

"Developing a Vision for Ministry"
Aubrey Malphurs
Notes by Dave Kraft

Leaders glimpse what others may not see and are captured by it (9) Strong leaders possess a vision as great as God and as specific as a zip code. Currently 80-85% of American churches are either plateaued or dying with no revival in sight (13)

THE IMPORTANCE OF VISION

To attempt a ministry without a clear, well-articulated vision is to invite a **still birth** (17) George Barna says that only 2% of pastors could articulate the vision for their church. Barna concluded, "If they do not know where they are going—a lack of mission—then surely they cannot see where they are going—a lack of vision. The mission determines what the direction is; while the vision, in particular, concerns what the direction looks like (18) There are several problems: No vision, multiply directions, wrong vision (19) Vision will invite unit in the recruitment of ministry personnel and the retention of personnel (20) One denominational exec was overheard to say, "**The church is organized for the 1950's, and if the 50's ever come again, we will be ready**" (21) Developing a vision and then living it vigorously and authentically are essential elements of leadership (22) A **maintenance mentality** will over time lead to a **ministry mediocrity**. Vision is a seeing word and passion is a feeling word (23) Many are caught up in what is, and no one has cast a vision for what could be. People with vision are not simply in a church, they are on a crusade (26)

THE DEFINITION OF A VISION

Purpose answers the question of, why? Vision answers the question of, what? Mission affects planning the organization's future, while the vision affects the communication of that future. A mission statement is short a vision statement is long (31) A vision is a clear and challenging picture of a future of a ministry as you believe that it can and must be (32) Presumably the point people are visionaries. Indeed, it is this visionary capacity that qualifies them to lead the organization in the 1st place (34) We see what is,

but do we see what could be? Visionaries have the innate ability to see what others don't see (35)

There are three issues that affect the carrying out of a vision: 1. Who is the visionary 2. Who are the visionary's people 3. Is the time right for the vision (39) Questions to ask about your vision: Is my vision clear? Is it challenging? Does it create a picture? Is it future oriented? Do I believe that it can be? Am I convinced that it must be? Does it inspire passion? Is it culturally relevant?

GIVING BIRTH TO A VISION

It is important to recognize that every ministry and every leadership team within a ministry needs a single leader (44) It becomes obvious that visionaries favor the intuitive over the sensing process (46) Work hard at developing as much as possible your intuitive abilities. Another characteristic of visionary type people is their ability to recognize, collect, and synthesize pertinent information from a variety of sources (48) The common trait of people who supposedly have vision is that they spend a lot of time reading and gathering information, and then synthesize it until they come up with an idea. We need leaders who gather knowledge gained from experience.

The emphasis in the American culture is on knowledge gained from the classroom (49) What does the visionary leader do? He must be a vision caster. He is to cultivate, communicate and clarify the vision (50,51) There is a difference between people who provide the momentum in a group and those who go along for the ride (53) Leaders conceive a dream when they have a deep dissatisfaction with what is and a deep, pressing desire for what they know could be (59) Visionaries may be characterized as opportunists (61) The vision has to be bigger than the envisionser in the sense that it goes far beyond him and his abilities to accomplish it (67) What will this mission look like as we begin to reach these people in this community? The picture that forms in your mind is your ministry vision (78)

COMMUNICATING YOUR VISION

One of the primary functions of the visionary leader of any ministry is that of vision caster. **I propose a new paradigm for the pastoral role for the**

21st century: Primary communicator, the developer of present and potential leadership, and the primary caster of vision.

The role of the leader is to keep the vision before other leaders, encourage them in their walk with the Savior, and make sure they have the skills necessary to accomplish well their individual ministry (86) Too many people in positions of leadership around the world do not have a vision, or they do not have a clear vision, or they do not see the need to articulate that vision (87) One of the keys is the necessity of presenting the vision within the context of a critical deficiency or problem with the status quo (88) Three issues affect the credibility of the visionary message 1. The visionary leader's performance 2. The vision's content 3. The visionary leader's integrity (92).

"If there is anything I have learned over the years, it is not to underestimate how often I need to rekindle the vision...to consistently reeducate people why we are on the track we are on...why we do things they way we do"-Bill Hybels. The rule is repeat it over and over every day in a different way (95) Leaders who desire to communicate the dream must do so with stories (98) There is energy in visionary preachers (100) Kouzes and Posner write, **"The greatest inhibitor to enlisting others in a common vision is lack of personal convictions" It is like trying to ignite a fire with a wet match (103)**

IMPLEMENTING YOUR VISION

Good dream casting by itself does not necessarily result in the implementation of that dream; implementation is necessary (126) The leader's number one priority, if he is to implement the dream, is to build a team who first owns the same dream (127) According to John P. Kotter (Author of *A force for Change*), there are three essential steps: 1. **Establish the direction** where a group of people should go 2. **Communicate** that vision to its people and **secure their commitment** 3. **Energize people** so they will be able to overcome various obstacles that are sure to surface along the way (128) Recruiting to the vision is everyone's business (132).

Four ways to build commitment: 1. Help people understand that they need each other 2. Create a climate of trust and vulnerability 3. Develop a sense of community 4. Maintain clear lines of communication (135) Goals need to be

truly collaborative, not exploitative (138) If people ever begin to suspect that the leader is hiding something from them, he will lose considerable credibility (139) Grace does not take a vacation after the cross (151).

Very few pastors spend enough time with their leadership teams to exercise servant leadership (156) I place the development of a team of leaders as a top priority for Pastors in the church (157) If an environment has not been established where people have freedom to fail, then people will not take risks, and the ministry will either plateau or go into decline (159) It is leader's behavior not their position that brings them the respect and credibility (162) I believe that one of the differences between 85% of American churches that are either stagnant or dying and the 15% that are not is the intensity to which they hold to their values whatever they may be.

They come up short on intensity. Those evangelical churches that are growing as a result of conversion growth most often are led by people who value the GC with intensity (164) Successful leaders have high expectations both of themselves and of their followers (167) The idea of viewing the church as a base for ministry as well as a place for ministry (174)