



# THE POWER OF VISION

## KNOWING GOD'S VISION FOR YOUR LIFE

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### **TEACHING OBJECTIVES**

#### **KNOWING GOD'S VISION FOR YOUR LIFE**

This session explores the vital importance of vision for effective leadership. A special focus is upon the process that God normally uses to birth vision in the life of Christian leaders.



## CORE VALUE

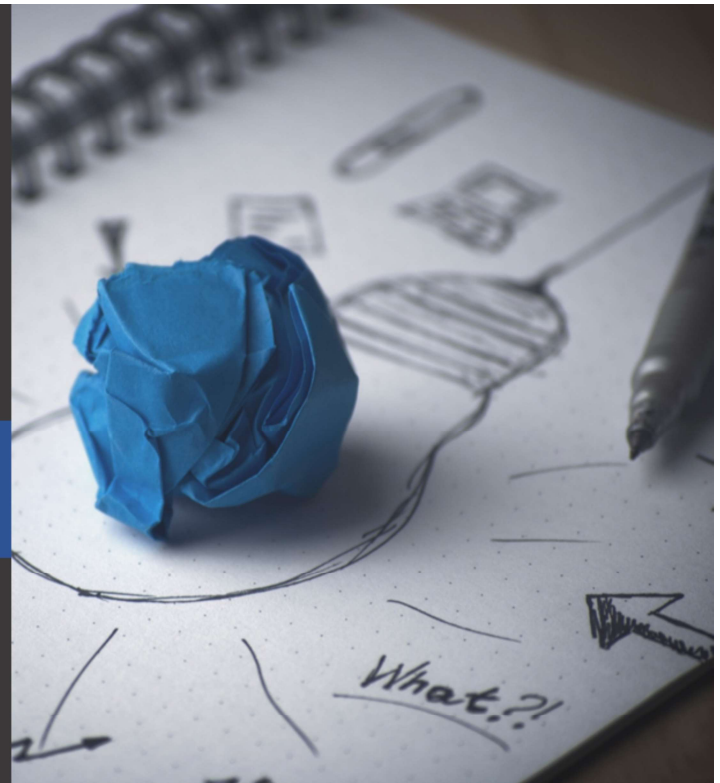
God looks for men and women who are biblically committed to cast vision, set goals, mobilize the Body of Christ, and overcome obstacles in order to reach the nations for Christ.

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**ALL EFFECTIVE  
LEADERSHIP  
BEGINS WITH**

**VISION!**



## INTRODUCTION

All effective leadership begins with vision!

A blind person's world is bound by the limits of his  
or her **TOUCH**

An ignorant person's  
world by the limits of his or her **KNOWLEDGE**

A great person's  
**VISION**

## INTRODUCTION

A blind person's world is bounded by the limits of his or her touch; an ignorant person's world by the limits of his or her knowledge; a great person's by the limits of his or her vision.<sup>1</sup> —E. Paul Hovey

Vision is the single most important factor that differentiates good leaders from great ones. Review the introduction to the opening session - The Vision (page 1). Vision is the common thread among leaders who change the course of history. It is fuel that propels leaders forward and ignites passion in them, as well as their followers.



# WORKSHOP

## Are you a visionary leader?

### WORKSHOP

#### Are you a visionary Leader?

The questions are not a scientific survey, but seek to stimulate your thoughts. Answer them honestly and then add your scores to help determine if you are a visionary leader. Rank your answers on a scale of 1 to 7 for the following questions: 1 = False, 4 = Sometimes, 7 = True

- I have a clear sense of the primary need I am called to meet.
- I spend the majority of my time working specifically toward my life's central goal.
- I am confident that God is the source of vision for my life.
- I have experienced deep and powerful emotions, even pain at times, just thinking about my greater goals.
- I talk about God's vision for my life frequently to those who are close to me and those who are under my authority.

Continued on Next Slide

## SCORING

# ARE YOU A VISIONARY LEADER?

42-49

I am a solar observatory telescope.

35-41

I have eagle vision.

28-34

I miss some of the fine print.

21-27

I am a little  
nearsighted.

7-20

Who turned out the  
lights?

SCORING:

ADD YOUR SCORE AND SEE WHERE YOU LAND ON THIS SCORING CHART:

42—49: I am a solar observatory telescope.

35—41: I have eagle vision.

28—34: I miss some of the fine print.

21—27: I am a little nearsighted.

7—20: Who turned out the lights?

# VISION FOR MINISTRY IS

A clear mental image of a preferable future imparted by God to his chosen servants, based upon an accurate understanding of God, self, and circumstances.



**GEORGE BARNA**

## WHAT IS VISION?

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.<sup>2</sup> —George Barna

Vision is a clear mental picture that leads people to reach out to the future. True vision stirs emotions. It is seeing that which is not yet here and visualizing something before it actually exists. By the power of the Holy Spirit, God gives vision to Christian leaders to bring into creation that which is not yet reality.



VISION IS LIKE

THE EYE OF AN  
**EAGLE**

WHAT IS VISION LIKE? THREE ANALOGIES

EYE OF THE EAGLE

An eagle can see farther than other animals. In the same way, visionary leaders see beyond a maintenance mentality and envision a mission that makes an apostolic difference for Christ.





WHAT IS VISION LIKE? THREE ANALOGIES  
MAGNIFYING GLASS

A magnifying glass brings objects into clearer focus. Vision from God allows a leader to see with greater clarity and focus.

# BANKS OF A RIVER

## VISION IS LIKE

### WHAT IS VISION LIKE? THREE ANALOGIES

#### BANKS OF A RIVER

The banks of a river provide direction for the flow of the water. Vision provides direction and keeps us moving in the direction that God wants to take us.



## THE BENEFITS OF VISION

Vision provides at least nine positive benefits:

1. vision clarifies purpose,
2. establishes clear priorities,
3. sets standards of excellence,
4. inspires expectation,
5. motivates commitment,
6. maximizes productivity,
7. expands horizons,
8. fuels passion, and
9. provides focus for reaching your fullest potential.



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9. provides focus for reaching your fullest potential.

Who is the greatest visionary leader that you know? What makes that person a visionary leader?

# THE BIRTH OF VISION



## A LESSON FROM NEHEMIAH

### THE BIRTH OF VISION: A LESSON FROM NEHEMIAH

The story contained in the book of Nehemiah is a model that will help us understand God's process of birthing vision in the heart of His servants.

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

# NEBUCHADNEZZAR CAPTURES JERUSALEM

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586 BC



### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

After the death of Solomon, God judged the nation of Israel for idolatry and sin. By 586 B.C., the twelve tribes of Israel no longer existed. The Babylonians, under King Nebuchadnezzar, captured the city of Jerusalem, burned the house of God (the temple), broke down the protective wall, destroyed the city's valuable articles, and stole the national treasures.

The Jewish people were captured, forced into slavery, and marched 1,400 kilometers (approximately 870 miles) to Babylon. Psalm 137 is written at this time: "How can we sing the songs of the LORD while in a foreign land?" (v. 4).

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

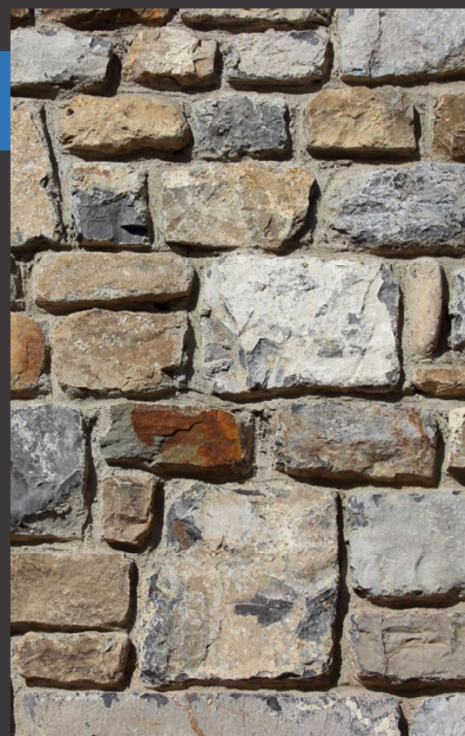
# THE RETURN

Zerubbabel REBUILDS TEMPLE

Ezra RESTORES WORSHIP

Nehemiah REBUILDS WALLS

**586 BC**



For seventy years, the Jewish people lived in captivity, and then God began to restore Jerusalem through three people.

Zerubbabel: Rebuilds the house of God (the temple)

Ezra: Restores worship (eighty years later)

Nehemiah: Rebuilds the walls (thirteen years later)

As the book of Nehemiah begins, Nehemiah is serving as the cupbearer to the king. He is about to learn God's vision for his life!



# 6 STEPS IN THE BIRTH OF VISION

## SIX STEPS IN THE BIRTH OF VISION<sup>3</sup>

God designed us to be people of purpose—to pursue causes for which we would exchange our lives. When you find God’s vision for your life, you will not take hold of it; it will take hold of you. It will begin quietly as you...





1. SEE THE NEED

SEE



The words of Nehemiah son of Hakaliah: In the month of Kislev in the twentieth year, while I was in the citadel of Susa, Hanani, one of my brothers, came from Judah with some other men, and I questioned them about the Jewish remnant that had survived the exile, and also about Jerusalem. — Nehemiah 1:1–2

#### 1. SEE THE NEED

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SEE



They said to me, “Those who survived the exile and are back in the province are in great trouble and disgrace. The wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates have been burned with fire.”  
Nehemiah 1:3

## 1. SEE THE NEED

It is said that a true Jew is always concerned about two things: the Jewish people and the city of Jerusalem. These were Nehemiah’s two questions.

They said to me, “Those who survived the exile and are back in the province are in great trouble and disgrace. The wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates have been burned with fire.” — Nehemiah 1:3

When you catch the sight of a human plight that stirs you, a spiritual nerve within you is touched. Quietly you experience the first step. This is the seeding process in the birth of a vision. Verse three is the answer to the question on Nehemiah’s heart. As he hears the words, he can see the situation in Jerusalem. He has never actually been to Jerusalem, but he can “see” the city in his mind. He can see the people living in fear and uncertainty. He can see the broken walls. His emotions are touched.

**VISION IS  
BIRTHED IN  
EXPERIENCE**

**VISION IS  
BASED UPON A  
HUMAN NEED**

1. SEE THE NEED

VISION IS...

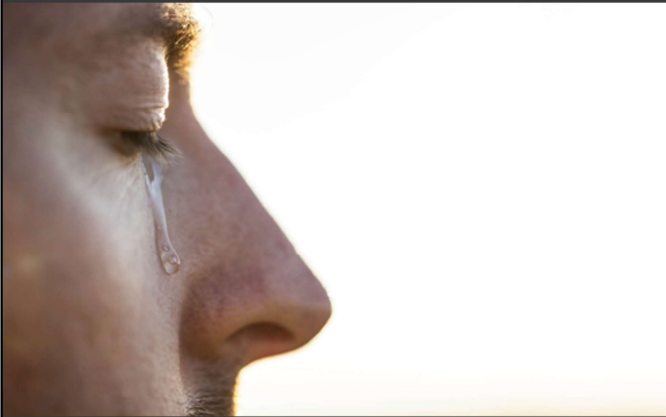
Birtherd in human experience

Based upon a human need



## 2. FEEL THE NEED

## FEEL



When I heard these things, I sat down and wept.  
Nehemiah 1:4a

### 2. FEEL THE NEED

When I heard these things, I sat down and wept. —Nehemiah 1:4a

First, you see the need, and then you begin feeling the need. You begin to purposefully open your heart and place the need inside you. Their need becomes your need. The seeds of vision begin to grow inside of you, and these seeds are the genuine needs of others.

Everyone sees many needs, but sometimes seeds give birth to something deep in your heart that has staying power. The need seems to have leapt onto you, and now it goes wherever you go. This is almost a chemical reaction between a certain need and the way God made you.

The news deeply impacted Nehemiah. It was exactly the opposite of what he had hoped to hear. It affected him emotionally, and he sat down and wept. His heart broke for Jerusalem and the situation the people were facing.

**LEADERS  
INTENTIONALLY  
PUT THE NEED  
IN THEIR HEART**

**LEADERS FEEL  
THE PAIN  
PERSONALLY**

## 2. FEEL THE NEED

VISIONARY LEADERS ARE WILLING TO...

Intentionally put the need in their heart

Feel the pain personally.



# BOND

3

## 3. BOND TO THE NEED



# BOND



For some days I  
mourned...  
Nehemiah 1:4b



### 3. BOND TO THE NEED

For some days I mourned...—Nehemiah 1:4b

The awareness of the need grows strong inside of you. The feelings don't leave; in fact, the feelings increase. At this point the need is almost like a burning pain in you. Yet, your response is a paradox. Instead of running away from the pain of the need, you are actually attracted to it. The Holy Spirit is bonding you to the need. This often takes place over a period of time. Bonding to the need is like God applying glue between the need and your heart.

**GOD BONDS  
CHOSEN  
SERVANTS TO  
NEEDS...**

**TO BRING THE  
KINGDOM OF  
GOD ON  
EARTH**

### 3. BOND TO THE NEED

GOD BONDS...

Chosen servants to needs to bring the Kingdom of God on earth.



4. FEEL A BURDEN FOR THE NEED

# BURDEN



...and fasted and  
prayed before the  
God of heaven.  
Nehemiah 1:4c

## 4. FEEL A BURDEN FOR THE NEED

... and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven. — Nehemiah 1:4.c

At some point, you cross the line from objective observation to a soulful yearning that something must be done. You mourn for what you have seen. The burden weighs heavily, and you cannot escape it. In the back of your mind, there is the thought that something must be done. Over and over again you see the snapshot of human need engraved in your mind, until you begin to glimpse your own face in the picture. You think about being the one to act.

**BURDENS...**  
**BIRTH GREAT**  
**VISIONS**

**BURDENS...**  
**PROVIDES**  
**PASSION**

- 4. FEEL A BURDEN FOR THE NEED BURDENS...

BURDENS...

Birth great visions

Provide passion for the vision

# WORKSHOP

- Do you have a clear sense of the primary need that God desires you to fulfill?

## WORKSHOP

- Do you have a clear sense of the primary need that God desires for you to fulfill?



5. BELIEVE THAT YOU COULD MEET THE NEED

# MEETING THE NEED

Requires **OBEDIENCE**

Requires **ACTING IN  
FAITH**

Acknowledges **THE  
POWER OF GOD**

Validates **YOUR  
ACCOUNTABILITY**

## 5. BELIEVE THAT YOU COULD MEET THE NEED

You could step out to meet the need, but will you? You are at a critical point. If this is a true vision struggling to be born, you will have an internal accountability for the need. You feel a sense of responsibility and urgency to do something. Softly wrapped around the burden is the quiet and persistent confidence that you are being called by God to take action.

### THIS STEP...

Requires obedience

Requires acting in faith

Acknowledges the power of God

Validates your accountability to God and people





## 6. TAKE AN INITIAL ACTION TO MEET THE NEED

It may be only a minor act on your part, but what matters most is that you take some action. You cross over an invisible line from belief to action. It is now clear that you are the person, this is the vision, and now is the time. This is the reason you are put here on earth.

# INITIAL ACTION

Launches **THE VISION**

Involves **RISK**

From Private **TO  
PUBLIC**

Move Towards **YOUR  
DESTINY**

6. TAKE AN INITIAL ACTION TO MEET THE NEED WHEN THIS STEP OF ACTION IS TAKEN, A LEADER...

Launches the vision

Takes a step of faith involving risk

Moves from the private arena to the public arena

Moves toward fulfilling his or her greater life purpose



## CONCLUSION

Every leader must answer the two questions below:

1. What is my purpose?
2. What is my vision?

If you can answer these questions, then... Your life is about to change forever.