



THE SGI JOURNAL

OF LEADERSHIP



No
11



Sept - Oct 2022



2023



VISION FOR
MINISTRY

PERSONAL
VISION



A PROPHECIC
VISION



LIMITING FACTORS
OF A VISION

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THE SGI JOURNAL OF LEADERSHIP

MISSION STATEMENT

Leading the United Pentecostal Church International to think strategically about future growth.

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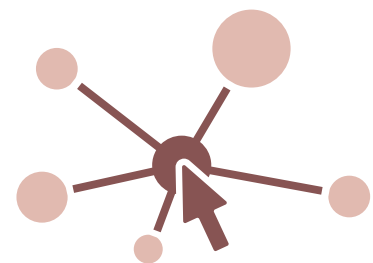
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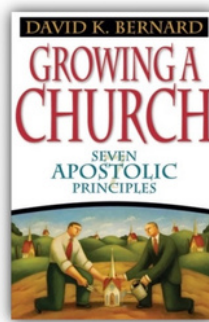
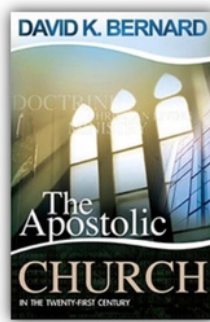
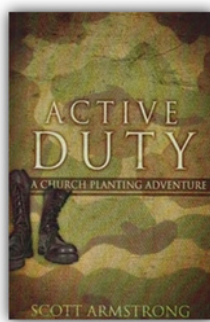
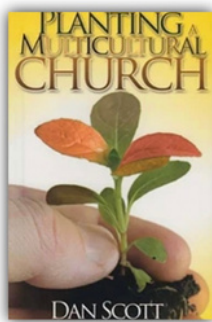
Strategic Growth Initiative (SGI) Resources



The Strategic Growth Initiative (SGI) was born in the heart of General Superintendent David K. Bernard as God gave him a vision for growing the North American church. The General Board of the UPCI approved the forming of SGI for the purpose of highlighting growth in the areas of the number of churches and ministers in North America. The four focus points of SGI are outlined below along with resources available through the Division of Publications.

Multiply the number of churches

SGI will assist districts by providing promotion, planning, and training with the goal of enabling every district to at least double the number of churches (including preaching points, daughter works, autonomous church plants, multicultural church plants, integrate independent Apostolic churches, etc.) in one decade.



VISION FOR MINISTRY

DARRELL JOHNS
SGI Committee Chair

2023

NOTE

It is an honor to chair the Strategic Growth Initiative Committee. I have a deep sense of gratitude for the outstanding leadership of my predecessor in this effort, Bro. Jack Cunningham. I look forward to working with the SGI team as an extension of the General Board to implement the vision of General Superintendent, Bro. David K. Bernard.

A vision for ministry reflects what God wants to accomplish through us to build His Kingdom. Vision is a picture of the future and lays out the path from here to there.

Vision has been described in various ways:

- Vision has been described as foresight with insight based on hindsight.
- Vision is the bridge from the present to the future.
- Visions are sanctified dreams.
- Vision is a picture of the future that produces passion.
- Vision is a picture of what could be and should be.

A vision for ministry addresses a pressing need and provides solutions to problems. It paints a picture of what must be done with a compelling reason why it should be done now. A vision should be clearly seen and creatively articulated. Early on, the vision will have missing pieces. Questions should be addressed as the vision unfolds.

Message, Mission, Vision

A vision for ministry addresses how the message and mission of the church will be implemented in our specific contexts. Global missionaries, North American missionaries, districts, sections, North American pastors, and ministers must discern what the Spirit is saying. We need a clear vision from God to accomplish the mission effectively. To be clear, the mission is to evangelize and disciple every person possible.

The message and mission of the church are nonnegotiable and are not subject to debate. Ministry mission statements should reflect the Great Commission given by Jesus. (See Matthew 28:18-20, Mark 16:15-18, Luke 24:46-49, John 20:21, Acts 1:8.)

The Apostolic message of the Oneness of God, the new birth as applied by Acts 2:38, and biblical holiness is a fixed stake in the ground. We dare not compartmentalize truth into levels. Truth is a body and is the expression of the nature of God. (It is not my purpose to write an apologetic of Apostolic doctrine in this article, but suffice it to say that we must have an uncompromising commitment to the UPCI Articles of Faith.) We also need an unwavering commitment to our mission to take

“The whole gospel to the whole world by the whole church.”

Vision answers the question, “How are we to fulfill the Great Commission in our setting?” In the Book of Acts, the message and mission never changed, but the vision for ministry was specific to the setting. The Gospel was preached in the Temple, in synagogues, in houses, on the street, in prisons, in the marketplace, in the school of Tyrannus, and in other venues. Vision addresses how we advance the mission.

Ability versus Vision

A leader of average ability with a God-given vision can accomplish more than a person with great ability without a vision. When I had served as pastor for about seven years, I was praying about my leadership “lid.” The leadership lid concept teaches that you cannot lead an organization farther than you have gone yourself. One’s personal limits become the organization’s limits.

In that season, I was praying about the future of our church. I was thinking about the leadership lid and wondering when I would hit the “lid.” I did not want my limitations to limit the Lord’s church. My question in prayer went something like this: “Lord, let me know when it’s time for me to transition to a more capable man to come lead our church to the next level.”

I believe the Lord really spoke to me about this. I understood Him to say,

“The church has already outgrown your ability, but it can never outgrow your vision.”

That word from the Lord was both humbling and encouraging.



We should continually strive to be our best. But even more than increasing our leadership quotient and raising our leadership lid, we should pray for the Lord to give us His vision for the ministries we lead.

Vision 2023

As you pray about and ponder what God wants you to do for His glory in 2023 and beyond, ask Him how and where He wants you to establish His Kingdom in your life, family, and ministry. May the Lord give us a vision for strategic growth to reach our lost world and advance the Kingdom of God.

Darrell Johns

Darrell Johns serves as pastor of Atlanta West Pentecostal Church, Assistant General Superintendent of the Eastern Zone, UPCI, and chair of the Strategic Growth Initiative Committee of the General Board.





From the General Superintendent

Personal Vision

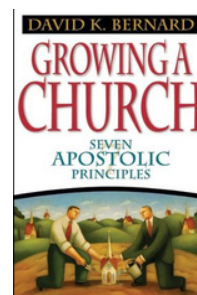
In addition to a vision for the church, it is helpful for a minister to develop his or her own personal vision for ministry. Over the years, I have tried to articulate my own vision, goals, and objectives in ministry, first for my own benefit and then for those I am leading. Doing so has helped me to think clearly about my ministry, communicate more effectively to those I am leading, and enhance accountability to God, myself, and others.

When I pastored, I asked each minister in our church to formulate a personal vision statement, and we spent time discussing the ideas that we had. Here is my own:

My Commitment to Ministry

- I will affirm and reaffirm the fundamentals of the apostolic faith and Christian living, to myself and to the people I serve.
- I will pursue life in the Spirit—including communion with Christ, the leadership of the Spirit in all things, and the anointing of the Spirit in all that I do.
- I will seek a balanced, well-rounded life and ministry: in Spirit and Word, in preaching and teaching, in evangelism and discipleship.
- I will love, respect, and encourage people.
- I will be merciful, and I will believe in people. If I am to err, I will err on the side of mercy. I will give people the benefit of the doubt. I will bend, but not break, in order to give people the opportunity to grow and develop.
- I will not seek personal gain, position, or glory.
- I will serve God and serve people.

Recommended Resource
Article adapted from *Growing a Church: Seven Apostolic Principles*
by David K. Bernard
(Word Aflame Press, 2010).





Article No.1

Prophetic Vision

It is the task of spiritual leaders to provide a clear vision that can be applied by followers within the organization. Vision can be discovered in many ways and provide a helpful starting place: observing the culture and needs of the entity, discerning the direction in which the organization is moving, and underscoring the mission of the organization. In these ways, we understand that vision is the desired future of the organization and is applied through the means of practical leadership.

However, there is another form of vision that is found within the structure of a spiritual entity, such as a church or organization. While there are many practical ways of discovering and clarifying vision, spiritual leaders are not limited to the thoughts or intentions of their own intellect, flesh, or emotion. We believe that the born-again mind is a sanctuary of divine potential.

Here—in a mind that is saturated with truth from the scripture and intimate fellowship with God—spiritual vision is born.

The desire of God is released into the believer through ideas, thoughts, and images. These heavenly intentions are truly prophetic in nature.

Prophecy is a declaration of divine intention. Through the gift of prophecy, God declares His willingness and desire to accomplish His will. In this way, it is understood that God's intentions are not known until they are spoken in prophecy by a willing vessel. Even then, the person being used in the gift may not have possessed the thought prior to the unction to speak. God simply put His word in their mouth.

Prophetic vision is born when God releases His thoughts into our thoughts prior to them being spoken. The mind begins to see it through images and understand it through language. The development of these thoughts into ideas is the essence of a prophetic vision. This would contrast with other forms of vision because it is not cultivated from the observation or analysis of the church's natural trajectory. The vision is from God, and this is what makes the vision prophetic in nature. It originates from the divine intent and literally expresses the purpose of God.

Prayer is the birthplace of prophetic vision. Intercessory prayer specifically positions a believer, especially a minister, to receive a fresh idea from God. A deep burden for the lost condition of humanity in the context of a family, city, or nation causes the minister to connect with the passion of God Himself. In its final form, the vision must reflect God's intent, not the leader's personal dreams or aspirations.

Rang Hinedinst





Article No.2

Limiting Factors of a Vision

It has been said that vision is the art of seeing what is invisible to others. Leaders must not only see what others cannot see; they must be able to see what is limiting their vision. Recognizing limitations that hinder vision can help you remove the obstacles and reach your desired destination.

As you read through this list, remember that knowledge can empower you and free you from the grip of limiting factors. Let the awareness of these limitations cause you to create a plan to overcome any factors that you consider a hindrance to your vision.

- **Our Past:** Past failures can cause you to limit yourself. You must reconcile your past in Jesus and move forward. Yesterday's failures are today's resources for improvement. You cannot move forward if you are focused on what's behind you.
- **Our Pressures:** The pressure of always being concerned about what other people think can cripple your ability to act in a timely manner, thus limiting your ability to effectively work your vision. The pressures of people, life, and situations can distract you from your purpose, but learning to deal with these pressures appropriately will keep you on track.
- **Our Problems:** Trouble will always come to hinder a man or woman on a mission for the kingdom, but you must learn to rise above your problems. Don't procrastinate when dealing with problems that can stop the flow of vision.
- **Our Programs:** Do not allow a program to become so sacred that it keeps you from moving forward. Any program that decreases faith saps your energy or is no longer producing either needs to be released or revamped. Programs are a tool to help the vision. They are not the vision.
- **Our Prognosis:** If we desire to know every answer and see every problem in the future, we will have problems. Nothing of value will ever be attempted if all possible objections must first be removed. You must walk by faith, not by sight. You cannot always determine the end at the beginning, but inaction will kill vision.
- **Our Perspective:** Sometimes, you must change your perspective to see not only what is possible but look for the impossibilities that God can change and bring glory to His name. Clear vision comes through challenging our perspective and getting the view God desires us to see. Look to see the goodness of God in all that you do.
- **Our Position:** Our world needs leaders who cannot be bought, whose word is their bond, who can put character above wealth, who will be honest in small things as well as great, who will make no compromise with wrong, and whose ambitions are not confined to their own selfish desires, and who are not afraid to stand for the truth even when it is unpopular. You must never allow your position to be a hindrance to God's vision. Many a man has hindered God's vision for their own recognition and desires.



These limiting factors to vision can be overcome. As the leader, there are three things you can do to remove these limitations.

- **See the vision** – Let God renew and expand your vision, always be ready to revise the vision.
- **Show the people the vision** – Make it plain; show them the possibilities.
- **Work together to bring the vision to pass** – Seek the partnership of the people. As the wise man Solomon wrote, “Two are better than one.”

Your vision should stretch you, challenge you, and grow you.

Never forget you will see further than you can see right now if you will remove all limiting factors of your vision. Dream God-size dreams and trust Him to empower you to fulfill them. Remove the limits and change your world for Jesus Christ!

Tom Foster





Article No. 3

Vision for Next Generation Leaders

In order for apostolic ministry to bring the whole gospel to the whole world, we must have a biblical vision that reflects that goal. However, we cannot just have a vision, we must also have a plan that will bring it forth. A vision without a strategic plan is just a dream.

While our vision of spreading the gospel is set out for us in scripture, we must be responsible for the development of specific and concise plans that will help bring it to fruition. Here are some principles to consider as we develop and implement those plans.

Involvement and unity

If we want to leave a lasting legacy, we cannot do ministry alone. There are no shortcuts to developing key leaders. We must invest time with them, trust them, and reward them as they grow and develop into capable leaders.

Interpersonal communication

In his book, *The 17 Indisputable Laws of Teamwork*, John Maxwell defines the law of communication as, "interaction fuels action." He says, "Communication is not just getting out information; it's getting information through." So, it's not enough for the leader to speak the vision, he must communicate the vision clearly and effectively so that the rest of the team can buy into the vision and make it their own.

Creativity and innovation

As we look within our congregations, there are, no doubt, very creative and innovative people present. We must be willing to embrace the creativity and innovation of others so that our team can reach new heights of production and accomplishment.

If we are not careful, we can subconsciously stifle the creativity and innovation that, if utilized, could be a great blessing to the Kingdom's work. In 1 Chronicles 12, we read that when the Lord began to transition from the kingdom of Saul to the kingdom of David, He sent mighty men to David, helpers of the war, to help him accomplish his God-given purpose. It would have been necessary for David to actually utilize the mighty men that God made available to him for the victory to be assured.

Prioritization

The Jesus model of prioritization was witnessed by His three-and-a-half-year involvement with twelve ordinary men. They were fishermen, farmers, and tax collectors, ordinary men full of flaws but hungry to be used by the Master. Their individual ministries matured as a result of Jesus' willingness to make their development a priority. As we focus on the development of the leaders around us, I believe that God will bless our ministries beyond our imaginations.



Culture

Any organization is a microcosm with its own unique culture created by the commonly-held beliefs and behaviors of those within it. Likewise, the local church is also a microcosm of the diversities of gifts, administrations, and operations (see 1 Corinthians 12). We must be deliberate and strategic in the utilization of the gifts and abilities of those among us.

Awareness and implementation of these principles will help guide us in not only developing strategic and specific plans of action but will also help us engage and involve the next generation of leaders. May God richly bless you as you raise up the next generation.

Nathan Foggins





Article No. 4

Planning

Planning for the future is a gift. As leaders, we often find ourselves in an intense planning mode toward the end of the year. Planning is great and preparation is wisdom and needful. But there are things that we sometimes tend to do that can work against our peace and progress when it comes to casting and fulfilling our annual plans.

**Ask ye of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain; so the Lord shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain, to every one grass in the field.
(Zechariah 10:1)**

The prophet Zechariah says it best when he says we are to ask God for rain when the rain would best benefit the seeds we've sown. God is speaking to Israel concerning preparing for a harvest to come. They had often wandered and frustrated themselves by following plans and ideas that were not on God's calendar or in His heart. This led to further confusion and frustration, which only took a good thing and made it aggravating for God and for Israel.

So, God is saying, "Plan, yes, but plan things within reason and with reasonable, attainable expectations." Don't ask God for the rain to water the harvest in the dead of winter. Wait until spring and set your expectations where the best result can be experienced. Work in God's season for your life and for your local congregation and don't feel obligated to do things that are not in alignment with what is best for you.

Dear friend, a full calendar isn't always a productive one and our progress doesn't always look like progress when it is compared to others. As you prepare for your upcoming year, don't fall into the trap of doing things just because it's convenient or the popular thing to do. Save your peace and your emotions this year. Don't schedule revival in December when you know everyone is focusing their efforts and emotional attention elsewhere. Be wise, be patient, be at peace and be fruitful.

David Bryan





ISSUE 11 TOOLBOX PRACTICAL TOOLS YOU CAN USE





4-D VISION EXERCISE

Cooperrider and Srivastva published "Appreciative Inquiry in Organizational Life" which has become a widely used method of creating organizational futures. Appreciative Inquiry takes a more positive stance, is more collaborative and participative, and is capable of generating organizational change. In Appreciative Inquiry, intervention gives way to imagination and innovation; instead of negation, criticisms, and spiraling diagnosis, there is discovery, dream, and design (Klenke, K., *Qualitative Research in the Study of Leadership*).

Consider working through this 4-D Exercise with your team as you plan for 2023.

1) Discovery

The **Discovery** phase focuses on discovering the best of what is. Participants share their stories and write down affirmations of past and present strengths and successes. By the end of this phase, your church will have a rich description of its positive aspects to carry forward into 2023.

2) Dream

The **Dream** phase involves envisioning the organization's future, an energizing exploration of "what might be." It is a time for participants to think big, out of the box, and out of the boundaries of what has been in the past. The dream phase aims to inspire hopeful images about the future. Imagine what the church would look like at its very best. When people have a compelling vision of the organization at its best, the vision motivates new behaviors to reach a higher sense of purpose.

3) Design

The **Design** phase takes the results of the first two stages and transfers them into an architecture of change. This phase involves making choices about "what should be" and creating an organizational infrastructure and processes that support the dream. It is a transformative stage during which organizational structures, processes, policies, and systems are aligned with the organization's positive past (**Discovery**) and highest potential (**Dream**) to facilitate replication of the peak performance and the implementation of the new dream. The Design phase creates positive affirmations by writing propositions describing the organization's image of itself in the ideal. It focuses on encouraging all members to contribute to the church's service.





4-D VISION EXERCISE

4) Destiny

The final phase, Destiny, brings the 4-D cycle to closure by focusing on the implementation and experimentation with the actions identified in the Dream phase. It focuses on personal and organizational commitments to change in major systems within the organization, such as service schedules, mission efforts, facility management, etc. The purpose of this final stage in the 4-D cycle is to sustain the developments and innovations of the inquiry process and to nurture a collective sense of destiny. The destiny phase invites action inspired by the outcomes of the discovery, dream, and design phases.

