which we live is exciting, challenging, and far reaching. We can access the world from our PC’s or devices, from our own homes – something that would have been considered a miraculous development not so many years ago.

God is still speaking words of encouragement, enlightenment and power, and He has many way to communicate this to His people and to the world. We are part of that an army of believers – His ambassadors if you like – called to speak His words of life to a lost and dying generation, and help equip the saints for the work of ministry that is really never ending. We are committed to doing this by any and all means available to us.

“And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ (Eph 4:11-12)